

# LIVABLE CENTERS

## ELEMENTS OF PLACEMAKING



**Rik Adamski**  
**Short Term Actions, Long-Term Placemaking**

**August 20, 2021**

## About ASH+LIME

- An award-winning Dallas-based planning and consulting firm
- Focused on the *user experience* of every place
- We are focused on what you can do now - not only what may be possible in the future
- Over 50 projects in Texas, with a primary focus on downtowns and local businesses
- Neighborhood-scaled integration of planning, events, economics, and development



# Strong Towns Approach to Public Investment

1. Humbly observe where people in the community struggle
2. Ask the question: What is the next smallest thing we can do right now to address that struggle?
3. Do that thing. Do it right now
4. Repeat

The logo for Strong Towns, featuring the words "STRONG" and "TOWNS" in a bold, white, serif font, stacked vertically. The text is centered within a dark blue rectangular box. The box is framed by two horizontal white lines above and below the text.

**STRONG  
TOWNS**

# Principle:

## Do What You Can With The Resources You Have

### Liberty Station, Houston





# Principle: Cultivate Local Leadership

## Reimagine Fair Park, Dallas





# Principle: Fill in Key Gaps

## Rosa Parks Plaza, Dallas, TX



# Principle: Take a Low-risk, Low-cost Approach...

Hamilton, Ontario





## ...and Keep Going if it's Working

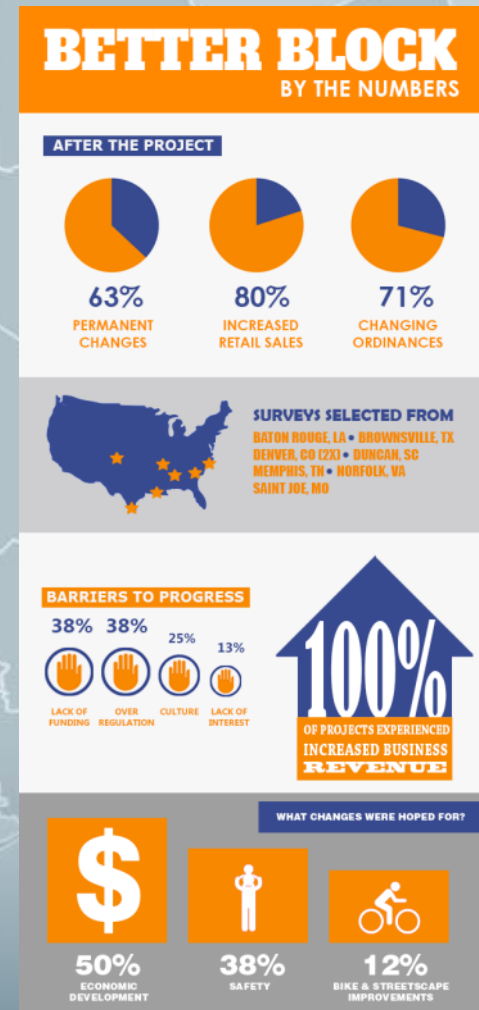
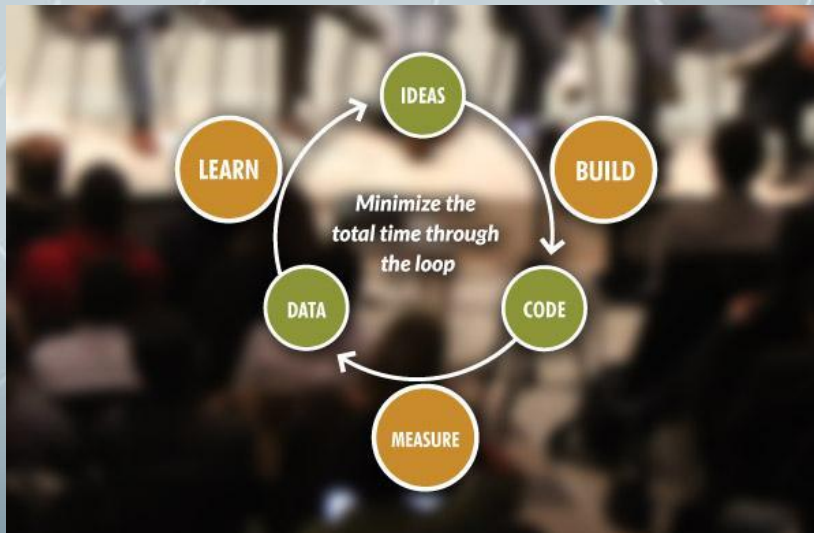






# Principle: Measure Results and Focus on Outcomes

- retail sales
- demographic studies
- user surveys
- vacancy rates
- price per square foot





# Sample Project (*before*):

## Grand Prairie, TX





# Sample Project (*before*):

## Grand Prairie, TX



# Sample Project (*before*):

## Grand Prairie, TX





# Sample Project (*after*):

## Grand Prairie, TX



# Sample Project (*after*):

## Grand Prairie, TX





# Sample Project (*before*): Downtown Action Plan and Activation (Garland, TX)

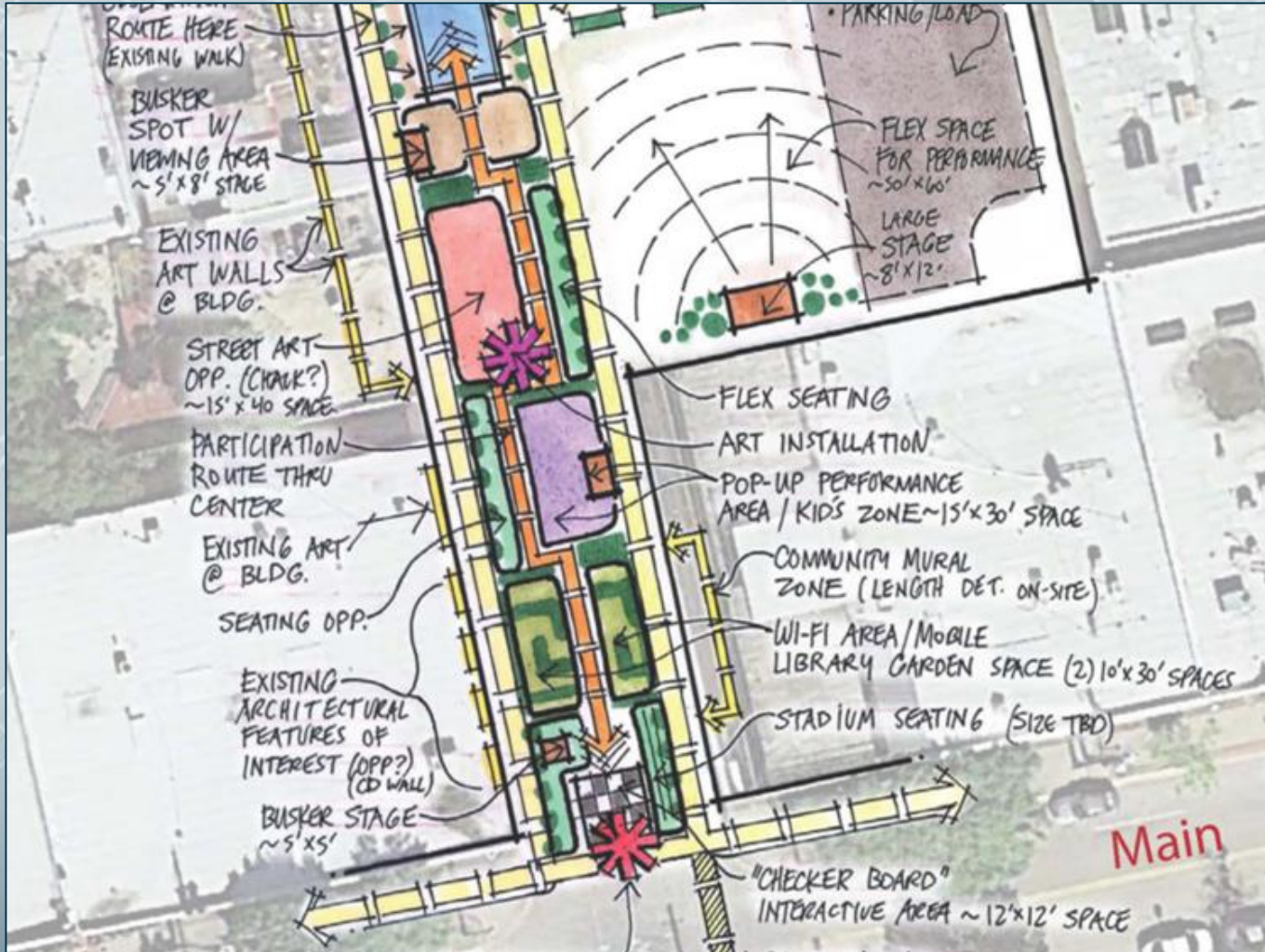




# Sample Project (after): Downtown Action Plan and Activation (Garland, TX)



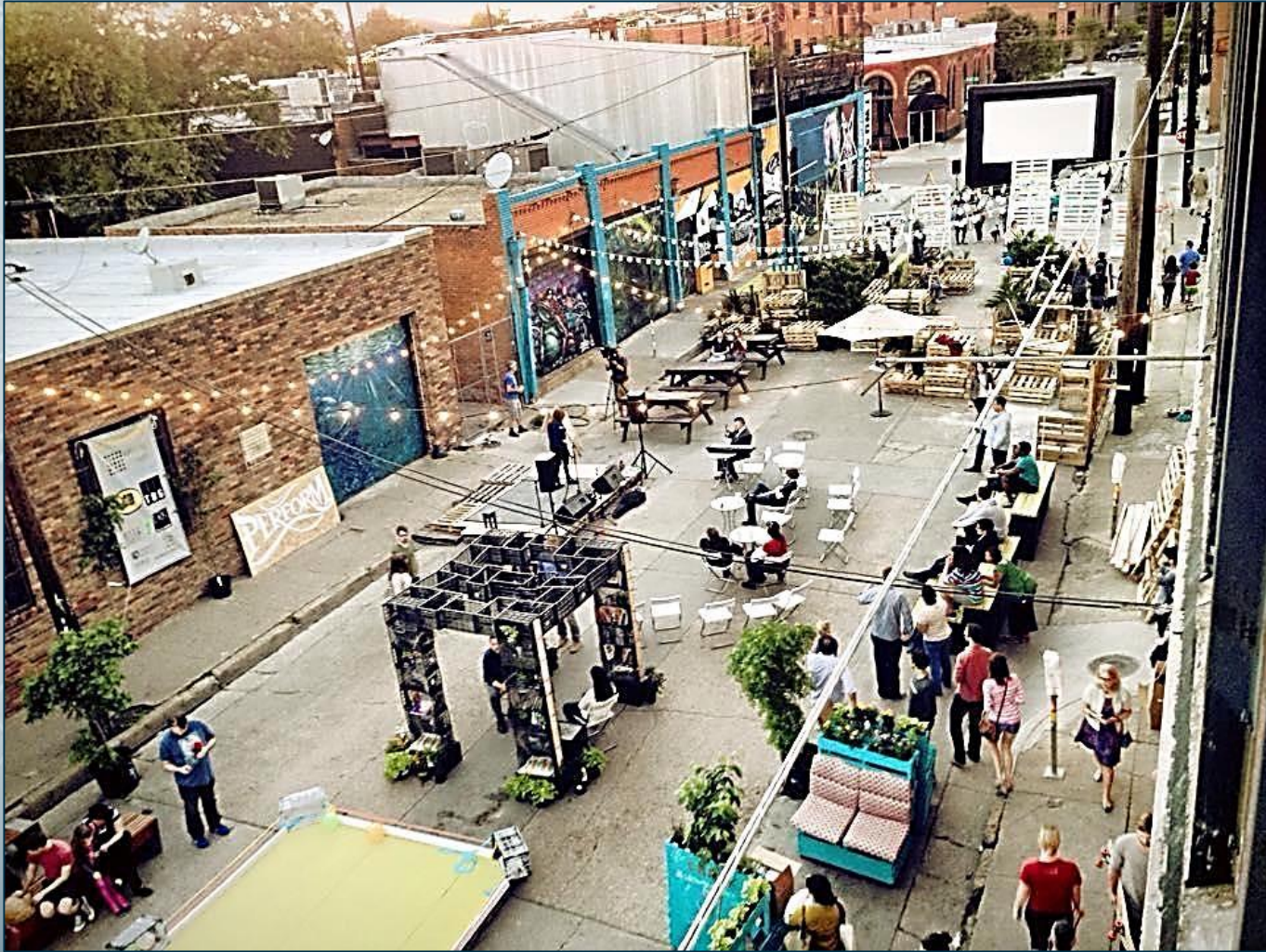
# Sample Project: Crowdus Plaza (Dallas, TX)





# Sample Project:

## Crowdus Plaza (Dallas, TX)



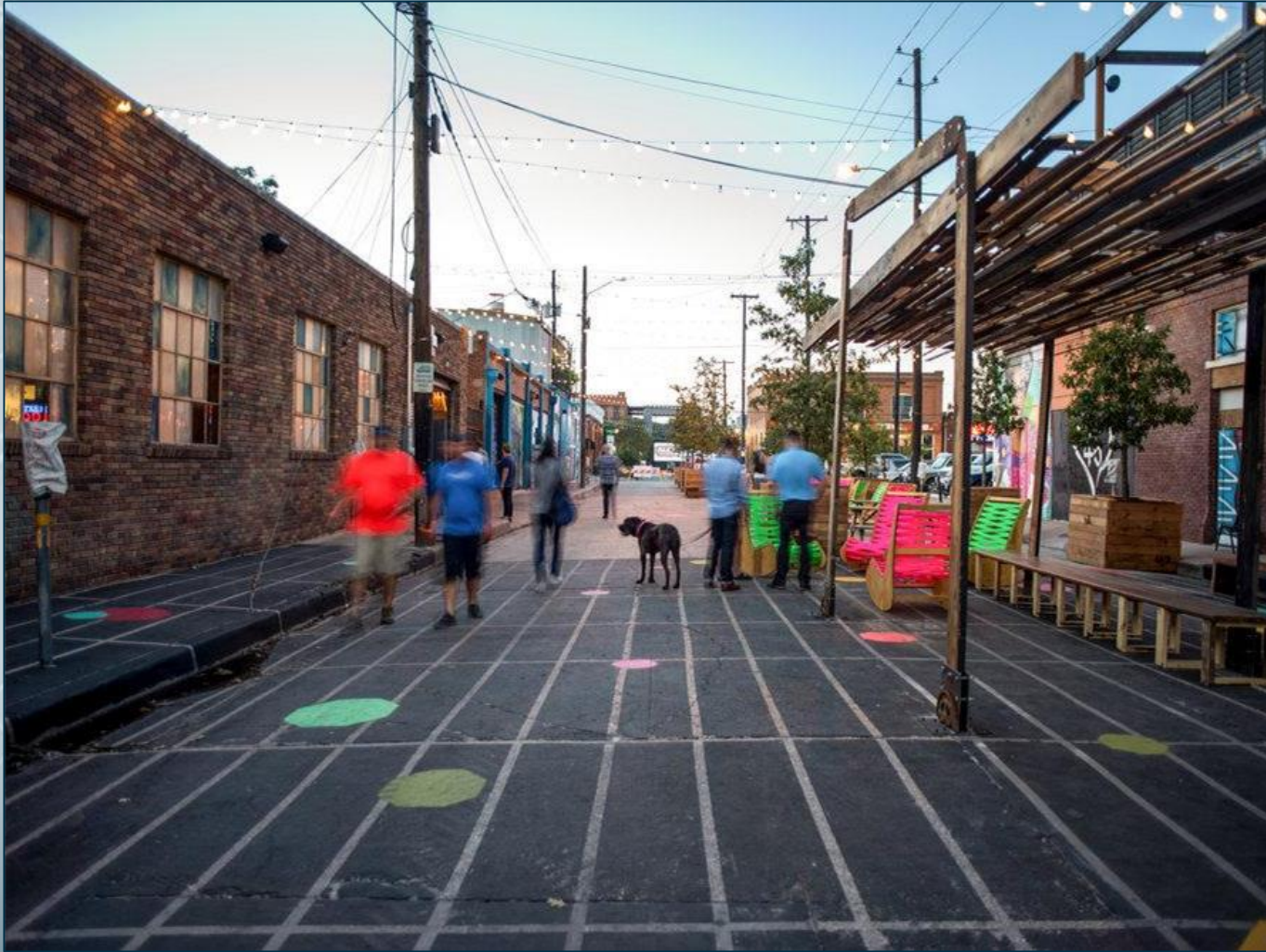


# Sample Project: Crowdus Plaza (Dallas, TX)



# Sample Project:

## Crowdus Plaza (Dallas, TX)





# Sample Project:

## Crowdus Park (Dallas, TX)



# Sample Project (*before*): Hurst, Texas



## AREA 7 - PHASE 1A

### SUMMARY

The first portion of phase 1 would be the creation of the pop-up plaza in the existing parking lot of Bellaire Center. This portion of phase 1 depicted would require the least amount of physical modifications. The concept is illustrative, in that, it shows how redevelopment could be integrated with existing development and amenities in the area. This development represents tactical urbanism that can be achieved through modest investment from property owners and/or the City.

### PLANNING AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES

- Encourage a mix of retail, arts, and community gatherings uses to create a vibrant center.
- Ensure that new development incorporates building design standards for long-term quality and maintenance.
- The focus should be less on the specific uses and more on creating a quality, urban gathering place for the community.

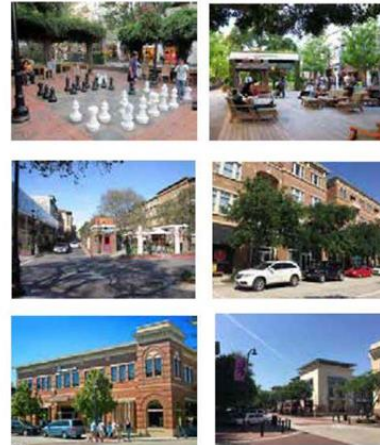


# Sample Project (*before*): Hurst, Texas



**Bellaire Center**  
**Interim Redevelopment Option**  
 Retail, Mixed Use and Civic/Open Space  
 DRAFT  
 March 7, 2017

Images to illustrate development character  
 (open space, streets, and buildings)



AREA 7 - PHASE 1B

SUMMARY

Bellaire Shopping Center: The redevelopment of the Bellaire Shopping Center was explored in two phases. This portion of the first phase could consider upgrading the existing big-box buildings with respect to building facades, signage, and interior upgrades. This will help with attracting better quality tenants and filling up some of the vacant and underutilized spaces. In addition, new buildings could be added to the Pipeline Road frontage with a linear plaza that can provide some much needed open space and new frontages for some modest new development. This phase would reorganize the shopping center into smaller "quasi" blocks with some of the internal driveways improved as new pedestrian-oriented streets with street trees, wider sidewalks, and buildings located at or close to the sidewalks.

# Sample Project: Hurst, Texas



The site plan shows a grid of streets with various development zones. Key features include:
 

- New Mixed Use Buildings:** Several blocks along the top and middle of the grid.
- New Urban Residential:** Blocks along the right side and bottom of the grid.
- Open Space:** Bellaro Park is centrally located, with other green spaces and trees scattered throughout.
- Existing Neighborhood:** A section on the left side of the plan.
- Small Lot SF:** Several blocks in the lower-left quadrant.

**Bellaire Center**  
**Build-out Redevelopment Option**  
 Retail, Mixed Use,  
 Urban Residential and Civic/Open Space  
 DRAFT  
 March 7, 2017

Images to illustrate development character  
 (open space, streets, and buildings)







## AREA 7 - PHASE 2

### SUMMARY

The second phase would be the redevelopment of the entire center and better transitions and connections to the multi-family development to the south. This phase depicts the scenario where all the existing development has been demolished and some of the older multifamily development to the south has also been demolished and redeveloped. The concept is illustrative, in that, it shows how redevelopment could be integrated with existing development and amenities in the area. Such a redevelopment concept could also be undertaken incrementally.

### PLANNING AND DESIGN

#### PRINCIPLES

- Encourage a mix of retail, office, and residential uses to create a vibrant center.
- Ensure that new development incorporates building design standards for long-term quality and maintenance
- Public or private "Streets" are to be improved with street trees, sidewalks, and other amenities for pedestrians.
- Maximize development frontage along Pipeline Road and along any open space amenities such as plazas and (existing) parks.



# Sample Project (*before*): Hurst, Texas





# Sample Project:

## Hurst, Texas





# Placemaking Toolbox: Pop Up Markets/Mobile Vendors/Food Trucks

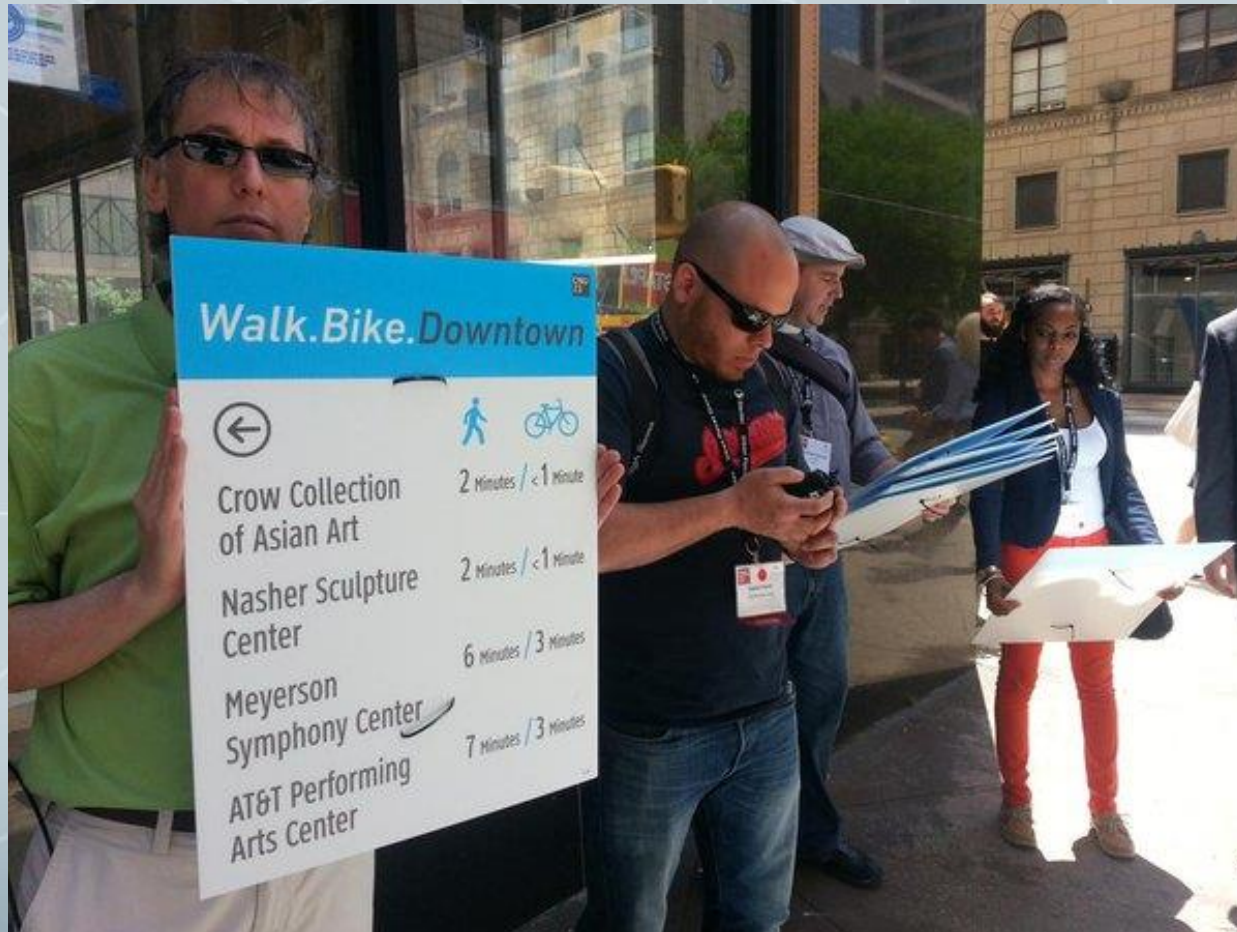
Austin; Chicago, Stillwater, MN; New Orleans



Sources: Select Austin, Fashion Mobile, afar.com

# Placemaking Toolbox: Wayfinding

Dallas, TX





# Placemaking Toolbox: Pop Up Retail

## Oklahoma City; Dallas; Pittsburgh; Oakland, CA



Sources: Down on the Range, DEOM, Operation Storefront, Popuphood



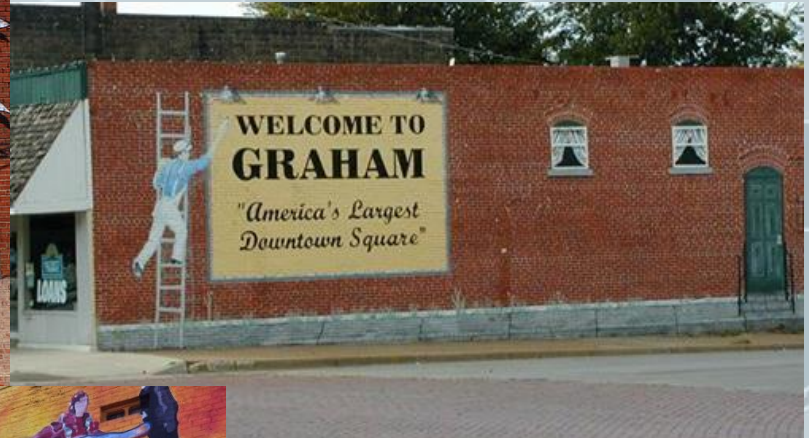
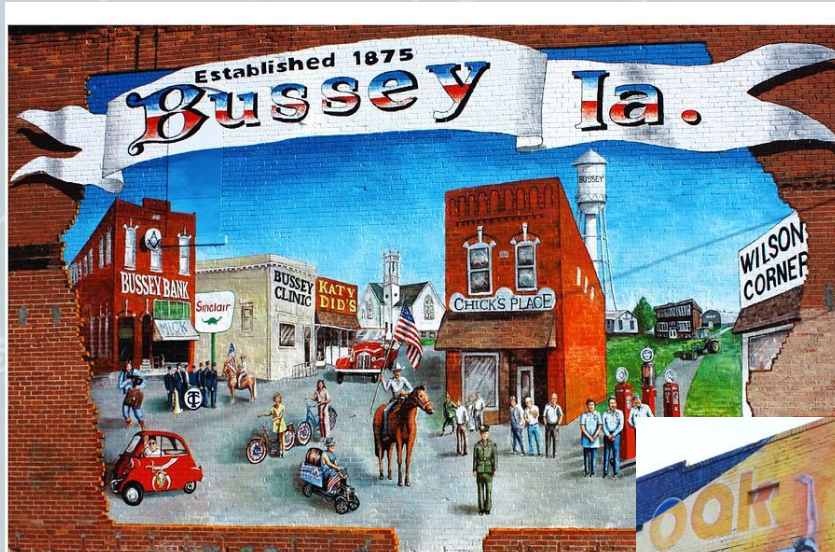
# Placemaking Toolbox: Little Free Libraries





# Placemaking Toolbox: Murals

St. Jo. TX; Bussey, IA; Graham, TX; Oak Cliff; Deep Ellum



Sources: Eat Play Love Iowa,  
St. Jo Chamber of Commerce, Texas Escapes



# Placemaking Toolbox: Storefront/District Spruce Up

Portland, OR; Port Clinton, OH; Huntsville, TX

PEARL DISTRICT NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION



**polish  
the Pearl**



**Saturday, April 20, 2013**  
**8:30–11:30 am** at Peet's, 1114 NW Couch St.

Join us Earth Day weekend for good clean fun. A little of your time goes a long way in making our neighborhood sparkle!

Register now at  
at **PearlCleanup.com**



Organized by the Pearl District Neighborhood Association Livability Committee.  
Made possible by our sponsors:



Sources: Pearl District Neighborhood Association, Lawrence Hartlaub, Sam Houston State University



# Placemaking Toolbox: Window Displays

## Minneapolis, MN



# Placemaking Toolbox: Business Incubation

DeSoto, TX





# How to Get Started

- **Step 1:** Assess community needs
  - Is there a lack of gathering places? Are there limited food and shopping options? Are children bored in the middle of summer?
- **Step 2:** Identify opportunities.
  - *Example:* Empty lots located in central areas provide a great opportunity for pop ups
  - *Example:* Busy intersections and streets can be closed off to create pedestrian friendly gathering areas
- **Step 3:** Take the next step
  - *Example:* Install amenities such as moveable furniture, live music, and games to activate the place

**Thank you!**

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