Ferguson, MO Better Block Project

DREAM Initiative Fall 2013 Seminar

Presented by Elizabeth Simons

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What is a Better Block Project?

- Opportunity (Vacancies/Underused Corridor)
- Community Planning Exercise
- Data Collection
- Demonstration Tool
- Pop-Up Businesses
- Entertainment
- Bike Lanes
- Crosswalks
- Seating
- Landscaping
- Lighting

Issues to Address in Planning

- Safety (Real & Perceived) – Traffic, Open Sightlines
- Shared Access – Pedestrians, Cyclists, Transit Users, Wayfinding
- Stay Power – Food, Music, Games, Things to Read (Maps, History, etc.)
- Amenities for All – Children, Seniors, Dogs

Permission/Forgiveness

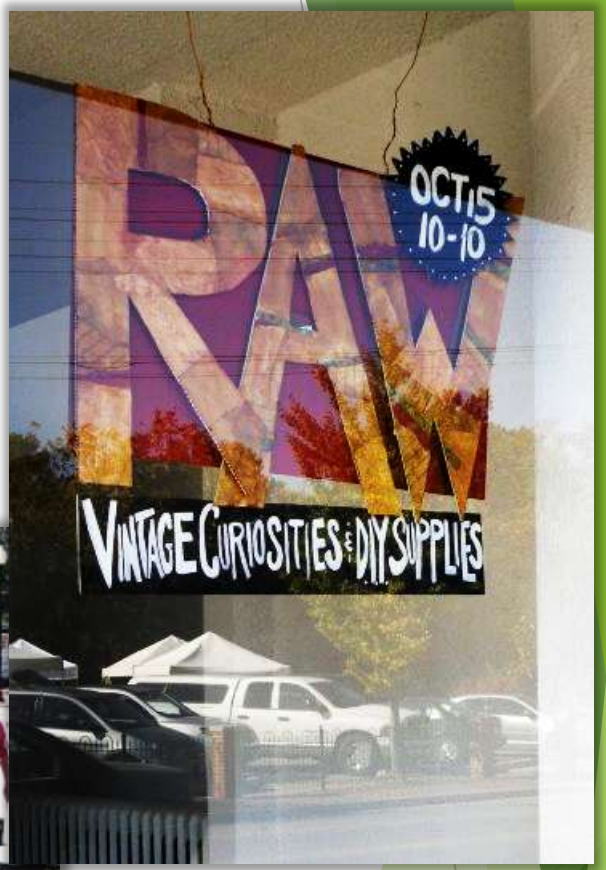
- Block Party/Assembly Permit
- Access to Vacant Spaces
- Insurance
- Business Licenses
- Temporary Food Permit

Incentives to Participate

- Exposure
- Message
- Sales
- Interactive Memento (Craft, Photo, etc.)

Advertising

- Multiple Outlets
- Individual
- Collective
- Blog



Budget & Materials

- Borrow & Request Donations
- Fundraise for Permanent Changes
- Street Furniture
- Landscaping
- Paint (Street/Indoor)
- Street Calming
- Cleaning Supplies
- Signage

Collaboration

- Latch to an existing event (art show, run, bike ride, farmers market, etc.)
- Combine participants for cross-promotion

Data Collection

- Traffic Counts/Speeds
- Opinions on Business Types & Street Configuration
- Retail Sales

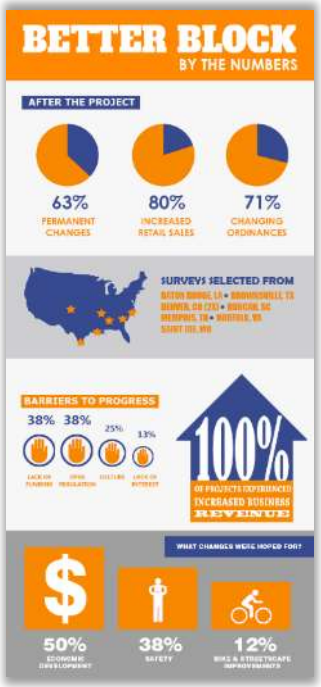


Image Credit: betterblock.org

Entertainment

- Music
- Food
- Theater
- Games

Lessons Learned

- Create a realistic “complete street”
- Base timeline on volunteer availability
- Road reconfigurations require education campaign
- Food and music draw people

Image Credit: San Antonio Better Block

End Results in Ferguson

- New businesses in surrounding blocks
- Lots of events
- Pilot green lane
- Planned road diet
- Citywide wayfinding

Other Better Block Projects

Kansas City, MO Better Block

Dallas, TX Better Block

St. Paul, MN Better Block

Wichita, KS Better Block

Norfolk, VA Better Block

Questions?

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More info on

Better Block Projects:

www.betterblock.org