

## City of Bridgeport

### Plan of Conservation and Development

#### Arts and Culture Thematic Meeting

University of Bridgeport, Tower Room  
10AM, Saturday, September 15, 2018

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On September 15, 2018, the City of Bridgeport Master Plan of Conservation and Development project team held their fifth thematic meeting related to arts and culture in Bridgeport. The purpose of this meeting was to review best practices for planning, identify relevant priorities, and discuss strengths, issues and new ideas for improving the arts and culture environment in Bridgeport. Thirteen (13) members of the public were in attendance.

The project team began the meeting by introducing the Master Plan and clarifying how housing relates to the larger picture of the Plan. Following the presentation, meeting attendees were given clickers to vote in real-time on interactive survey questions that helped to identify the group's priorities relevant to Bridgeport's housing (results below). Attendees broke out into groups to identify the strengths, challenges, and new ideas for reforming and improving Bridgeport's housing system (summarized below).

#### **Breakout Session Notes**

The statements below are a summary of the opinions expressed by meeting attendees. The statements do not necessarily reflect City policy or objective facts.

#### Strengths:

- Micromanufacturing related to arts and culture already happening in Bridgeport
- Bridgeport has an edginess and artistry as part of its culture
- Arts and culture education is present in curriculum but could be greatly expanded
- Bridgeport has room to house artists and has the potential to expand on its artistic reputation
- Lots of public art already present in Bridgeport
- Lots of galleries and programs that are active in Bridgeport already; Arts Fest, City Lights Gallery, Bridgeport Arts Trail, etc.

#### Issues and Challenges:

- Limited support for artists
- Administration changes usually dismantle arts programs more frequently
- Limited support from the City for arts projects and initiatives

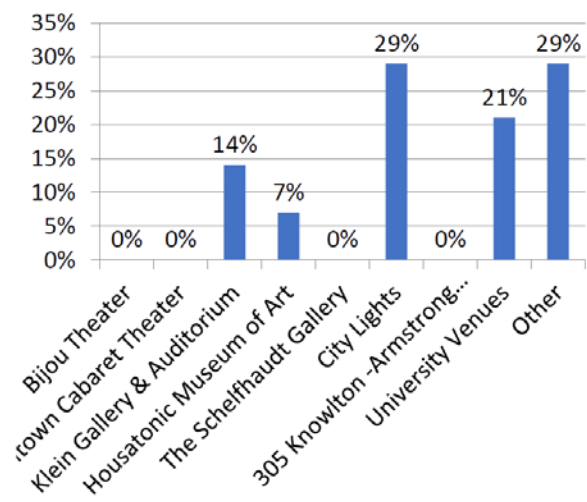
#### Ideas for Improving Bridgeport's Housing:

- Incentivize funding of public arts projects through artists and community
- Create an arts and entertainment district in Bridgeport to economically incentivize arts and creation
- Change zoning to allow for micromanufacturing outside of manufacturing zones
- Create artist housing downtown and subsidize rent or ownership of gallery spaces
- Create funding for arts and arts education programs
- Incentivize arts in community projects and afterschool programs
- Focus on music as well as arts and culture
- Create a Public Art Plan

#### **Interactive Survey Results**

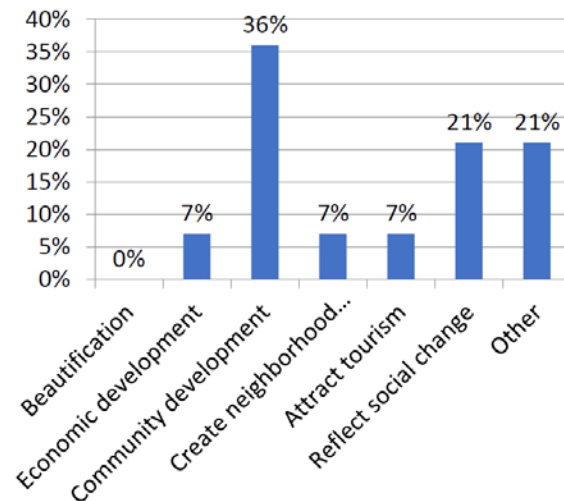
### What is your favorite arts and culture venue in Bridgeport?

1. Bijou Theater
2. Downtown Cabaret Theater
3. Klein Gallery & Auditorium
4. Housatonic Museum of Art
5. The Schelfhaudt Gallery
6. City Lights
7. 305 Knowlton -Armstrong Gallery
8. University Venues
9. Other



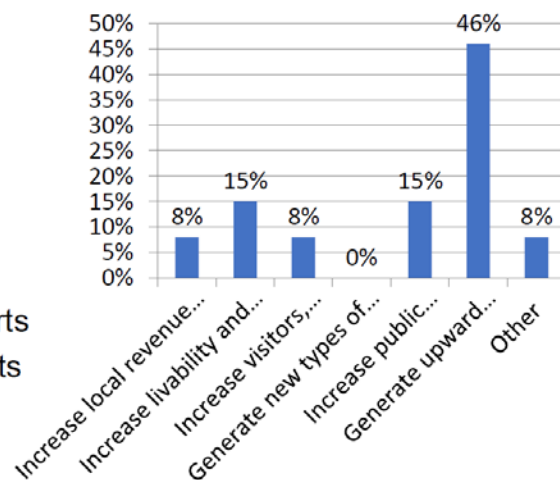
## What do you think is the primary role of arts and culture in a Bridgeport?

- 1.Beautification
- 2.Economic development
- 3.Community development
- 4.Create neighborhood identity
- 5.Attract tourism
- 6.Reflect social change
- 7.Other



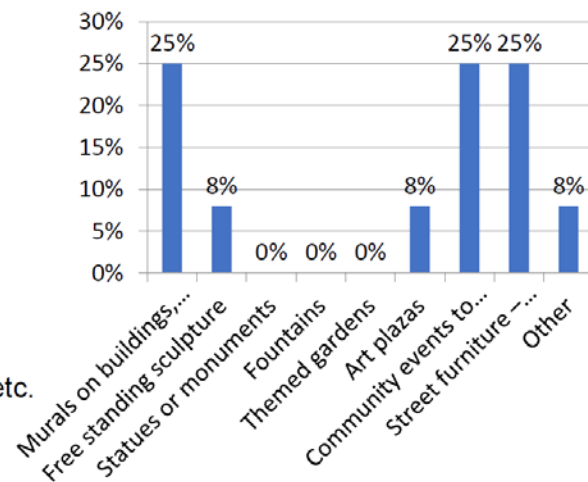
## What benefit would you most like to see from public art and culture programs?

1. Increase local revenue through increased tourism
2. Increase livability and attractiveness of the City
3. Increase visitors, shoppers, and investors
4. Generate new types of businesses
5. Increase public involvement in the arts
6. Generate upward mobility through arts and culture programs
7. Other



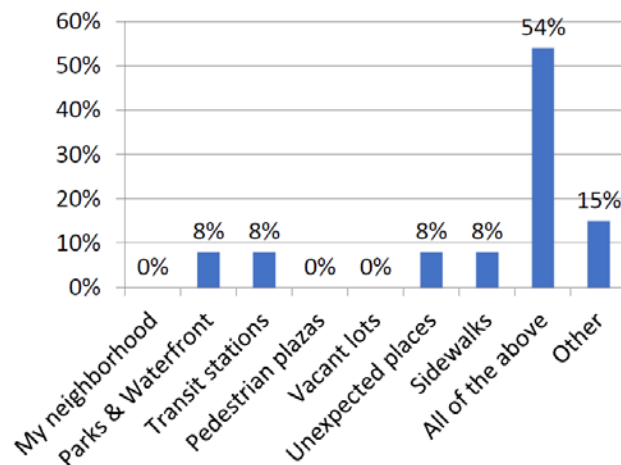
## What kinds of public art would you most like to see?

1. Murals on buildings, bridges and highway underpasses
2. Free standing sculpture
3. Statues or monuments
4. Fountains
5. Themed gardens
6. Art plazas
7. Community events to create public art
8. Street furniture – decorated benches, lamps, bus stops, garbage disposals etc.
9. Other



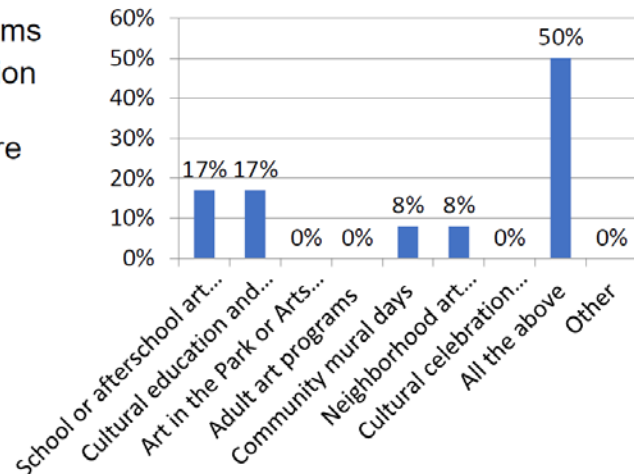
## Where would you most like to see public art?

1. My neighborhood
2. Parks & Waterfront
3. Transit stations
4. Pedestrian plazas
5. Vacant lots
6. Unexpected places
7. Sidewalks
8. All of the above
9. Other



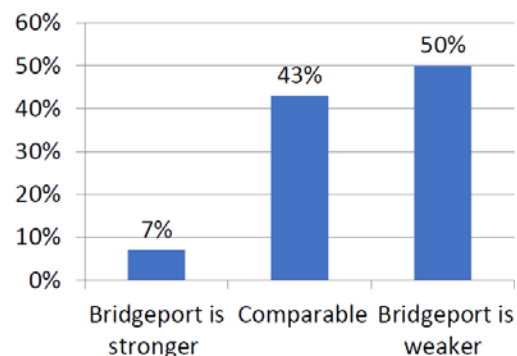
## What kinds of arts and culture programs are a top priority for Bridgeport?

1. School or afterschool art programs
2. Cultural education and celebration programs
3. Art in the Park or Arts and Nature programs
4. Adult art programs
5. Community mural days
6. Neighborhood art initiatives
7. Cultural celebration events
8. All the above
9. Other



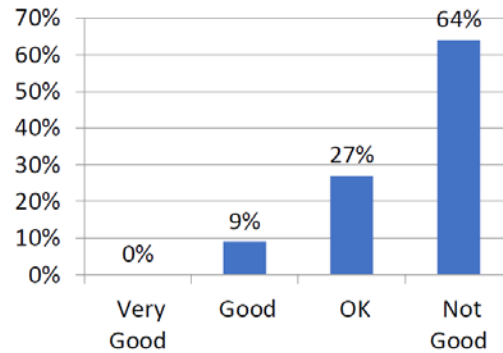
## How does Bridgeport compare to similar communities with respect to Arts & Culture?

1. Bridgeport is stronger
2. Comparable
3. Bridgeport is weaker



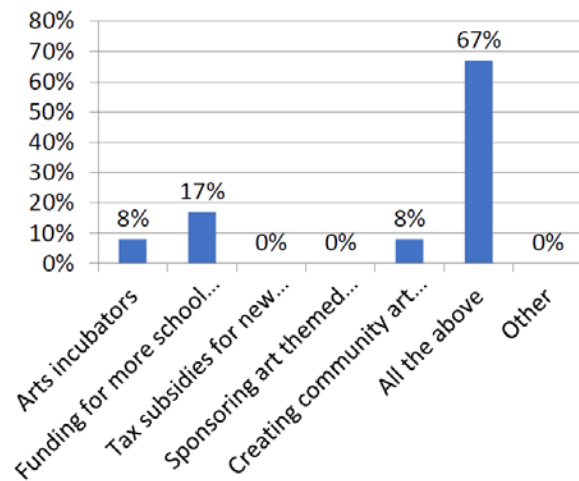
## How do you rate the City of Bridgeport's support of Arts & Culture?

1. Very Good
2. Good
3. OK
4. Not Good



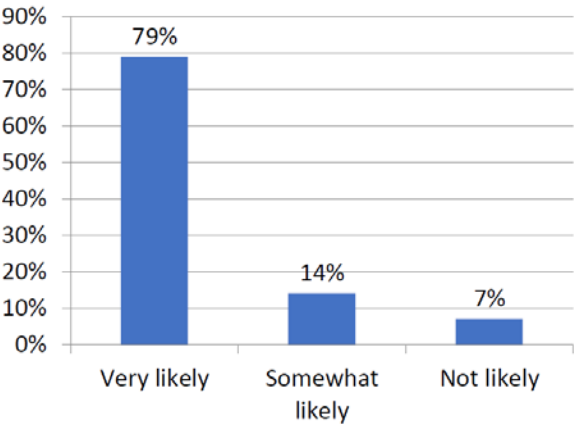
## How should the City promote arts and culture programs and development?

1. Arts incubators
2. Funding for more school programs
3. Tax subsidies for new arts and culture centers and venues
4. Sponsoring art themed events
5. Creating community art days
6. All the above
7. Other



# How likely are you to participate in a community arts program?

- 1. Very likely
- 2. Somewhat likely
- 3. Not likely



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## Project Team

- Lynn Haig – City of Bridgeport
- Dean Mack – City of Bridgeport
- Francisco Gomes – FHI
- Zainab Kazmi – FHI