



WISCONSIN DOWNTOWN ACTION COUNCIL DOWNTOWN PROJECT CASE STUDY PROFILE

Project Name: RACINE AND WISCONSIN ARTS PROGRAMS

Project Location: RACINE WI/STATEWIDE

Project Type (check all that apply)

- Residential
 - Commercial
 - Industrial
 - Adaptive Reuse
 - Redevelopment
 - Signage
 - Creative Partnership
 - Financing
 - Mixed Use
 - Historic Preservation
 - Transportation
 - Open Space
 - Other _____
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Brief Project Description

This case study profiles two programs. The first is related to the work of Arts Wisconsin and the overall effect of arts on downtown redevelopment in the State. The second reviews Racine's arts program and how it has helped their downtown redevelopment efforts.

Project Location: Racine Downtown/Statewide Impact of Arts

Site Size: Racine Downtown and Arts in Wisconsin's Downtowns

Land Uses: Downtown Mixed Use Districts

Key Words, Special Features: Arts, culture, financial strategies, programming, events



Project Address: Racine Downtown/Statewide Impact of Arts in Wisconsin's Downtowns

Owner: City of Racine/ Arts Wisconsin

Other Key Development Members

Anne Katz Arts Wisconsin Executive Director

Devin Sutherland-Director of Racine Downtown Corp.

General Description (Use, Density, Partners, Strategy, Details...)

Anne Katz presented materials on Arts Wisconsin's initiatives to educate and promote the arts in Wisconsin's downtowns. Anne mentioned that Arts Wisconsin works with service advocacy and development-helping organizations define what they want to do in their community and local artists gain opportunity, also affecting education, civic engagement and community development. Anne noted that arts are part of the solution-creativity affects economic development.

It's all about investing in human talent, community and creativity-people are main driver of economic development.

Creative economy-creative industries, creative workforce equals creative communities, states and regions. The intersection of the three is Creative Economy.

Arts can help people choose to live in a community-more livability-young people coming back to raise their kids. Lifelong learning opportunities are important to attracting talented and engaged people.

There are over 10,000 businesses in WI in the arts and WI employs nearly 46,000 people in the arts. The questionable economy requires adaptation and reinvention which is fostered by creativity

We are all hungry for the authentic and unique.

To build a strong economies through arts and culture-focus on creativity, jobs, public spaces, increased civic participation, involving our children, promote stewardship of place, involve the arts in the civic agenda.

Planning and Design (Partners, Challenges, Tools Used, Innovation...)

Anne Katz described the arts in Wittenberg where a mural program has turned empty walls into art. The walls of Wittenberg program is a branding opportunity for the community driven by local artists creating murals.

Anne profiled the Paducah, Kentucky as well and how they attracted artists to the City:

- Financial incentives-low interest rates, low closing costs, loan to value ratios of up to 100%
- Business incentives-health insurance, web sites at no charge, etc.

Anne also recommends, 'The Creative Community Builder Handbook'



Devin Sutherland, Director of the Racine Downtown Corp. presented Racine's innovative arts program. Devin indicated that Racine has had great success with arts in the downtown, working with artists all over the country for public art.

Downtown Racine Inc., although perceived as a downtown economic development organization does more arts work than anything. They have learned that the way you train people to come back downtown is through special events and referenced the book Placedynamics.

Racine nets up to \$150,000 annually from events through various promotions such as their fiberglass sculpture program. Adirondack chairs were their best sellers, and this year they are featuring 'Potsarratzi' (large pots).

Racine's program begins by choosing a subject based on a price point, (\$275 for fiberglass +\$100 to artist) \$375 budgeted for each. They try to focus on items that are good choices for kids to touch or have interest in, functional, durable, size, sellable.

60 sponsors are attracted to the annual program @\$375 each =\$22,500 for sculptures. Artists usually contribute \$300 for each so they are contributing to the local economy plus the art attracts people who spend lots of money in the downtown area. The art then sells for between \$50,000 and \$150,000 at an annual auction. The event also attracts many organizations which create excitement and makes downtown the first place to come to mind that it is the place to do things. Proceeds are used for business retention and recruitment each year-business development.

Racine has become the best place to take out of town visitors because the arts program based on comments received by Racine residents.

Other Racine programs include:

- Music at the Monument (Every Friday June July August) \$300.00 max per band-try to focus on local bands.
- Gallery night-galleries open late offering wine and cheese-Saturdays 6 to 9PM.
- Summer Nights on the Square-2nd Saturday of each month-Couple from Chicago gave \$15,000 to launch program-initially hired local bands but couple wanted musicians hired who only do original music.-crowds went from 2000 to 500.
- 2011 will be a new event combining Gallery night-all businesses open 6 to 9, must do something arts related, with music-June July August and September-one night a month.

Approvals and Permitting (Agencies, Challenges, Costs, What was learned...)



Devin Sutherland noted that artists are initially interviewed and concepts reviewed by committee before projects are awarded. This is important to gauge an artist's capabilities and intentions. Art is mounted on a cart on four wheels so businesses can easily wheel the items out each day and take them in each night. Every cart has a plaque, artist name, name of piece, and sponsor. Fiberglass sculptures are clear coated by the artists usually at local autobody shops and typically donated. This has been important to the durability of the items for their eventual auctioning.

Financing (Partners, Level of Participation, Equity, Grants, Loans, Revenue...)

Artists, local businesses, sponsors

Marketing and Management (Keys to success, Promotion, Target audiences...)

Racine also used free shirt program to have people's picture taken with a clock sculpture which was one of a previous year's themes. They randomly gave away shirts to people on the street, asking for a picture with the clock sculptures and information about their visit. Of the 30 shirts distributed, 15 were given to Racine residents while 15 were given to people from out of town. This was a great way to understand the influence of people coming in from out of town.

Experience Gained (Key Issues, Difficulties, Challenges overcome, Solutions...)

The year Racine's theme included clocks, some of the more fragile parts such as the hands of the clock were bent or damaged and potential buyers noticed before the auction took place and did not participate in the auction, thinking these parts were not going to be repaired before auction when in fact they were to be repaired.