



## **FY 2016 Our Town – Knowledge Building Projects**

*This is the second year of funding projects led by field service and policy organizations to provide technical assistance to their members interested in creative placemaking.*

**Number of Grants: 8**

**Total Dollar Amount: \$525,000**

### **Art of the Rural**

\$50,000 Winona, MN

To support phase three of Next Generation: The Future of Arts & Culture Placemaking in Rural America. Art of the Rural, in partnership with the Rural Policy Research Institute (RUPRI) based at the University of Iowa, will continue to disseminate knowledge on creative placemaking as a strategy to improve rural communities. During the first and second phases of this work, Art of the Rural developed a digital learning commons and facilitated rural peer exchanges in Minnesota, Iowa, and Kentucky. The third phase will support the expansion of the digital learning commons, a fellowship program to build the capacity of rural communities to undertake creative placemaking work, and a national conference to unite a broad network of rural leaders working across the country. RUPRI will continue to share best practices on rural arts and cultural strategies to its diverse network that includes Delta Regional Authority, Rural Local Initiatives Support Corporation, U.S. Department of Agricultural Rural Development, state agricultural offices, and more.

### **buildingcommunityWORKSHOP**

\$75,000 Dallas, TX

To support the integration of creative placemaking and design strategies into the work of the Housing Assistance Council (HAC) and their community-based partner network. The buildingcommunityWORKSHOP will provide training to a core group of HAC regionally based housing specialists, develop a repository of best practices, facilitate a peer-exchange program, and publish articles that reach rural housing developers. Through training and demonstration projects, affordable housing developers and residents will be empowered to participate in the community design process and ultimately create more livable, vital places that celebrate the unique culture of the community. HAC reaches 6,500 rural practitioners and helps build the capacity of local organizations to develop affordable homes in rural America, and maintains a special focus on particular groups and regions such as Indian country, the Mississippi Delta, farmworkers, the Southwest border colonias (communities within the mainly rural US-Mexico border region with marginal conditions related to housing and infrastructure), and Appalachia.

### **Center for Land Reform, Inc. (aka Center for Community Progress)**

\$25,000 Flint, MI

To support A Bridge Between Policy and Design: Creative Placemaking on Vacant Properties. Center for Community Progress will partner with the J. Max Bond Center on Design for the Just City at City College of New York to equip local city leaders from across the country with knowledge, systems, and creative placemaking tools to transform vacant lots in ways that support equitable revitalization. Project activities include a learning exchange between local government, community development, and arts leaders; an assessment of policy barriers that impede the ability of local organizations to implement creative placemaking on vacant properties; and a transmission of lessons learned to Center for Community Progress' network. As a national leader on solutions for blight and vacancy, Center for Community Progress serves as the leading resource for local, state,

and federal policies and best practices that address the full cycle of property revitalization, from blight prevention through the acquisition and maintenance of problem properties, to their productive reuse.

**Chamber Music America**

\$100,000 New York, NY

To support the sharing and implementation of creative placemaking approaches within the chamber music field. Chamber Music America will facilitate a pilot artist residency program in Louisiana cultural districts to explore how ensembles and other performing artists can integrate their work into the civic fabric of neighborhoods more effectively. Louisiana Office of Cultural Development will identify cultural districts for the pilot program, with a focus on places ripe for experimentation with the performing arts. Following lessons learned through the pilot artist residency program, Chamber Music America, in partnership with Project for Public Spaces, will design interactive learning sessions, webinars, and best practice case studies that ultimately will inform a creative placemaking toolkit for ensemble musicians nationwide. Chamber Music America is the national service organization for ensemble music professionals, with thousands of members that include individual musicians, ensembles, presenters, artist managers, composers, educators, and others in the national chamber music community.

**FORECAST Public Artworks (aka Forecast Public Art)**

\$100,000 St Paul, MN

To support a partnership between Forecast Public Art and American Planning Association (APA) to translate knowledge of the public art field into learning tools for urban planners. This collaboration will result in creative placemaking curricula and continuing education units for urban planners to influence the livability of mid-size American cities. The resulting curricula for the pilot public art certificate program will focus on best practices in planning and designing healthy cities through the public art lens, including guidance on working with artists, tactical strategies for implementing public art projects, meaningful community engagement, and racial and economic equity. In year two, Forecast will facilitate an APA chapter and a team of regional artists in planning, designing and creating temporary demonstration projects to test the effectiveness of the training. APA is an independent, nonprofit educational organization with approximately 40,000 members and subscribers and provides leadership in the development of vital communities across the nation.

**Maryland Institute (aka Maryland Institute College of Art)**

\$75,000 Baltimore, MD

To support the North Avenue Knowledge Exchange (NAKE). This community-based education platform will provide free access to high quality classes for neighborhood stakeholders to learn from each other and engage in projects that improve the Station North community. In addition to those courses taught by local residents, partner institutions may offer arts-based instruction in design, drawing, video production, and literature, as well as classes on livability for residents on topics such as financial literacy. NAKE is a partnership between Maryland Institute College of Art, Station North Art & Entertainment District, Baltimore Office of Promotion and The Arts, Inc., and Red Emma, a local coffeehouse and bookstore that has pioneered this program through the Baltimore Free School. The project addresses Baltimore's endemic inequitable access to quality education and supports approximately 2,400 local residents, 70% of whom are African American and where 17% are households living in poverty.

**Opera America**

\$50,000 New York, NY

To support learning and capacity building for opera companies to become agents of community building in cities across the country. Drawing on the expertise of Tucson Pima Arts Council, Opera America will establish a

*Some details of the projects listed are subject to change, contingent upon prior Arts Endowment approval. For the most up to date project information, please use the NEA's online [grant search](#) system.*

creative placemaking community of practice by forming a cohort of field leaders and opera companies who will develop, implement, refine, and assess the impact of pilot projects. The project will result in the development of case studies and other best practice resources for the field of opera. A multimedia art form, opera possesses a unique capacity to enrich the lives of diverse audiences, support community building, and communicate universal human stories. Serving the entire opera field, Opera America, with a membership of more than 150 professional opera companies, supports the creation, presentation, and enjoyment of opera.

**Tucson-Pima Arts Council, Inc. (aka TPAC)**

\$75,000 Tucson, AZ

To support Cultural Belonging and Transformation: Placemaking from the Community Up. The project will focus on how arts and cultural practices can positively affect public health, participatory budgeting, criminal justice reform, land stewardship, and the Appalachian economic transition from coal. Tucson-Pima Arts Council, Naturally Occurring Cultural Districts NY, LA Commons, Arts & Democracy, and Kentucky Cultural Organizing Alliance will partner to conduct workshops, learning exchanges, trainings across the country, and will research issues relevant to underserved communities. The project will unearth creative approaches for inclusive civic engagement, and ultimately build community capacity to participate in local planning processes. Project partners will convene diverse audiences, including artists, culture bearers, educators, community developers, planners, activists, and policy makers.