



MEMPHIS
ART PARK

AT THE PROMENADE



BUSINESS PLAN

2016



AT JUAN
CONSULTING



***Catalyzing the renaissance of Memphis
by creating a dynamic bluff-top arts & culture campus
for our city and its emerging artists***

memphisartpark.org

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INTRODUCTION

The 21st century will belong to the distinctive city, and entrepreneurial artists...are key to that future.

-- "How Cities Can Nurture Cultural Entrepreneurs,"

Ann Markusen, University of Minnesota, Kauffman Foundation, November 2013

It is widely recognized that the key to innovation, economic progress, and cultural enrichment is the amount of interaction and idea exchange among a population. Cities become more dynamic and distinctive the more its creatives interact. After all, the integration of Memphis' black and white cultures in the mid-1900s gave the city its mojo, which inspired the world.

Memphis Art Park ("MAP") proposes to create two community art centers and an outdoor art park, among other amenities, on a public campus along the downtown Memphis riverfront. Such a creative hub would foster integration, interaction and idea exchange among local creatives and entrepreneurs, thus further kindling the city's current cultural renaissance. While our groundbreaking artistic past is our heritage, today's emerging artists are the key to our future; so MAP's mission is to help nurture the soulful, artistic, and historically-innovative creativity that is inherent to our city's DNA.

We are confident that MAP will offer the ideal public forum and creative environment to (1) help cultivate our creative class and cultural entrepreneurs, and (2) reestablish Memphis as a thriving arts-and-entertainment hub as well as a distinctive cultural destination.

MAP was inspired by the historic and monumental Church Park & Auditorium and has been developed primarily via input from local artists, creatives and arts organizations. Perched high on our river bluff -- our city's doorstep -- MAP would:

- serve as a fertile incubator for local emerging artists. MAP's arts facilities, resources, and downtown visibility would empower ambitious filmmakers, musicians, performing artists, dancers, visual artists and other creatives to develop, expose and market their art.
- create a hub that not only brings together talented creatives but encourages collaboration among our city's various arts and artists. With a constant circulation of talented creatives, the interchange of ideas and cross-pollination of disciplines would naturally and frequently occur. Art movements and innovation are seeded in such fertile forums.
- foster a synergistic and collaborative team environment, where artist support and development are shared goals among MAP's partner organizations.
- nurture arts-and-entertainment-related entrepreneurialism, which is one of the most organic entrepreneurial routes for Memphis. Just as artistic creativity has been one of our city's strongest assets, so has our innovative entrepreneurialism. Fusing the two would be the key that helps unlock Memphis' full potential.
- increase access to the arts for low-income and minority communities through arts education and community outreach programs. This will not only aid cultural and economic development but enrich communities, bridge racial divides, and foster social harmony.
- significantly transform the river bluff into a beautiful, dynamic downtown destination where locals and tourists can enjoy our emerging arts & culture amid spectacular river views.

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The exciting Memphis Art Park proposal makes a new use of the [Promenade] site without changing its civic nature. Creating the Art Park on this block would be a great benefit to the riverfront and downtown, and deserves City support.

—Jeff Speck, “Memphis Riverfront Recommendations”

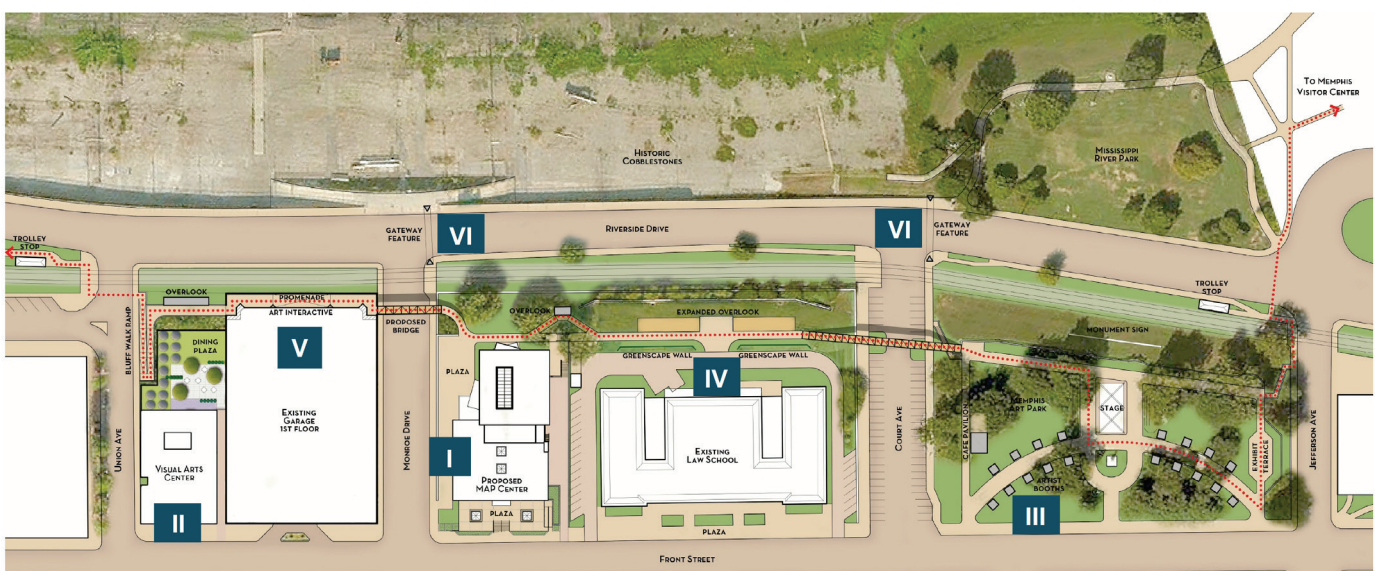
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SITE PLAN

The downtown Promenade was set aside upon the founding of Memphis for public use and enjoyment. MAP offers the city a compelling plan that honors the letter and spirit of the public-use easement protecting the Promenade. MAP would stimulate the city's arts & culture, while adding a burst of energy to downtown and the under-utilized Front Street Promenade.

In order to bring this project to life, we propose to:

- (I)** convert the Cossitt Library buildings at Front and Monroe into MAP's Community Arts Center for film, music, dance, and performing arts with a digital library and arts-resource center, among many other amenities;
- (II)** convert the fire station at Front and Union into MAP's Visual Art Center with an art gallery + exhibition venue, arts facilities, a rooftop event deck, and a bluff-top café;
- (III)** transform Memphis Park to the north of the University of Memphis School of Law into MAP's Art Park, which would include an outdoor artist market, a café, and a performance pavilion for theatre, music, dance and film, among other showcases and events;
- (IV)** enhance the Riverbluff Walkway behind the Law School in order to increase its utility and attractiveness to the public as well as to better integrate MAP's arts campus;
- (V)** beautify the exterior of the neighboring Parking Garage with green walls, murals, and LED lighting; plus complete the Riverbluff Walkway's missing link between the Cossitt bluff-top and the trolley stop at Union and Riverside by: building a pedestrian bridge over Monroe to connect the Cossitt bluff-top with the parking garage and creating a pedestrian walkway along the western edge of the parking garage that then ramps down and around the fire station until it connects with the existing bluff-walk at Union and Riverside; and...
- (VI)** construct new pedestrian Crosswalks across Riverside Drive at both Monroe and Court Avenues with LED-illuminated gateways to better and safely connect Mississippi River Park with MAP.



COMMUNITY ARTS CENTER (I)

Community Arts Center (the Cossitt buildings at Front & Monroe)

Located on the Promenade overlooking the Mississippi River, the Cossitt Library began its existence in 1888 as the Cossitt-Goodwyn Institute, Memphis' first public library. To continue honoring its public-use legacy, both library buildings (53,600 ft²) would be renovated and transformed into a public-use arts center. The new center would provide the arts community with (1) access to amenities that may otherwise be unaffordable or inaccessible to young creatives or recent arts-graduates and (2) an intimate yet high-profile public forum to develop, mix, and showcase their work. MAP would also offer the public—both locals and tourists alike—a more beautiful and dynamic Promenade filled with our city's emerging arts & culture.



Modern Wing:

Added in 1958, the library's "International Style" modern wing faces Front Street. As part of the overall renovation, our plan is to redesign the submerged, uninviting courtyard and first-floor entryway as well as the building's facades on the south side.



COMMUNITY ARTS CENTER (cont'd)

MAP Entryway

The modern wing's first floor would be extended to Front Street, with the extension's rooftop serving as the foundation for a new second-floor public plaza.



Instead of the barrier-to-entry created by the stone wall and chain-link fence that now separate the building's entryway from the sidewalk, the new plaza would offer visitors an expansive public gathering place with an ascending staircase that leads directly from Front Street into a new main entrance on the second floor.



The modern wing's southern facade would also be redesigned.

The area outside of the first floor would be expanded and turned into a patio with MAP's coffee and pastry shop, located just inside.

The second floor's grid enclosure currently blocking the view of the river would be transformed into an open balcony with green screen:



MAP's balcony would provide visitors with great views of downtown and the Mississippi River.



Welcome Center

Located just inside the new second-floor entryway would be MAP's Lobby and Welcome Center. Here visitors can find information not only on MAP's arts amenities on offer but also its upcoming events, films, workshops, lectures and performances.



Digital-Media/Arts-Resource Center and Public Library Branch

Below the Welcome Center on the first floor, the current Cossitt Branch Library would be converted into a digital-only public library branch combined with a digital-media center. MAP's media center would include an arts resource center for local artists; an online digital archive of area artists (past and present); and a hub for Memphis arts & culture history.



Film Center

MAP’s Film Center would feature a community art-house cinema and screening room for local filmmakers. Potential beneficiaries also include: Indie Memphis, On Location: Memphis International Film & Music Fest, FuelFilm, Outflix International Gay & Lesbian Film Festival, Lil’ Film Fest, and the Memphis & Shelby County Film and Television Commission.



St. Antony’s College, Zaha Hadid Architects

The Film Center’s cinema would double as a lecture and event space, which would allow both film and non-film-related entities to stage lectures, panel discussions and workshops as well as film festivals, screenings, and other events.



Film Center at Lincoln Center

MAP’s Film Center would also offer an audio lab, an editing room, a resource center with film-equipment rental, along with a photo studio, which could also double as a digital recording studio for film, TV and webisode auditions.

Atrium

Located just past the Welcome Center, an atrium would serve as the central spine of MAP's Community Arts Center, by connecting the modern and historic wings and extending above to the third floor.



Extensive skylights above the third floor would illuminate the atrium while new balconies in the background provide expansive views of the Mississippi River.



Historic Wing:

Built in 1923 and perched high atop the bluff facing the Mississippi river, the Romanesque-style historic wing now sits unused and neglected.

As part of the overall renovation, our plan is to integrate the modern and historic wings internally via the atrium, as previously illustrated, and externally, by aesthetically fusing the two wings, part of which includes a new outdoor plaza and fountain.

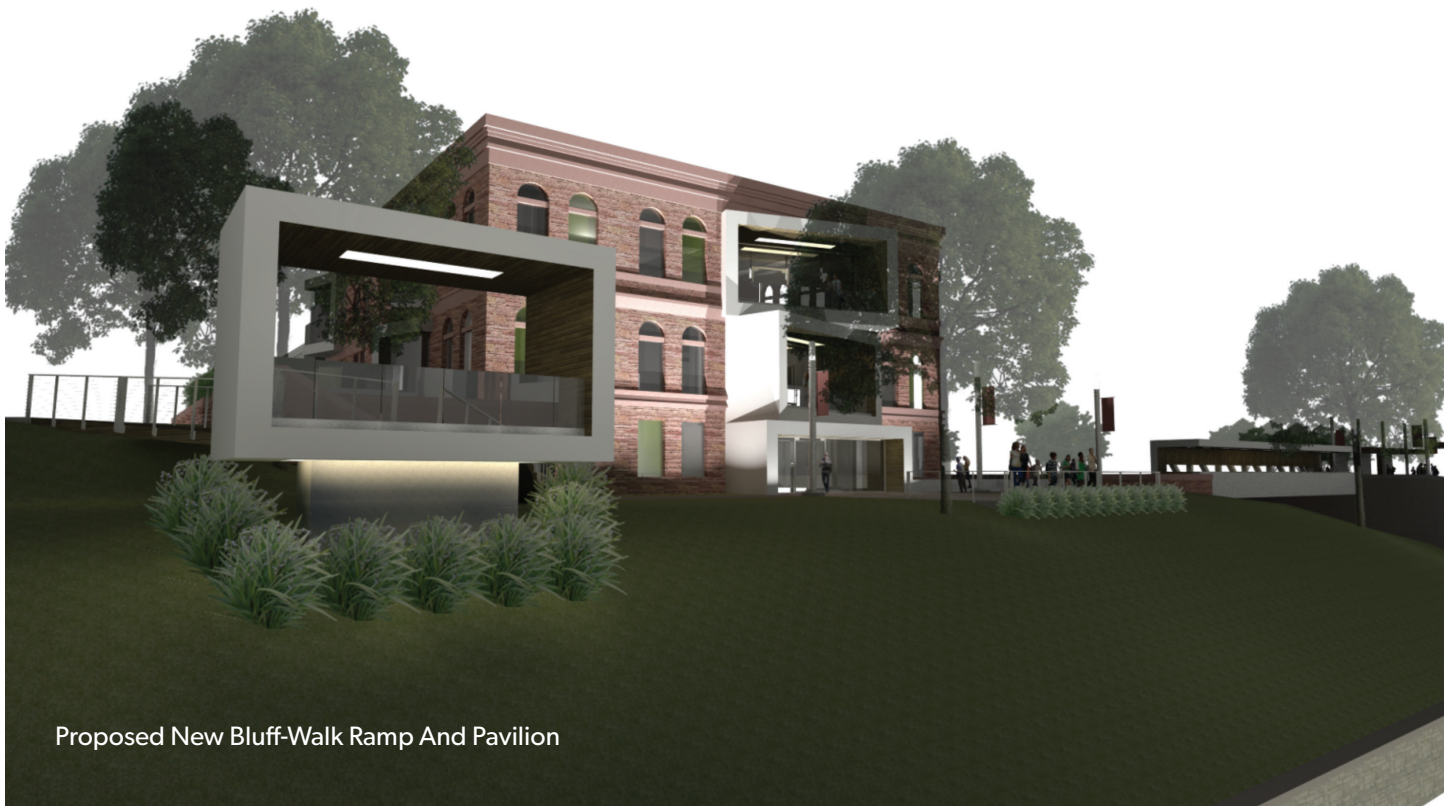


Observation Decks

In order to take advantage of the spectacular river views from the bluff-top behind the Cossitt, MAP plans to add three new observation decks/balconies to the building's western facade.

Bluff Walk

Also, the Bluff-walk behind the neighboring University of Memphis School of Law would be extended and connect with MAP.



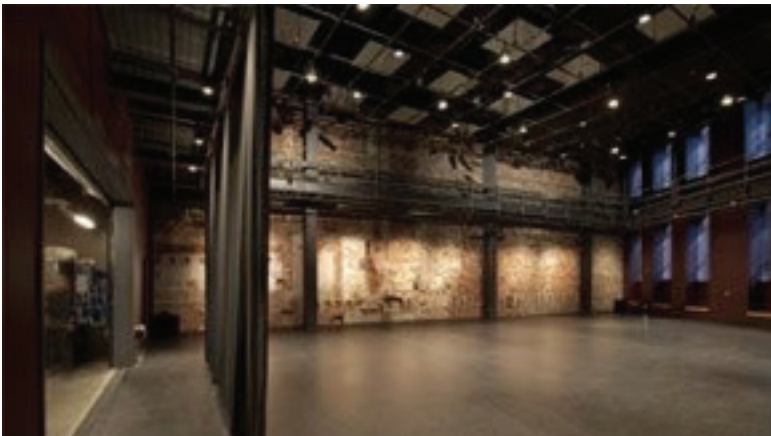
Proposed New Bluff-Walk Ramp And Pavilion

Music Center

The Cossitt's historic wing would house MAP's Music Center, among other amenities. Local musicians and music organizations believe that MAP would best serve the music community by offering: (1) a music resource center; (2) a recording lab; and (3) rehearsal space. MAP's black box theatre (described below) would also double as a performance venue for emerging musicians. The Music Center would benefit artists from every genre and help serve as a launching pad for the Memphis music scene.

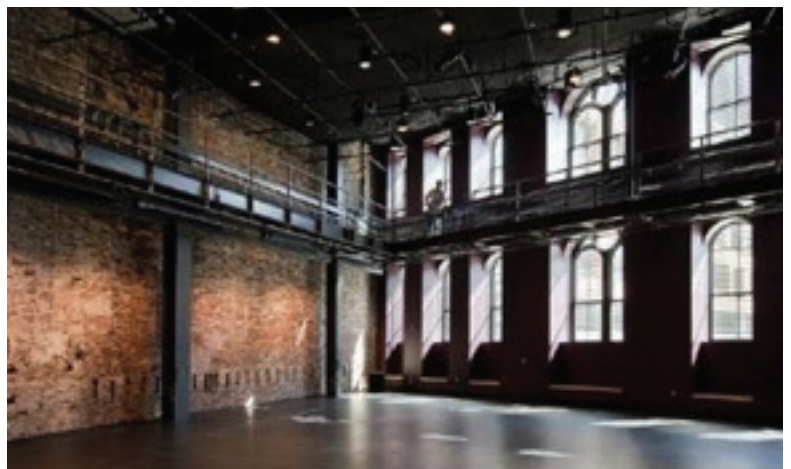
Performing Arts Center

A two-story cavernous space on the first floor's north side provides an ideal space for a black-box theatre, offering the community a remarkable downtown rehearsal and performance venue for everything from plays and musicals to poetry, spoken word, improv, comedy, and live music. The Performing Arts Center would benefit a variety of artists, including solo performers, start-up theatre groups, and established theatre organizations that are in need of extra space due to overlapping productions or expanded programs (e.g. Voices of the South, Playback Memphis, etc). Additionally, the black box theatre would help fill the void created by the loss of both Ewing Children's Theater and Morgan Woods Children's Theatre. Such a flex-use theatre would also be a part of MAP's Music Center and serve as a performance space for the local music community.



Located in the Paramount Center at Emerson College in Boston, the Jackie Liebergott Black Box Theatre (pictured to the left and below) would inspire the design of MAP's Performing Arts Center theater. The featured theatre is a multi-functional space with potential seating for 125 and is specifically designed for small-scale productions. It is equipped with theatrical lighting and stage-and-audience seating platforms with moveable seating.

The theatre's large windows, which are quite similar to those at the Cossitt, have blackout ability, which is ideal for multi-purpose uses.



Dance Center

After heeding the advice from local dancers and dance organizations, MAP plans to offer two professional dance studios. These studios would be divided by a retractable wall, which could be removed to create either a large dance studio or an intimate venue for dance performances. The dance center would benefit independent/street dancers, experimental dance troupes, and emerging dance organizations, such as U-Dig Jookin' Academy and Racine + Southern Dance Exchange, among others.



Flex-Use Space and Offices

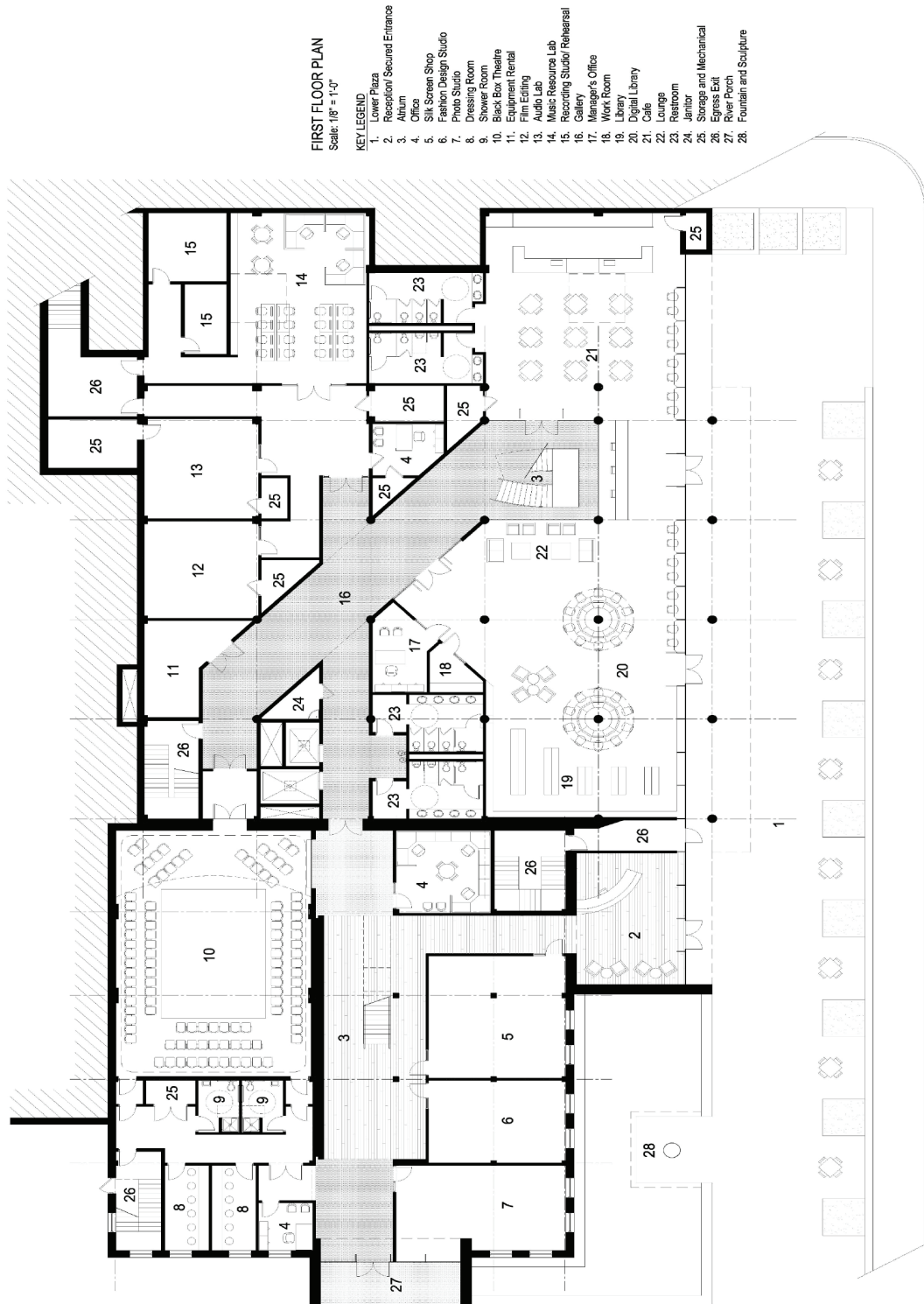
Other amenities scattered throughout MAP would include flex-use rooms for classes, conferences, meetings, etc.

Office space would also be available for MAP's employees and partner organizations, as well as for artists or other arts-related entities who may need temporary office space.



MAP'S Community Arts Center: View Of Upper And Lower Plazas

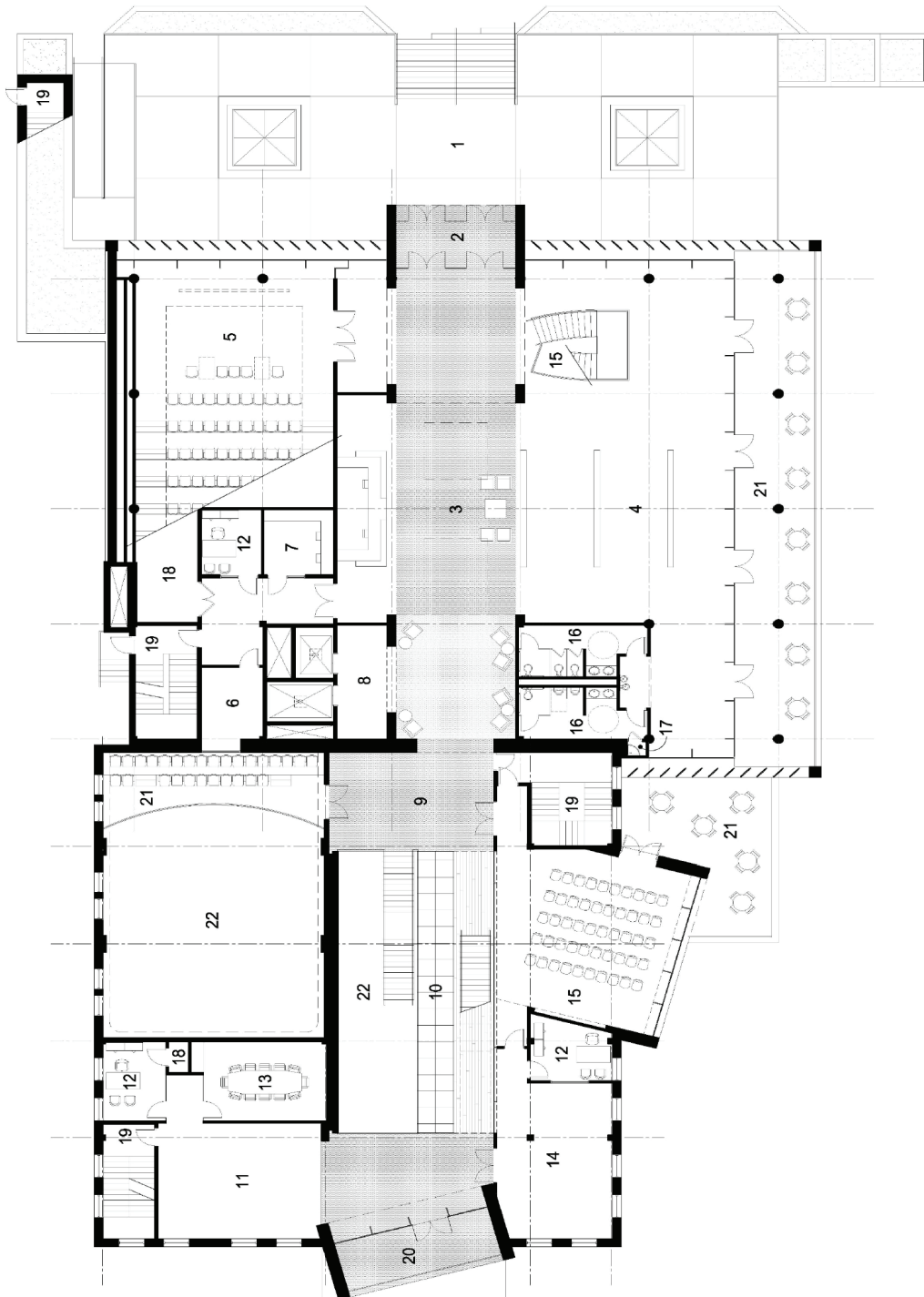
Community Arts Center—Floor Plans



SECOND FLOOR PLAN
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"

KEY LEGEND

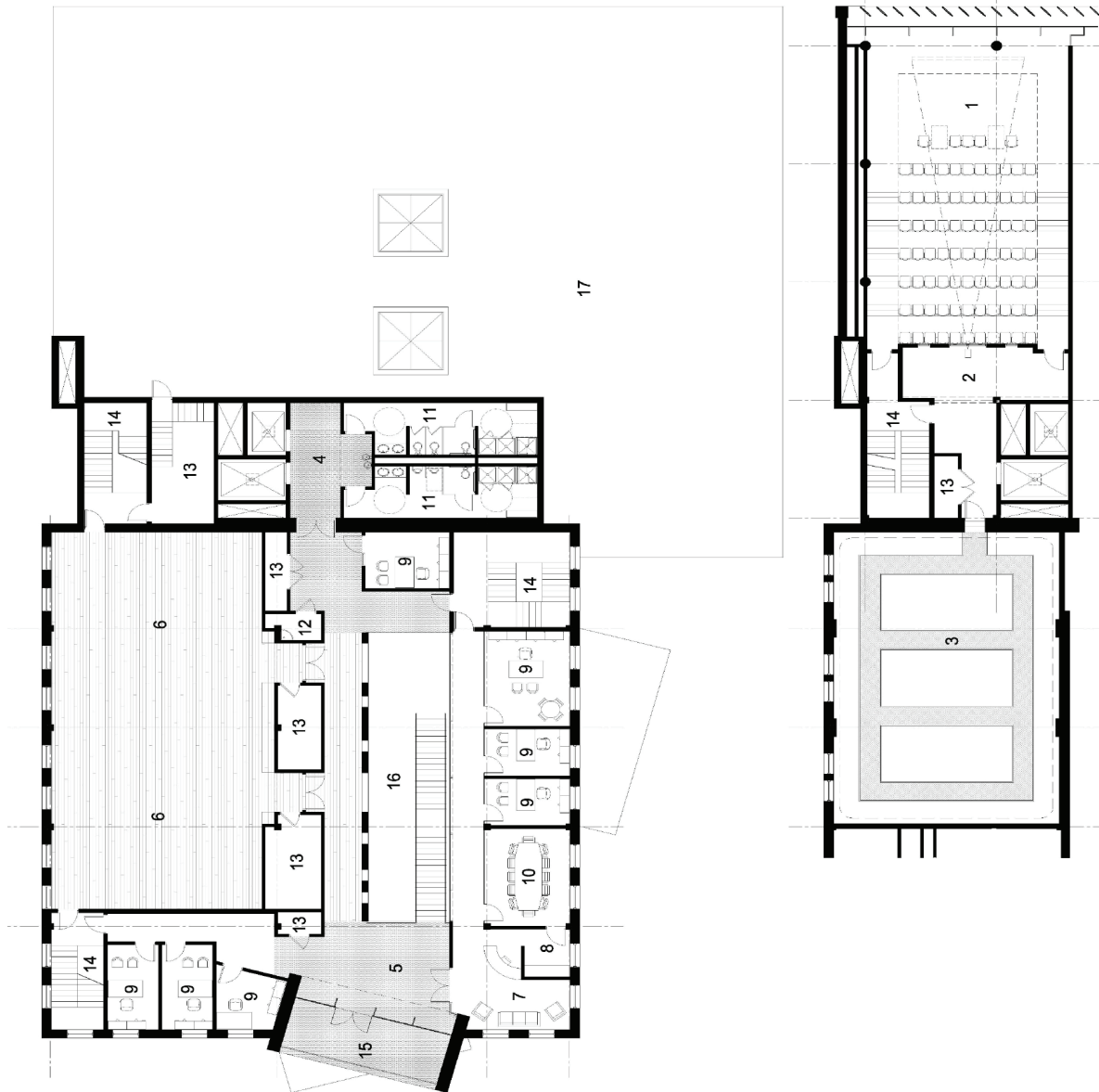
1. Upper Plaza
2. Entry/Vestibule
3. Lobby and Welcome Center
4. Art Gallery
5. Chemical Screening Room
6. Production Booth
7. Security Office
8. Elevator Lobby
9. Atrium
10. Glass Catwalk
11. Studio Lab
12. Office
13. Conference Room
14. Digital Print Shop
15. Classroom/Meeting
16. Restroom
17. Janitor
18. Storage and Mechanical
19. Egress Exit
20. River Porch
21. Balcony
22. Open To Below



THIRD FLOOR PLAN & MEZZANINE
Scale: 1/8" = 1'-0"

KEY LEGEND

1. Cinema
2. Screening/Film Booth
3. Catwalk System
4. Elevator Lobby
5. Atrium
6. Dance Studio
7. Reception
8. Copy
9. Office
10. Conference Room
11. Restroom/Lockers and Showers
12. Janitor
13. Storage and Mechanical
14. Egress Exit
15. River Porch
16. Open To Below
17. Roof



Community Arts Center – Concept Budget

Prepared by Montgomery Martin Contractors, 6/30/2016

| Conversion of Cossitt Library into MAP's Community Arts Center | Budget |
|---|---------------------|
| Site Improvements | \$453,561 |
| Exterior Fountain & Sculpture | \$97,374 |
| Interior Demolition & Structural Modification | \$755,765 |
| Exterior Modification | \$561,935 |
| South Elevation & Addition (new ext, incl. lower plaza & upper balcony) | \$508,200 |
| River Porch | \$278,925 |
| South Elevation Projection | \$117,533 |
| New Plaza/Entry East Elevation | \$995,984 |
| Reception / Secured Entrance & 2nd Floor Balcony | \$209,181 |
| New Toilets (3rd Floor) | \$179,626 |
| New Ext. Steps/Storage/Mech Room (north elevation - addition) | \$154,400 |
| Building Infill (1st - 3rd) Stair/Elevator/Shaft/Circulation | \$723,948 |
| New Stairs | \$115,562 |
| Atrium | \$398,121 |
| Plumbing / HVAC / FP /Electrical | \$2,810,698 |
| Interior Build-Out Finishes | <u>\$3,172,234</u> |
| Sub-Total: | \$11,533,047 |

| Other Costs | Budget |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Design Fees @ 10% | \$1,153,304 |
| Developer Fee @ 5% | \$576,652 |
| Rendering | \$17,757 |
| Reimbursables | \$65,109 |
| Management Costs | \$147,976 |
| Marketing | \$118,381 |
| Legal | \$118,381 |
| Project Contingency | <u>\$473,523</u> |
| Sub-Total | \$2,671,083 |

| FF&E | Budget |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Cinema | \$69,221 |
| Film & Music Center | \$86,726 |
| Façade Illumination | \$96,909 |
| Theatre | \$188,771 |
| Misc FF&E | <u>\$97,664</u> |
| Sub-Total | \$539,291 |

| Community Arts Center | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Total Concept Budget | \$14,743,421 |

VISUAL ARTS CENTER (II)

Visual Art Center (fire station at Front & Union)

The fire station at Front and Union would provide an opportune space for MAP's Visual Art Center. According to emerging self-taught artists, Shelby County School creatives and recent art-college graduates, there is a fundamental need in Memphis for public access to visual-art facilities.



The vision to renovate the fire station into MAP's Visual Art Center involves creating (1) a gallery/exhibition venue on the 1st floor, (2) an indoor/outdoor bluff-top café on the west side of the 1st floor, (3) visual art facilities in the basement and on the 2nd floor, (4) offices on the 2nd floor, and (5) a rooftop event deck with a river view.

Former University of Memphis architecture student Roy Beauchamp creatively (re)designed and enhanced the existing architecture of the fire station into MAP's Visual Art Center. The mostly-concrete facade on the second floor of the current fire station would be reconfigured to include a mostly glass-encased façade.



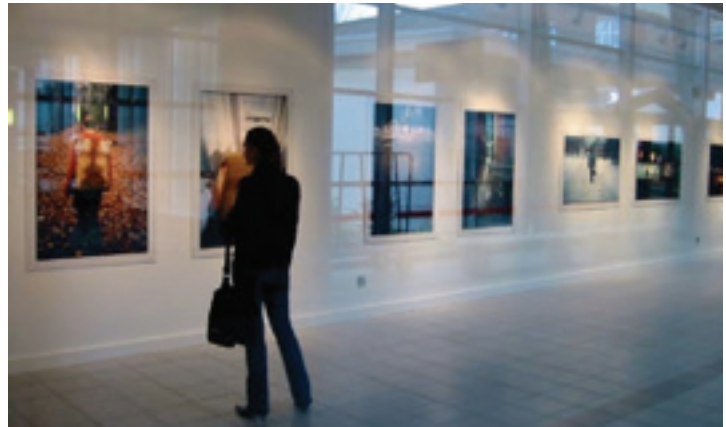
Visual Art Center designs by Roy Beauchamp

Entryway

On the south side of the fire station, a more inviting entryway would be created for the Visual Art Center. The Front Street entrance would boast views of the river and lead directly into the Visual Art Center's gallery.

Visual Art Gallery

The wide open space on the 1st floor of the fire station, which was built to house the station's fire trucks, would make for an ideal visual art gallery, event and exhibition space given its tall ceilings, natural lighting, large garage doors, and vast open space.



Café and Dining Plaza

A bluff-top café would also be included on the west side of the 1st floor, where the fire station’s current kitchen is located. Such a cafe could also serve as a showcase venue for our city’s emerging culinary artists by periodically featuring local chefs who are looking for an “open-mic” kitchen to try out their experimental culinary creations.



Seating would be located inside the café as well as outside on a new café plaza—currently (and depressingly) a parking lot. Such an outdoor dining plaza would include a garden with beautiful landscaping and patio seating with river views.



Visual Art Facilities

The eastern half of the second floor and basement of the fire station would provide ideal spaces for MAP's visual art facilities. According to local artists, the visual art facilities that are most needed include: a digital print shop (computers and high-end printers), a silk-screen shop, and a photo studio and lab. MAP would also welcome basing a fashion design studio at the Visual Art Center, which the founder behind Memphis Fashion Week is pursuing.

Offices and Meeting Spaces

The western half of the second floor, which currently houses the fire station's offices, would likewise be used for MAP's office space as well as meeting rooms.

Rooftop Terrace

A garden terrace with event space and related facilities would be added to the fire station's third floor rooftop. Such a terrace would take full advantage of MAP's bluff-top location and spectacular views of the river.

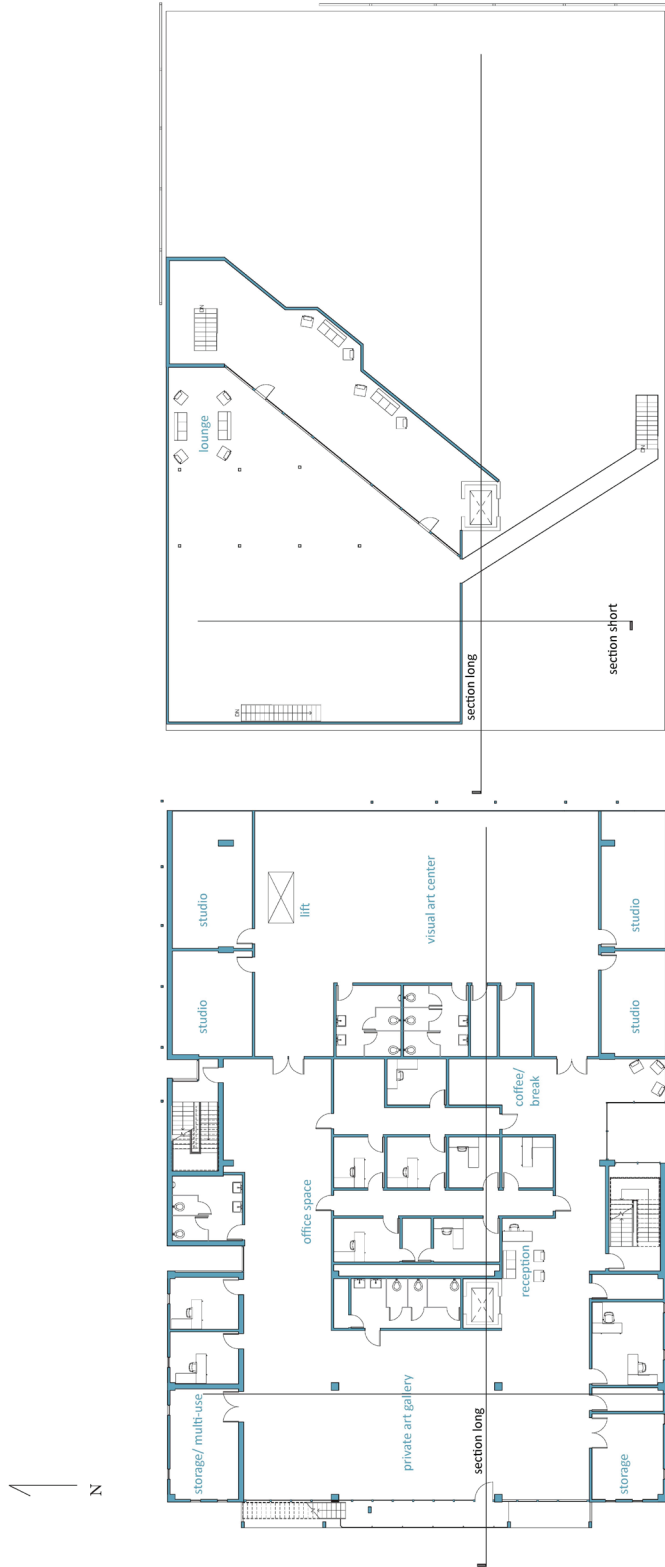


Visual Art Center—Floor Plans:

Prepared by Montgomery Martin Contractors, 6/30/2016



floor plans



terrace floor plan 1'-0"=1/8"

second floor plan 1'-0"= 1/8"

Visual Arts Center – Concept Budget

Prepared by Montgomery Martin Contractors, 6/30/2016

| Conversion of Fire Station into MAP's Visual Art Center | Budget |
|--|--------------------|
| Exterior Improvements | \$625,000 |
| Convert Fire Station to Art Center | \$2,800,000 |
| General Conditions/Supervision/Fee/Permit/Insurance/Bond | \$411,000 |
| Contingency @ 10% | \$383,600 |
| Sub-Total: | \$4,219,600 |

| Other Costs | Budget |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Design Fees @ 10% | \$421,960 |
| Developer Fee @ 5% | \$210,980 |
| Rendering | \$6,497 |
| Reimbursables | \$23,822 |
| Management Costs | \$54,140 |
| Marketing | \$43,312 |
| Legal | \$43,312 |
| Project Contingency | \$173,248 |
| Sub-Total | \$977,270 |

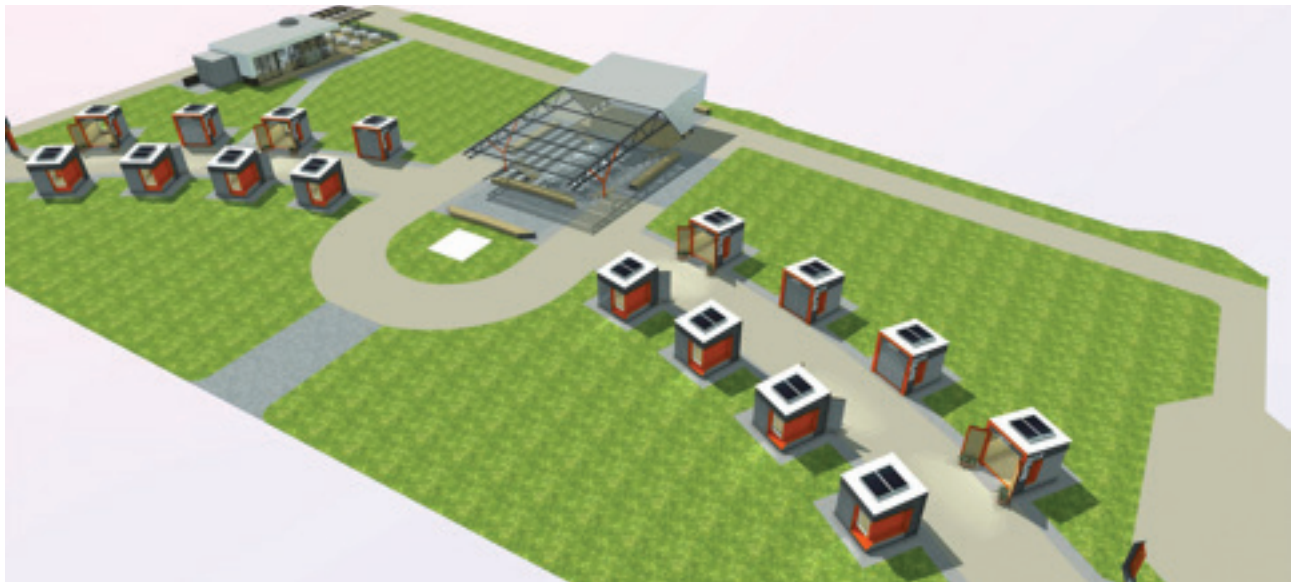
| FF&E | Budget |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Visual Art | \$47,746 |
| Misc FF&E | \$35,732 |
| Sub-Total | \$83,478 |

| Visual Arts Center | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Total Concept Budget | \$5,280,348 |

ART PARK (III)

Art Park (Front & Court)

As an additional way to further connect the Promenade's public spaces and to complement MAP's mission, MAP proposes to turn Memphis Park to the north of the Law School into an art park that includes a performance pavilion, an artist market, and a cafe.

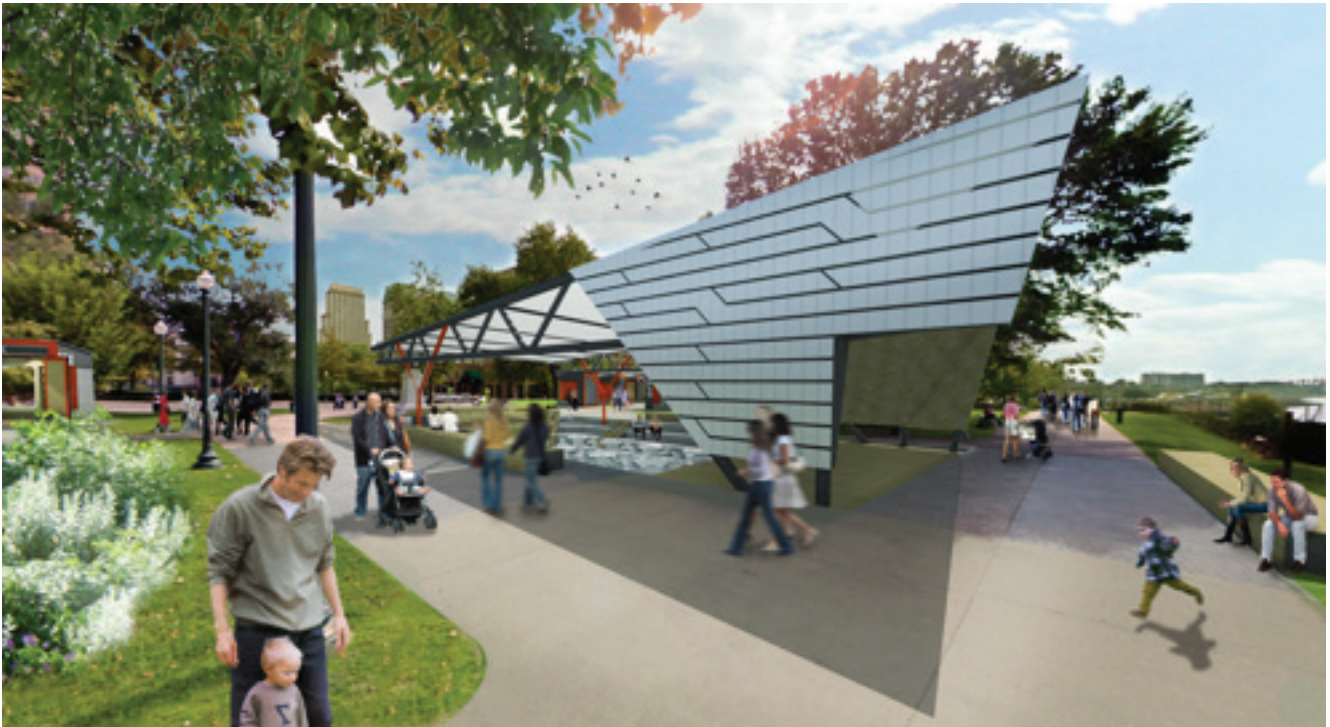


Entering Art Park from the east, the performance pavilion lies straight ahead facing the river; the artist market arcs along the north-south sidewalk; and the cafe is in the southwest corner.



Performance Pavilion

Art Park's outdoor performance pavilion would provide artists and the public with an intimate venue for music, dance, performing arts, and film, among other showcases.



Art Park's performance pavilion was designed so that visitors would get to enjoy not only the stage performances but also sweeping views of the horizon, the Mississippi River and the Hernando de Soto Bridge in the background. What's more, this pavilion provides both bench-style seating as well as tables and chairs, which could be taken advantage of by downtown's weekday lunch crowd.

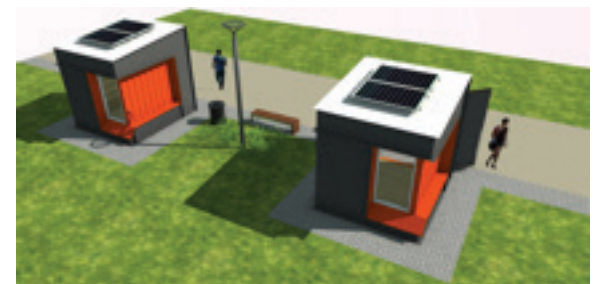


Artist Market

Memphis does not currently enjoy a year-round artist market. MAP's Art Park would establish one with 16 vendor booths for local artists and creatives to sell their wares.



The climate-controlled artist booths would be made from recycled shipping containers that can be opened fully during market hours and locked up securely at other times.



Art Park Café

MAP's Art Park would also feature an outdoor café, which would be a wonderful complement to the whole art park experience.



MAP's art-park café would feature both indoor and outdoor seating, with views of downtown, the river and the rest of the park, to be enjoyed by the public.



Public Event Space

In addition to events programmed by MAP, local artists and the University of Memphis, Art Park would offer an ideal venue for public events hosted by others, such as Memphis in May, Memphis Music & Heritage Festival, and Downtown Memphis Commission's "Downtown Alive!" concert series, among others.

Art Park

Art Park would certainly complement MAP's community arts center at the Cossitt and its Visual Art Center at the fire station. What's more, it would turn an underutilized park into a beautiful, dynamic and enjoyable space for the public.



Art Park – Concept Budget

Prepared by Montgomery Martin Contractors, 6/30/2016

| Conversion of Memphis Park into MAP's Art Park | Budget |
|--|------------------|
| Misc Grading & Demolition | \$129,000 |
| Walks (existing) | \$0 |
| Art Park Café | \$75,000 |
| Café Exterior Canopy/Paving | \$22,000 |
| Performance Pavilion | \$280,000 |
| Store Booths | \$180,000 |
| Monumental Sign | \$20,000 |
| Landscaping | \$50,000 |
| Lighting | \$30,000 |
| General Conditions/Supervision/Fee/Permit/Insurance/Bond | \$94,320 |
| Contingency @ 10% | <u>\$88,032</u> |
| Sub-Total: | \$968,352 |

| Other Costs | Budget |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Design Fees @ 10% | \$96,835 |
| Developer Fee @ 5% | \$48,418 |
| Rendering | \$1,491 |
| Reimbursables | \$5,467 |
| Management Costs | \$12,425 |
| Marketing | \$9,940 |
| Legal | \$9,940 |
| Project Contingency | <u>\$39,758</u> |
| Sub-Total | \$224,273 |

| FF&E | Budget |
|------------------|----------------|
| Misc FF&E | \$8,200 |
| Sub-Total | \$8,200 |

| Art Park | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Total Concept Budget | \$1,200,825 |

LAW SCHOOL BLUFF-WALK (IV)

MAP proposes to further enhance the Riverbluff Walkway behind the University of Memphis School of Law just north of the Cossitt, not only to improve the public's enjoyment of the Promenade, but also to create a more exciting connection between MAP's Community Arts Center at the Cossitt and Art Park, just north of the Law School. Today's Riverbluff Walkway behind the Law School offers a pretty but simple public amenity with an overlook that provides a nice view of the river but with only a single set of benches.



MAP's new designs take inspiration from the High Line in New York, which is a 1.45-mile-long linear park in Manhattan on an elevated section of a disused New York Central Railroad spur. The High Line features amenities, such as built-in lounge chairs, that are quite popular as they allow the public to take full advantage of the elevated park and its views of the Hudson River.

MAP proposes similar enhancements that give visitors more reason to stay and enjoy the Promenade and its beautiful views. Such improvements include a greatly expanded look-out area, lounge chairs, more park benches, a sculpture garden, and a green wall separating the bluff-walk from the Law School's loading zone:



As illustrated, the expanded lookout area would extend the full length of the Law School's bluff-walk. Combined with the addition of many more park benches and numerous built-in lounge chairs, MAP's new Law School bluff-walk would offer the public more amenities.



Visitors coming from MAP's community arts center at the Cossitt and heading to the new Memphis Art Park on the other side of the Law School would get to enjoy a sculpture garden on their way, while the Law School's loading zone would be hidden from view by a green wall.



All in all, such additions would greatly enhance the bluff-walk experience and allow visitors to take full advantage of the Promenade and its spectacular views of the Mississippi River.



Law School Bluff-Walk – Concept Budget

Prepared by Montgomery Martin Contractors, 6/30/2016

| Enhancements to Bluff-Walk behind the Law School | Budget |
|--|------------------|
| Misc Grading & Demolition | \$50,000 |
| Retaining Wall | \$136,500 |
| Expand Overlook | \$81,000 |
| Bluffwalk Paving | \$68,750 |
| Railing | \$34,000 |
| Green Screen Fencing | \$25,500 |
| Built-in Lounge Seating | \$30,000 |
| Benches/Misc Furnishings | \$7,500 |
| Misc Improvements | \$25,000 |
| Landscaping | \$50,000 |
| Lighting | \$50,000 |
| General Conditions/Supervision/Fee/Permit/Insurance/Bond | \$66,990 |
| Contingency @ 10% | <u>\$62,524</u> |
| Sub-Total: | \$687,764 |

| Other Costs | Budget |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Design Fees @ 10% | \$68,776 |
| Developer Fee @ 5% | \$34,388 |
| Rendering | \$1,059 |
| Reimbursables | \$3,883 |
| Management Costs | \$8,824 |
| Marketing | \$7,060 |
| Legal | \$7,060 |
| Project Contingency | <u>\$28,238</u> |
| Sub-Total | \$159,288 |

| FF&E | Budget |
|------------------|----------------|
| Misc FF&E | \$5,824 |
| Sub-Total | \$5,824 |

| Law School Bluff-Walk | |
|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Total Concept Budget | \$852,876 |

PARKING GARAGE & BLUFF-WALK (V)

Garage Beautification & Extended Bluff-Walk (Front & Monroe)

The current public parking garage to the south of the Cossitt building across Monroe does not do our river bluff justice. Our city's façade deserves a prettier face than this:



Thus, MAP proposes to (1) beautify the City-owned public parking garage located to the south of MAP's Community Arts Center at the Cossitt; (2) connect the river bluff behind the arts center with the garage via a pedestrian bridge over Monroe; and (3) create a pedestrian walkway through the west side of the garage to complete the Riverbluff Walkway's missing link, which extends from the river bluff behind the Cossitt to the north of Monroe all the way to the trolley stop at Union and Riverside Drive.

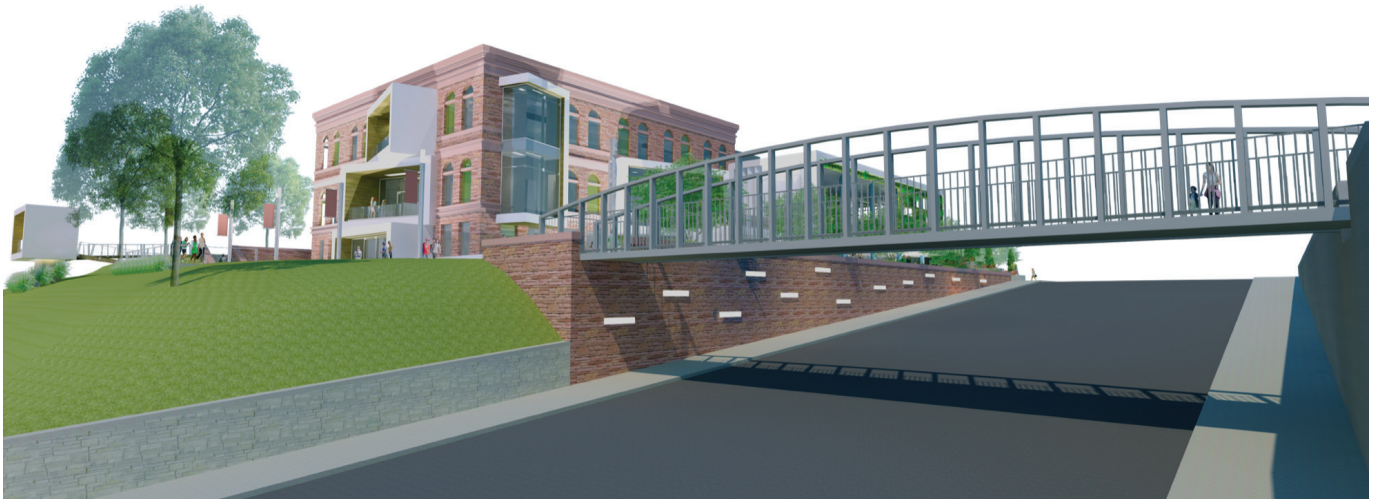
Garage Facelift

Beginning with beautification, the exterior of the garage would be beautified with green walls, murals and LED lighting, as sampled below:



Pedestrian Bridge

To provide full public connectivity along the Promenade (and to plug the glaring gap in today's pedestrian Riverbluff Walkway), MAP proposes to connect the neighboring parking garage with the bluff behind the Community Arts Center via a new pedestrian bridge over Monroe—similar to the pedestrian bridge over Court that connects the Law School with Memphis Park.



Riverbluff Walkway

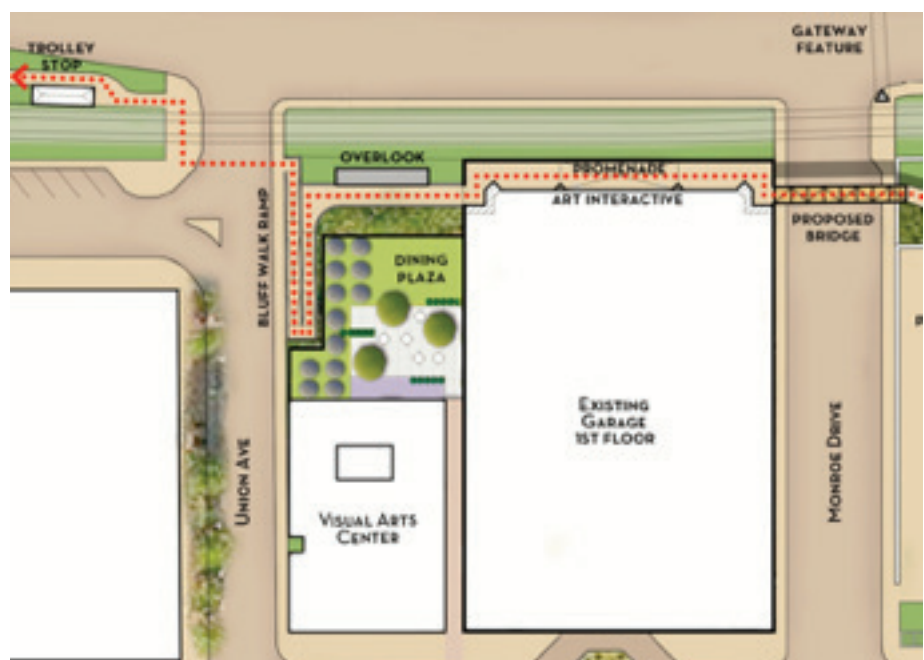
The Riverbluff Walkway's new extension would enter the parking garage on one of the upper levels on the north side via the pedestrian bridge. Pedestrians would then be ushered into a lobby area just inside the garage. The interior of this lobby area as well as the walkway along the garage's western wall would be designed with decorative lighting and art displays and feature a security wall separating the bluff-walk from the rest of the garage.



From the north, the garage's pedestrian walkway would start on the 3rd level then descend to the 2nd level along the inside of the garage's western wall. As shown, the lattice concrete work along the new walkway would be removed on the 2nd and 3rd levels to allow for river views.



The bluff-walk would exit the south side of the parking garage and continue behind the Visual Art Center via a pedestrian ramp that would wind its way down and around the bluff until at grade with Union. The walkway would then connect with the existing Riverbluff Walkway that resumes at Union and Riverside. All in all, this new extension from the Cossitt to Union would complete the gap in the Riverbluff Walkway that currently exists in the heart of the Promenade. What's more, it would also fully integrate all of MAP.



Parking Garage & Bluff-Walk – Concept Budget

Prepared by Montgomery Martin Contractors, 6/30/2016

| Pedestrian Bridge, Extended Bluff-Walk & Garage Beautification | Budget |
|---|--------------------|
| Pedestrian Bridge | \$635,589 |
| Garage Exterior Upgrades | \$863,127 |
| Bluff-walk through Garage | \$251,821 |
| Bluff-walk behind the Visual Art Center/Fire Station | \$193,424 |
| Sub-Total: | \$1,943,961 |

| Other Costs | Budget |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Design Fees @ 10% | \$194,396 |
| Developer Fee @ 5% | \$97,198 |
| Rendering | \$2,993 |
| Reimbursables | \$10,975 |
| Management Costs | \$24,942 |
| Marketing | \$19,954 |
| Legal | \$19,954 |
| Project Contingency | \$79,815 |
| Sub-Total | \$450,226 |

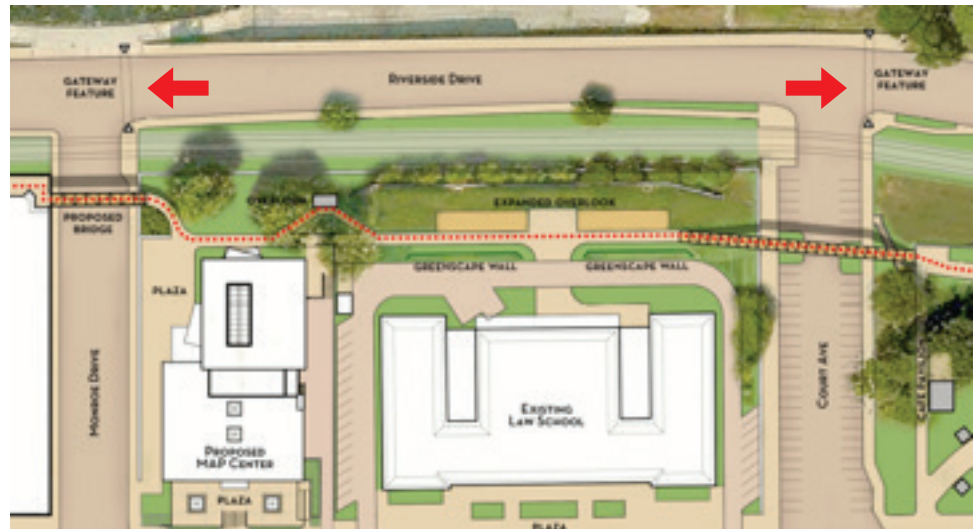
| FF&E | Budget |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Misc FF&E | \$16,462 |
| Sub-Total | \$16,462 |

| Parking Garage & Bluff-Walk | |
|--|--------------------|
| Total Concept Budget | \$2,410,649 |

RIVERSIDE DRIVE CROSSWALKS (VI)

Riverside Drive Crosswalks (Riverside at Monroe + Riverside at Court)

MAP's designs include two unique crosswalk structures across Riverside Drive—one at Monroe Avenue and another at Court Avenue, which would connect MAP with Mississippi River Park.



These two sculptural steel gateways would not only mark the entrance to the Memphis Art Park campus for pedestrians crossing Riverside, but also to the City of Memphis for motorists driving along Riverside.



These gateways would feature graphic signage and color-changing LED lighting that assist with traffic control and improve the safety of pedestrians crossing Riverside Drive.



These unique crosswalks would also include raised paver crosswalks that would serve as a traffic calming agent and improve pedestrian safety.

Altogether, these two innovative crosswalk structures would provide striking and enhanced connections between Mississippi River Park and MAP's Community Art Center and its Art Park.



Riverside Drive Crosswalks – Concept Budget

Prepared by Montgomery Martin Contractors, 6/30/2016

| Riverside Drive Crosswalks | Budget |
|--|------------------|
| Street Demolition | \$5,400 |
| Sawcut Street | \$192 |
| Concrete Edge Stripe | \$2,240 |
| Crosswalk Pavers | \$28,080 |
| Gateway Feature Foundation | \$1,200 |
| Gateway Feature w/ Signage | \$60,000 |
| Lighting | \$10,000 |
| General Conditions/Supervision/Fee/Permit/Insurance/Bond | \$12,853 |
| Contingency @ 10% | \$11,997 |
| Sub-Total: | \$131,962 |

| Other Costs | Budget |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| Design Fees @ 10% | \$13,196 |
| Developer Fee @ 5% | \$6,598 |
| Rendering | \$203 |
| Reimbursables | \$745 |
| Management Costs | \$1,693 |
| Marketing | \$1,355 |
| Legal | \$1,355 |
| Project Contingency | \$5,418 |
| Sub-Total | \$30,563 |

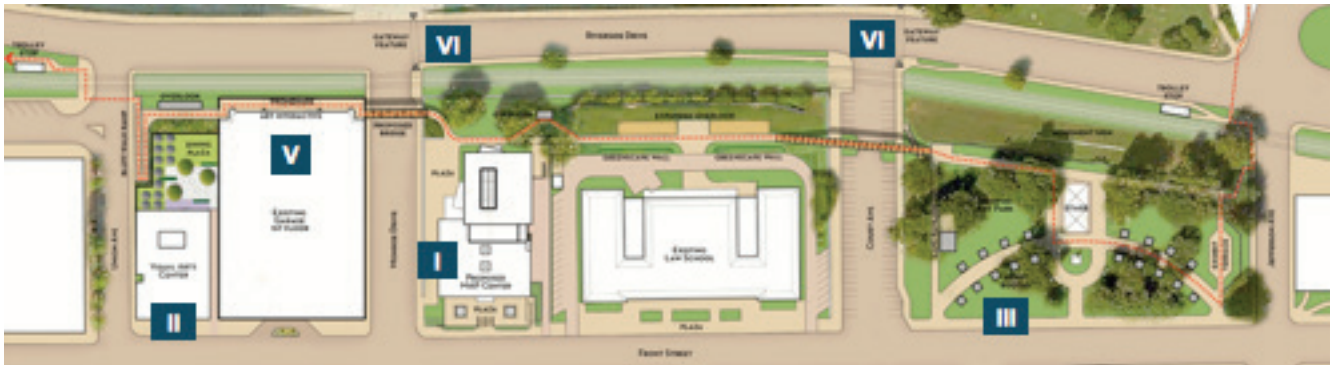
| FF&E | Budget |
|------------------|----------------|
| Misc FF&E | \$1,117 |
| Sub-Total | \$1,117 |

| Riverside Drive Crosswalks | |
|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Total Concept Budget | \$163,642 |

MEMPHIS ART PARK - A BEACON

Memphis Art Park —Concept Budget

Prepared by Montgomery Martin Contractors, 6/30/2016



| Memphis Art Park | Budget |
|--|---------------------|
| (I) Community Arts Center | \$14,743,420 |
| (II) Visual Art Center | \$5,280,348 |
| (III) Art Park | \$1,200,825 |
| (IV) Law School Bluff-Walk | \$852,876 |
| (V) Garage Bluff-Walk & Beautification | \$2,410,648 |
| (VI) Riverside Drive Crosswalks | \$163,642 |
| TOTAL Concept Budget | \$24,651,759 |

MAP's 2016 Master Plan not only establishes two new community art centers and an art park that nurtures and showcases our city's emerging creative class; it also creates a beautiful, dynamic and more integrated Promenade that locals and tourists alike can fully enjoy...and that Memphians can be proud of.



OPERATIONS

Public Arts Amenities

As a private 501(c)3, Memphis Art Park would be operated as a public-use community arts complex and park for the benefit of emerging artists, creative youth, entrepreneurs, and arts organizations as well as for the enjoyment of the public. Locals and tourists alike would be welcomed to enjoy MAP's arts centers and park, live performances, cinema screenings, gallery showings, sculpture garden, public plazas, bluff-top cafés, and more.

However, the use of MAP's various arts facilities would be reserved for locals, since our goal is to enrich and expand the arts community of Memphis. Local individuals and organizations interested in accessing MAP would need to pay to become members on a per-use, quarterly, or annual basis. Such memberships would also be offered as facility-specific, with rates set according to each respective facility costs. For instance, no fees would apply for meeting rooms, but a membership that grants use of the dance studio, the music rehearsal rooms, or the visual-art facilities would carry varying fees. Overall, MAP's fees would be set at rates just enough to offset expenses and deter abuse but would not be prohibitively expensive.

In some cases, a pay-what-you-can policy may apply for MAP's amenities, by suggesting a "donation" amount for the use of certain facilities.

Free memberships could also be offered to individual artists and arts organizations in exchange for services rendered at MAP or elsewhere. For example, artists could volunteer to work a certain number of hours at MAP, or even mentor a child, in exchange for membership. Similarly, an arts organization could offer free classes or community-outreach programs. Alternatively, artists or arts organizations could volunteer at St. Jude Hospital or other worthy local institutions in exchange for membership, where the membership is sponsored by a local corporation or individual donor. In addition, direct scholarships may also be made available. We believe such membership-for-services programs would help engender a self-reinforcing, sustainable and highly-synergistic arts community, with the Memphis community at large also benefitting.

In addition to offering facilities for artists to help cultivate their creativity, MAP would offer artists and arts organizations various performance venues, a cinema, art galleries, and event spaces to showcase their work. Rather than an up-front fee, the cost to reserve such venues could be commissions on ticket or art sales. MAP's facilities, such as the cinema/lecture hall and other flex-use spaces, could be used by entrepreneurial-focused events and workshops.

Essentially, any artist, arts organization, or other creative outfit would have equal opportunity to reserve the cinema, art galleries, event spaces and performance venues for a nominal fee, ticket-sales commission, or barter exchange. Each entity would be responsible for promoting its own performances, screenings, showings, etc., but MAP could also offer assistance.

In short, MAP would be taking a do-it-yourself, "open-mic" approach in order to provide the city's rising creative class with an affordable, high profile, and engaging downtown platform in which to develop and showcase itself.



PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

University of Memphis, College of Communication and Fine Arts (CCFA)

The University of Memphis serves as MAP's primary community partner. MAP would double as the University's downtown arts presence, with CCFA's units providing programming at MAP and making use of the facilities for studios, exhibitions and classes. CCFA would also provide MAP with student interns to assist in MAP's management. All in all, the University's strong presence at MAP would help further its mission of serving the local community.

Live from Memphis (LFM)

LFM's tagline "connect, collaborate, create" mirrors MAP's mission. From 2001 to 2013, LFM successfully showcased and marketed Memphis arts & culture through its unique and original content, events, and online presence. MAP would resurrect and contract with LFM for creative content management, events and marketing: documenting/showcasing MAP's member artists and organizations; managing the digital media archive and MAP's multi-media presence; building/maintaining MAP's website; and producing regular events.

Shelby County Schools (SCS)

MAP and the University's CCFA proposed to SCS the idea of introducing a feeder-scholarship program that would provide University of Memphis scholarships to high-performing arts students from SCS. Such scholarship recipients would then be required to intern at MAP in their first three years at university with seniors mentoring the new crop of the university's freshman scholarship recipients, all as a way to give back to Memphis and become more integrated with the wider arts community.

ArtsMemphis

ArtsMemphis, the city's chief grant-maker for the arts, has expressed interest in a (satellite) office at MAP. At MAP, ArtsMemphis would be exposed to the artists and arts organizations continually flowing through MAP, which would boost their grant-making efforts, not only to arts organizations, but also to individual artists, such as through their ArtsAccelerator program.

Memphis Public Library

MAP's plans include integrating the Cossitt Branch Library, which would be converted into a digital-media/arts-resource center combined with a digital-only library branch. The library and media center's focus would be configured towards the arts in order to provide both a resource center for emerging artists and an online digital archive of area artists.

Music

A potential collaboration exists with David Porter's Consortium MMT, which merged with the Memphis Music Foundation (MMF), with whom MAP had established a strong relationship. Another potential partnership includes Darren Isom's Memphis is Music Initiative, whose end goal is a community arts center akin to MAP. MAP has already held preliminary discussions with these two groups, both of whom are open to possible partnerships.

Memphis & Shelby County Film and Television Commission

In conjunction with local and state nonprofit film organizations, such as Fuel Film, the Film Commission has expressed interest in organizing a variety of events and workshops at MAP.

UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS

With the School of Law as MAP's neighbor, the presence of the University of Memphis (UofM) at MAP would create a high-profile UofM corridor in the center of downtown along the river bluff on Front Street. With MAP serving as UofM's downtown arts presence, such a set-up is comparable to the **Shaw Center for the Arts and Louisiana State University**.



The Shaw Center is a creative catalyst in the everyday life of Baton Rouge and Louisiana. The Center offers opportunities for artists, arts organizations, students, scholars, visitors and the community to create an experience of vibrant and diverse visual and performing arts for the purposes of education, entertainment, interpretation and discovery.

Opened in 2005 and covering a full city block in the heart of downtown Baton Rouge, the multi-use museum, theatre and arts complex incorporates historic architecture and modern design, creating a fantastic structure overlooking the Mississippi River.

Inside the 125,000 square-foot facility resides the LSU Museum of Art. The LSU MOA showcases more than 17,000 square feet of exhibition space that houses touring and permanent collections. Located on the first level, the intimate and acoustically brilliant Manship Theatre is truly a magical venue for musicians, dancers and actors alike. Seating 325 people, the Manship Theatre includes an orchestra level and two balconies, an audio system, a large fly house and automated orchestra pit. Adjacent to Manship are the Hartley/Vey Theatres, Jones Walker Foyer and The Gallery, a mezzanine level art exhibition space. Also located within the Center is the LSU School of Art Glassell Gallery, featuring exciting works from the faculty and students of Louisiana State University. Rounding out the facility is an exciting combination of retail and restaurant destinations.

The specific goals of the Center are to:

- create a setting that serves as an extraordinary public resource and a community gathering place for appreciation and study of the visual and performing arts;
- promote the arts by providing education programming, exhibitions and forums for the community;
- collaborate with individuals and organizations throughout the state and region to develop the Center into a nationally recognized destination for arts programming excellence;
- serve as a contemporary landmark for the community that unites LSU with downtown Baton Rouge;
- contribute to economic development by establishing a significant attraction for residents and visitors; and
- sustain and enhance a not-for-profit center that is a model for community arts development.

LIVE FROM MEMPHIS

Why involve Live From Memphis?



MAP recognizes the importance of Live From Memphis (“LFM”) and its past contribution to Memphis arts & culture. With a high level of community spirit and a co-creative attitude, LFM built a city brand to inspire, share and be proud of. “Connect, Collaborate, Create” was more than just a motto, it was LFM’s promise. LFM engaged, created, documented and shared.

With only a handful of staff members, along with a regular rotation of University of Memphis interns, LFM developed rich media content showcasing the creative culture of Memphis on a shoe-string budget.

LFM documented live performances and developed community campaigns, special events and films, all of which was made available to the public through an online digital archive.

Coupled with an online artist directory, LFM’s blogs, galleries, films, events and special projects linked the creatives involved, providing direct access to artists and potential job opportunities. With over 4,000 listings, it was the largest artist directory in Memphis.

LFM’s community and educational outreach was the driving force behind their ability to produce content and maintain their web and social presence. While enlisting local creatives, interns and a volunteer work force, LFM engaged Memphians through community events, their web site, and television shows as well as through digital and social networks.

Ultimately LFM affected change by providing a unique platform where local creatives could showcase their talents and nurture their professional careers.

It has been a few years since LFM shut down, yet their content continues to expand its reach. With close to 2 million views, LFM’s YouTube channel continues to work for Memphis and its creatives.

Memphis Art Park together with Live From Memphis would create a unique opportunity -- a union between a physical and a digital space. Along with the participation of the University of Memphis and a host of creative organizations and Memphis artists, MAP’s potential for connecting people, encouraging collaboration and fostering innovation is limitless.

MAP and LFM: Connect. Collaborate. Create.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Arts education and community outreach would be at the heart of MAP's mission – from classes for young artists and children, to after-school and summer programs for at-risk youth.

Statistics show that many of the troubled inner-city youth are creative/right-brained students who fail to connect to the hard subjects and, therefore, do not find much hope in the world of academia, which increasingly, in our standardized-test school system, gives the arts short shrift. The arts, however, provide such creative students with alternatives and hope, and allows them to fulfill their innate strengths, which positively impacts not only their lives but also the entire community.

“At-Risk Youth and the Creative Process” By Linda Kreger Silverman, Ph.D.

Excerpt: A disconcerting proportion of the delinquent population is gifted and talented. The largest study ever undertaken of gifted delinquents was conducted in the Arapahoe County juvenile court system. The study revealed that 15% of incarcerated youth tested in the top 3 percentile on standardized intelligence scales (Harvey & Seeley, 1984; Seeley, 1984, 2003); some estimate that as many as 25% are gifted... The majority exhibited a “fluid” or “spatial” learning style, in which the right hemisphere is favored over the left. Such children are often unrecognized as gifted, as sequential methods of instruction fail to reach them.

Shelby County Schools/Modulus Arts

In addition to the community outreach efforts from MAP's Partner Organizations, MAP would partner with Modulus Arts, a new arts organization whose predecessor was Echoes of Truth, an arts-based summer job-core program previously sponsored by Memphis City Schools and local patrons.

MAP, in partnership with the University of Memphis, will be working with James Wells, the Director of Modulus Arts and the Fine Arts Instructional Advisor at Shelby County Schools (SCS), to help launch Modulus Arts, which will be a year-round outreach program versus the summer-only Echoes of Truth program. Among other collaborations, MAP would serve as a home base of sorts for Modulus Arts' classes, workshops, rehearsals, showcases, etc.

In addition, Modulus Arts would also serve as the feeder program for MAP's proposal to offer University of Memphis scholarships to SCS students. High-performing SCS creatives who qualify for Modulus Arts would be the students considered to receive scholarships at the University of Memphis for their arts programs.

According to James Wells: “Modulus Arts is a non-profit arts organization whose mission is to cultivate a positive image of youth through the visual and performing arts. In order to fulfill this mission, we plan to engage youth in various programming that includes mentoring, career-oriented education, after-school programs, performances, international art exhibitions, etc. Success of this organization will rely upon public and private support and partnerships. We are excited to partner with Memphis Art Park as an organization that looks to change the creative landscape of Memphis TN through the arts and education.”

SOCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPACT

Social Impact

According to ARTS (A Reason To Survive): “Youth facing adversity need support to build a positive sense of identity and purpose, which is critical to reaching their full potential in life. We believe that the arts and creativity, through guided mentorships, are the most powerful avenues through which youth discover who they are and why they matter. In doing so, the arts build hope, self-confidence, resiliency, and 21st century life and work skills among youth. In addition, studies show participation in the arts increase academic scores, leadership skills and civic engagement.”

And crucially for Memphis: a ten-year study at the University of Pennsylvania, conducted by Mark Stern, Susan Seifert, and Jeremy Nowak, showed the catalytic role of the arts in Philadelphia and Baltimore. Three conclusions stood out: (1) The arts are a force for social cohesion and civic engagement. In communities with a strong cultural presence, people are much more likely to engage in civic activities beyond the arts. Community participation increases measurably and the result is more stable neighborhoods. (2) The arts make a major difference in child welfare. To quote, “Low income block groups with high cultural participation were more than twice as likely to have very low truancy and delinquency rates.” (3) Art is a poverty fighter. Artists form clusters; cultural institutions are built; people gravitate to them; and the businesses follow. The businesses hire and the virtuous cycle continues. What’s more, arts jobs leverage other jobs.

Economic Impact

Americans for the Arts recently conducted the most comprehensive national study of the nonprofit arts and culture industry ever. The study concluded that the nonprofit arts and culture industry is an economic driver in communities; it is a growth industry that supports jobs, generates government revenue, and is the cornerstone of tourism.

Nationally, the nonprofit arts and culture industry generates \$166.2 billion in economic activity every year: \$63.1 billion in spending by organizations and an additional \$103.1 billion in event-related spending by their audiences. The \$166.2 billion in total economic activity has a significant national impact, generating: 5.7 million full-time equivalent jobs; \$104.2 billion in household income; \$7.9 billion in local government tax revenues; \$9.1 billion in state government tax revenues; and \$12.6 billion in federal income tax revenues

Locally, the Memphis area’s culture industry accounted for more than \$125 million in combined spending from arts-focused nonprofits and the audiences it drew in 2010, according to the most recent study available, also conducted by Americans for the Arts. The study finds that spending on the arts accounts for nearly 4,000 full-time equivalent jobs, more than \$100 million in household income to area residents and more than \$15 million in local and state government revenue. While those numbers are impressive, they lag behind similar-size regions. The average amount spent by regions similar in size to Memphis, according to the study, is more than \$161 million.

CULTURAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The 21st century will belong to the distinctive city, and entrepreneurial artists are key to that future.

-- "How Cities Can Nurture Cultural Entrepreneurs," Ann Markusen, University of Minnesota, Kauffman Foundation, November 2013

Entrepreneurial-ecosystem development is also a vital part of MAP's mission: namely, to help Memphis (re)foster arts-and-entertainment entrepreneurialism, which we believe to be one of the more organic (and much needed) entrepreneurial routes for Memphis.

According to the Commercial Appeal ("Live from Austin," June 14th, 2009), "While Austin, Texas, and Nashville are thriving music centers, Memphis is still struggling to achieve similar success. This chart compares the economic impact of the music business and employment in the three cities."

| City | Population | Economic Impact | Employment |
|-----------|-------------|-----------------|------------|
| Nashville | 1.5 million | \$6.3 billion | 19,000 |
| Austin | 1.6 million | \$1 billion | 20,000 |
| Memphis | 1.2 million | \$367 million | 1,436 |

At one point, music was the second largest industry in Memphis. But with the demise of Sun Studios and Stax in the 1970s, Memphis largely lost its once-thriving music industry, as the above chart shows. MAP aims to help rebuild it by incubating cultural entrepreneurship.

A paper entitled "How Cities Can Nurture Cultural Entrepreneurs" was recently released by the Kauffman Foundation at the first-ever Mayors Conference during Global Entrepreneurship Week 2013. It discusses the importance of cultural entrepreneurs and provides concrete steps that cities can follow to promote cultural entrepreneurship. One of the more highly recommended steps involves the creation of dedicated spaces for artists to convene, share equipment and space, and learn from each other—much like Memphis Art Park!

Other notable points made by the paper include:

- Artists extraordinarily high self-employment rates often mean that they lack adequate workspace; ongoing opportunities for professional training, skill upgrading and networking; marketing savvy and outlets; and business training appropriate to their aspirations.
- Working relationships with arts educational institutions [like the University of Memphis] can encourage badly needed entrepreneurial training as part of the curriculum and alert current students to the benefits of staying in their city.
- Art centers operate as inexpensive incubators of entrepreneurship, launching successful small firms and viable artist proprietorships.

By partnering with the University of Memphis, Modulus Arts/Shelby County Schools, and Live from Memphis, among others, and by providing workspace, workshops, equipment and a networking forum, Memphis Art Park would be ideally positioned to help Memphis foster cultural entrepreneurship...and help gets its mojo back.

OPERATING BUDGET

Proposed Annual Operating Budget

MAP's proposed annual operating budget was created using the Fort Worth Community Arts Center and Warehouse 21 as benchmarks (both art centers were kind enough to provide MAP with their operating budgets, copies of which are available upon request). The former Memphis Music Foundation; the University of Memphis, College of Communication and Fine Arts; and Walker & Associates also advised MAP on its projected operating budget.

| Expense | Description | Budget | Totals |
|-----------------------|--|----------------|----------------|
| Personnel | | | 359,900 |
| | Salaries | | |
| | <i>Executive Director</i> | 65,000 | |
| | <i>LFM - Manager/Producer</i> | 50,000 | |
| | <i>LFM - Web Developer/Graphic Design</i> | 45,000 | |
| | <i>LFM - Content Developer/Editor/Writer</i> | 35,000 | |
| | <i>LFM - Content Developer/Film/Photo</i> | 35,000 | |
| | <i>Building Mgr</i> | 35,000 | |
| | <i>Front Desk/Assistant</i> | 30,000 | |
| | Sub-total | 295,000 | |
| | Payroll (12%) | 35,400 | |
| | Benefits (10%) | 29,500 | |
| Administration | | | 234,600 |
| | Advertising/Marketing | 50,000 | |
| | LFMTV Licensing Fees | 10,000 | |
| | Special Content Contributions | 10,000 | |
| | Insurance | 15,000 | |
| | Phone/Internet | 10,000 | |
| | Postage | 1,500 | |
| | Printing | 3,000 | |
| | Copy Machine Rental | 3,600 | |
| | General Operating Expenses | 5,000 | |
| | Website Domain, Hosting, Maintenance, etc. | 1,500 | |
| | Data Backup | 5,000 | |
| | Professional Services: | | |
| | <i>Accounting/Audit</i> | 20,000 | |
| | <i>Contract Labor</i> | 5,000 | |
| | <i>Security</i> | 95,000 | |

| | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| Special Projects | | | 25,000 |
| | Quarterly Main Events | 20,000 | |
| | Monthly Events | 5,000 | |
| Operations | | | 41,000 |
| | Building Maintenance | 30,000 | |
| | Equipment Repairs | 2,500 | |
| | Theatre Maintenance | 5,000 | |
| | Cinema Maintenance | 2,500 | |
| | Visual Art Facility Maintenance | 1,000 | |
| Supplies | | | 18,500 |
| | Building | 5,000 | |
| | Computer | 1,000 | |
| | Janitorial | 2,500 | |
| | Office | 2,500 | |
| | Production | 5,000 | |
| | Workshop | 2,500 | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | Total | 679,000 |



Prospective Revenue

After initial support, MAP aims to generate enough revenue to internally finance its annual operating budget -- as is the case with the Fort Worth Community Arts Center, which has advised MAP. Potential sources of revenue for MAP include:

Facility and Venue Proceeds: MAP would collect membership fees, sponsorships, and donations for the use of MAP's facilities, plus any ticket commissions and rental fees for the use of its various performance, screening, and exhibition venues.

Art-House Cinema Ticket Sales: The Film Center's cinema could double as Memphis' dedicated art-house cinema by screening non-local art films in addition to local indie films.

Commissions from Art: Art, film, or music sales generated at MAP or online via MAP's e-commerce website would be subject to a commission charge to be collected by MAP.

Event Rentals: Special events, such as weddings, private parties, business events, etc, could be held at the Art Park or MAP's café plaza and/or gallery and event spaces.

Content Subscriptions: MAP will be documenting much of the content created at the center. Such videos will be posted on the website (in some cases streamed), available for viewing by those wishing to subscribe to the service.

Café: The cafés at both the Community Arts Center and Art Park would likely be outsourced to a local business, where rent or a percentage of gross revenue would be collected by MAP.

Office Rent: Office space could be rented to MAP's Partner organizations, who would in turn help run the Arts Center, as well as provide assistance to visiting artists.

Locker Rentals: Storage lockers could be rented to MAP's members.

CITY OF MEMPHIS

MAP could be organized similar to the Fort Worth Community Arts Center (FWCAC). This center is on City property, but management has been outsourced to a private 501(c)3. The deal between the City of Fort Worth and FWCAC includes the City contributing the building, free utilities, plus \$200,000 per year toward the operating budget.

Similarly, we are requesting that the City of Memphis lease the library buildings to MAP for \$1 per year on a long-term lease and, given that it is public park land, continue to maintain the area grounds.

Regarding utilities, the City of Memphis currently pays approximately \$60,000 in annual utility costs at the Cossitt Branch Library, partly due to inefficiencies between the historic and modern buildings. After renovation, MLGW estimates annual utility costs to be \$93,800. We request that the City cover the marginally-higher utility costs for the buildings.

Lastly, we propose that the City of Memphis maintain and contribute its current operating budget for the Cossitt Branch Library to MAP's overall operating budget. As previously detailed, the downtown Cossitt Branch Library would be converted into a digital-media/arts-resource center combined with a digital-only public library branch. Such a new, re-configured and expanded library branch would be co-run by the City's Memphis Public Library and MAP.

MAP is also requesting that the Downtown Memphis Commission (DMC) consider funding the beautification and improvement plans for the City-owned and DMC-managed parking garage. Our proposal would further beautify the Promenade bluff, add dynamism to the area, and increase parking revenue.

On another note, MAP was given an endorsement in the Riverfront Report (dated March 18, 2013) by Jeff Speck, a prominent and world-renown city planner and architectural designer, whom then-Mayor Wharton hired to advise the City of Memphis on its riverfront.

Speck's report states: "The exciting Memphis Art Park proposal makes a new use of the [Promenade] site without changing its civic nature. Creating the Art Park on this block would be a great benefit to the riverfront and downtown, and deserves City support."

The full report, entitled "Memphis Riverfront Analysis and Recommendations," can be found on the City of Memphis website.



DEVELOPMENT TEAM

Developer

A native Memphian, John Kirkscey returned to Memphis in 2006 after many years away and (re)discovered his hometown as a historically soulful, artistic and innovative city with great potential to become a major cultural hub once again. This led to his conception of MAP. Subsequent to earning his Masters in international business from Thunderbird, Global School of Management, John founded Liberty Investment Group, LLC, which created and licensed global market index investment strategies. Most recently, he produced and directed a short film entitled "Bookin'" that blends ballet with Memphis Jookin', an urban dance style native to Memphis. His award-winning film, which has now screened at 28 film festivals around the world, sought to mimic the positive cultural dynamics that would be incubated at MAP.

Architecture Firm / Designer

As a graduate student, Mario Walker participated in a University of Memphis Department of Architecture class project for MAP during the Spring 2011 semester, subsequent to the Fall 2010 MAP class project. Spearheaded by Professor Michael Chisamore, the students created a variety of designs to turn the Cossitt into MAP's Community Arts Center. Mario Walker's innovative work stood out. After completing his Masters Degree in Architecture, Walker was selected as the official designer for Memphis Art Park. All designs herein—save the Visual Art Center, which was designed by Roy Beauchamp, from the Fall 2010 semester class project—have been created by Walker. Prior to his graduate studies, he earned a degree of Fine Art in Architecture from the University of Memphis in 2007, graduating in the top of his class. Walker currently works as a Project Manager for Self+Tucker Architects, a local firm whose work on the National Civil Rights Museum and STAX Music Academy/Soulsville Museum has won Design Excellence Awards from the National Organization of Minority Architects.

General Contractor / Construction Manager

Montgomery Martin Contractors, LLC (MMC) has provided MAP with advice and construction budget estimates throughout its development. MMC was formed in July of 1995 and founded by H. Montgomery Martin, with a vision to create a service-oriented, client-focused company that could provide quality construction services for a reasonable cost. Since 1995, the company has grown into a premier General Contractor/Construction Manager with the majority of work attained from references and repeat business with their clients.

PR/Marketing Firm

Walker & Associates is a female/minority owned full-service advertising, marketing, public relations & digital agency. For 50 years, Walker & Associates has been at the forefront of the creative industry, bringing their clients award-winning and goal-accomplishing work. The firm is locally grown, internationally known and looking ahead to the next 50 years.

Special Thanks

Special thanks goes out to Tom Jones of Smart City Memphis, who has been an invaluable consultant to MAP. His unwavering support throughout MAP's 9-year development is much appreciated.

APPENDIX I: Public Support

MAP Website Comments

"This would be one of the best things to happen for Memphis. I am originally from New Orleans and I believe the arts of New Orleans is what makes the city. My son is a gifted artist, and although he chose to move back to Memphis after graduating (college), this type of community arts action will certainly influence him to stay in Memphis."

"This is such a great idea. It seems to be a perfect confluence of two of the city's greatest treasures: the River and our art. "

"Wonderful idea... a necessity in allowing the embedded talent in this city to shine through!!"

"Hugely important in combining important visual aspects of our city – art and architecture – which must be evident to keep and attract talent in our city."

"Art enhances life, so adding art to our incredible river would be a great revitalization of that area."

"This will be a fantastic addition to the enjoyment of Memphis."

"Can't wait to collaborate and visit MAP once it's established!!! Memphis Art Park is exactly what Memphis needs downtown!!"

"Make this happen Memphis!"

"I went to the Trolley Tour Downtown and I thought it was absolutely amazing... and I believe that this art park is an outstanding idea... and I am wondering why it is being devised now instead of ten years ago. Again, it is an excellent idea."

"Memphis is in need of this type concept."

"This sounds great! As an artist, I can't imagine a better way to utilize the space."

"Great idea... I would love to help in any way I can."

"I strongly support this cause!"

"This seems like a great way to revitalize a great section of the city. What a good resource for so many sections of the city."

"A terrific idea, long overdue!!"

"I really support your idea."

"This would be a great thing for Memphis, a boost for downtown and the arts!"

"Memphis is an arts town. We need an Art Park!"

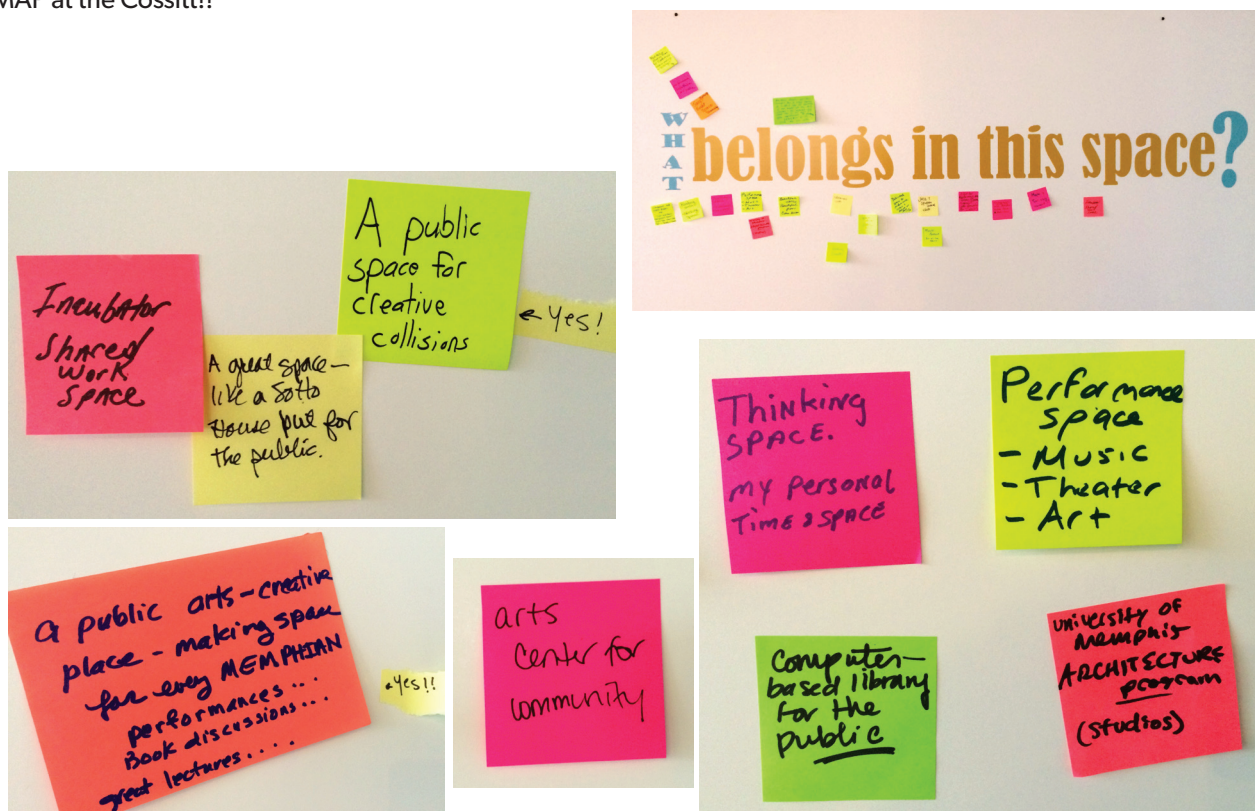
Facebook Page

Without any notable public promotion, MAP has managed to collect about 1700 “likes” to date on its Facebook page! As MAP’s numerous website comments also attest, there is much enthusiasm for Memphis Art Park at the Promenade.



Cossitt Event

This past April, the Cossitt Library held an open house to invite the public to comment on what they’d like to see at the Cossitt. As you can see (and as we found out ourselves during our nine years of development...and have been promoting), Memphians want MAP at the Cossitt!!



APPENDIX II: Press

THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL

Memphis consultant to propose art center renovations for Cossitt Library

By Christina M. Wright

Posted March 31, 2014 at 5:58 p.m.

Six years ago, local filmmaker and consultant John Kirkscey came up with a \$20 million idea to renovate Cossitt Library as the Memphis Art Park. That's not the idea he'll present to the City Council Tuesday. Instead, it will be a scaled-down version that would cost about \$1 million of private funds. "It's a way to have your cake and eat it too," Kirkscey said.

Kirkscey wants to form a public-private partnership with the city of Memphis, University of Memphis and Memphis Public Library to use the second floor of the Downtown library to showcase art, music, film, dance and theater and part of the first floor as a digital-media and resource center for local art.

Originally, Kirkscey wanted to turn the entire property, including the parking garage and fire station, into a community art center.

"It's been kind of like a chicken and the egg problem," Kirkscey said. "Donors say, 'You need the green light from the city.' The city has said, 'You need to get funds together.' So it's kind of languished in that way."

In the meantime, Kirkscey noticed city officials' annual conundrum about Cossitt. They don't want to close the venerable library branch, but also haven't found funds to upgrade it. If the council gives Kirkscey the go-ahead, he would raise the needed funds for the renovations and manage the project with his partners. He said the University of Memphis and former Live From Memphis organizer Christopher Reyes have agreed to partner. The library system officials like the idea but haven't committed to it.

The local art community is sure to get behind the Art Park, Reyes said. It would combine the documenting Live From Memphis did for 13 years with a physical property to display the arts. Reyes disbanded Live From Memphis last year because he couldn't find funding. He said the Art Park removes that hurdle. He'll attend Tuesday's council meeting, at 10:15 a.m., with Kirkscey. "They should do it," Reyes said. "They should have done it five years ago when he first brought it up."

Smart City Memphis

September 12, 2011

The Art of Downtown Vibrancy By Smart City Memphis (RSS)

Vibrancy: Pulsing or throbbing with energy or activity, such as the vibrancy in the streets of a big city.

There's little question that urbanists today are obsessed with vibrancy.

With good reason.

More and more, it is vibrancy that is the ultimate indicator that a neighborhood or a city is working. It is the ultimate measurement of whether redevelopment projects are successful and vibrancy is a factor that determines in particular whether a city can attract and keep young professionals.

If you ask a downtown development official anywhere in the country what they are working to create, the answer is most often vibrancy. That underscores the biggest challenge facing the Downtown Memphis Commission.

Highest and Best

If downtown Memphis is notable for anything, it is its routine lack of vibrancy. There are pockets of activity for sure. Usually, it's the oasis of activity that blooms nightly on Beale Street. Other than that, it's event-driven like special occasions in South Main Arts District, where the prevalence of nonprofit organizations with a handful of employees contributes little to daily vibrancy.

That's why we are unabashed supporters of Memphis Art Park. There is nothing proposed for downtown – or for anywhere else, for that matter – that promises to create as much vibrancy as this single project. There's no proposal for an arts-related project with as much potential.

At a time when the term, game changer, has been devalued by overuse, Memphis Art Park is nonetheless a game changer. Unlike any other project, it has the power to transform Memphis in a way that is nationally significant. It does without question have the ability to convert a block of a half of prime real estate that is now wasted into a hub of activity, energy, and creativity.

Doing Something Better

At this point, the block and a half on Front Street that includes the Cossitt Library, the Monroe garage, and Memphis Fire Department offices are the highest and best real estate in Memphis and used for the lowest and worst use. The library is in deteriorating condition, an eyesore made even more bleak by splendor of its new neighbor, University of Memphis Schools of Law; the garage is one of three that are blemishes on the face of our riverfront and a testament to our indifference to better uses of our most valuable land; and the MFD headquarters that use only a small part of the building and is past time to be relocated.

A former visionary City Hall official suggested a phased-in approach for Memphis Art Park, starting with Cossitt Library as phase one. In this way, she conceived that it would be a way to demonstrate dramatically what the project can do and to build public interest and support for it. Already, Memphis Art Park has the support of a number of arts organizations and key civic and educational organizations, but it's time for its full constituency to call for City of Memphis to help the project get a fair hearing and chance for success.

One aspect of the plan that appeals to us is the involvement of University of Memphis' architectural students. They have done impressive work in imagining the design and programming for the art park and their latest ideas have been featured in the Memphis Flyer and are posted to MAP's website.

On the Money

The MAP website says it best:

What would Memphis Art Park (MAP) do? It would...

- create a community arts center and public art park on the Memphis bluff;
- incubate, empower, and showcase our city's emerging filmmakers, musicians, dancers, performing artists & visual artists;
- serve as a collaborative forum for local artists, arts groups & entrepreneurs;
- congregate and connect on its "campus" a variety of arts-focused entities whose common mission is artist support and development;
- offer arts education and community outreach programs for children; and
- provide an engaging public destination to enjoy our city's emerging art.

Located on the Front St. Promenade in downtown Memphis between Union Ave. and the University of Memphis School of Law, MAP would: (i) renovate the Cossitt Library buildings into an arts center for film, music, performing arts, and dance; (ii) replace the neighboring parking garage at Front and Monroe with an art park built on top of a new underground garage or a restored bluff; and (iii) convert the adjacent fire station at Front and Union into a visual art center.

As a public-use art park, MAP offers the city a compelling plan that would honor the letter and spirit of the Promenade's public-use easement; help stimulate our city's arts and culture; further beautify and energize downtown Memphis and its riverfront; and help make Memphis a city of choice among creatives.

the Memphis Flyer

Never Say Never

Students design Art Park.
by ANDREW CALDWELL
March 17, 2011

Memphis Art Park proponent John Kirkscey has been talking up the idea of converting a stretch of Front Street into a public art park for more than three years.

Now, a group of University of Memphis architecture students are giving new life to Kirkscey's plans.

If he can convince Mayor A C Wharton to back him, Kirkscey hopes to transform the Cossitt Library into a community arts center, replace the library's neighboring parking garage with an underground garage and rooftop art park, and revamp the Front Street fire station into a visual arts center.

Last fall, a U of M architecture class led by the department's assistant director, Michael Chisamore, created designs for the fire station to include a gallery and studio spaces, a cafe, and an event venue. "I wanted something pretty amazing for the fire station," Kirkscey said.

"Michael and I were so pleased with the results from that class that we're doing it again this spring." This semester, Kirkscey is working with five U of M graduate students to design an outdoor art market and an arts center in the Cossitt Library...

At the beginning of each class, Kirkscey presented his idea for the park and students have been free to pursue the assignment as they see fit. "I've been blown away so far. I couldn't be happier with what they've come up with," Kirkscey said.

Chisamore is equally enthusiastic. "By all accounts, John believes in this city and the students have responded," he said. "The idea of creating artistic collaboration space downtown that can connect to so many existing strengths is provocative."

In his business plan for the Memphis Art Park, Kirkscey writes that the park is "created for emerging artists ... designed by emerging artists." By providing a space where the arts are allowed to flourish, Kirkscey hopes his park plan can help shape Memphis into a thriving arts city.

"Looking at what both classes have done so far, it makes you have faith in the younger generation," Kirkscey said. "It's not about throwing amenities their way. It's putting your faith in them, trusting them, having them get involved. That's what this is all about: turning to that grass-roots level. You want something that's unique to Memphis, and the people who are best at that are the ones actually living here, the people who know and love our city."

THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL

Proposal for a Downtown Memphis 'art park' and arts center gets a hearing

By Thomas Bailey Jr.

Posted February 28, 2011

One man's three-year effort to build support for transforming the Downtown riverfront with a public arts center and art park has slowly gotten the attention of Memphis leaders.

John Kirkscey got an hour with Mayor A C Wharton last Friday and is to meet with University of Memphis president Shirley Raines this Friday.

Many are intrigued by the idea, but money is the rub. Construction cost estimates provided to Kirkscey by Montgomery Martin Contractors are \$20 million to \$38 million.

Kirkscey's vision is to:

- Convert most of the historic and modern space of the Cossitt Library into a public arts center ? an incubator for emerging artists ? for music, film, performing arts and dance, and tweak the library's mission on the bottom floor to be an art library;
- Create views of the Mississippi River by demolishing the neighboring, three-story parking garage, replacing it with an underground garage, and building on its roof an art park and a strikingly designed arts museum. The art park would have a permanent art market;
- Convert the fire station at Front and Union into a visual arts center with space for galleries, exhibitions and events, as well as a cafe, offices and public plaza.

The 39-year-old Cooper-Young resident's day job is running a start-up company that sells an investment strategy for market indexes, investing in "the freest economies in the world," he said.

An art dabbler and lover, Kirkscey said the idea for Memphis Art Park struck him about five years ago when he returned home to Memphis and immersed himself in local history.

"Inspired by Robert Church's Church Park and Auditorium, Memphis Art Park would create a self-sustainable community arts center and public art park in Downtown Memphis on the Front Street Promenade," states the introduction to his business plan.

As it exists now with a fire station, garage and underused library buildings, Kirkscey sees the Front Street Promenade section from Union to Monroe as a dead zone.

Bringing art and art facilities to the riverfront would give emerging artists inspiration as well as exposure to tourists and more Memphians, Kirkscey said.

An arts center and park would also be a far better use of the city's choicest property than a parking garage and fire station, he said.

Susan Schadt, president and CEO of ArtsMemphis, declined comment about the plan until she saw Kirkscey's latest business plan for how the operations would sustain themselves.

Richard Ranta, dean of the University of Memphis College of Communication and Fine Arts, participated in last week's meeting with Wharton.

"I do like it," he said of the proposal. "Whether it's doable is another question.

"It should be done. I don't think there's any question that use of that corner right now for that ugly old garage is not a great one."

The U of M architecture program has supported Kirkscey by having architecture students create renderings for adapting the fire station.

The art park could provide campus-like green space for the new Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law, which moved in 2009 next door into the renovated old U.S. Customs House, Courthouse and Post Office.

"All the unit heads here would be excited about the possibility of using that space," Ranta said. Wharton liked the idea, too, Ranta said, but "he raised the kind of questions, the do-ability of it."

The future of the Promenade has been a point of conflict for years between the Riverfront Development Corporation, which wants more vitality on the riverfront, and Friends of Our Riverfront, a citizens organization which wants to preserve the open space.

Kirkscey said he hopes both sides see his proposal as a happy medium.

He's an entrepreneur; his Memphis Art Park business card identifies him as "developer."

While he has spent his own money promoting the idea, he said any possible compensation he may receive if the project progresses might be as a consultant.

Some potential users of the space include the Memphis & Shelby County Film Commission, Memphis Music Foundation and University of Memphis, Kirkscey said.

"My goal is to hand it off to organizations; I'm not looking to run it," he said.

But he feels it's time for others to support the plan. "I feel I've taken it as far as I can take it," he said.

Smart City Memphis

Wednesday, October 20, 2010

Reinvigorating the Mojo of Memphis Culture

By John Kirkscey

In searching for the keys to the phenomenon of rapid human evolution and progress, intellectuals have seized upon the idea of collective intelligence: the notion that what determines the rate of innovation, economic progress, and cultural enrichment of a population is the amount of interaction between individuals.¹

In other words, it's not individual intelligence that matters. What matters most is collective and cumulative intelligence — and that grows with the exchange of ideas and the interaction of people.¹

This is why cities foster much more innovation than small towns, and why high-density cities tend to be more dynamic than low-density ones. Serendipitous connections happen more readily when there's more chance for strangers to rub shoulders together. When ideas from different people come together, innovation is more likely to occur. And the bigger the supply of existing ideas and the faster those ideas combine, the more new ideas are generated.²

The success of multi-cultural America (and highly-dense New York City) in the past century is the epitome of this relationship with its vast open society, through which goods, ideas and people flow freely. As a result of this rapid rate of exchange, America is known for and has greatly benefited from its bounty of innovation and discoveries as well as its cultural richness.

But if a population falls, becomes fragmented, or loses density, thereby resulting in less exchange and interaction, cultural evolution may actually regress. So developing and maintaining large, tight-knit, and vibrant social networks is paramount to ensuring a thriving culture.¹

During its heyday, Memphis had a tightly-networked talent pool with a high rate of idea exchange and artistic cross-pollination. As a result, Memphis' rich and innovative culture influenced and inspired America — and the world — with its blues, rock 'n' roll, and soul music.

That cultural genius is still in our blood and soil, but it seems less cultivated, innovative, and dynamic than before. Why? Because Memphis has suffered from a reduced rate of idea exchange. Three reasons come to mind:

First off was the destruction in 1969 of Beale Street, the artistic and cultural hub of black Memphis (and arguably black America at one time). But Beale Street wasn't just a black cultural hub that helped nurture and fulfill black creativity and artistic talent. White artists also frequented the street and absorbed ideas and inspiration from the rich culture bubbling out of Beale — think Elvis. Severing this vital artistic and cultural hub has had dire consequences on the interim innovation and integration of Memphis arts & culture. Unfortunately, today's Beale Street, with its tourist-laden national chains and gimmicky bars, doesn't nearly serve its pre-destruction role of local cultural enrichment.

Second, the concurrent and subsequent sprawl of Memphis away from the urban core of downtown has resulted in a severely low-density city, even by national standards.

Third, Memphis has been suffering a creative brain drain ever since the period of Beale Street's destruction and Stax's bankruptcy. Thousands of ambitious creatives have been leaving Memphis over the years as local opportunities have dried up.

What do the loss of our unique cultural hub; the decrease in our urban density; and the draining of our creative pool all have in common? All three of these occurrences greatly reduce the rate at which our population exchanges ideas. That has had quite the negative impact on the evolution of Memphis culture and the dynamism of our arts over the past four decades.

Reversing sprawl and increasing our city's urban density would help Memphis regain its dynamism. To ensure a healthy talent pool, plugging and reversing the Memphis brain drain should be a priority, which the City of Choice initiative aims to do. But given our city's historical arts & culture forte, nurturing, connecting, and integrating our artists with an arts hub and forum — akin to pre-destruction Beale Street — may be the most critical catalyst this city needs.

Memphis Art Park would help address all these issues. It would be a community arts center in the heart of downtown, our urban core. It would help retain and attract the creative class. It would incubate and cater to emerging artists of all kinds, thereby enriching our talent pool. It would serve as an integrative arts & culture hub and forum where filmmakers, musicians, performing artists, dancers, and visual artists of all stripes would congregate, communicate, cross-pollinate, and inspire each other. And it would help tighten and strengthen our creative social network.

Most importantly, Memphis Art Park would help increase the rate at which our city's artists and creatives exchange ideas, which would help reinvigorate the dynamism, richness, and innovation of Memphis culture...and help Memphis get its mojo back.

1 Ridley, Matt. *The Rational Optimist: How Prosperity Evolves*. Harper, 2010.

2 Johnson, Steven. *Where Good Ideas Come From: The Natural History of Innovation*. Riverhead Hardcover, 2010.

Smart City Memphis

May 21, 2010

The Art of Downtown Vibrancy
by Smart City Memphis (RSS)

Memphis Art Park – one of our favorite projects proposed for the riverfront – has a new website. It features an updated business plan that reflects refinement of the park’s vision and plans, and if you were impressed before, the project now seems to us to be absolutely essential. We were pleased that Memphis Mayor A C Wharton mentioned the Art Park as something he wants to pursue in his plan for a renewed riverfront.

In describing its purpose, Memphis Arts Park summed up well the reason that it’s potential excites us and said that it will: create a community arts center and public art park in downtown Memphis; incubate, empower, and showcase our city’s emerging filmmakers, musicians, dancers, performing artists & visual artists; serve as a collaborative forum for local artists, arts groups & entrepreneurs; congregate and connect on its “campus” a variety of arts-focused entities whose common mission is artist support and development; offer arts education and community outreach programs for children; and provide an engaging public destination to enjoy our city’s emerging art.

Here’s our September 20, 2009, post about Memphis Art Park:

My morning commute delivers me many days to downtown Memphis from the Riverside Drive exit of I-40. It’s the antithesis of the experience that greets me two miles away south when I enter downtown from the other end of Riverside Drive off I-55.

There, the spectacular view of the river and downtown unfailingly lifts my spirit and evokes my pride in our city. Meanwhile, the other end of Riverside Drive is unwelcoming, shabby and depressing.

It is a rare day that I don’t drive onto Riverside from the north that I don’t think of Memphis Art Park. Coupled with a skate park on Mud Island, it has the power to redefine a riverfront desperately in need of vibrancy and to shake off the pervasive feeling of lethargy that greets visitors.

Turning Around

Beale Street Landing is an important piece in the puzzle and will change things at the foot of Beale, but in its own way, Memphis Art Park’s opportunity to shake up the area between Union and Floyd Alley and Front and Riverside has equal, if not more, potential. After all, most visitors to Memphis end up in this area looking at the most photographed location in our city – the Mississippi River.

They look eagerly for something to do – even if it’s just to buy a Coke or ice cream and enjoy the view. Often, they’re looking for anything to pass the time while they wait for a riverfront trolley whose posted schedule is irrelevant. (Q: When will the next trolley arrive? A: When you see it coming.) The idea of eating lunch in a restaurant where they can view the river is as alien as the Riverfront Development Corporation and Friends of our Riverfront issuing joint press releases.

Visitors are looking for something interesting to do – an activity, something with the opportunity for a personal experience, something that offers them the feeling of doing something special or finding something unexpected in a city known for its creativity but that often works hard to keep it under wraps.

When Memphis decided to turn its back on the river, it did so with a vengeance. But that's a common tale for cities on American rivers. Riverfronts were rowdy, dirty and commercial, so cities didn't place much value on them as iconic landmarks or competitive platforms for the future. They were simply ignored.

The Wrong Message

But we know better now. So it's nothing short of astounding that the northern entrance to Riverside remains as dismal today as it did 30 years ago. Driving off I-40, we are greeted with chain link fences that do little except to send the message that this must be a city with a lot of crime and little design ethos. The chain link fence on the west lines a parking lot and the chain link fence on the east follows the trolley line (and makes visitor's walk from the Welcome Center to the Mud Island tram circuitous and indirect). If this entrance into downtown is anything, it is a juxtaposition, killing the chance for a strong first impression.

Across from the Tennessee Welcome Center is an austere, crumbling oatmeal-colored, bunker-like parking garage whose better days are long past, and a large motor home seems perpetually parked there. There's brief respite passing between Confederate and Jefferson Davis Parks, and about the same time that Mud Island comes into view on the right, there's promising work taking place on the left as the old Custom House is being converted into the University of Memphis law school (and thanks to the Hyde Family Foundations, the face to the river is being made greener and more attractive).

Eyesores

But the boost doesn't last long. Immediately past it are the ignored rear of the old Cossitt Library, another godawful garage facing the river and a parking lot and more fencing behind the first station – all of which would be transformed by Memphis Art Park. Finally, at Union and Riverside, where you expect a breath-taking experience, the high ground – Wagner Place – is lined with commercial garbage dumpsters and hundreds of parking spaces where green space and seating overlooking the river would be gifts to downtown.

Greater momentum for elimination of the prevailing ugliness on this section of the riverfront should be a cause that all of us could rally around. For now, we'll start with Memphis Art Park.

Its creator, John Kirkscey, reminds us about what's best about Memphis: the ability of one person with a dream and an entrepreneurial and creative spirit to inspire others to rally around him. Already, the Center City Commission has expressed support for the Art Park, joining an awful lot of people who live and work downtown and who work and enjoy our arts and culture scene.

The \$30 million project would transform the heart of the riverfront (which dearly needs it), and it would become the most visited, most vibrant place in a downtown (which dearly needs it). A few years ago, when CEOs for Cities asked corporate CEOs what they most wanted out of a city, they said vibrancy.

Something Better

Unfortunately, vibrancy in downtown Memphis is few and far between, pretty much centered in the area of Beale Street, and it generally cranks up about the time that many people are going down for the night. Memphis Art Park would become another important anchor of vibrancy as the fire station, the parking garage and the Cossitt Library became a beehive of creativity, contributing to a culture of creativity that cities need today to succeed.

There are places for emerging artists, musicians, dancers, actors and filmmakers who could be celebrated and enjoyed. In Mr. Kirkscey's words, "Memphis Arts Park would be a cultural beacon on our city's doorstep and announce that Memphis is a distinctive arts destination."

His conceptual plans – fleshed out by David Schuermann and Joey Hagan of Architecture, Incorporated – call for rehabilitating the library into a multi-purpose arts facility, including studios, film rooms, music rooms, gallery/exhibition/event space and a community arts resource center. It would also have a sculpture garden overlooking the river.

Best of all, the Art Park reimagines the Monroe garage so that it has murals, lighting, colored scrim, a green rooftop park and art plaza and a pedestrian bluff walk. Finally, the fire station headquarters – which has been slated for replacement by City of Memphis Fire Services – would become a community cinema, a performance venue, gallery and event space and a plaza for outdoor events. There also would be a grand staircase and fountain at Union and Riverside.

Planning The Dream

Fortunately, Mr. Kirkscey and his advocates are remaining nimble so alternates are being considered and suggestions are being welcomed. Already, a number of local organizations have expressed their interest in being part of the project, and hopefully, local government and local philanthropies will join hands to jump start the project.

To his credit, Mr. Kirkscey is doing more than offering up a dream. He has developed a 60-page plan complete with design ideas, costing, architectural renderings, operational philosophy and examples of successful similar projects in other cities.

At this point, we need to admit that we have a personal bias in this issue. Our office is a half block from the river on Union and faces the moribund fire station and the concrete walls that meet the sidewalk beside it.

It would be so good that when visitors to Memphis walking down Union to the river ask us what they can do, we could point across the street to a lively, active art park that reflects the best of what our city has to offer.

Smart City Memphis

Sunday, September 20, 2009

Art Park Paints a Better Picture of Memphis

My morning commute delivers me many days to downtown Memphis from the Riverside Drive exit of I-40. It's the antithesis of the experience that greets me two miles away south when I enter downtown from the other end of Riverside Drive off I-55.

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Driving off I-40, we are greeted with chain link fences that do little except to send the message that this must be a city with a lot of crime and little design ethos. The chain link fence on the west lines a parking lot and the chain link fence on the east follows the trolley line (and makes visitor's walk from the Welcome Center to the Mud Island tram circuitous and indirect).

If this entrance into downtown is anything, it is a juxtaposition, killing the chance for a strong first impression.

Across from the Tennessee Welcome Center is an austere, crumbling oatmeal-colored, bunker-like parking garage whose better days are long past, and a large motor home seems perpetually parked there. There's brief respite passing between Confederate and Jefferson Davis Parks, and about the same time that Mud Island comes into view on the right, there's promising work taking place on the left as the old Custom House is being converted into the University of Memphis School of Law (and thanks to the Hyde Family Foundations, the face to the river is being made greener and more attractive).

Eyesores

But the boost doesn't last long. Immediately past it are the ignored rear of the old Cossitt Library, another godawful garage facing the river and a parking lot and more fencing behind the first station – all of which would be transformed by Memphis Art Park. Finally, at Union and Riverside, where you expect a breath-taking experience, the high ground – Wagner Place - is lined with commercial garbage dumpsters and hundreds of parking spaces where green space and seating overlooking the river would be gifts to downtown.

Greater momentum for elimination of the prevailing ugliness on this section of the riverfront should be a cause that all of us could rally around. For now, we'll start with Memphis Art Park.

Its creator, John Kirkscey, reminds us about what's best about Memphis: the ability of one person with a dream and an entrepreneurial and creative spirit to inspire others to rally around him. Already, the Center City Commission has expressed support for the Art Park, joining an awful lot of people who live and work downtown and who work and enjoy our arts and culture scene.

The \$30 million project would transform the heart of the riverfront (which dearly needs it), and it would become the most visited, most vibrant place in a downtown (which dearly needs it). A few years ago, when CEOs for Cities asked corporate CEOs what they most wanted out of a city, they said vibrancy.

Something Better

Unfortunately, vibrancy in downtown Memphis is few and far between, pretty much centered in the area of Beale Street, and it generally cranks up about the time that many people are going down for the night. Memphis Art Park would become another important anchor of vibrancy as the fire station, the parking garage and the Cossitt Library became a beehive of creativity, contributing to a culture of creativity that cities need today to succeed.

There are places for emerging artists, musicians, dancers, actors and filmmakers who could be celebrated and enjoyed. In Mr. Kirkscey's words, "Memphis Arts Park would be a cultural beacon on our city's doorstep and announce that Memphis is a distinctive arts destination."

His conceptual plans – fleshed out by David Schuermann and Joey Hagan of Architecture, Incorporated – call for rehabilitating the library into a multi-purpose arts facility, including studios, film rooms, music rooms, gallery/exhibition/event space and a community arts resource center. It would also have a sculpture garden overlooking the river.

Best of all, the Art Park re-imagines the Monroe garage so that it has murals, lighting, colored scrim, a green rooftop park and art plaza and a pedestrian bluff walk. Finally, the fire station headquarters – which has been slated for replacement by City of Memphis Fire Services – would become a community cinema, a performance venue, gallery and event space and a plaza for outdoor events. There also would be a grand staircase and fountain at Union and Riverside.



Planning The Dream

Fortunately, Mr. Kirkscey and his advocates are remaining nimble so alternates are being considered and suggestions are being welcomed. Already, a number of local organizations have expressed their interest in being part of the project, and hopefully, local government and local philanthropies will join hands to jump start the project.

To his credit, Mr. Kirkscey is doing more than offering up a dream. He has developed a 60-page plan complete with design ideas, costing, architectural renderings, operational philosophy and examples of successful similar projects in other cities.

At this point, we need to admit that we have a personal bias in this issue. Our office is a half block from the river on Union and faces the moribund fire station and the concrete walls that meet the sidewalk beside it.

It would be so good that when visitors to Memphis walking down Union to the river ask us what they can do, we could point across the street to a lively, active art park that reflects the best of what our city has to offer.

the Memphis Flyer

A Walk in the Art?

by MARY CASHIOLA
October 16, 2008

Memphian wants to create artist studio, gallery space on the downtown promenade.
by

When it comes to promoting its brand, Memphis has been criticized for being something of a one-note town.

But Memphian John Kirkscey has an idea to change that. "Memphis is the arts Mecca of the South," Kirkscey says. "We need to start celebrating our present culture, not just our past."

Kirkscey is the "idea guy" behind the Memphis Art Park, a proposal to create a public park on the Front Street promenade that would "provide both locals and tourists with an attractive destination to enjoy a wide variety of local art while providing our city's emerging artists with vital arts facilities."

The proposal includes an arts center at the Cossitt Library with space for studios, classrooms, and galleries, a performance venue on Monroe Street between Front and Riverside, and a rooftop park on the parking garage at the corner of Front and Monroe.

"We should be nurturing arts and creativity," Kirkscey says. "We're not going to be a Fortune 500 town. We shouldn't be trying to be Atlanta or Dallas."

Kirkscey grew up in Germantown and has a background in international business. After completing his undergraduate degree at Ole Miss, he bounced around, living in Costa Rica, Miami, and New York, getting his masters in Phoenix, and doing corporate banking in Houston.

"Some people backpack in Europe," he says. "I went to Costa Rica."

A fluke brought him back to Memphis a few years ago, and he rediscovered the city through fresh eyes.

"I realized what an amazing city this is in terms of creativity. This is an arts town. That's our niche," Kirkscey says.

He began thinking about an arts park after a visit to the Cooper-Young festival a few years ago. Friends for Our Riverfont — a group that formed in response to the Riverfront Development Corporation's (RDC) plan to build office buildings on the public promenade and a land bridge near Mud Island — had a booth. Friends for Our Riverfont's plan included a great urban park on the promenade.

For the next two years, Kirkscey did research on art parks and began working on his proposal full-time last spring after noticing that plans for the promenade had stalled.

“An art park seems like something both groups could be happy with,” Kirkscey says. “It adds vitality to the area; it has green space; it’s in the public use so it honors the easement.”

He’s been meeting with members of the Friends for Our Riverfront and the RDC, as well as the Center City Commission, the Memphis Regional Chamber, the Memphis Convention & Visitors’ Bureau, and the Memphis City Council.

Kirkscey also has approached foundations to help fund the art park. His vision is to set up the park as a non-profit with an executive director (though he clarifies he is not interested in running it).

“I don’t want to go to the city for money. I just want to go to them for the green light,” he says.

To unveil his proposal to the public, Kirkscey held an event during the most recent South Main Art Trolley Tour. In the little sliver of space between Earnestine & Hazel’s and Gestures, he set up what he calls “a miniature version of what an art park would be.”

Seven artists painted from 6 to 9 p.m., when their work was auctioned off. Kirkscey’s cousin, Jonathan Kirkscey, a cellist who plays with the Memphis Symphony Orchestra and Mouserocket, performed solo. Jazz group the Spondoolicks also performed.

And, of course, there were architectural drawings detailing Kirkscey’s vision.

“I think people in Memphis get frustrated and then they get cynical. I don’t think they would get so frustrated if they didn’t think this city had so much potential,” Kirkscey says.

“Our whole downtown should be a platform for the arts. That’s the way to get downtown Memphis going.”

THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL

The art of a compromise

By Staff Reports

Posted September 26, 2008

The Promenade, a four-block area west of Front Street between Union and Adams avenues, has long been one of the city's most poorly utilized portions of Downtown riverfront.

Credit John Kirkscey with an idea that could change that. Kirkscey wants to see the Promenade developed into an art park, an area in which the city's artists, musicians and other creative types could be celebrated.

He plans to unveil a set of architectural drawings for the proposed park tonight from 6 to 9 in the courtyard beside Earnestine & Hazel's Bar & Grill, 531 S. Main.

Kirkscey believes his idea represents a good compromise between the goals of the Riverfront Development Corporation, which wants to bring more vitality to that part of the waterfront, and the Friends for Our Riverfront, a citizens group that wants to preserve as much open space as possible.

Kirkscey hopes tonight's event, which will also feature live music and art displays (naturally), can be a starting point to build public support for the art park.

The concept, explained in more detail at the Memphis art park Web site, is certainly worth exploring.