

A FRAGILE ECOSYSTEM

THE ROLE OF ARTS & CULTURE IN
PHILADELPHIA'S MANTUA, POWELTON VILLAGE
AND WEST POWELTON NEIGHBORHOODS

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INTRODUCTION

Arts and culture play an enduring role in the West Philadelphia neighborhoods of Mantua, Powelton Village, and West Powelton. From the community murals in Mantua to the galleries and second Friday gatherings on Lancaster Avenue to a growing annual jazz festival, there are many examples of the importance of the arts in these neighborhoods. Many arts and cultural organizations call these neighborhoods home, with major institutions like the Philadelphia Zoo and Please Touch Museum nearby. It is also an area with a high concentration of artists, yet these neighborhoods are not regarded region-wide as a hub of arts activity.

From their roots as a colonial-era settlement and early suburb of downtown Philadelphia, to their emergence as a home for those affiliated with the local universities and hospitals, these neighborhoods have witnessed many political, social and economic transformations. What was once a quiet outpost beyond the city limits became a thriving working class district, before disinvestment and urban renewal altered the landscape for its residents. Landmarks abound, from the physical – the nation’s first transcontinental highway on Lancaster Avenue – to the historical – Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s famous speech in 1965. And yet the neighborhoods struggle with population decline, failing schools and persistent crime. Amid these challenges, there are signs of another era of renewal, driven by institutions like Drexel University, the University City Science Center, Penn Medicine and a host of real estate developers. Does this investment mean a transformation of these neighborhoods for the better? Who will benefit and how?

THE RESEARCH EFFORT

A team of faculty and students from Drexel University carried out a research project on participation in and access to arts and culture in the Mantua, Powelton Village and West Powelton neighborhoods. We set out to find what is currently happening in the neighborhoods, what is emerging, and what is possible.

From July to December 2013, the research team collected data in the three neighborhoods. We were able to meet and interview representatives of a number of local cultural and civic organizations. We held six focus groups at the West Philadelphia Community Center in September and October 2013. These were attended by a total of 45 residents and community leaders. These data

were combined with quantitative data and mapping tools to examine population and existing cultural assets. Finally, the students conducted approximately 450 short interviews that took place throughout the neighborhoods on street corners, at community events, in local businesses and other places where people gather.

Initial findings of the research were presented at two community meetings in March 2014. This report reflects what was learned from the research and community feedback sessions. Its goal is to encourage and support efforts to advance these neighborhoods through the further development and use of their cultural assets.

THE RESEARCH AREA

The boundaries for our research were the Schuylkill River to 40th Street from east to west and Mantua Avenue to Market Street from north to south. This area covered four census tracts (see Figure 1).

Household incomes in the study area are on average considerably lower than Philadelphia, with some areas as low as \$15,000 per year. However, part of Powelton Village has household incomes over \$85,000 per year. The unemployment rate ranges from below the national average (as low as 5%) to very high (27% in parts of Mantua). The southern portion of the study area has nearly half of its workers in health and education professions and the northern part is also in the health and education field but in service occupations.

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, about 14,000 people live within the research boundaries, down approximately 7% from the year 2000. There has been a steady decline in population since the 1950s in much of the study area. This



- 📍 Cultural Assets
- 📍 Civic Assets
- ⋯ High Concentration of Resident Artists

Figure 1: Many neighborhood cultural and civic assets are located near and along Market Street, Lancaster Avenue, and Haverford Avenue. Artists are concentrated in the southern and western sections of the study area. Source: CultureBlocks.com

study is very much a tale of two cities. The northern part has very different conditions from the southern part of our research area. Powelton Village is majority White and Asian, while Mantua and other parts to the west of the study area are majority Black. In Mantua especially, the population of children under 18 has dropped significantly between the 2000 and 2010 Census.

Many community plans and reports provide greater detail on these neighborhoods. For more information on where to find these sources, please see the “Further Reading” section of this report.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

First we describe the area’s cultural ecosystem. Next, we discuss opportunities, challenges, and possibilities related to this cultural ecosystem and its role in these neighborhoods. Throughout the report, quotes from the resident interviews and focus groups are used to highlight the research findings.

THE CULTURAL ECOSYSTEM OF THE RESEARCH AREA

Arts, cultural, and creative activities and events play an important role in these neighborhoods. From established arts organizations to public art projects to cultural festivals, these activities and events have the potential to play a transformative role in building social, economic, and community capital.

However, significant challenges exist in supporting the current arts and cultural assets of the neighborhoods while also building up community leadership from both a grassroots and institutional perspective. These challenges are more than just relevant to arts and culture, and relate to broader social issues.

The area’s cultural ecosystem includes three main categories of assets, composed of the following elements:

Figure 2: Public investment in arts and culture in the study area is lower than comparable cultural clusters in Philadelphia

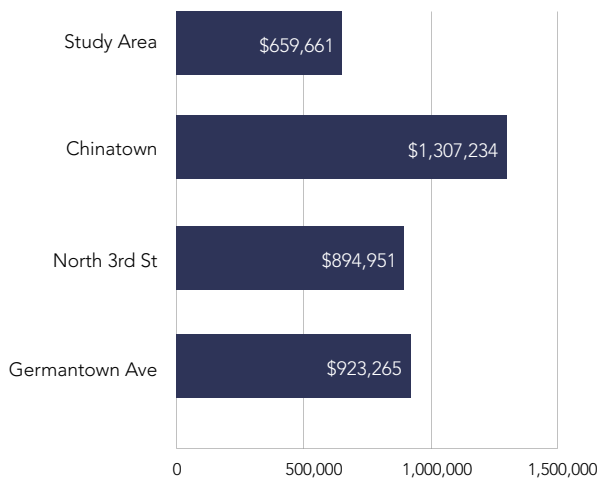
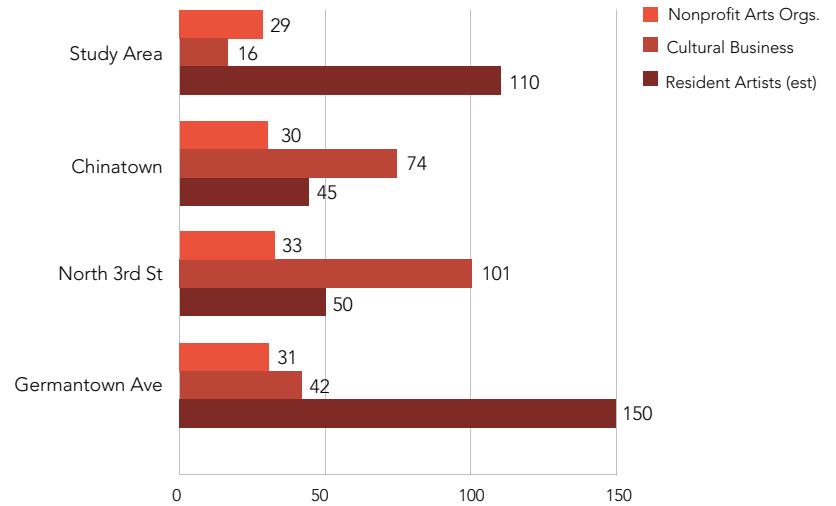


Figure 3: Compared to other cultural clusters in Philadelphia, the study area has a similar number of nonprofit arts organizations, few cultural businesses, and a high number of resident artists



Source: CultureBlocks.com

1. Resident artists, cultural organizations, and creative enterprises

- Organic clusters of cultural assets (“cultural clusters”)¹ along Market Street, Lancaster Avenue, and Haverford Avenue.
- A dense cluster of individual artists residing between the Lancaster Avenue and Haverford Avenue cultural clusters.
- Other cultural programs in the neighborhoods, though not located within the clusters, whose mission and process are community-based, such as Spiral Q Puppet Theatre and Lil’Filmmakers.

2. Other groups engaged in the arts in these neighborhoods

- Religious and civic organizations offering cultural activities and programs.
- Schools and educational organizations offering cultural activities and programs.
- Cultural organizations located outside of the neighborhoods offering activities and programs within them, such as the Mural Arts Program, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, and Temple University’s Tyler School of Art.

3. Major institutions

- Drexel University’s cultural and creative programs, facilities, and resources.
- A “ring” of major cultural institutions, including the Philadelphia Zoo, Philadelphia Museum of Art, and Please Touch Museum, located just beyond these neighborhoods.

Figures 2 and 3 illustrate two key dynamics found in the cultural ecosystem. Public investment in arts and culture in the study area is lower than in comparable cultural clusters in Philadelphia. Additionally, compared to other cultural clusters in Philadelphia, the study area has a similar number of nonprofit arts organizations, fewer cultural businesses, and a high number of resident artists.

¹ The term “cultural clusters” refers to a cluster of cultural assets in a neighborhood that emerges from the activities of local residents, businesses, organizations, artists, and activists. This concept was originated by the Social Impact of the Arts Project (SIAP) at the University of Pennsylvania. For more information visit SIAP online at <http://www.sp2.upenn.edu/siap/about.html>

OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES, AND POSSIBILITIES FOR THE CULTURAL ECOSYSTEM

It's important to remember that these neighborhoods are changing. The population is changing, the physical landscape is changing, and these dynamics are leading to changes in the civic and social structures of these neighborhoods, too. A new generation of community leaders is coming into its own. Drexel University's President, John Fry, has been in his current role for just four years, as has Farah Jimenez, the Executive Director of the People's Emergency Center (PEC), a leading civic organization in the area. The leadership of some of the area's other community organizations, including its cultural ones, may also change in the next five to ten years. Some schools in the area have closed, and plans are forming to open new ones. The presence of University students continues to impact the demographics of these neighborhoods, as does a drop in the number of children and youth under age 18. New community sites and programs such as Mighty Writers, Drexel's Dornsife Center for Neighborhood Partnerships, a planned grocery store on Haverford Avenue, and the planned 4050 Apartments for low-income artists all contribute to the changing landscape. The growth of Drexel University, the Science Center, and related facilities contribute to this, as well.

“
IT'S NOT JUST THE ARTS IT'S
THE WHOLE PICTURE SO Y'ALL „
CAN CHANGE THE WHOLE PICTURE.

As in many Philadelphia neighborhoods, there is both optimism and concern about the changes happening here. There is even some mistrust. While the increasing number of artists and arts-related businesses add to the vibrancy of the neighborhood, some residents are fearful that it means they could be pushed out. Other residents are fearful of what Drexel's campus expansion plans mean for the future of their neighborhood, while some see the changing nature of the neighborhood as a positive step forward.

These changes bring with them hope and uncertainty for the participants in this study. The hope is that the community can come together across neighborhood, age, and socio-economic boundaries to address challenges, maximize

opportunities, and enhance the lives of all residents. The uncertainty is whether or not enough transparency and trust exist, or can be built, to enable and sustain these efforts.

What does this time of change mean for the neighborhoods' arts and cultural activities and programs? We heard from residents that arts and cultural activities and events must play a key role in these neighborhoods. Residents see arts and culture as a crucial part of their neighborhood's ability to educate youth, build employment skills, bridge generations, and revitalize community spaces.

Two themes emerge to maximize the opportunity for arts and culture to bolster these neighborhoods:

- Build a network that supports the area's cultural ecosystem; and,
- Connect the neighborhoods' cultural assets to the area's civic agenda and its collaborative opportunities.

A discussion of related ideas follows below, including possible action steps. Finally, some examples of arts and culture programs are provided that can serve as inspiration and models for efforts in these neighborhoods going forward.

FINDINGS & ACTION STEPS

Upon reviewing the information gathered in the research, we uncovered the eight findings outlined below, and proposed related action steps.

1. RESIDENTS SEEK ARTISTIC AND CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT ALIGNED WITH NEIGHBORHOOD NEEDS.

We heard a clear call for cultural activities and programs that:

- Engage multiple generations of participants together
- Build marketable job skills
- Utilize existing facilities and amenities
- Employ local artists
- Explore community identity and history
- Provide opportunities after school, in the evenings, and on weekends
- Occur in conjunction with other recreational, social, or community activities

2. CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS NEED SUPPORT TO BUILD CAPACITY, ENGAGE IN COLLABORATIONS, AND DEVELOP LONG-TERM PLANS.

Cultural leaders in the area know of and respect one another, but find the capacity to work together diminished by day-to-day challenges. Support for collaborative efforts and opportunities would enable these leaders to contribute to the overall growth and development of the area by ensuring the sustainability and growth of its cultural resources. Increased philanthropic investment from public and private sources could support these efforts.

3. ARTISTS SEEK STRONGER CONNECTIONS TO THE COMMUNITY, INCLUDING THE NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS, BUT OFTEN HAVE NO CLEAR WAY TO FIND THEM.

The concentration of resident artists in this area is something to be celebrated, as it is a resource found in other thriving Philadelphia neighborhoods. We heard from some of these artists that there is no central place or people in the area to turn to for those who wish to become more involved in neighborhood activity and community development. As a result, artists frequently helm their own efforts. Further investigation into the interests and needs of these resident artists can help illuminate possibilities for appropriately supporting them. Opportunities for artists to convene with one another, and with the neighborhoods' schools, churches, and civic organizations could be more frequent. An artist support network could be housed in a local cultural or civic organization, or a new organization could be established along the lines of the Chicago Artists Initiative, described later in this report. Projects like PEC's 4050 Apartments, a live-work space for low-income artists, could also provide a springboard for these efforts.

Artists want to be in the schools, but find them difficult to navigate. Many studies document the value of the arts to education as a means to improve critical thinking, communications, teamwork, and other skills. Yet, we heard that while the area's local artists and cultural organizations want to work more with the neighborhoods' schools, they have difficulty navigating the complexity of the Philadelphia School District's bureaucracy, and grow frustrated by an inability to move projects forward. Finding ways to ease this struggle could enable local schools to utilize local cultural resources and artists in, and beyond, the classroom to support improved educational outcomes for all students. It is important to note that the Philadelphia School District faces substantial challenges, particularly financial, which limit its capacity. However, new opportunities, like the involvement of Drexel University in the support of McMichael Elementary School and in the redevelopment of the former Drew Elementary and University City High School campuses, offer a chance for neighborhood artists to play a role in revitalizing the area's public schools. Resident artists and neighborhood cultural organizations could be part of the planning efforts for the new schools, as well as providing artistic programs to the students once these schools re-open.

“ THE BIGGEST AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT WOULD BE THE COMMUNICATION BETWEEN [ARTS] GROUPS AND THEIR ABILITY TO WORK TOGETHER TO CREATE A COHESIVE COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT. ”



Tumelty House Mural, 31st Street and Hamilton Street. Photo credit: research team.

4. CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS, ARTISTS, AND CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS NEED EACH OTHER TO BUILD SUCCESSFUL COMMUNICATIONS NETWORKS.

Neighborhood residents and the providers of arts and cultural activities and programs are not connecting with each other. Communications is a big challenge. People are often unaware of events and activities happening just around the corner. Residents want to hear more about what is happening in the neighborhood and want arts and cultural providers to communicate better, while the providers are often frustrated that residents aren't participating in their programs.

The neighborhoods suffer from a lack of centralized communications efforts, leading to a "Facebook and flyers" system of promoting events and activities that is low-cost but does not succeed in the eyes of residents or organizational representatives.

“ WE’RE INDEPENDENT ARTISTS. WE HAD A FABULOUS PROGRAM BUT ,, WE COULDN’T GET THE WORD OUT.

Though the area lacks the type of independent community newspapers found in some other Philadelphia neighborhoods to address this issue, opportunities do exist through communications vehicles such as the PEC's CDC Newsletter and Events Calendar, the Philadelphia School District's communications systems, and Drexel University's communications systems. The neighborhoods' religious organizations also regularly issue newsletters promoting community events and activities. Like PEC's newsletter, these outlets can be utilized to promote neighborhood arts and cultural activities, as well as activities of the respective institutions they represent. A current disconnect exists, however, between these communications vehicles and the neighborhoods' artists and cultural organizations.

To bridge the gap, civic and cultural leaders could collaborate to explore the development of a localized communications system that more easily enables artists and cultural organizations to share information and requests once. The system could then re-distribute the information through the community's multiple existing communications vehicles.

5. THE NEIGHBORHOODS' CULTURAL CLUSTERS ARE ANCHORS FOR CIVIC, SOCIAL, AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITY, AND THEY NEED ADDITIONAL CAPITALIZATION TO REALIZE THEIR POTENTIAL FOR THE COMMUNITY.

Cultural organizations in the clusters along Lancaster and Haverford Avenues in particular are challenged by low public investment and less than optimal operational capacity. They would like to do more, particularly for area residents, but they face many of the same financial struggles as residents, making it difficult to provide low- or no-cost programs or services to the community. If these corridors are cultivated, they have the potential to increase cultural activity and economic benefits. A dedicated, volunteer-led business owner's association is active along the Lancaster Avenue corridor, though it, too, needs broader support. Additional investment in these organizations is needed to increase ongoing opportunities for meaningful cultural engagement, and to fully realize the possibility of the cultural clusters to serve as anchors for economic, social, and civic engagement in the area.

Fairs, festivals, and community block parties, often organized by civic or social groups, can be held in one of the cultural clusters along Lancaster Avenue, Haverford Avenue, and Market Street. This maximizes the potential for artists and cultural groups to play a leading role in these efforts, and bolsters their chances to positively impact the neighborhoods' civic life. Past efforts, such as Look! Lancaster Avenue, can be built upon, and existing programs like Second Fridays on Lancaster Avenue can work with cultural programs to seek additional financial support for these efforts. These efforts could be part of broader economic development plans for the area.

One way to enhance those clusters is through access to economic development support provided by city and state programs. Mantua's recent designation as a Promise Zone also provides improved access to federal support for these corridors. The cultural clusters should be a key part of funding and other proposals for support. Large institutions such as Drexel University can seek ways to leverage their local purchasing power in support of these corridors' development, as well.

6. DREXEL PRESENTS OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARTNERSHIP, SHARED RESOURCES, AND SUSTAINED MOMENTUM OF COMMUNITY EFFORTS, BUT SUFFERS FROM CONCERNS THAT IT HAS A HIDDEN AGENDA THAT COULD HARM AREA RESIDENTS AND ORGANIZATIONS.

The Dornsife Center for Neighborhood Partnerships presents an excellent opportunity to serve as a community resource and a gateway for open communication between Drexel University and its neighbors. By providing Drexel-based programs alongside community-led ones, by serving as a gathering space for community meetings and events, and by fostering relationships and connections among residents and members of the Drexel community, Dornsife has the potential to build greater trust and transparency among people interested in the area's sustainability and growth. To achieve this goal, Drexel must ensure that the Dornsife Center has the resources it needs to achieve its mission and to support the local community as well as the University. A new network of community-based researchers at the University can further support these efforts. Drexel and the community must also reckon with a complicated history of redevelopment in order to successfully work together to advance these neighborhoods.

“ DREXEL'S BUILDING A 30-STORY HIGH BUILDING. AND YET, RIGHT ,” NEXT DOOR, THEY'RE STRUGGLING.

7. CHURCHES AND CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS ARE SEEKING STRONGER CONNECTIONS TO THE CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC COMMUNITY, AND MAY HAVE PHYSICAL SPACE THAT CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS AND ARTISTS NEED.

People's Emergency Center and other civic organizations are supporting artists through their involvement in community projects and the development of projects like 4050 Apartments. In the course of our research, many community organizations and leaders expressed interest in continuing to work with the area's cultural and artistic

resources. Increased opportunities to meet, collaborate, and engage in mutually beneficial projects and activities will strengthen the community by collectively leveraging all of its assets for the common good. These organizations could provide support to efforts connecting artists to religious organizations.

Churches, libraries, recreation, and community centers have classroom, meeting, rehearsal, and performance spaces that could be better utilized by cultural programs and individual artists. The Dornsife Center provides another opportunity along these lines. The challenge lies in establishing connections among the people and organizations, and in finding the financial capacity to support low- or no-cost rentals of these spaces on an on-going basis. Arts activity can also be used to highlight and animate abandoned or neglected civic spaces. The use of Hawthorne Hall for a site-specific art exhibit in the 2013 Hidden City Festival, and the subsequent opening of Mighty Writers there, are great examples of what can happen when the neighborhoods' civic and cultural organizations come together to address mutual space concerns. A potential partner in these efforts is Partners for Sacred Places, whose Arts in Sacred Places program was developed in Philadelphia and now serves as a national model for this type of work.

8. CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS OUTSIDE OF THESE NEIGHBORHOODS CAN SUPPORT THE CHANGE PROCESS, THOUGH ACCESS TO SOME OF THE LARGE ORGANIZATIONS BORDERING THE NEIGHBORHOODS PRESENTS CHALLENGES.

Cultural organizations outside of these neighborhoods support the change process by honoring the neighborhoods' history and sparking discussion about the area's future. In a time of change, projects and activities that enable residents to reflect on their history, on current situations, and on future possibilities can support the process of community transition by ensuring that everyone's voice has an opportunity to be heard. Witnessing the past, honoring the present, and imagining the future through artistic and cultural activity can foster community dialogue,

promote civic engagement, and strengthen neighborhood identity and pride. The Mural Arts Program has worked with residents to create a number of public murals in the area. The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society has created neighborhood gardens with residents in abandoned and neglected lots, Temple University's Tyler School of Art worked with residents, local clergy, and civic leaders to present "Funeral for a Home," a project highlighting the past residents of a Mantua home slated for demolition as a lens to explore community change over time. These projects all provide the type of cultural engagement needed. Other cultural organizations can follow the lead of these groups, who have thoughtfully built relationships in the neighborhoods and partnered with local residents and existing groups to ensure that their presence and involvement in the area is respectful, engaging, and well-received.

Larger cultural institutions bordering these neighborhoods represent opportunities to broaden the horizons of neighborhood residents, particularly children and youth, but access to them presents challenges. We heard residents speak highly of the value of the large cultural institutions that border the area. We also heard them lament the loss of free access and other programs, and the barrier of not feeling welcome at many of these places. Whether real or perceived, these barriers present a challenge to residents to continue seeking ways to tap into the resources around them, and to the institutions to improve accessibility for and engagement with the residents of these neighborhoods. Stronger communications between the institutions and residents could help address these challenges.

**“ YOU NEED TO GO OUT OF YOUR WAY TO ENTICE PEOPLE TO COME IN AND SEE ART, MAKE THEM FEEL WELCOME. NEED TO MAKE SURE EVENTS ARE FRIENDLY TO THESE COMMUNITIES IF YOU WANT MORE THAN THE ”
NORMAL ART-GOING TYPE OF CROWD.**

CONCLUSIONS

To meet the stated needs of the neighborhoods' residents regarding arts and culture, we must build networks supporting the resident artists, cultural organizations, and creative enterprises located here, and connect the neighborhoods' cultural assets to the area's civic agenda and its collaborative opportunities.

BUILD NETWORKS TO SUPPORT THE CULTURAL ECOSYSTEM

There must be additional investment supporting the cultural clusters. Capacity for the neighborhoods' nonprofit cultural organizations must also be built. Connections need to be further developed between artists, cultural organizations, creative enterprises, and civic groups. The process of working with neighborhood schools should be simplified. Cultural organizations from beyond the neighborhoods can be welcomed to partner on community-based projects, and improved access for neighborhood residents to larger cultural institutions can be provided. The new Dornsife Center can build stronger connections between Drexel and the community.

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...AN IMPORTANT DYNAMIC
AGAIN TODAY, [IS] THAT
COMMUNITY RESIDENTS BAND
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AND PLAN FOR DEVELOPMENT.”

CONNECT CULTURAL ASSETS TO THE AREA'S CIVIC AGENDA

The cultural corridors should be utilized for community-wide events, fairs, and festivals. A portal should be developed for churches and civic groups to share space with cultural groups and artists. Working together, collaborative resources can be built for getting the word out to residents about community activities and events. Cultural assets and representatives of those assets should play a role in community planning efforts. Cultural and civic representatives should work together to increase overall neighborhood investment and capitalize on the promise of the Promise Zone.

Cultural assets should be part of community planning efforts, and cultural and civic organizations can work together to increase neighborhood investment. Through working together, the fragile cultural ecosystem can be strengthened and play a thriving role in community-wide efforts focused on public safety, education, economic development, and other opportunities.



DREXEL UNIVERSITY

Westphal

College of Media Arts & Design

APPENDIX

INSPIRATIONAL MODELS TO CONSIDER

The following programs and initiatives are included as a source of inspiration for the community. They provide examples of innovative ideas that speak to some of the challenges and opportunities presented in this report.

TURNAROUND ARTS

Turnaround Arts is a public-private partnership created in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Education and the White House Domestic Policy Council. It aims to transform some of the nation's lowest-performing schools through comprehensive and integrated arts education. Extensive assessment of the initiative is being conducted with the pilot schools. Public elementary and middle schools receiving federal School Improvement Grants were eligible to apply for funding support. More information can be found online at <http://www.pcah.gov/turnaround-arts-creating-success-schools-0>.

IMMIGRANT MOVEMENT INTERNATIONAL

Immigrant Movement International was founded in 2011 by artist Tania Bruguera and the Queens Museum. It aims to address the pressing needs and unique potential of residents in the heavily immigrant neighborhood of Corona, Queens. The program offers comprehensive educational programming, health, and legal services at no cost, as well as more than a dozen free workshops each week, including dance, nutrition, childcare, bicycle maintenance, construction safety, classical music, English language through art history, Spanish for Mandarin speakers, computer literacy, screen printing, immigration law, and counseling for women who are victims of domestic violence. The space has also served as a hub for cultural organizing initiatives regarding issues of importance to the local community. More information can be found at <http://www.queensmuseum.org/projects/2013/11/08/immigrant-movement-international/>

TRADE SCHOOL EVERYWHERE

Trade School, a project of the Queens Museum in New York, is a self-organized learning platform that runs on barter. Its core beliefs are that everyone has something to teach, and that students should be able to pay for classes with resources like advice, supplies, and food rather than money. From its start in 2009 it has grown to an international network of more than 50 cities with similar cooperatives who are adapting the barter-based learning model to local contexts. More information can be found at <http://www.queensmuseum.org/projects/2013/11/08/artist-project-trade-school-everywhere/>.

CHICAGO ARTISTS COALITION

The mission of the Chicago Artists Coalition is to build a sustainable marketplace for entrepreneurial artists and creatives. It capitalizes on the intersection of art and enterprise by activating collaborative partnerships and developing innovative resources. The Coalition is committed to cultivating groundbreaking exhibitions and educational opportunities, and to building a diverse community of artistic leaders that defines the place of art and artists in Chicago's culture and economy.

The Chicago Artists Coalition was founded in 1974 by a group of artists who sought to create a better environment and future for the local artistic community. From its inception, the organization has played an important role in artists' professional development and advocacy. Over the years, as the identity and needs of Chicago's artistic community have evolved, so too have the Coalition's services as a dynamic and responsive institution. Always endeavoring to lead new efforts of artists' advocacy and support, the Coalition's current programming includes professional development, online resources, and residency initiatives. It currently operates in an 8,000 square foot historic building with a lofty gallery and program space, artist residency studios, and administrative offices. More information can be found at <http://www.chicagoartistscoalition.org/>

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Anonymous survey participants

Anonymous focus group participants

Residents of the research area

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Spiral Q Puppet Theater: Tracy Broyles

West Philadelphia Community Center: Branon Gilmore, Bintu Kabba

University City District

FURTHER READING

The following resources provide additional information regarding these neighborhoods, including their history and recent community planning efforts.

Make Your Mark! Lower Lancaster Revitalization Plan,

http://www.interface-studio.com/isftp/PEC/MYM_6_28.pdf

Philadelphia 2035: District Plans, University/Southwest,

<http://phila2035.org/home-page/district/university-southwest/>

Powelton Village Directions, 2011 Neighborhood Plan,

http://poweltonvillage.org/PVCA-Master_Plan_2011/index.html

West Powelton Saunders Park Neighborhood Plan,

<http://www.dvrpc.org/reports/04048.pdf>

We Are Mantua! Mantua Transformation Plan,

http://planphilly.com/uploads/media_items/mantua-transformation-plan-1.original.pdf

West Philadelphia Community History Center,

<http://www.archives.upenn.edu/histy/features/wphila/>

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