

# A Citizen's Guide to Creative Placemaking

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## What is Placemaking?

Moran, Schupbach, Spearman, & Reut (2014) state that, “[c]reative placemaking is about helping people learn about social and political issues, health and nutrition, environmental concerns and more; helping people take ownership of the special place in which they live, in order to make it more vital and ever more livable; and helping people understand their collective responsibility for fighting injustice in their place, as well as what it means to exercise their citizenship”. People are drawn to certain cities not only because of jobs, but also for other aspects on the livability index<sup>1</sup> (Florida, 2002). As creativity becomes an increasingly valued asset in jobs and communities, individuals continue to seek these creative centers which fulfill employment needs while also offering alternative employment opportunities. Artists and other creative talents are drawn to cities with greater diversity and lifestyle interests. Placemaking can help foster diversity in neighborhoods by creating the uniqueness that the creative class desires in their communities.



The Allen Elizabethan Stage in the Shakespeare Festival located in Ashland, Oregon has become an economic powerhouse in Southern Oregon, drawing in \$90 million in 2013 of direct spending into the local economy.

Placemaking is a decentralized form of using spaces creatively to gather people, usually reflecting the historical and ethnic character of the surrounding neighborhood<sup>2</sup>. Placemaking is intended to bring more activity and reinvigorate neighborhoods by developing gathering places that people can utilize creatively. In this process, open public areas such as parks and squares draw in additional people, benefit local businesses, and celebrate what is intrinsically unique to the place. Placemaking can improve the quality of the community and region. Creative placemaking creates spaces that incorporate human interaction and knowledge sharing. These public spaces are what attract talent, and in turn, jobs for the community. Creative placemaking strategies have created distinct districts and neighborhoods within cities; many cities eventually use these placemaking strategies for tourism purposes.

At present, there are four types of placemaking: Standard Placemaking, Tactical Placemaking, Strategic Placemaking and Creative Placemaking (Michigan State University Land Policy Institute).

<sup>1</sup> The Livability Index is a signature of the Public Policy Institute to measure the quality of life in American communities across multiple dimensions: housing, transportation, neighborhood characteristics, environment, health, opportunity, civic and social engagement. <http://www.aarp.org/ppi/issues/livable-communities/info-2015/livability-index.html>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.curbed.com/2016/9/22/13019420/urban-design-community-building-placemaking>

## Standard Placemaking

Standard placemaking is the universal term for placemaking which consists of developing spaces in which people want to live, work, and play. To do this, certain projects such as street and downtown improvements or residential infill are addressed. Other amenities such as developing walkable town squares and sidewalks are intended to draw people in.



## Strategic Placemaking

Strategic placemaking is the deliberate process of developing projects and activities in locations. This might include larger and long-term projects such as increasing housing and transportation options in an area or preserving historic buildings, creating transit corridors, and bike lanes.

## Creative Placemaking

Creative placemaking is centered on developing projects around arts and culture. This is especially relevant now as more individuals want to live in attractive places that offer diversity of options, jobs, and art. Some elements that are considered part of creative placemaking include:

*Creative placemaking happens when partners come together from all different sectors to “strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighborhood, town, or city around arts and other cultural activities” (Nicodemus, 2012).*

- **Quality Public Spaces**
- **Multiple Transportation Options**
- **Arts, Community, Creativity**
- **Recreation**
- **Green Spaces**
- **Human Scale – Designed for People**
- **Walkable – Pedestrian and Bike Oriented**
- **Social Opportunity**

## Tactical Placemaking

Tactical Placemaking is the process of creating spaces using a phased approach that often start with short term, low-risk commitments. This process may consist of small, short term projects occurring in underused public spaces, showing the community what options are possible in utilizing the spaces. Activities such as one-day events converting parking spaces into gathering areas, and drawing out bike lanes in a small neighborhood center allow for opportunity to make overall long-term positive impact in the area. Using tactical urbanism, communities can test a variety of activities which the public and policy makers can see the result of and support over time with more permanent resources.



## Northern Cities Placemaking Techniques

Placemaking in places with long winters is an added dimension to the challenge of developing placemaking in public spaces. Public gathering places are attractive in the summer months but may not carry the same draw in the winter. Despite the weather, specific design and placemaking techniques can be implemented to draw people in when temperatures dip low. Specific designs such as capturing sunlight and wind blocking techniques as well as creative evening lighting are some ways northern cities create places that draw people in during the colder, darker months.

A variety of locales have pushed for developing spaces with the consideration of how it may be used in different seasons. In 2013, the city of Edmonton in Alberta, Canada developed a Winter Plan that provides guidelines for future investment in winter placemaking tactics. Some of the goals and strategies provided by the plan are included below.

A winter patio setup in Edmonton, Canada.  
Source: <http://www.cbc.ca/radioactive/050.jpg>



### Develop a Four-Season Patio Culture:

Remove regulatory barriers for small businesses to make year-round use of outdoor space for patios, including temporary winter patios at festivals, events, and sidewalks.

A section of St. Jean road in Quebec City, Canada.  
Source: <https://goo.gl/yWe3G2>



### Increase the capacity for outdoor festivals and events by using lighting:

Landscaping lighting can accentuate public spaces, lighting up darker areas, and extends the ability to utilize these places in the evening hours. This is very helpful for people that would like to enjoy the spaces when the sun has gone down.

A winter maze developed in Sapporo, Japan.  
Source: <https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com>



**Incorporate urban design elements for winter fun, activity, beauty and interest:**

Draw people in for regular events such as ice sculpture festivals, fireworks, music, and food or beverage options in the outdoors

Interactive ice sculptures in Harbin, China.  
Source: <https://goo.gl/t2OVMfj>



**Design the community for winter safety and comfort:**

Incorporate design elements to protect pedestrians from the cold, wind, and ice by using creative lighting, building wind blocks, fire pits, and heat lamps in public



## Placemaking in Alaska

### *Spenard Road Corridor, Anchorage, Alaska*

In 2015, Anchorage-based Cook Inlet Housing Authority received an Artplace America Community Development Investment (CDI) grant for place-based non-governmental organizations with a primary focus on community planning and development to incorporate art and culture strategies into their projects and mission. The program provides up to \$3 million of flexible funding over three years. Cook Inlet Housing Authority (CIHA) was one of six organizations across the country selected for the



Church of Love along Spenard in Anchorage, Alaska. Source: Cook Inlet Housing Authority



Painting the sidewalk to illustrate the potential for having increased sidewalk widths along Spenard. Source: Cook Inlet Housing Authority.

Since CIHA's acceptance of the Artplace grant, they've conducted several projects along the Spenard Road corridor in Anchorage. One of their projects consists of reclaiming asphalt at the Church of Love, which has ample parking space. Reclaimed parking areas created areas of appeal and interest in one section of Spenard. Sezy Gerow-Hanson, Director of Public and Resident Relations at CIHA, stated that their organization created painted sidewalk widths and brought individuals to the space to show how people can better relate to the street, and how different widths can incorporate people passing through on a bike. In the winter time, CIHA placed burn barrels

out along the parking lot so individuals could stand at the fire pit. Movable and portable benches have been put out so people can use the space, with benches removed in non-peak hours so that the public space prevents unwanted loitering.

### *Mountain View Neighborhood, Anchorage, Alaska*

Mountain View is a neighborhood burgeoning with art, farmer's markets, and other activities that draw the community together. Some of these placemaking activities are supported by the Anchorage Community Land Trust (ACLT), an organization which promotes positive community development and revitalization



Source: Al Jazeera America




Street art projects within the neighborhood of Mountain View. Source: <http://acmedia.alaskacommons.com>

throughout Anchorage. ACLT has supported public art in the Mountain View neighborhood since the organization's inception. Through ACLT, art in Mountain View has flourished along the Mountain View Drive corridor in the last decade. These art activities have stemmed new studios and restaurants to open up in the neighborhood. Some of the arts and creative placemaking projects led in Mountain View include the many public art pieces found throughout the community and the façade improvements projects. In 2016, ACLT supported local artists to develop a five-foot bronze sculpture called "whale song". This sculpture was then installed at the corner of Mountain View Drive and Park Street in Mountain on June 2016.


## PUBLIC ART WALK IN MOUNTAIN VIEW

TAKE A PUBLIC ART WALK THROUGH ANCHORAGE'S DIVERSE AND HISTORIC MOUNTAIN VIEW NEIGHBORHOOD!


**A. WE'VE COME SO FAR -**  
"INDRA ARRIAGA AND CHRISTINA BARBER (2011)  
CONCRETE SCULPTURE DEPICTING THREE FIGURES




**B. CONATUS -** "CRAIG UPDEGROVE (2012)  
MOBILE SCULPTURE




**C. MOUNTAIN VIEW DRIVE POLE BANNERS -** NORA GECAN (2012)  
112 METAL POLE BANNERS DESIGNED BY NORA GECAN AND INSTALLED BY THE ANCHORAGE COMMUNITY LAND TRUST.




**D. MULTIPLE ARTWORKS -** TYSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
FOUR ARTWORKS BY LABRY ARVAKANA  
PICTURED: "WELCOME DANCERS AND DRUMMER; ALVIN AMASON, SUSIE BEVINS, AND NATHAN JACKSON.




**E. GARDEN ART PARK -** "MARGRET HUGI-LEWIS (2001)  
WOODEN SCULPTURES DEPICTING FIGURES PLAYING SPORTS OUTSIDE THE SUCCESS BY SIX BUILDING.




**F. CAR WASH MURAL**  
MURAL DEPICTING MOUNTAINS ON THE MOUNTAIN VIEW CAR WASH BUILDING.




**G. 52 FACES OF MOUNTAIN VIEW -** "STEPH KESEY AND ERIN POLLOCK (2010)  
FIBERGLASS LAMPS BASED ON THE FACES OF 52 MOUNTAIN VIEW RESIDENTS.




**H. MULTIPLE ARTWORKS -** CLARK MIDDLE SCHOOL (1995-2012)  
SEVEN ARTWORKS BY JOHN DOBBS, WALTER KRIVITZ, JANE DEBECKER, CLIFF GARTEN, ROBERT BELCADO, ALVIN AMASON (PICTURED: A PIECE FROM THE "KNOW YOUR BIRDS SERIES), AND WASSILY SUMNER.




**I. MULTIPLE ARTWORKS -** MOUNTAIN VIEW LIBRARY  
TWO ARTWORKS BY DAN DEROUX (PICTURED: "TRANSPORTED) AND CLARK JAMES MISHLER.




**J. BICYCLE BLOOM -** "CINDY SHAKE (2010)  
20' POLE WITH BICYCLE SHAPES WELDED IN THE SHAPE OF A FLOWER.




**K. MULTIPLE ARTWORKS -** CREDIT UNION 1 MOUNTAIN VIEW BRANCH  
SEVEN ARTWORKS BY NELDA WARKENTIN, PAT WALSH, JUDY WARWICK, SANDRA HARRINGTON, AND DUKE RUSSELL (PICTURED: "BREWSTER'S).




**L. DINOSAUR MURAL -** "JAMES HAVENS (2013)  
LARGE MURAL DEPICTING DINOSAURS ON THE ALASKA MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND NATURE BUILDING.




**M. HOW TO LIVE TOGETHER -** "CATHERINE DOSS (1999)  
CERAMIC TILE MURALS IN THE MOUNTAIN VIEW BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB.




**N. WHALE SONG -** "CHRISTINA DEMETRO AND AURORA SIDNEY-ANDO (2016)  
BRONZE HUMPBACK WHALE SCULPTURE.




**O. MURAL -** "LINDA INFANTE LYONS (2015)  
MURAL DEPICTING RUFOUS HUMMINGBIRDS ON THE HISPANIC CULTURAL CENTER.



**P. MULTIPLE ARTWORKS -** "KEITH APPEL (1986)  
TWO SERIES OF STEEL PANELS INSIDE MOUNTAIN VIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.





**FOR MORE INFORMATION AND NEWS ABOUT FUTURE PROJECTS, VISIT [ANCHORAGELANDTRUST.ORG](http://ANCHORAGELANDTRUST.ORG)**

Click here to enlarge image



### *Fairview Winter Carnival and Pop Up Market*

In February 2015, six residents of the Fairview neighborhood in Anchorage organized a local winter pop-up market. The market brought residents and other community members together to participate in outdoor events, such as winter bowling and s'more making, and the indoor market.



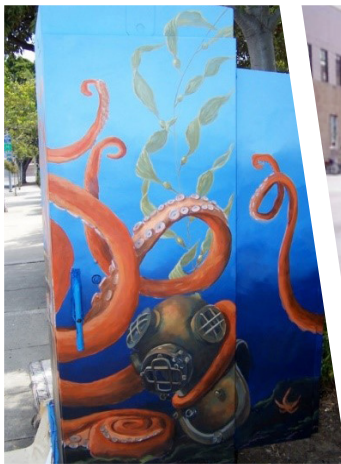
The Fairview winter carnival was a direct result of NeighborWorks® Alaska's participation in a national Community Leadership Institute (CLI). CLI is a three day training event for community resident and volunteer leaders across the United States. Local teams are formed and work together in their hometown before travelling to the CLI event to take part in workshops and courses. During this workshop they work together to develop a project for their community. The 2015 CLI team developed the winter carnival in Fairview after they had the opportunity to attend CLI and gain seed funding for the project from NeighborWorks® America.



## Affordable Placemaking Activities

Placemaking activities take incremental effort, especially for projects such as street and downtown improvement projects or residential infill and surface improvement. This requires significant planning efforts that may consist of public-private partnerships and upfront capital costs. However, placemaking activities can be conducted with minimal costs if there is great community interest. Affordable placemaking activities in your neighborhood could include the following:

- Paint a pop-up (temporary) bike lane through your neighborhood
- Screen a movie outdoors for free at a park
- Set up neighborhood Wi-Fi at a park
- Get the neighborhood to donate old holiday lights for more lighting
- Have a community suggestion board available
- Integrate youth and families in the designing of parks and playgrounds



Source: [http://www.colleengnos.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/ColleenG-nos.Octo\\_utilitybox.rtside.jpg](http://www.colleengnos.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/ColleenG-nos.Octo_utilitybox.rtside.jpg)



Source: <https://bikeeastbay.org/sites/default/files/images/demo-example-pic.jpg>



Tour de lights event in Knoxville, Tennessee during the winter holidays. Source: <https://goo.gl/fS0Msv>

## Community, Art, & Gentrification

### Community and Art

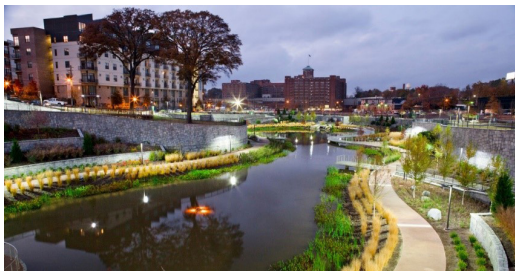
Arts and culture help define the regional identity of a place. Arts and culture development also supports economic revenue and helps communities understand and celebrate their past while looking forward into the future. Community Partnership for Arts and Culture (CPAC) was created as a non-profit that benefits the art and culture of Cleveland, OH, enhancing the town. Through art residencies, grants, and tuition reimbursements, CPAC works with artists to address art and cultural concerns in the area. According to CPAC, focusing on the art and culture of a town creates an “economic engine” that in turn creates jobs. “It



Source: <http://www.vancouversun.com/cms/binary/9785229>

can breathe new life into neighborhoods. It can generate business networks and bring in new businesses. It helps drive tourism. It provides students with creative expression, and gives them a new and more tangible understanding of math, science or history”. This is a major benefit for the community as people choose to relocate here and boost the city’s economy. Artists use arts and culture to animate downtowns and neighborhoods, stoking the creative industries, which in turn stabilize population and increase employment. (Nicodemus, 2012) Cities benefit monetarily from additional taxes and revenue generated by a larger population.

Economic stimulation is an unintended benefit riding on the coattails of social and cultural benefits. As people of a community converge for community involvement, their social identity becomes collective and shared. People converge to develop and alter structures and improve businesses (Markusen & Gadwa, 2010).



The Atlanta Beltline's Historic Fourth Ward Park.  
Source: <http://www.investatlanta.com>

### Art and Gentrification

One of the major issues that is often overlooked during the creative placemaking process is the potential negative effects of gentrification. The term gentrification was coined in 1964 by Ruth Glass as the process by which a working class urban population is displaced by the middle class in a particular area. Initial studies of gentrification indicated that middle class consumers that have distinct consumer

preferences are preferring to move to cities as opposed to living in neighborhoods further away from all the action. With the movement of wealthier people in a particular area, rent gaps become more dramatic as developers recognize the potential of selling living spaces for a higher value to meet the demand. As the population demographics shifts, the desired needs of the community changes which can impact the existing residents of a neighborhood.





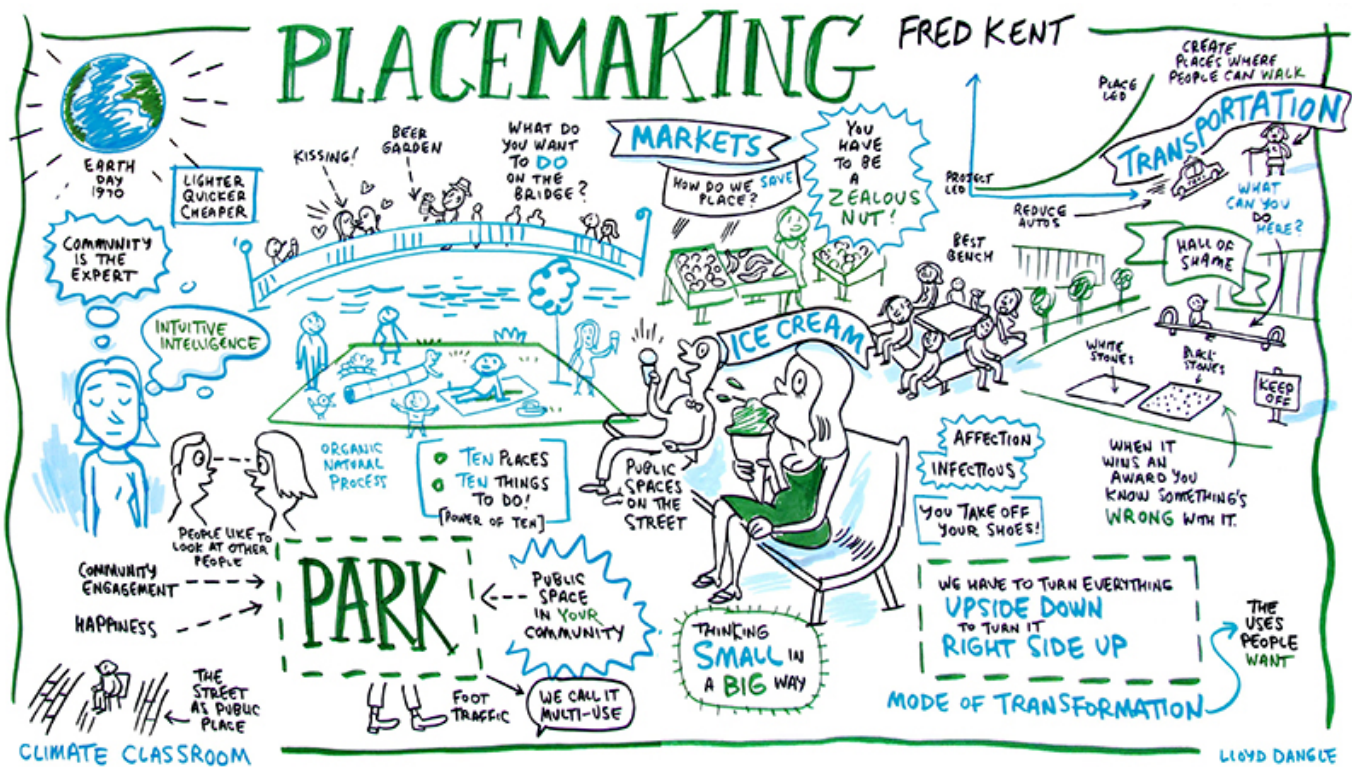
Proposed Beltline system. Source: <http://www.investatlanta.com/wp-content/uploads/Funding-Page-Sidebar-Map.jpg>

The Beltline project within Atlanta, Georgia is an ongoing redevelopment project slated to connect all parts of the inner Atlanta core by using old railway by converting them into a beltline trail system. As more people become drawn to living near the various amenities associated with the Beltline, it drives up the home prices, and prices out individuals that once could afford to live in the area.

To mitigate issues related to gentrification, developers, planners, and community organizers can be more aware of these problems as they relate to placemaking activities that require more capital improvement. Being inclusive in the creative placemaking process by drawing in current residents and the larger community will provide opportunity to hold space for such discussions.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, creative placemaking is a vital tool that can revitalize a community or neighborhood using diverse art to create a sense of community. Individual artists are able to create and maintain a name for themselves while simultaneously boosting the economy. There are many benefits to incorporating placemaking activities for economic development purposes in communities. However, practitioners must also be aware of issues unique to the place, and determine that the activities will be effective in an area with northern region climates. Although creative placemaking may be a long-term process, communities benefit greatly. Through collaboration and agreements, communities thrive. Artists are a great tool to revitalize or change a community with an abundant return investment. (Vazquex, 2012). By developing a unique program with adequate funding and continued communication with partners, creative placemaking is a successful way to enhance neighborhoods.



## Resources

Summary	Link
This study was developed by Harvard University in conjunction with NeighborWorks America to help identify different strategies for guiding the conversation surrounding community transitions.	<a href="http://www.jchs.harvard.edu/sites/jchs.harvard.edu/files/w14-12_brown.pdf">http://www.jchs.harvard.edu/sites/jchs.harvard.edu/files/w14-12_brown.pdf</a>
This is a commentary on art and its use in the gentrification of neighborhoods and places.	<a href="http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/aug/30/art-blame-gentrification-peckham">http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/aug/30/art-blame-gentrification-peckham</a>
Richard Florida – The Rise of the Creative Class: Why Cities Without Gay Guys and Rock Bands are Losing the Economic Development Race.	<a href="http://www.washingtonmonthly.com/features/2001/0205.florida.html">http://www.washingtonmonthly.com/features/2001/0205.florida.html</a>
This handbook is of housing strategies for making neighborhoods affordable, describing a wide range of strategies that local governments, developers, and nonprofit organizations can use to create and retain affordable housing in their communities.	<a href="http://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/50796/411295-Keeping-the-Neighborhood-Affordable.PDF">http://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/50796/411295-Keeping-the-Neighborhood-Affordable.PDF</a>
Three case studies are drawn from various Artspace projects which identify how the organization's work impacts various communities. The study looks at the best practices and what can be improved upon by the project in the future.	<a href="http://metrisarts.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/2-howartistspace-matters.pdf">http://metrisarts.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/2-howartistspace-matters.pdf</a>
This research paper goes in depth of utilizing arts and culture engines as an opportunity for create placemaking projects. The paper identifies the background of the creative economy and some of the challenges with implementing placemaking initiatives including regulatory requirements, countering community skepticism, and developing metrics after the project implementation process.	<a href="http://arts.gov/sites/default/files/CreativePlacemaking-Paper.pdf">http://arts.gov/sites/default/files/CreativePlacemaking-Paper.pdf</a>
The Milwaukee Method of creative placemaking identifies Milwaukee-specific creative placemaking methods as they determine initiatives and investments in the city that support it as place to live, learn, work, and play. Some strategies may apply to northern and cold-weather specific issues found in neighborhoods and communities around Alaska.	<a href="http://gmconline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/The-Milwaukee-Method-of-Creative-Placemaking.pdf">http://gmconline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/The-Milwaukee-Method-of-Creative-Placemaking.pdf</a>
Curbed identifies 101 ways small neighborhood projects can have a large impact. From developing summer gardens to reading libraries, the list identifies a number of example activities that can be used all year round.	<a href="http://www.curbed.com/2016/9/22/13019420/urban-design-community-building-placemaking">http://www.curbed.com/2016/9/22/13019420/urban-design-community-building-placemaking</a>
This study looks at artist centers in Minnesota and how service venues where artists can come together to show and share their work may be beneficiary for the community.	<a href="http://archive.hhh.umn.edu/centers/prie/pdf/artists_centers.pdf">http://archive.hhh.umn.edu/centers/prie/pdf/artists_centers.pdf</a>
The Edmonton Winter City Love report was developed to help identify strategies that help celebrate winter in the northern city. There are a number of different methods to support winter placemaking activities.	<a href="https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/documents/PDF/COE-WinterCity-Love-Winter-Summary-Report.pdf">https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/documents/PDF/COE-WinterCity-Love-Winter-Summary-Report.pdf</a>
The definition of Placemaking: Four Different Types looks at the different kinds of placemaking and what they mean for different people.	<a href="http://pznews.net/media/13f25a9fff4cf18ffff8419ffaf2815.pdf">http://pznews.net/media/13f25a9fff4cf18ffff8419ffaf2815.pdf</a>
The Project for Public Spaces (PPS) is the central hub of the global placemaking movement, which is connecting people to ideas, expertise, and partners who share a passion for vital spaces. PPS has a wealth of resources and external links to additional information related to placemaking.	<a href="https://www.pps.org/">https://www.pps.org/</a>
Cover images, left to right.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="http://thebelt.org/wp-content/uploads/belt-pose-1-1280x720.jpg">http://thebelt.org/wp-content/uploads/belt-pose-1-1280x720.jpg</a></li> <li><a href="https://www.summitexpress.com/denver-airport-shuttle/files/uploads/2013/12/image2.jpg">https://www.summitexpress.com/denver-airport-shuttle/files/uploads/2013/12/image2.jpg</a></li> <li><a href="http://www.halifax.ca/culture/CommunityArts/images/deacon-st-paint-red-for-web.jpg">http://www.halifax.ca/culture/CommunityArts/images/deacon-st-paint-red-for-web.jpg</a></li> <li><a href="https://a.travel-assets.com/findyours-php/viewfinder/images/res60/23000/23548-Discovery-Green.jpg">https://a.travel-assets.com/findyours-php/viewfinder/images/res60/23000/23548-Discovery-Green.jpg</a></li> </ol>