

ACTIVATING DEMA REST PLACE

REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE HACKENSACK STRATEGY LAB



Northern New Jersey
Community
Foundation

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE CITY OF HACKENSACK
AND THE HACKENSACK PERFORMING ARTS CENTER



The Hackensack Creative Placemaking Strategy Lab was an initiative of the New Jersey Creative Placemakers in partnership with the National Consortium for Creative Placemaking and the Northern New Jersey Community Foundation's ArtsBergen initiative. The program took place on October 17, 2017 at 4:30pm on Demarest Place in Hackensack, NJ. Fifty members of Hackensack and surrounding communities teamed up to brainstorm ideas of art, cultural programming, and tactical urbanism strategies in order to activate Main Street and this unique pedestrian connection between the bus stop on Demarest Place and the Hackensack Performing Arts Center.

The following is a summary of the brainstorming efforts. It is a combination of ideas written and sketched onto maps by the 50 participants and includes physical design, programming, and short- and long-term strategies for making downtown Hackensack a more vibrant and activated arts hub of northern New Jersey.

This program was made possible by the National Endowment for the Arts, The New Jersey State Council on the Arts, and The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation.

CREATIVE PLACEMAKING IS HAPPENING IN HACKENSACK

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WHAT'S THERE?

Challenges of
Demarest



Main Street

Moore Street

MURAL ALLEY

- Planters prevent flow or gathering spaces
- Feels dark and uninviting
- Dead / dying plant material
- Broken infrastructure
- Lacks a sense of “place”

DEMAREST PLACE

- Underutilized space
- Feels dark and uninviting
- Dying significant trees
- Evidence of littering
- Missed opportunity to engage Main Street

BUS CONNECTION

- Requires crossing a busy street
- Entrance to Demarest is dark and uninviting
- Difficult to navigate
- Underutilized space
- Poor first impression to visitors

WHAT HAPPENED?

The Strategy Lab
Thursday October 19
Demarest Place
Hackensack, NJ

METHODS

The group of about 50 participants was divided into four teams:

- Team A: Bus Stop Connection
- Team B: Demarest to Main St.
- Team C: Mural Alley
- Team D: Programs and Events

Each team was given either a map or a pad of paper to take notes on. Challenges of their sites were to be written in red colored pencil. Opportunities and ideas were to be recorded in blue. The teams were

encouraged to think about what the spaces could become with short and long term intervention and programming.

The maps and notes were collected and ideas were shared later on. A brief conclusion was made about the relatively simple, cheap, and easy ways to transform these underused spaces into something inviting, entertaining, and beautiful.

MAP
NOTE
TAKING



MURAL
ALLEY



SO WHAT?

Concept
Design

Based on the feedback given by the different teams, a trend emerged along the connection from the bus stop, through Demarest Place, all the way down the mural alley. By assigning general uses to each of these distinct areas, separated by major roads, there can be a stronger sense of place and purpose.

Activating these spaces requires programming and physical interventions, all of which can be done in a short and long term fashion. The goal is to connect newcomers, traveling by bus, to Main Street and beyond through this otherwise underused series of spaces.

PASSIVE

By creating better gathering spaces and implementing a more soothing palette of colors and textures, this alley can become a moment to get away from the noisy street. Programming can include educational activities, games, quieter performances, yoga, and crafting. Art should be more subtle and calming.

ACTIVE

This central space can be utilized as a more active gathering space for Main Street and beyond. By removing the existing trees and adding brighter colors and lights, this street can become instantly activated and exciting. Programming should include large social events like food or cultural festivals and performances.

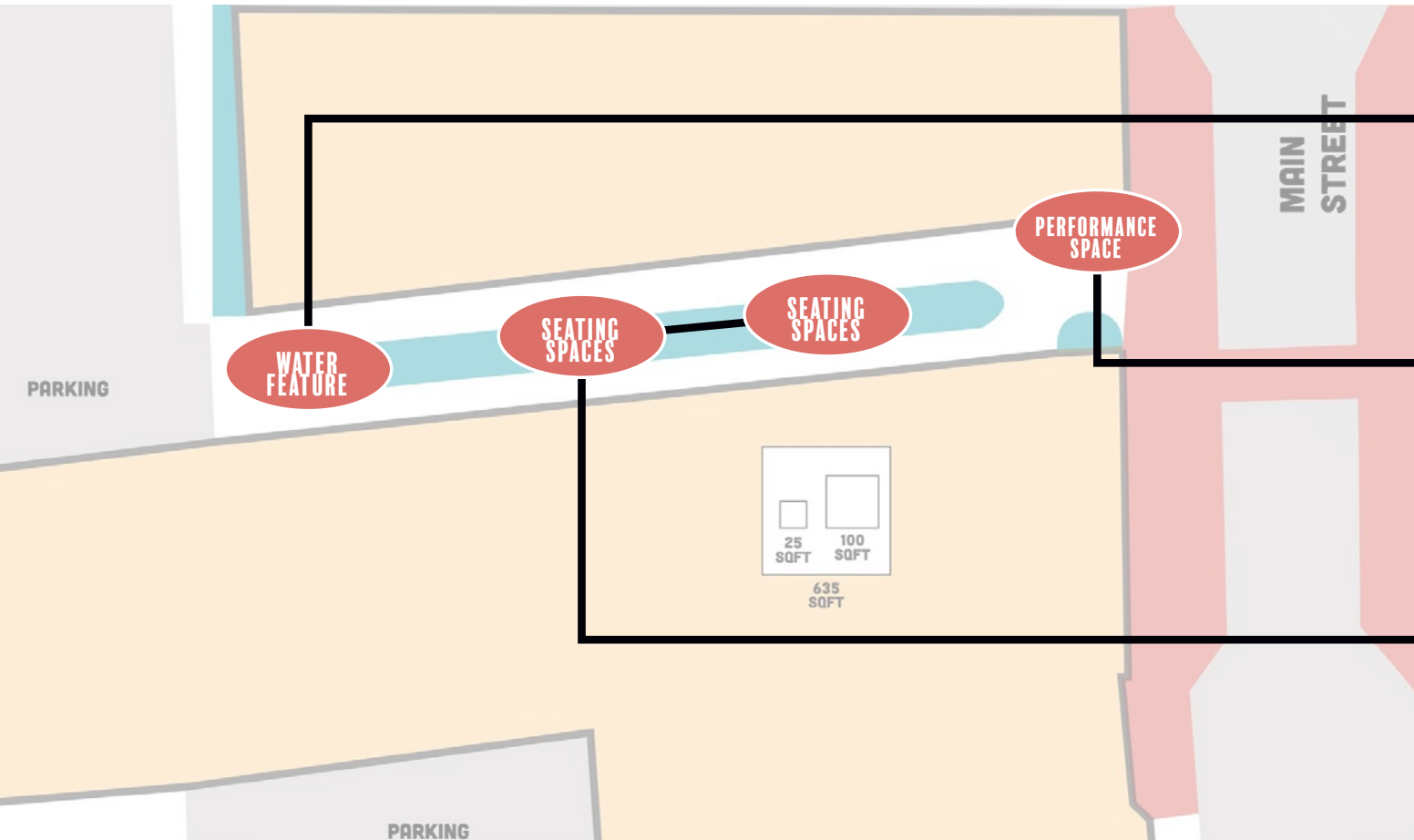
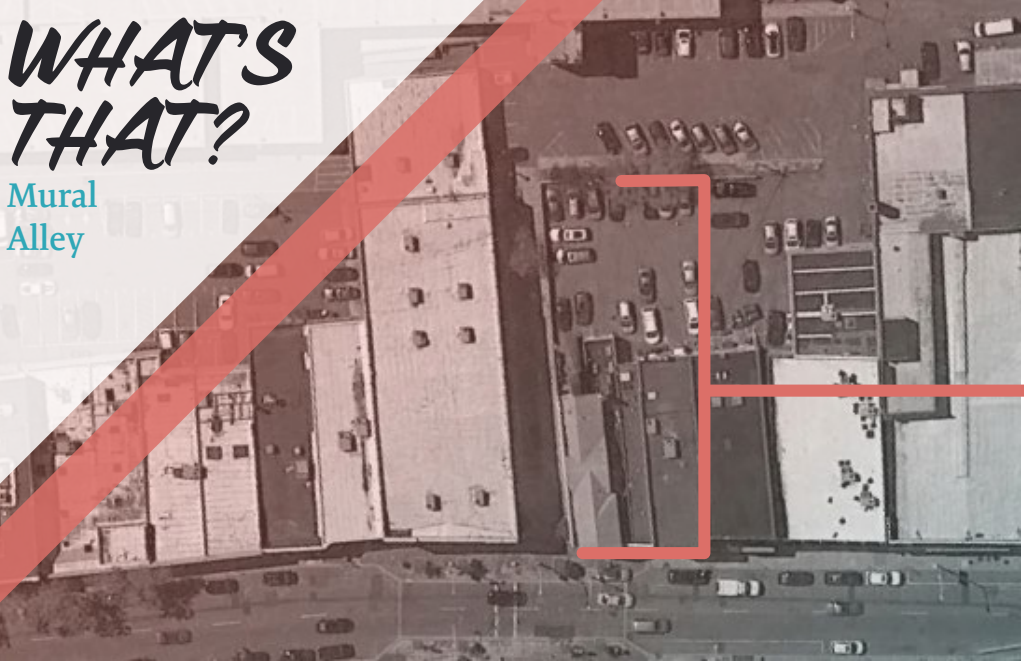
INVITING

This crosswalk and set of bollards can serve as a threshold for Hackensack for those traveling by bus. By creating better and more creative signage, visitors can be instantly welcomed into the downtown and now activated spaces north of the bus stop. Colors should be bright and fun.

WHAT'S THAT?

Mural Alley

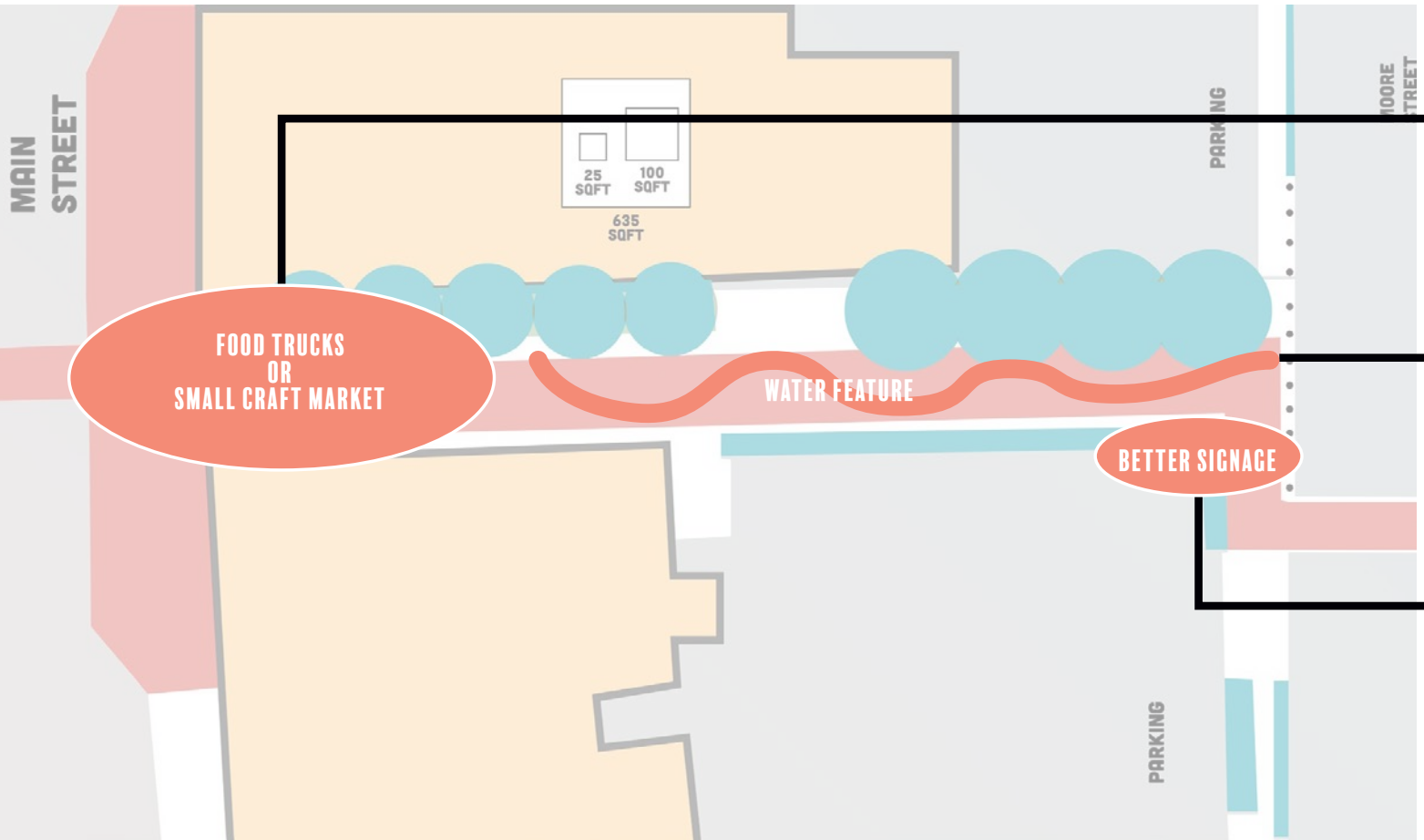
PASSIVE



WHAT'S THAT?

Demarest Place

ACTIVE



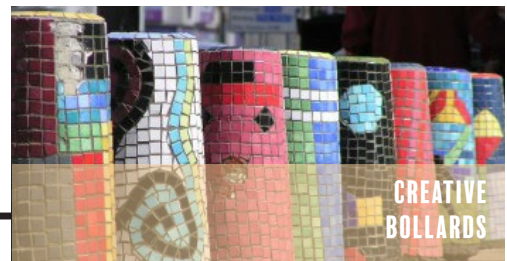
WHAT'S THAT?

Bus Stop
Connect

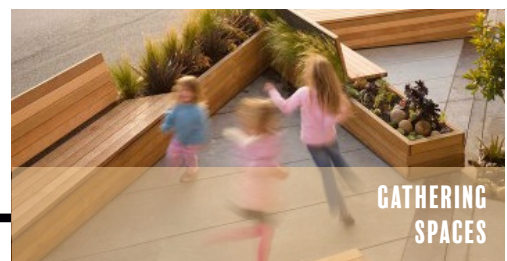
INVITING



LIGHTING ART



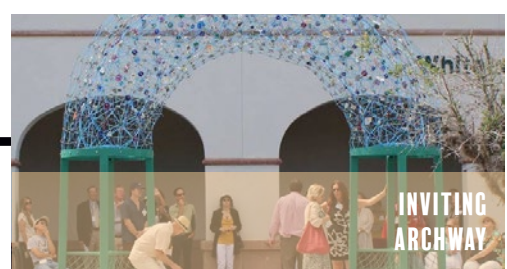
CREATIVE BOLLARDS



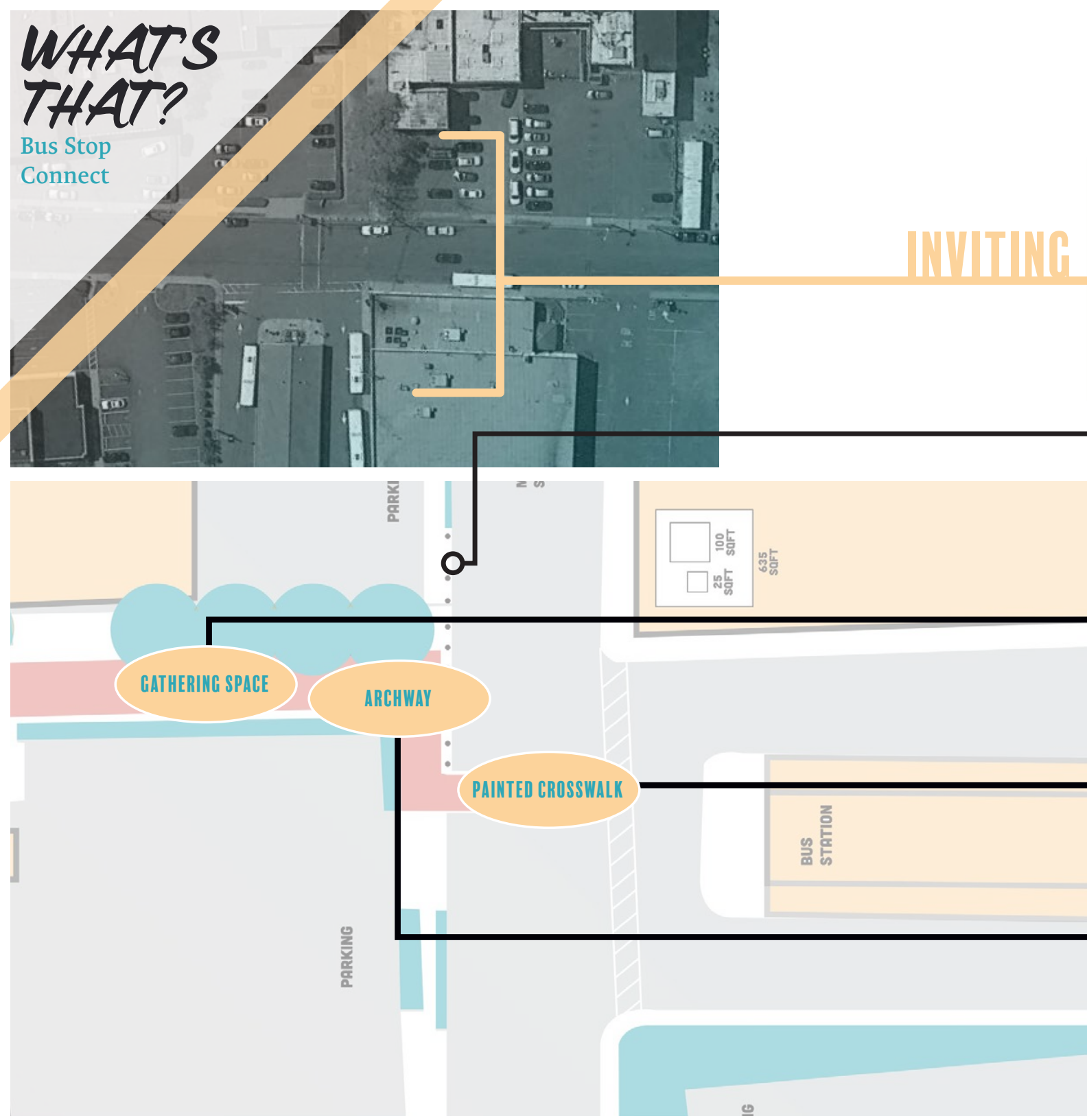
GATHERING SPACES



PAINTED CROSS WALK



INVITING ARCHWAY



WHAT'S NEXT?

Short/Long-Term
Strategies

QUICK FIXES

SPRING 2018

Within the next year, consider using Tactical Urbanism strategies to begin making a quick and cheap impact on your site. Using simple supplies like paint, shipping pallets, cones, and potted plants, a space can be instantly transformed into a much more inviting and creative place.

SEASONAL EVENTS

SPRING TO FALL 2018

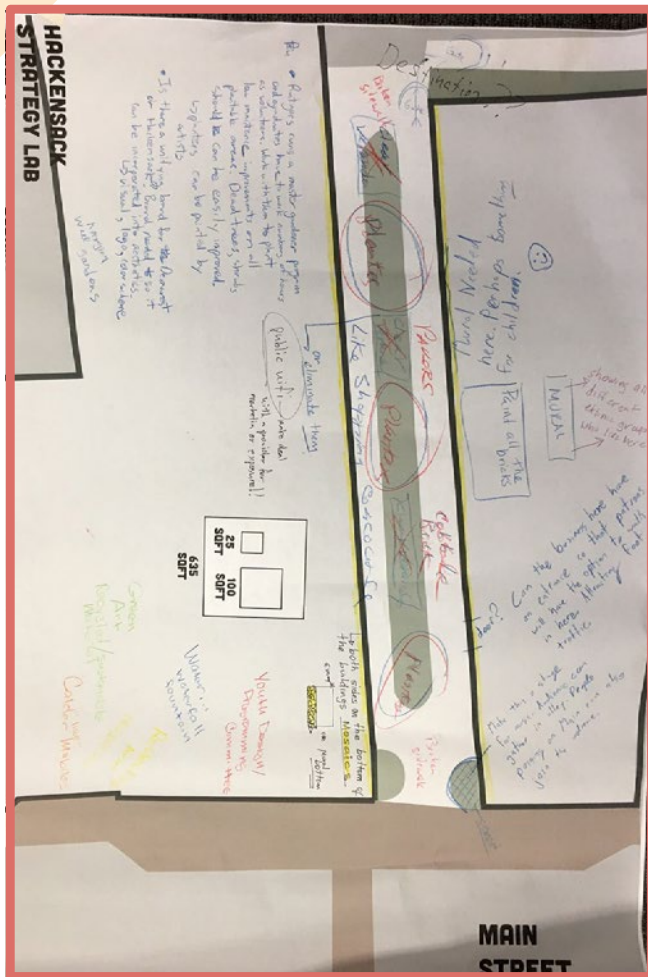
Another easy way to activate space is through seasonal programming. By initiating events like craft fairs, food truck festivals, learning activities, chalk drawing days, cultural festivities, and more, your previously underused space becomes an artistic and cultural hub for Hackensack.

PERMANENT FEATURES

SPRING 2020

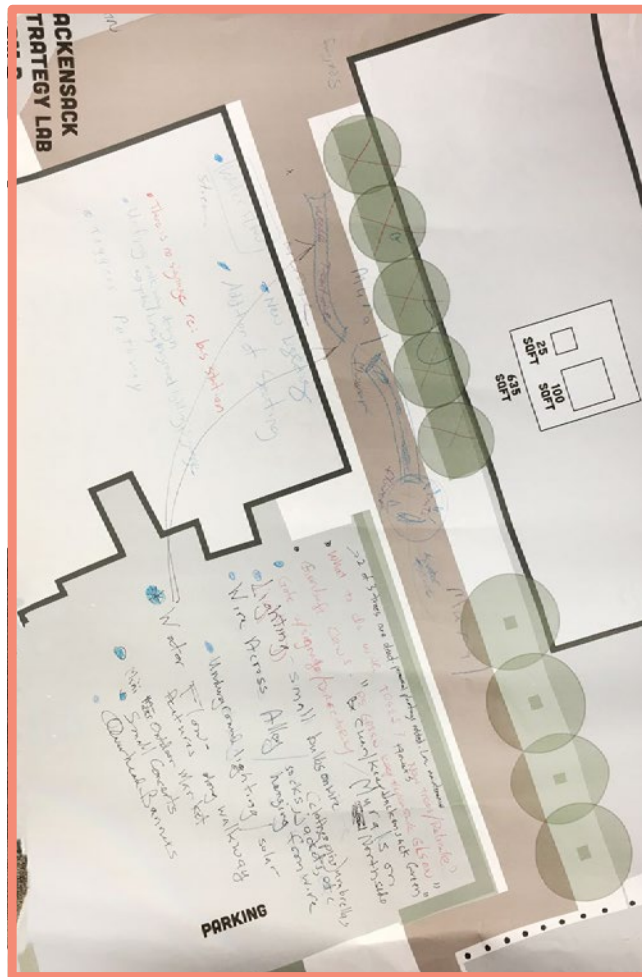
As you begin to experiment with these different temporary structures and events, you can to inventory what the community enjoys or doesn't enjoy. From this information, you can start to make plans for permanent infrastructure like seating, planting beds, water features, lighting, and more.

OTHER IDEAS



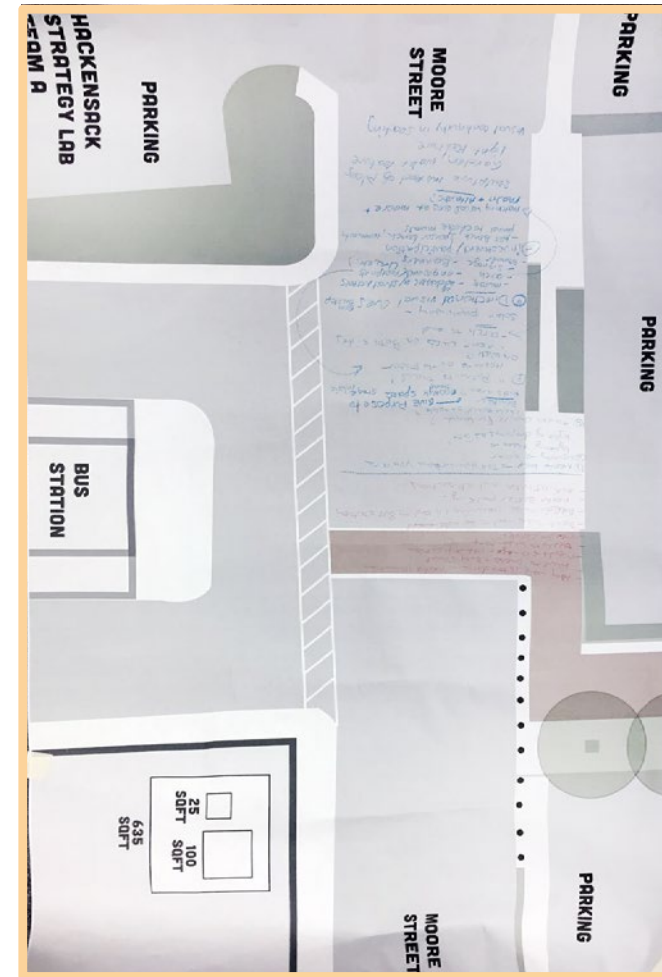
MURAL ALLEY - OTHER IDEAS

- Public Wifi
- Painting ground plane
- Master Gardeners involvement
- "Green" or sustainable art
- Unifying Brand with other locations
- Youth Design / Programming Committee
- Creating better connection to businesses
- Destination or signage for opposite end



DEMAREST PLACE - OTHER IDEAS

- Joggers pathway
- Seating areas
- Performance spaces
- Garbage cans
- Banners
- Cutting down evergreens
- Children's activity center



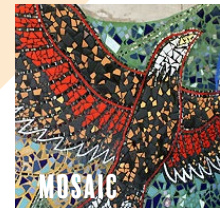
BUS STOP CONNECT - OTHER IDEAS

- Map of area
- Solar powered lighting
- Mosaics and murals
- More sculpture
- Banners or signage
- Planters and/or gardens
- Sponsorship through benches or bricks

WHAT ELSE?

Appendix

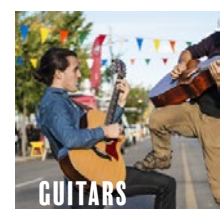
EXAMPLES



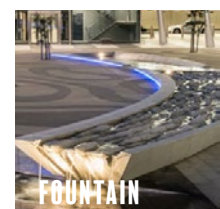
What: "Indian Land Dancing" public mural
Where: Chicago, IL
When: 2009
Web: <https://www.theclio.com/web/entry?id=37096>



What: Barbican Station Pop-up Garden
Where: London, UK
When: 2018
Web: <http://www.opensquares.org/detail/BarbicanStn.html>



What: Kaleido Family Arts Festival
Where: Alberta
When: 2017
Web: <https://exploreedmonton.com/festivals-and-events/Kaleido-Family-Arts-Festival>



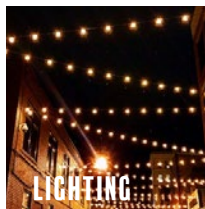
What: Adelaide Airport
Where: Australia
When: 2013
Web: <http://www.tcl.net.au/projects/urban-design/adelaide-airport-371>



What: ParkedBench
Where: London
When: 2015
Web: <http://www.wmbstudio.co.uk/work/#/parkedbench/>



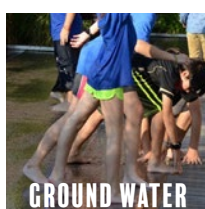
What: "Link"
Where: Chicago, IL
When: 2013
Web: <http://www.andersonville.org/eco-andersonville/people-spots-placemaking/>



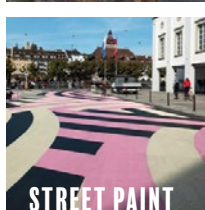
What: Light Up Brush Alley
Where: Flint, MI
When: 2015
Web: https://www.patronicity.com/project/light-up_brush_alley#/



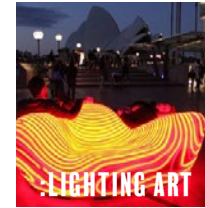
What: Gourmet Food Truck Festival
Where: Kohler, WI
When: 2015
Web: <http://www.theblindhorse.com/calendar-of-events/gourmet-food-truck-festival-july-18-19/>



What: Make It Splashy!
Where: The High Line, NYC
When: 2016
Web: <http://www.thehighline.org/activities/make-it-splashy>



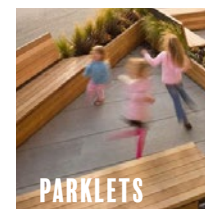
What: Street Painting #9
Where: Luzern, CH
When: 2017
Web: http://www.langbaumann.com/?project_id=378



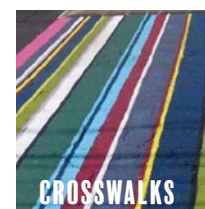
What: The Heart of the City
Where: Sydney
When: 2015
Web: <http://www.anaisafranco.com/heartofthecity/>



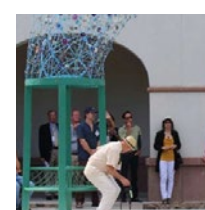
What: Best Bollards in Scotland
Where: Glasgow
When: 2006
Web: <https://weburbanist.com/2014/09/28/posts-with-the-most-12-cool-creative-traffic-bollards/2/>



What: Parklets for Placemaking
Where: Grand Rapids, MI
When: 2014
Web: http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/parklets_for_placemaking



What: Cebratón
Where: Puebla, Mexico
When: 2015
Web: <http://mexiconewsdaily.com/mexicolife/hard-miss-pueblas-new-crosswalks/>



What: Archway
Where: Ft Myers, FL
When: 2006
Web: <http://www.artswfl.com/public-art-2/fgcu-public-art-2/archway/archway>

SPONSORS & PARTNERS



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The Strategy Lab was conducted in partnership with ArtsBergen, an initiative of the Northern New Jersey Community Foundation.



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