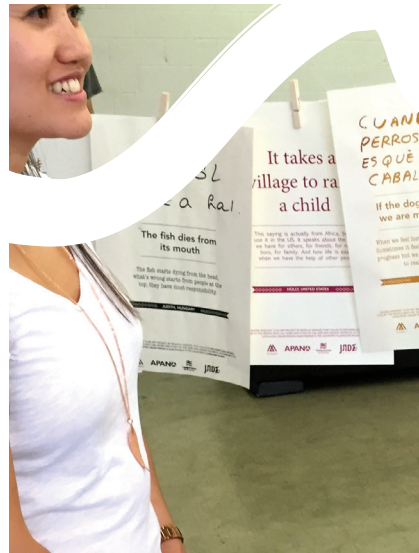


JADE—MIDWAY DISTRICTS ART PLAN



By Linda Wysong & Horatio Hung-Yan Law



Jade-Midway Districts Art Plan
June, 2016



Acknowledgments

Linda Wysong and Horatio Hung-Yan Law would like to thank Transportation For America (T4A), the Kresge Foundation and the following individuals for their time, expertise and insights to help develop the recommendations in this plan.

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“The Jade District and Division Midway are home to some of the most vibrant and diverse communities in Portland. They are anchored by local neighborhood businesses, amazing food, PCC’s Southeast Campus, and a strong sense of community.

The Jade District and Division Midway are not immune from Portland’s housing crisis. Skyrocketing rents, gentrification and displacement, and a shortage of affordable homes threaten these communities.

We must ensure that investments by the City, County, and other governmental partners are thoughtful, targeted, and strategic. We want to help alleviate the problem – not to exacerbate it. But there is only so much that the government can do to ensure that our plans are done correctly. This is why we need to hear directly from the communities we are seeking to serve.

For this reason, I am excited about the work that has gone into developing art plans for these two districts. Arts and culture are cornerstones of what makes Portland special. The small art projects and public engagement have activated the communities in ways that traditional outreach programs have not. These are welcome new voices in our public discourse.

As the Arts Commissioner for the City of Portland, I am proud to support these district art plans. They will help to showcase the district’s unique and diverse cultural fabric; serve the existing residents, business owners, and neighbors; and preserve the unique identity of the Jade District and of Division Midway.

Special thanks to the staff and volunteers who have worked on this effort. Your commitment will have a lasting, positive impact in our community.”



Nia Fin

Commissioner Nick Fish
Portland City Council



Contents



Vision, Principles & Values



Placemaking – Placekeeping



History - Building on the Past



SYMBIOSIS By Roya Amirsoleymani



Methodology



Strategies and Formats



Opportunities



Sites



Recommendations



Placemaking Projects



Lessons Learned



2015–2016 Placemaking Projects



VISION, PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

Diversity, Sustainability, Placemaking

Traditional urban renewal strategies rely mostly on market economy without considering the value of human capital or a diverse community. This perspective tends to favor the privileged, reinforce structural racism, and weaken the social fabric through division and fragmentation. Our core vision challenges this urban trend of gentrification, and advocates for the rejuvenation of public spaces for all income groups. This art plan proposes placemaking activities in the Jade and Midway Districts, to be focused on people, social relationships and sustainability.

Diversity

The Jade and Midway districts are vital, culturally diverse and dynamic neighborhoods located along SE 82nd Avenue and SE Division Street. Global immigration and local displacement have transformed these once agricultural suburbs. Now over 45 languages are spoken at the local grade school, and international restaurants and markets are plentiful. It is this social capital that gives the area its unique character and value. This

diversity rests on a delicate balance that can be easily upset and destroyed--rising rents and property values could rapidly shift this valuable asset.

Sustainability

A sustainable community must not only include environmental awareness, but also provide stability and affordability on the human level. The vision is for a future with walkable neighborhoods, good roads and sidewalks, gathering places and green spaces for all residents.

As a step toward that desired future, this art plan celebrates the richness of the diversity now in place. The arts can bring people together through creative placemaking that activates the whole community regardless of economic status. These art events create opportunities for participants to share experiences and discover common perspectives and values.

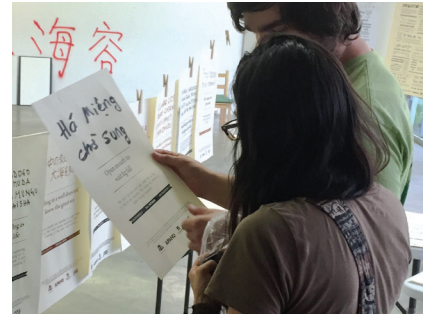


Placemaking – Placekeeping

Placemaking builds community power and capitalizes on local assets and participation to collectively work toward a healthy and sustainable community. When placemaking is practiced as a form of neighborhood-centered urban design, it encourages creative patterns of use and pays attention to the physical, cultural, and social identities that define a place and support its ongoing evolution. Our process is guided by local community input, taking time to listen to, learn from and empower diverse voices for a vision of dynamic and inclusive civic space.

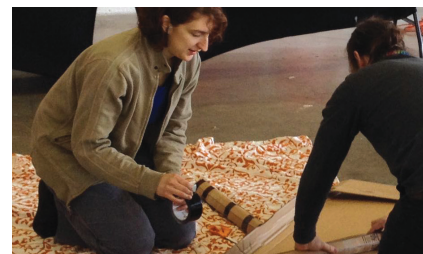
Placekeeping pushes back against the adverse results of urban gentrification: real estate speculation and rent hikes that lead to displacement of low-income communities to the outer fringes of the city, replacing the vitality of the original communities with a monoculture. Placemaking and Placekeeping work in concert to counter these adverse effects of market-based development by emphasizing the importance of maintaining cultural memories, advocating for affordable housing, and strengthening social connections already in place.

Placemaking Projects 2015



Top left clockwise: Conant & Frandina, *Place/Displace*; Alain Bally, *House of Bees*; Patricia Vazquez, *Shared Wisdom*. Workshop 2015: Opposite: Sandy Sampson, *Mixing Together*

Placemaking Projects 2016



Top left clockwise: Unit Souzou, *See Me, Hear Me*; Tamara Lynne, *Transit Inspired performances*; Solomon Starr, *Division Street Stories*



History – Building on the Past

The Jade and Division Midway Districts are home to many immigrant and dislocated families that give the area a rich ethnic and cultural diversity unique in Portland. In the local grade school, over 45 languages are spoken; markets and restaurants feature cuisines from China, Vietnam, India, Korea, Somalia, Iraq, Russia, Mexico and more.

Located in the center of East Portland along SE Division Street between 82nd and 148th Avenues, the area was originally on the edge of the city and was primarily agricultural with berries, orchards and dairy farms. Southeast 82nd Avenue, still a state highway, served as a north-south route to Oregon City and other points south; and SE Division (Section Line) was a key east-west street for delivering produce to the markets. After the turn of the century, residential developments began to slowly supplant agriculture.

The post WW II boom saw suburban development with modest kit homes, car lots and trailer parks. Already auto-centric neighborhoods were further separated by the construction of Interstate Highway 205. These suburban neighborhoods became urbanized in the 1980's without the typical municipal infrastructure. Standard improvements such as sidewalks and upgraded drainage systems were not made. The auto-centric suburban design continues to impact the Districts. TriMet's plan for the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and other improvements looks toward street safety and less reliance on the automobile.

With urban displacement due to steep rent increases becoming more common in Portland, minority communities began to move out of the inner-city core to more plentiful and affordable housing in “the numbers.” The Chinese community that was once centered in the Chinatown Old Town district began to move to the Jade District in the 1990's. This urban displacement coincided with international migration to the Portland area, giving the larger region a rich cultural diversity. The Jade District also includes Chinese, Vietnamese, Melanesian, Korean, Filipino and Thai communities, while Midway has a strong Russian, Ukrainian, Hispanic, Malaysian, Somali and Pakistani presence.

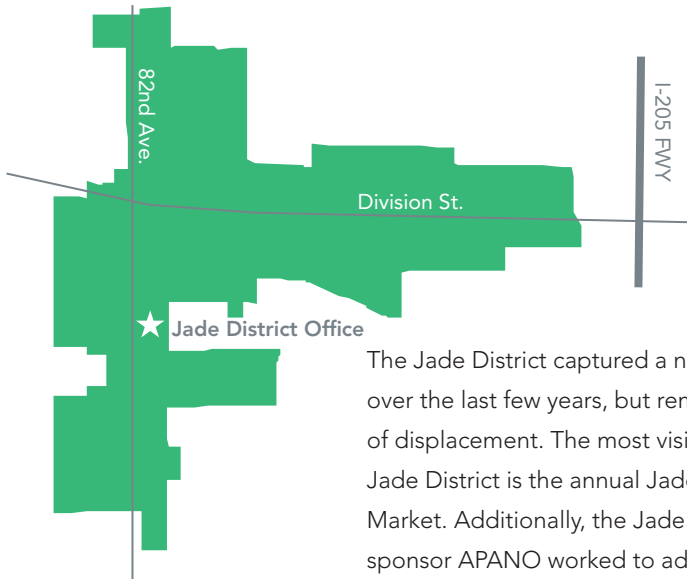
The Jade and Midway Districts were founded as part of 6 Neighborhood Prosperity Initiatives (NPI) formed by the Portland Development Commission in 2011. They are commercial urban renewal districts established to assist local small businesses and the residents who live, work and shop in the area. Their unusual shapes do not reflect established neighborhood association boundaries or educational districts but key commercial and tax zones.

The continuing challenge is to maintain the rich diversity and distinct identity of the districts and to create a neighborhood with a more walkable and sustainable infrastructure without displacing the local businesses and residents. How do we balance development and livability of a place? How do we support new economic and community development, without displacing local businesses and local residents?

Art and culture are essential elements that sustain the livability of a community and maintain the fabric of place. Besides building connection and affirming cultural identity, they also question, provoke and intervene in politics, public perception and social identity. They have much to contribute and must be part of the a larger collaborative solution.

Jade District

Todd Struble, Jade District Manager



The Jade District captured a number of successes over the last few years, but remains under threat of displacement. The most visible project of the Jade District is the annual Jade International Night Market. Additionally, the Jade District and its fiscal sponsor APANO worked to advocate for a prominent site in the Jade District for a future Transit-Oriented-Development project.

This development will include affordable housing for at-risk residents in the neighborhood. Despite this, threats of displacement remain. The BRT project will impact local businesses, and a city-wide housing emergency is driving housing costs up. Housing complexes in the district have changed private owners and renters experienced rent increases. Our work remains to address these challenges to continue to root the community in place.

Midway District

Lori Boisen, Midway District Manager



Division Midway's district has experienced many successes since 2011; however, prosperity comes with a price. While business vacancy rates have been cut in half, in January 2016, one minority owned business closed its doors when the Tibetan community it served was displaced to Salem. This story highlights the importance of organizing and empowering the Division Midway's diverse community.

The most successful tool for engagement to date has been the Festival of Nations, the largest multicultural event East of I-205. Division Midway residents and businesses, as culturally represented from around the world, participate in the festival as planners, entertainers, vendors, urban farmers, taste tent providers and event goers.

These connections and successes have led to business expansions, business exploration and organizational building among specific cultures. Like the Jade District, Division Midway is committed to keeping community in place.





SYMBIOSIS

Roya Amirsoleymani

The Participant-Artist Relationship in Creative Placekeeping and Community-Based Art Practices

Art is inextricably woven into the cultural fabric of a place and its people and is vital to our sense and self-expression of history, heritage and identity. Access to artistic experiences and creative encounters can spark timely dialogue and conversation, add new dimensions to our thinking, cultivate cross-cultural connections, and enhance our overall quality of life. Beyond just beautification, art is an open invitation to collectively create, debate, envision, reflect and rejoice--the very functions of a healthy, robust community.

What does art do differently?

Art and activism have a close relationship, and universally, art has been and continues to be critical to effective political, social, and cultural coalition-building and movement-mobilizing. In some contexts--such as community organizing efforts, social justice movements, and advocacy and policy initiatives--we strive for clear objectives, firm resolutions, and a unified vision. These things help us realize the greatest mutual benefit to our communities, despite our differences.

In contrast, art is a rare haven for infinite interpretations. An artistic exchange or experience can acknowledge, provoke, and even celebrate controversial issues, difference of opinion, difficult discussions, or a coexistence of multiple viewpoints. Art is one of few opportunities we have to revel in life's open-endedness, gray areas, unpredictability, and unanswered questions. Rather than deliver a clear statement or uniform message, community-based art can authentically tell our stories and prompt dialogue through words, images, sound, movement, and public

gatherings that reflect the breadth of our differences and viewpoints, while in the process, foster communal creative outlets and locating common ground.

If we let it, art doesn't just give; it also asks something of us. It asks us to notice, to momentarily look, listen, and perceive in new ways. It asks us to *think differently*--to pose and process big questions and ideas about our collective past, present, and future. It asks us to *relate*--to share unique moments and experiences with friends, family, and strangers. Art can take many forms, but at its best, art functions as an *intervention* into our everyday lives and landscapes, quietly shifting our attentions and routines, or actively disrupting our assumptions and relations.

Why artists?

The power of art does not lie with an individual artist or their intentions alone. The audience or public who encounters and engages with the art is essential, and each of us is entitled to our own interpretation of an artwork. In turn, we all have the capacity to contribute creatively to our communities, and likely, we already do. Art is an indelible part of our cultural traditions and customs. Even without formal training, we all possess artistic abilities, ideas, and inclinations.

That said, professional artists with backgrounds in community-based practice have something valuable to offer participants--the *facilitation* of a dynamic and fulfilling creative process and project that enables new ways of thinking, making, and doing, which are crucial elements for a dynamic creative placemaking initiative.



The Jade Midway District's creative placekeeping efforts are a timely response to economic and cultural opportunities and challenges for our highly diverse population. We are fortunate for the chance to support artists in our neighborhoods to do what they do best--*vision, innovate, and create*. Community-based or socially engaged artists are a unique breed--they are skilled collaborators, effective at bringing people together--to imagine and generate new possibilities for their shared environment. In other words, the artist's conceptual and aesthetic skill can contribute to the shape of both the process and product, but the community is crucial to generating *content* as well as contributing their own knowledge, skill, and experience. Unlike an architect, designer, or planner, an artist is not primarily solution-oriented or exclusively focused on practicalities. Rather, they help open up space for more possibilities (or even *impossibilities!*) and experiment with ideas that might even fail. An engaging, rewarding, and transformational process often supersedes the end result.

Community-based artists consider themselves *co-authors* with the community of an artistic or creative project, operating with the understanding that the community can benefit from the unique experience, direction, and vision an artist (whether an insider or outsider) can help to elicit or provide. Community members will harness their own, existing imaginative and creative capacities, talents and skills, but the assumption is that a professional, trained, or otherwise highly experienced community-based or public artist has a valuable process to teach and share. In the end, the most successful projects are those that elicit reciprocal exchange--the artist(s) and participants involved *all* teach, learn, and benefit.

Roya Amirsoleymani is the Community Engagement Manager of the Portland Institute for Contemporary Art and on faculty in the Art & Social Practice Program at Portland State University in Portland, Oregon.

Methodology

Art Plans are an aspirational vision mixed with a realistic sense of the possible. They are not urban planning documents or an artistic manifesto, but a hybrid that is founded in place and community. They are developed through research, urban planning, artistic intuition and an understanding of space and movement. Horatio Hung-Yan Law and Linda Wysong are active multi-disciplinary artists and long time Portland residents who have a history of collaborating with the Jade and Midway Districts, serving as curators and outreach coordinators during the first cycle of Artist Projects and mini-grants. They bring these experiences to the Jade Midway Art Plan.

Placemaking is often framed within the generic vocabulary of a *Tool Kit*. The Jade Midway Art Plan does not advocate for such a universal template but asserts that each site is unique. To keep a place, the art must evolve from that place. The first phase begins with the gathering of local and regional precedents, conversations with the Districts and the investigation of local history. The Steering Committee contributed a mix of local voices and government agencies with expertise in art, planning and transportation agencies. Our process involves meeting with agency representatives, neighborhood walks, open houses and individual interviews with area residents, artists, business owners and organizations. These conversations centered around: potential art venues, community and public space, hidden treasures, food, ugly spots and green space opportunities. All contribute to an understanding of the Districts.

This information is compiled and connected to the vocabulary of socially engaged art and public art, both locally and nationally, as well as an understanding of local resources, needs and talents of the Jade and Midway Districts. This vision for the integration of art, culture and community is not limited by budget or the current infrastructure challenges but specific recommendations do reflect these realities.



Strategies and Formats

Art comes in many forms. In the public realm, temporary projects often allow for greater experimentation, collaboration and community participation, without getting too bogged down in complex fabrication processes and durability issues. They utilize resources wisely and embody the spirit of shared investigation; the focus of these projects can be kept current and relevant for communities caught in the winds of change. The following creative strategies and formats offered here are meant to provoke and inspire dialogue, mixing, matching, and creativity.



Tango in Plaza



Chinese Lantern Festival

Festivals

The Districts have two established and successful late summer festivals: the Jade District International Night Market and Midway's Festival of Nations. They bring people together and are excellent venues for art, craft, performance and cultural projects. The possibility of enhancing these existing events or adding a new co-produced festival should be considered during the winter or spring. The focus could be theater, music, dance or light. Other examples of community-based celebrations that already exist locally are the Portland Winter Light Festival, Take Back the Night Movement, and PARK(ing) Day.



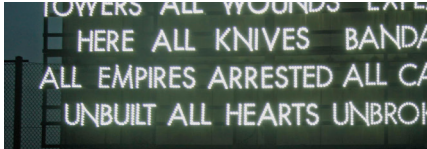
Mierle Ukeles, *Touch Sanitation*



Linda Wysong, *Backyard Conversations*

Conversations

Conversation is a time-honored activity that is particularly valuable in our era of digital communication and is used by community-based artists as a means of engagement. Temporary projects that facilitate situations for audiences to sit down and talk in a small group offer intimacy and insight. Some projects provide impromptu meetings at bus shelters, parks and sidewalks and bring spontaneity and unexpected collaborations. Intentional conversations that are arranged around an event or topic can cultivate the seeds of dialogue and shared understanding. Socially engaged art includes individual encounters, small group interactions and large events that verge on spectacles. Each serves a different audience and yields its own dialogue. All are encouraged. *Mixing Together* by Sandy Sampson and Jason Zimmerman successfully used food as a vehicle for conversation and exchange. (For more information see page 31.)



Robert Montgomery, *Echoes of Voices*



Patricia Vazquez, *Shared Wisdom*

Posters, Poetry & Words

One well-placed word can shift a person's perspective. Coming across a few lines of poetry on the bus, a poster, or a reader board can transform the experience of an everyday trip from routine to memorable. The spoken word can be performed on the street corner or a bus stop and includes genres such as poetry reading, hip hop, storytelling and chants. Sound, music and performance can connect with diverse audiences, while publications establish a permanent record and can reach beyond local boundaries. In a multilingual community, there are unique challenges and opportunities associated with language and text. A wonderful example of using the written word to bridge barriers and share language is *Shared Wisdom* by Patricia Vazquez. Another example is *Faces and Places* by Rachel Siegel & Paul Montone. It required collaboration between the students to photograph and highlight key women in the community. (For more information see page 31.) Both projects used text in creative and interesting ways. All of these options should be explored.



Patrick Blanc, *Vertical Garden*



Park(ing) Day

Green & Sustainability

The cacophony of the streets and the acres of asphalt have left both pedestrian and business calling for green, green and more green. Temporary projects can have a strong and timely impact. The House of Bees by Alain Bally adds beauty and pollinators to the Harrison Community Garden. The repurposing of unused land as seen in Linda K Johnson's public piece entitled *Lot # ISIE 40DD*, that turned a traffic triangle into a vegetable garden for one year, sparked the community's imagination by making the impossible happen. Depaving, green walls, parklets and the creative use of unrecognized spaces are all affordable and workable possibilities.



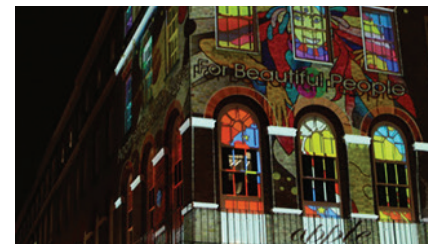
Horatio Hung-Yan Law, *McCoy Park*



Yarrington & Inoue, *Mural – Fontana*

Sidewalks, Walls and Structures

Art is often the best way to transform a potential liability into an asset. The integration of art into the everyday can happen with paint and some imagination. The traditional mural has its place, but a more vibrant mix of design and contemporary culture speaks to our global world. In the Jade and Midway Districts the numerous blank walls, billboards and the pedestrian bridges offer opportunities. When these interventions are rotating, performative and temporary, they become exciting elements of a dynamic cityscape.



Light Projection 94 Baker Street



Dread Scott, *Street Performance*

Street Actions, Projections and Performance

To reclaim public space is to shift the focus from the automobile to the people who live and work in the community. One way to build civic connection is through the shared experiences of street performance, theater and light projections. There is a rich history and tradition of street theatre, art in public places and other interventions of this sort around the world, both formal and informal. Some examples are Solomon Starr's *Division Street Stories* and Tamara Lynne's *Transit-inspired Street Theater*. (For more information see page 32.) Others include dance on urban rooftops, processions, tours and bus shelter installations. The work does not need to be message driven; its very existence crosses cultural and physical boundaries and helps establish connections.



Christine Hill, *Tourguide NYC*



Rick Lowe, *Project Row Houses*

Artist Residencies

An artist residency in the community allows time for deeper engagement, research and understanding. Artists who live and work within the districts and those who live in other neighborhoods bring unique and valuable perspectives. In order to promote a wide-ranging dialogue, both are encouraged. The time, space and funding encourages higher quality projects with greater community impact. A residency does not always require a space but this physical grounding is helpful. In Portland, there are a number of successful residency programs, with Multnomah County (Intersections), Public Spaces (InSitu), the Portland City Archives, Metro and Recology (GLEANings) and Neighborhood Associations (Resident Residency). Each residency is crafted differently and results in a variety of programs, publications, tours, visual art and performances that enrich the host community.



Valerie Otani, *Expo Gates, MAX*



Horatio Hung-Yan Law, *Velosaurus*

Permanent Public Installations

Public transportation is an integral to the livability of any city. The Jade and Midway Districts are serviced by the regional TriMet bus system and the planning for a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is underway. This addition to the area transit service brings an opportunity for permanent art installation(s), probably along SE Division Street. The energetic experimental art projects that are the foundation of this Art Plan can become the guide and testing ground for interests, and sites of the area, there will be a stronger sense of how to develop permanent art installations that come out of and speak to these dynamic and changing districts.



Partnerships with business, neighborhood and cultural organizations Opportunities

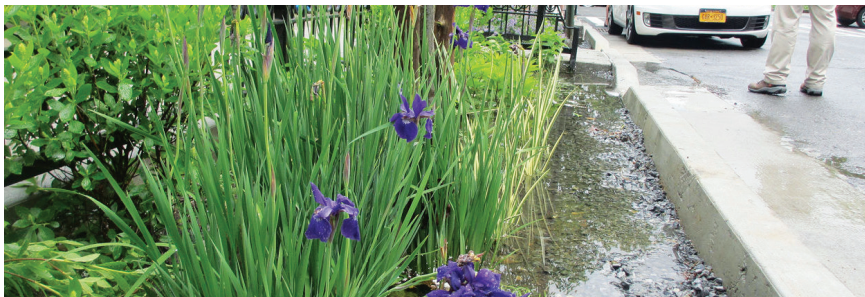
This art plan is focused on modestly scoped permanent and temporary art projects that also include creative placemaking projects, community residencies and arts festivals. With the postponement of the BRT project, the art plan is primarily exploring projects achievable within the budget of the next funding cycle from the Kresge Foundation through Transportation for America (T4A) while still acknowledging possible future opportunities.

Partnerships with businesses, schools, neighborhoods and cultural organizations are essential to community support and inclusivity. Art managers play a key role in connecting artists with public agencies such as TriMet, the Regional Arts and Culture Council (RACC), Portland Parks and Recreation, the Portland Development Commission (PDC), the Portland Bureau of Environmental Services (BES), and Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT). Some opportunities already in place are Storefront Improvement Grants, RACC's *Mural Art Program*, Portland Parks and Recreation's *Movies In The Park* and TriMet's bus shelters and windscreen design program.



Sites

The Jade and Midway Art Plan is primarily focused on performance and temporary work that instigates placekeeping conversations and community connections. This exciting work should not overshadow the long-term transportation goals and the fact that new infrastructure brings the possibility of permanent public art. Art that remains in one place can over time become a trusted part of the cityscape and a landmark. Space is a key challenge of a BRT line along SE Division. There are no platforms, park and rides or zones to integrate art into public space. Therefore this plan makes one specific suggestion and lists a number of key neighborhood locations that should be explored as the transportation planning moves forward. It also names green sites that are community assets and have the potential for future collaborative projects.



Bus Shelter Series

With the current land use, the existing bus stops offer a wonderful opportunity to commission a series of unique and individual bus shelters. Each shelter has the potential to be a different design, possibly reflecting the diverse cultures of the residents. There could be unique sculptural seating, a patio, trees, a trellis or garden, green roof as well as, metal work, mosaic or stone with community stories. Additionally the monitors or reader boards can have changing programs – video, spoken word and images.

The key intersections along SE Division are:

- SE 82nd Avenue: heart of the Jade District and location of the Portland Community College's SE Campus, Harrison School and Park.
- SE 122nd Avenue: commercial center of Midway District
- SE138th Avenue: connection to David Douglas High School and to Lincoln Park.
- SE 148th Avenue: terminus of the Midway District

Rain Gardens

At every public forum or small meeting, the most frequent request was the need for greenery to enhance the atmosphere, calm the noise, improve the air and just create a more pleasant place. A direct and effective method of both introducing more green and addressing water quality is to work with the city to develop a series of artist designed rain gardens along SE Division. This would create a green border and also allow for seating, art and more visible crosswalks.

Other possible sites:

- Pedestrian Bridges over SE Division at 85th and 136th
- Parks – Harrison Park, Lincoln Park and Mill City Park
- Undeveloped BES site on 89th and SE Brooklyn
- Public/Private Partnerships



RECOMMENDATIONS

The arts have a role in bringing the community together through shared experience, discovery, communication, and activation. These recommendations function as a placekeeping playbook that is adaptable to the changing city and shifting budgets. The Jade Midway Art Plan also recognizes specific and targeted challenges of each district, as well as their need to be able to take advantage of opportunities as they arise.

We recommend:

- Building local capacity by engaging community-based artists – preferably former grantees or artists-in-residence – to act as mentors for the next cycle of creative placemaking grants. This practice supports the accumulation of knowledge and experience by nurturing the next generation of artists and community collaborators.
- It is equally important to allocate adequate funding for project documentation and evaluation, not only for record and promotion, but to retain cultural memories and community connection.
- The full funding for administration and arts management is the third element of capacity building. An arts and culture manager provides valuable oversight, connections and consistency.

The Budget Priorities Include:

- 1. Residencies:** An artist residency provides the time to learn, share and develop relationships and generates thoughtful work. We recommend a full year for each residency. Active support from each of the districts is also essential for success.
- 2. Artist creative placemaking grants:** The pilot Creative Placemaking grants have been successful and should continue. Adding an integrated mentorship program would encourage the participation of emerging artists.
- 3. Festivals:** There is the potential to enhance the current Jade Night Market and the Midway Festival of Nations. It is also recommended that a joint District Festival along Division Street be explored to bring the Districts together and raise awareness of their common goals. A mid-winter light Festival has been suggested.
- 4. Districts' Choice:** This gives each District the ability to respond to specific community feedback and the freedom to try out innovative ideas.
- 5. Youth Centered Art Collaboration:** The young are the future and as they work out their place in the world, art can be a unique and wonderful part of that path. A youth program is vital to the communities.
- 6. Administration & Art Management:** Although administration is always included in any budget, it is particularly important to have a dedicated project manager who understands the art process and the community, and also provides consistency and continuity.





Sample Budgets

These budgets are based on funding ranging from \$125,000 to \$250,000 per year. They are intended to elicit conversation and assist in setting priorities. All projects are temporary with broad impacts.

For a \$250,000 Budget:

Festivals	45,000
Artist Residencies - 4 x 10,000	40,000
Placemaking grants - 10 x 5,000	50,000
Mentorship positions - 2 x 5,000	10,000
Districts' Choice - 2 x 20,000	40,000
Youth Centered Art Collaboration - 2 x 10,000	20,000
Administration & Art Management (20,000 per district)	40,000
Documentation	5,000
Total	250,000

For a \$150,000 Budget:

Festivals	20,000
Artist Residencies - 2 x 10,000	20,000
Placemaking grants - 6 x 5,000	30,000
Mentorship position	5,000
Districts' Choice - 2 x 10,000	20,000
Youth Centered Art Collaboration - 2 x 10,000	20,000
Administration & Art Management (15,000 per district)	30,000
Documentation	5,000
Total	150,000

For a \$125,000 Budget:

Festivals	10,000
Artist Residencies - 2 x 7,500	15,000
Placemaking grants - 6 x 5,000	30,000
Mentorship position	5,000
Districts' Choice - 2 x 7,500	15,000
Youth Centered Art Collaboration - 2 x 7,500	15,000
Administration & Art Management (15,000 per district)	30,000
Documentation	5,000
Total	125,000



The Jade-Midway

PLACEMAKING PROJECTS

Background

The Jade and Midway Neighborhood Prosperity Initiative Districts received a grant as a part of the planning for a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line from Gresham to downtown Portland. The artist activist team of Horatio Hung-Yan Law and Linda Wysong were engaged to develop a Placemaking program of mini-grants to fund opportunities for community makers and performers. The primary goal was to open civic discussions, form cross-cultural bonds and engage people to envision responsible transit development.

Pilot Projects 2015

Wysong and Law developed a call that encouraged visual artists, performers, DIY entrepreneurs, storytellers, practitioners of folk art, outsider art, healing arts, culinary arts, martial art and gardening arts to apply. We invited potential applicants to a full day workshop that provided an introduction to the neighborhoods, time to meet and connect, great local food, and a tour of the Jade District and the future Community Center. We received a total of 22 applications, and ultimately 7 artists and artist-teams were selected.

These projects directly engaged 430 participants, included 26 languages, collaborated with 31 local partners and were presented in 8 community venues. One project, Shared Wisdom by Patricia Vazquez distributed over 400 hand-screened posters. The individual events had audiences that ranged between 10 and 100. Four artists also participated in either

the Jade Night Market (4,000 – 6,000) or the Midway Festival of Nations (5,000).

The Creative Placemaking projects were largely successful and represented diverse media and connected with a range of ethnic groups within the Districts. They focused on the people and creativity of those who live, work and care about the Jade Midway Districts and expanded the dialogue around development and community.

Placemaking Grant Call Process

1. The managers of the grant assemble a selection committee before every grant cycle. A selection committee is made up of representatives from both Jade and Midway districts, as well as local artists and community members. It is advisable to also include someone from outside of the districts to provide a sense of objectivity.
2. Before sending out the applications for each grant cycle, the selection committee is convened to determine a set of criteria for eligibility and focus of each cycle.
3. Based on recommendation from district managers, Steering Committee members and community art professionals, the managers will assemble a list of local artists, makers and community creatives, as well as potential community collaborators for these projects.
4. Besides publicizing the grant through the usual venues, managers should also extend personal invitations to local creatives and community collaborators to apply for the grant.
5. Craft a request for proposal (RFP) or request for qualification (RFQ) letter that is written in plain and inclusive language, and free of art jargons. Promote the widest view of what is considered as art, and encourage non-traditional view of art that include crafts, culinary art, folk art, storytelling, etc.



6. Create an application and proposal form that is simple and easy to fill out. Focus on helping the applicant to convey pertinent information relating to the grant proposal, using plain language, questions and prompts. Beside proposal and idea description, it should also emphasize the importance of community connection and collaboration, as well as the expected outcome and a realistic budget.

7. Applicants are encouraged to attend a grant workshop that introduces the applicants to the districts, the grant process and provides vital opportunity for individual applicants to connect with potential community collaborators.

8. Credentials: Professional artistic background can be substituted or combined with creative work and life experience.

9. Eligibility: For the first round of pilot-grant, the grant was open to all who have interest in the district. For the second round pilot-grant, the selection committee created a scoring system that gave preference to those who live or work in the district. Ultimately, Steering Committee and selection committee should determine criteria of eligibility and emphasis of each grant cycle.

Placemaking Projects: 2015 Artists Comments



"...The importance of allowing things to evolve organically, not forcing things. When I let go the answers I needed usually presented themselves."

Alain Bally
Casa de las Abejas House of Bees

"We learned that all the time we spent just walking around and spreading a wide net in terms of contact, talking to strangers, and just being in the neighborhood eventually enabled us to engage meaningfully. All our direct episode participants came to us from introductions. This further reinforces the idea that reciprocity between disparate organizations, programs and efforts is the ideal it was bittersweet how many offers of further introductions and participation we were getting near the end of our project when we were out of time."

Sandy Sampson and Jason Zimmerman
Mixing Together



"I would encourage a debrief meeting with current grantees to identify challenges and opportunities, as well as further relationship-building with small business owners, residents, schools and community based organizations to explore further collaborations. In my perception, the project had very little coverage outside local events and media, further efforts to make the projects known to the larger Portland community could be valuable."

Patricia Vázquez
Shared Wisdom



Lessons Learned

Engagement

Community work of any type, particularly creative collaborations is based on personal connections. The artists who were willing to take the time to develop trust and relationships were the most successful. Every personal contact is a pearl to be treasured. Artists who developed successful projects should be encouraged to continue by rewarding them with new grants in the next cycle.

The original time frame of 3 months is not enough time for strangers to develop a trusting relationship or achieve fruitful collaboration. A successful project can be developed in 6 months, but a year is optimal. It allows for introductions, trust building and careful listening prior to crafting the specific elements of the project. Ideally, a community group, business or individual would enter into the collaboration having already expressed interest in participation. Active outreach by districts, the committee or program manager would be helpful. The artists who developed successful projects should be tapped as mentors and advisors for the next round of artists.

Workshop

The workshop format that introduced the artists and community partners before the proposal and selection process was very successful. It should be kept. Either at the introductory Workshop or before the projects begin, there should be a brief cultural awareness training. This training should be conducted by an experienced trainer to insure quality and consistency.

Oversight

The projects and the participants need the time and space to grow and develop. The project should be overseen by an experienced social practice artist who can mentor the project artists. There should also be firm and clear timetable for checking in about the progress and direction of each project. In order for creativity to flourish there needs to be a delicate balance between freedom and oversight.

Getting the Word Out

Participation should not be assumed. Outreach is extremely important. There was a Facebook page and event notices were sent out by the Jade and Midway Districts. It would be better to have an independent project website with links to Jade and Midway websites. Then the individual projects can be followed, shared and enjoyed as they progressed, not only when they had a final event.



Jade-Midway Placemaking Projects

2015



Alain Bally, *Casa de las Abejas - House of Bees*

The five native pollinator habitats [Bee Hotels] were created for the Harrison Park Community Garden. They are beautifully crafted and include text in 5 languages and are a wonderful addition to Harrison Garden and food for the community



Pamela Chipman, *One Voice Many Languages*

This video of over 30 Jade/Midway community members speaking the same message, in 26 languages - "One Voice, Many Languages, A Proud Community" was shown at community events including National Night Out, the Jade Night Market and Midway's Festival of Nations.



Christina Conant & Danielle Frandina, *Tell It Slant_Place/Displace: A Jade-Midway Reading*

Tell It Slant collaborating with APANO Arts & Media Project presented an evening of reading and celebration of diversity to a packed house at the Jade and APANO Multicultural Space (JAMS) on June 25, 2015. The speakers included local poets Natasha Moni and Christopher Rose, musician Simon Tam and video & radio producer Dmae Roberts.



Danielle Ross & Rosana Ybarra, *Peoples Treasury*

Danielle Ross, movement artist and Rosana Ybarra, activist and visual artist combined forces to create an exhibition of community culture and history entitled *The Peoples Treasury* at the JAMS Cultural Space.



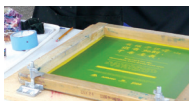
Sandy Sampson & Jason Zimmerman, *Mixing Together*

Mixing Together is a series of five short documentary videos on the international cuisine found in the Midway District. Each episode follows a family or individual of the neighborhood through the planning, shopping, preparation, and finally, the enjoyment of a meal. The cuisines from China, Burma, Nepal, Iraq and Somali are explored through home cooking.



Rachel Siegel & Paul Montone, *Faces and Places*

Rachel Siegel, a photography instructor and Paul Montone, an English teacher worked with Portland Community College students to celebrating the Women of the Community by developing a 48-page booklet and a video projection of the strong female figures that live or work in the Jade and Midway Districts. A reading and reception was held to celebrate the project.



Patricia Vazquez, *Shared Wisdom*

Artist Patricia Vázquez collected sayings by talking to people in stores, churches and English as a Second Language classes in the Jade and Midway Districts. People contributed a saying, written in the original language and an approximate translation. Each saying was turned into a free poster that was silk-screened by the artist and community members attending public printing sessions at the Jade Night Market and the Festival of Nations.

2016



Christine Toth, *Wish You Were Here*

Wish You Were Here was a series of postcards that highlight the diverse businesses along the transit corridor in the Midway District. Each participating business had a unique *Wish You Were Here* card that is a portrait of the business and information about their services and products. There was a map to encourage collecting the cards.



Christopher Rose, Writing group and spoken word/poetry

This project combined poetry, found language, and community narrative to create a series of poems and nonfiction pieces that explored the issues of movement and displacement. He also led a series of free creative writing workshops.



Joe Jiang, *Voices of the Jade District*

A video tour and travel documentary that examines the past, present and future of the Jade District through the words of the business owners and patrons. The video tour served both as an introduction and a guide to the neighborhood. Interviews touched on the topics of gentrification, displacement.



Joamette Gil, Cameron Whitten, *Oregon History Comic #11, Hung Far Low Restaurant*

Gil and Whitten worked the organization, Know Your City to produce a comic focused on Hung Far Low, *Oregon History Comic #11*, the oldest Chinese restaurant in Portland. The comic addresses the restaurant's opening, transition, and recent closure. It details how racism and displacement effects the Asian Pacific Islander communities living around 82nd avenue.



Committee for Human Rights in the Philippines, *Talk Story: Land Is Life*

This interactive workshop series consisted of 4 sessions that culminated in a cultural solidarity night featuring a documentary highlighting migrant stories and the organizing work being done to encourage rising up for self-determination and liberation in Portland and in the Philippines.



Solomon Starr, *Division Street Stories: Southeast Mixtape Volume 1*

A combination of urban music and community organizing, this project was designed to pair opportunity youth and high school students with Hip-Hop educators to document through film and audio, the real life experiences of southeast Portland community members taking mass transit.



Tamara Lynne, *Transit-inspired interactive performance*

In partnership with OPAL/Bus Riders Unite and Living Stages, Tamara engaged community members who live, work, and travel along the proposed high capacity-transit route in a dialogue about displacement, gentrification and transportation justice.



Toni Tabora-Roberts, *Unit Souza See Me, Hear Me*

The project consisted of multigenerational community workshops that used Taiko and theatre performance to examine the impact of the High Capacity Transit Project on the Jade District and explore issues of pedestrian and child safety, neighborhood character, gentrification and identity.



Bijan Sharifi

Developed a mural for the Jade-Midway Districts