



Community Planning and Economic Development Department

News Release

Contact: Rose Lindsay (W) 612.673.5015; (C) 612.250.8661

Minneapolis City Goals: A Safe Place to Call Home ▫ Jobs & Economic Vitality ▫ Eco-Focused ▫ Livable Communities, Healthy Lives ▫ Many People, One Minneapolis ▫ A City That Works

City of Minneapolis's Great Streets Program to Provide Free Training on Leveraging the Creative Economy

Interactive Training Teaches Business Associations and Others Why and How to Leverage Pop-Up Programming and Art in Vacant Storefronts

August 19 (Minneapolis) – On Tuesday, August 20 from 8:15-11:30 a.m. the City of Minneapolis Department of Community Planning and Economic Development will provide a free training to business associations and other community-based organizations about how they can leverage the creative economy through art in vacant storefronts and pop-up programming to build economic and social capital as well as serve community needs. The training, being held at the Soo Local at 3506 Nicollet Ave, is part of the City of Minneapolis's Great Streets Neighborhood Business District Program (Great Streets).

Recognizing the crucial role that healthy neighborhood business districts play in the livability of our city and the competitive challenges they face, the Great Streets program was established by the Minneapolis City Council in 2007 with the goal to cultivate and sustain vibrant neighborhood commercial districts in Minneapolis. Today, small businesses in Minneapolis are supported by Great Streets through a variety of investment tools, including commercial real estate development and business loans, business technical assistance grants, district-wide marketing and business recruitment grants, and façade improvement matching grants to business and property owners.

The Tuesday, August 20 creative economy event is part of an ongoing Great Streets speaker series, bringing the voices of experienced practitioners to staff and board members of business associations and other groups working to maintain the economic vitality of business districts. This session is different in that it is a half-day, interactive idea exchange with several presenters, including Gulgun Kayim, Director of Arts, Culture and Creative Economy, City of Minneapolis; Carrie Christensen, Program Manager of Creative CityMaking; Renan Snowden, Intern with the Washington D.C. Office of Planning's Temporary Urbanism Initiative; Carolyn Payne, Executive Director of the Soo Visual Arts Center and Soo LOCAL; and Joan Vorderbruggen, Founder, Artists in Storefronts.

In the first session, presenters will cover case studies on successful local and national Art in Vacant Storefronts projects and highlight the road map to creating pop-up programming and behind the scenes details that make these events fun for the community and a valuable tool for lasting economic impact.

"In just 8 months of participating in the Artists in Storefronts project, seven properties with a combined vacancy of more than 15 years acquired lease agreements," said Joan Vorderbruggen, Director of Artists in Storefronts.

The second session will be an interactive workshop for participants to engage in small group discussions about their ideas for using the strategies discussed earlier in their specific commercial districts. Presenters who have implemented these strategies will be available to share personal stories, provide feedback to participants, and help build relationships for future work.

There are still a few seats still available for the event; to register call 612.673.5018 by 4:30 p.m. on Monday, August 19. There will be no same day registration.

To learn more about the City of Minneapolis Great Streets program visit [here](#). To learn more about Artists in Storefronts click [here](#).

###