

# Arts + Social Impact Explorer Fact Sheet

## INFRASTRUCTURE

# ARTS + TRANSPORTATION & INFRASTRUCTURE

## IMPACT POINTS

### ARTS SPARK \$97 MILLION INVESTMENT

A \$97 million railcar system came to fruition because of arts-based activism in El Paso, TX.<sup>1</sup>

### ART EMPOWERS COMMUNITIES BY OPENING DIALOGUE

Certain forms of public art can empower communities by opening up a dialogue and inviting critical as well as creative imagining to take place.<sup>2</sup>

### 100% CLEAN TRANSIT ENVIRONMENT

The New York City subway system's Arts in Transit program is credited with a drastically reduced amount of graffiti and vandalism (which the city now claim as a 100% clean transit system).<sup>3</sup>

### ARTS FOSTER PARTNERSHIPS STRENGTHENING INFRASTRUCTURE

In towns of all sizes, city councils and local government agencies often transcend traditional turfs and training to specifically foster arts-driven downtown revitalization.<sup>4</sup>

## OVERVIEW

Since the launch of the first collaborative transportation systems, artists have been commissioned to beautify the spaces, places, and vehicles that comprise these systems with murals, mosaics, writing, and other artwork. And the integration of creativity, whether through architectural design, artifice, interior design, or placemaking, has been core in every major design movement in U.S. history.

More recently, artists have begun to collaborate with government officials and businesses on transportation and infrastructure planning efforts to improve community engagement with local resources; increase equity in planning processes; and design more innovative, unintrusive, and environmentally friendly solutions to community transit and infrastructure challenges.

The integration of the arts into both the planning process and the physical components of existing transit systems and infrastructure projects improves the user experience, increases feelings of safety and well-being, creates more community cohesion, and can educate users on the environmental and social implications of different transit and infrastructure work.

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### ART REDUCES BARRIERS IN TRANSIT STATIONS

Art pieces cued to the businesses or industries associated with particular hubs, as well as the integration of more traditional wayfinding symbols like arrows and pointing fingers, can help ease congestion and direct passengers, including those unable to read written signage.<sup>5</sup>

# EXAMPLES OF PRACTICE



## El Paso Transnational Trolley, El Paso, TX



This project started as a fictional marketing campaign for the historic streetcar line that connected El Paso with Juarez, Mexico. The project attracted so much community interest that city funds have been raised to rebuild the streetcar.

<http://elpasotransnationaltrolley-blog.tumblr.com/>

**image:** Poster installation from the El Paso Transnational Trolley project. Photo by Peter Svarzbein.

## Envision Nolensville Pike, Nashville, TN



Led by Conexión Américas, this is a comprehensive creative placemaking process to help transform bus shelters, roads, and parks in a diverse neighborhood.

<http://www.conexionamericas.org>  
[alex@conexionamericas.org](mailto:alex@conexionamericas.org)

**image:** Community members participate in a Creative Lab in the Envision Nolensville Pike, Nashville. Photo courtesy of Conexión Américas and Transportation America.

## Moving Stories, Indianapolis, IN



IndyGo captured stories from community members about what defines Indianapolis as home. As part of Spirit & Place, these stories are shared through images and quotes on bus routes, at the Transit Center, and on social media.

[indygo.net/movingstories](http://indygo.net/movingstories)

**image:** IndyGo—with CityWrite, Arts Council of Indianapolis, and Writing Futures at Marian University—elicited stories from community members about what defines Indy as home. Photo by Rebecca Jacobson. Courtesy of IndyGo (Indianapolis Public Transportation Corporation).

## Manhole Masterpieces, Tokyo, Japan



Across Japan, manholes are viewed as more than just a way to hide access to sewer lines, cables, and other infrastructure. In the hands of artists, manhole covers become works of art.

<https://www.tsunagujapan.com/the-masterpieces-on-50-japanese-manhole-covers/>

**image:** Manhole in Osaka Japan

## Rain Ravine, Pittsburgh, PA



This artwork collects the water that falls on and near it and creates a playful environment that also salvages and allows the building to have a zero-net waterflow, meaning it collects and filters more water than it uses.

<https://www.stacylevy.com/ravine-runnel-frick-stacy@stacylevy.com>

**image:** A collaboration between the rainfall and the built environment, Rain Ravine fulfills one of the petals of the Living Building Challenge. Frick Environmental Center, Frick Park, Pittsburgh, PA. Artist Stacy Levy

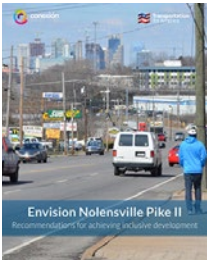
**top image:** Residents of Austin waiting for the lighting of the Sunflowers, with I-35 in background. 2009. Owner is Catellus Development. Photo by David Newsom. Courtesy of Mags Harries and Lajos Héder.

### REFERENCES

1. "Arts, Culture, and Transportation: A Creative Placemaking Scan." Commissioned by ArtPlace America. Retrieved 4 May 2018 from <https://www.artplaceamerica.org/view/pdf?f=http://t4america.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Arts-Culture-Field-Scan.pdf>.
2. Raven, Arlene, ed. *Art in the Public Interest* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1989), 10.
3. Bata, A. "Intelligent Transportation Systems for New York City Transit." In *Proceedings of the 14th World Congress on Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS)*, Held Beijing, October 2007. Retrieved 4 May 2018 from <https://trid.trb.org/view/1082379>.
4. Markusen, A. and A Gadwa. "Arts and Culture in Urban or Regional Planning: A Review and Research Agenda." *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 29(3) 379–391. 383. Retrieved 4 May 2018 from <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0739456X09354380>.
5. Abramson, C. (1994). "Safety, Wayfinding, Circulation, and Orientation." *Art and the Transit Experience*. *Places*, 9(2). Retrieved 4 May 2018 from <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/4jr6h2mt>

# READING LIST

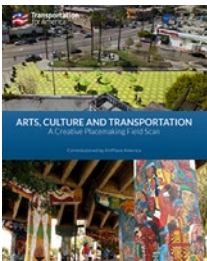
## Envision Nolensville Pike II: Recommendations for Achieving Inclusive Development



This analysis offers recommendations to help decision-makers in the city and region of Nolensville Pike in Nashville make the corridor safer for everyone, improve the economic prospects (and equity) of the area.

<https://www.americansforthearts.org/node/100776>

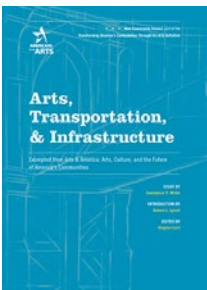
## Arts, Culture and Transportation: A Creative Placemaking Field Scan



This report by ArtPlace America and Transportation for America looks at arts and transportation collaborations and includes case studies.

<https://www.americansforthearts.org/node/99976>

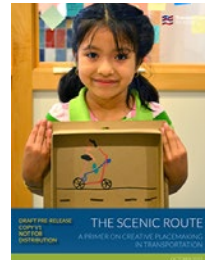
## Arts, Transportation, and Infrastructure



The Americans for the Arts essay examines the connections between transportation and arts and culture. This article is an excerpt from the book *Arts & America: Arts, Culture, and the Future of American Communities*.

<https://www.americansforthearts.org/node/90694>

## The Scenic Route: Getting Started with Creative Placemaking and Transportation



Created by Transportation for America, The Scenic Route is an online guide for transportation professionals who want to collaborate with artists.

<https://www.americansforthearts.org/node/100772>

## Arts & Planning Toolkit



This set of resources and case studies, developed by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, gives insight into how the arts can be incorporated into both transportation and infrastructure efforts.

<https://www.americansforthearts.org/node/100773>

**top image:** Floor-to-ceiling glass mosaics cover the walls of a moving sidewalk connecting the G train at the Court Square line and the E and V at the 23rd Street/Ely Subway stations, New York City. See <https://www.americansforthearts.org/node/94629>



# ORGANIZATIONS

## ArtPlace America

ArtPlace is a creative placemaking hub that includes transportation as one of its key areas of focus.

<http://www.artplaceamerica.org>

## Transportation for America

Transportation for America is a service organization for transportation professionals that provides a number of resources to support collaborations with the arts sector.

<http://www.t4america.org>

## Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC)

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) is the regional planning agency serving the people who live and work in the 101 cities and towns of Metropolitan Boston, and exists to promote smart growth in regional planning, including through the integration of arts and culture.

<https://www.mapc.org/>

**top image:** Bus-Home at Ventura bus stop, Ventura, CA. Artist Dennis Oppenheim. Photo Credit: Donna Granata, Focus on the Masters Archive, Dennis Oppenheim Papers. See <https://www.americansforthearts.org/node/94593>

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Americans for the Arts developed this Fact Sheet as part of the Arts + Social Impact Explorer.

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