ONE ALBUQUERQUE

cultural services
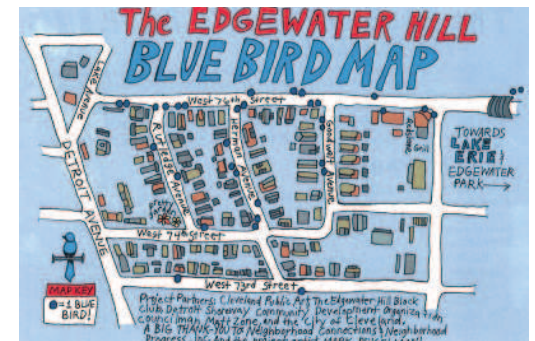
ABQ PUBLIC ART

@abqpublicart

#oneabq

How to Organize a
GRASSROOTS
Community-Organized Art Project

THE EDGEWATER HILL BLUE BIRD MAP

Presented by CABQ Public Art Urban Enhancement Division

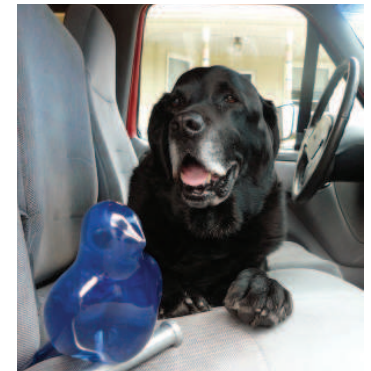ABQ PUBLIC ART

ONE ALBUQUERQUE
cultural services

FOLLOW US WE'RE SOCIAL
@abqpublicart
#oneabq

Why Art?

"Art is a powerful thing. It can be both an outlet for creativity and a vehicle for communication. Art can express ideas, tell stories, create identity, beautify spaces and much more. Another thing that art can do is bring people together. *YOU* can organize an art project that tells the world something about your community!"

Table of Contents

7. SUSTAIN
(MAINTAIN YOUR WORK)

Is your community art project a permanent work or something temporary? Does it need continued maintenance? Is it part of a recurring event? Maintain what you have created to keep it beautiful, engaging, and meaningful. Continue to document your project to keep records for posterity. Take pride in your accomplishments so that you and your community can continue to appreciate your efforts for years to come.

◊ **Permanent work.** If your artwork is meant to be permanent how will you maintain it, will you hire someone or have it adopted by your city to be maintained through city funds.

◊ **Temporary work.** Make sure to follow the project timeline and take down your temporay work when the time has come. Schedule accordingly so that deinstillation is done effeciently. Document your process for the history books.

◊ **Continue to document.** Throughout the life of your art project you should document through pictures and video. Take notes on how your project changes over time, this will help you create the perfect schedule for maintenance. Another great practice is to speak with a community member who lives closest to the public art. If it is vandalized let them know who to contact for quick clean up.

WHAT'S THE PURPOSE OF COMMUNITY-ORGANIZED ART?

There are many benefits to creating artistic interventions in your community. While the Albuquerque Public Art Program organizes and implements art projects all over the city (there are nearly 850 artworks in the collection!), initiating a grassroots project with the people in your neighborhood can have many benefits, such as:

◊ Identifying your community by expressing its values, hopes and dreams.

◊ Promoting good stewardship of the community by creating a sense of ownership, pride and investment.

◊ Getting to know your neighbors by building stronger friendships through working together.

◊ Harnessing the history, culture, and creative forces of your community.

◊ *Having fun!*

WHAT DOES COMMUNITY ORGANIZED ART LOOK LIKE?

That's up to you! A community-organized art project could be one thing like a mural, many things like colorful mailboxes, special events or something else entirely. It can be big or small, temporary or permanent. Work with others to identify what type of art would be meaningful and representative of your community. Take a look at some examples below.

◇ **Edgewater Hill Bluebirds** (Cleveland, OH)
   https://www.land-studio.org/projects/edgewater-hill-blue-birds

◇ **Before I Die** (Multiple Locations)
   https://beforeidieproject.com/

◇ **Really Big Table** (Minneapolis, MN)
   http://amandalovelee.com/Really-Big-Table

◇ **The Edible Hut** (Detroit, MI)
   http://www.ediblehutdetroit.com/

6. CELEBRATE
(YOU DID IT!)

You have a brand new piece of community-driven art. Enjoy and celebrate your accomplishments.

◇ **Have a party.** Your work is complete. Have a picnic, a block party, a dedication ceremony. Celebrate your community art project. You've earned it, and the celebration will let everyone bask in their achievements and appreciate what has been done. This is another great opportunity to get neighbors together and build community connections through art!

◇ **Alert the media.** Spread the word. Utilize social media channels. Contact media outlets. Send out a press release. Show the world what your community has accomplished together.

> **Free PR Toolkit by Hubspot**
> https://blog.hubspot.com/
> marketing/public-relations

HOW IS COMMUNITY—ORGANIZED ART CREATED?

This PDF gives you a basic outline for how to get started, but the short answer is **TEAMWORK**. Creating a diverse team of people in your community allows you to identify community values, build connections within your immediate community and beyond, promote your project, find funding, and bring your community-driven art project to fruition.

For more on how to work in community check out this amazing PDF guide by ArtPlace.

> http://www.artplaceamerica.org/
> view/pdf?f=/sites/default/files/
> public/pictures/creative_place-
> making_values_final_for_up-
> load_11_15_19.pdf

Creative Placemaking Values:

A Guide for Practitioners, Funders, and Evaluators
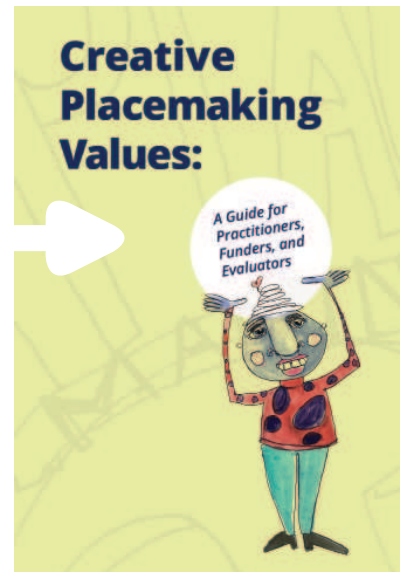
1. IT BEGINS WITH A SEED

All creative projects begin when someone has an idea. It is best to start with a general concept and work towards something specific over time.

◇ **Define your community.** Is it your street, your block, your neighborhood, or something else? Are you interested in representing a small group, or a large swath of the community?

◇ **Identify your own strengths and capacities.** What skills, tools, and connections do you have? What do you need help with? Do you want to be the leader of this project, or is there someone else who would be a better fit?

◇ **Establish your level of commitment.** How much time, money, and energy do you want to invest into this project?

◇ **Clarify project mission and goals.** What is the purpose of this project? What do you hope to accomplish? By what date, estimated timeline? Who is your audience? Who does the project benefit and how? What is the overall cost?

◇ **Write it all down.** Put together a text document answering the above questions. Then, use that information to find support within your community for your project idea.

5. GROW
(SEE YOUR PROJECT COME TO LIFE)

You have a plan, funding, materials, community support, artists, and a team to lead the way. You've got everything you need. It's time to make it happen!

◇ **Build your project.** This is a great opportunity to get the community involved in the hands-on aspect of making your project a reality. Can community members participate in building the project? Can you involve children, the elderly, and others? Organize workshops and art-making sessions if training is needed for your project. This is a great time to bring people together and collect testimonies. Always document the creative process, funders love to see the community at work.

◇ **Promote a sense of ownership.** This project belongs to your community. It was created by community members every step of the way, from forming ideas and funding the project to constructing the work itself. When people feel a sense of ownership, they take pride in the work, and will engage in good stewardship of what they created.

◇ **Look for other opportunities.** Does this project have growth potential? Could you see it expanding to a larger community? Could it become more sophisticated in time, or spur new ideas?

2. CULTIVATE
(LAY THE GROUNDWORK)

You have a general idea, and you're ready to develop it. Now it's time to take a deeper look at what you want to accomplish and how you want to make it happen.

◇ **Build a team.** Who are the people in your community that are proactive? Who are the creatives that can design and build the project? Who are the storytellers, the fundraisers, the communicators, the organized and detail oriented folks? Your team should be diverse, positive, able to cover all of the above roles, and willing to work together towards a common goal.

◇ **Identify and recruit effective partners.** Are there businesses, nonprofit organizations, or special groups that can help you to find space and funding, researching neighborhood resources, and promoting the project?

◇ **Look for opportunities.** Your plan will work best if it can be associated with other revitalization or development efforts. Is there new construction in your neighborhood? A push to bring in more business? A plan for beautification, crime mitigation, or another improvement project?

◇ **Research your community.** Meet with your team to organize a community asset mapping session and build your inventory. Identify potential project locations. What is your community known for? Think about its cultural history, the environment, industries and infrastructure, its reputation in the outside world, and what makes it unique. Where are some of the community's favorite spots? Where do people go to walk, jog, bike, or just hang out? What are some places that need improvement? Visit a library or historical society for more information, or seek out people who have lived in the community for a while and ask questions.

4. FERTILIZE
(GETTING WHAT YOU NEED TO MAKE THE PROJECT SPROUT)

Can your project be built with donated materials, or do you need to raise funds to buy things? This is how to get what you need to build the project. Dont forget to contact media during your fundraising stage they can help spread the word on your project needs.

◇ **Get permission.** Will your project be built in a city park, at a library, on a trail, in an arroyo, on the side of a building, or on private property? Make sure that you have all of the proper permits, as well as permission to use the selected space. Contact the appropriate City departments and property owners before you proceed. Take your finalized plan with you to show that you are organized, that you have a fully formed idea and community support, and that you are ready to move forward.

◇ **Fund your project.** It's likely that your project will require some funding. You established a budget when you defined your project, so where will the money come from? Some funding options to consider include: taking up a collection in the community; finding a sponsor (individual, business, or organization); writing a grant; asking your project partners; requesting in-kind donations of materials and labor; or launching an online crowd funding campaign with sites like Kickstarter or Indiegogo. Reach out to people who can help you find funds, such as your City Council, your State Representatives, experienced fundraisers, and other community leaders.

3. GERMINATE
(THE IDEA TAKES ROOT)

Now that you have a team and have done some research, it's time to finalize your project idea and develop an action plan.

◇ **Define and design your project.** Work with your team to develop a clear, concise plan. What does your project look like? Include a sketch or mock up. Where will it be located? Include a map. Who is going to build it? List their names and credentials. How much does it cost (time, materials, labor, marketing, permits, space rental, etc.)? Make a chart easy to read for possible donors. What is its goal? Is it temporary or permanent? If you haven't identified an artist yet, reach out to one who can help you design and build the project.

◇ **Evaluate feasibility.** Do you feel confident that this project is buildable, fundable, and will garner support? If so, then keep going! However, if you think it's not feasible, or you're just not sure, discuss revising your plan with your team. Consult with professionals and/or people who have completed similar projects. Give us a call!

◇ **Spread the word.** Answer the questions above and create a presentation, use visuals to garner support. Get feedback from other community members by attending a neighborhood association meeting to explain the project, going door to door, or holding a meeting at a library or community center. You may want to create a website or use social media channels to promote the project. Create visuals, such as posters and brochures that both explain the project and show what it will look like. Be ready to answer questions from community members, and be open to revisions if others express concerns or have suggestions.

◇ **Finalize your plan.** Now that you have spread the word, generated excitement, and have people in your community on board, it's time to finalize your plan. Incorporate feedback, address any lingering issues, and prepare a final action plan that can help you stay on track, or that you can reference when talking to potential funders. This should include timeline, budget, mission, concept art/mockup, small description of purpose, artist(s) involved etc.