



MISSION  
COMMUNITY  
ASSESSMENT  
and YOUTH  
ENGAGEMENT  
PROJECT



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**THE GREAT COMMUNITIES  
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*a project of the*  
**MISSION COMMUNITY MARKET  
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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Most of all, MCM is especially grateful to the project staff who executed the community assessment, designed and produced recommendations, and have dedicated themselves to the betterment of our community.

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# CONTENTS

Executive Summary .....	4
Project Introduction .....	6
Community Assessment.....	8
Methodology .....	8
Focus Group Findings .....	12
Survey Findings .....	13
Community Presentation .....	18
Highlights .....	19
Urban Design Recommendations.....	20
Programming Recommendations .....	40
Tool Kit .....	42

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Mission Community Market (MCM) received a Great Communities Collaborative grant from the San Francisco Foundation in 2013 to implement a young adult-led Community Assessment in the Mission district of San Francisco. The Assessment was designed to solicit input from Mission residents and stakeholders about community needs and desired activities in a future public space to serve those needs. The new space - or Mercado Plaza - will serve as a model platform for convening community partners through civic engagement, community health, and shared stewardship.

The Community Assessment project included:

1. a review of Mission District health reports
2. community focus groups
3. a community survey, and
4. urban design and programming recommendations in the Mercado Plaza

The community assessment targeted long-term residents and stakeholders, especially Latino Mission residents to ensure the new public space would be responsive to populations whose concerns and ideas may not have been collected in public meetings, market sessions and previous workshops held to inform the Mercado Plaza.

As part of this community assessment, three community focus groups were held at various community sites in the Mission district. In addition, 229 community questionnaires were administered and completed throughout the community.

Focus group findings reflect a strong desire to provide programming activities that 1) reflect the Latin@ character of the Mission community, 2) are affordable and/or free, and 3) provide a clean and safe space for children, adolescents and adults to spend time together outdoors and enjoy the neighborhood. The focus group consisting of female mothers/elders, emphasized the desire for health and wellness workshops and forums.

The community survey findings include a strong desire to see public art, music/concerts, intergenerational programming, family-centered and inclusive activities that would increase the utilization of space. Diverse social and cultural programming that also include health related information was seen as very desirable for families as well as offering information to community residents about jobs and health through job fairs, community boards and health related events and activities. Food preparation demonstrations emerged as desirable for adults.

The findings also suggest the importance of ongoing maintenance of the future public space. Respondents feel comfortable with new infrastructure and movable furniture, as long as it is clean and safe. The respondents also included creative uses of the space, beyond that for the open farmer's market and cultural activities. These included bringing people together to barter skills/wares, open up a flea market, use of rental space etc.

By age category the following were identified as desirable activities:

The top three children activities include having a play area, arts and crafts and music. The new urban space would include areas spacious enough to allow children to roam/run around and space for interactive group activities engaging children with adults through classes or workshops.

The top activities desired for adolescents include concerts/music, physical space to hang out and workshops of various types. Art (photos, art making) and body movement opportunities (exercise, sports, skateboarding, dance) were specified as well as topics such as urban farming, health, alcohol and drug prevention, counseling, healthy living, and inspirational speakers for the educational workshop/forums.

Music concerts, food demonstrations and cultural events were the top three desired activities for adults. The ability to socialize in a clean and safe space was highlighted as an important aspect of the new

open space for this age group. Creating a friendly community space with affordable and accessible prices is very desirable.

The top activities identified for the elderly population include arts and craft classes, opportunities to volunteer and games, such as card games, loteria and others.

The majority of the survey respondents felt the creation of a new public space had the potential of bringing the Mission community together. The offering of social and cultural activities that enhance the neighborhood experience was reported to be a positive move.

MCM created a series of design interventions and scenarios that would support the recommended programming and desired activities resulting from

the assessment.

The main recommended design intervention is a "gateway" element and marquee at the busiest intersection of the future plaza. Together, the design elements will communicate that this space is special, while offering opportunities to play, talk with neighbors and interact with the space.

Three design scenarios are offered in this report: "Huacal," "Cubes" and "Niche," each with pros and cons related to cost, maintenance, and interactivity of. Movable seating is recommended for all of them. A seating study helped identify optimal designs.

Finally, the Assessment report concludes with a toolkit and series of lessons learned for other communities interesting in a similar project.



# PROJECT INTRODUCTION

The Mission Community Market (MCM) received funds from The San Francisco Foundation in 2013 to implement a youth-led Community Assessment in the Mission district of San Francisco. The Community Assessment project goal was to solicit input from Mission residents and stakeholders in order to identify neighborhood needs and inform programming and public space interventions, including health interventions, in the new public open space (Mercado Plaza) slated to open in 2015. Simultaneously, the project was designed to engage and provide young adults with a leadership opportunity, informing and shaping the Community Assessment process through their participation.

MCM's vision is to transform what was once a blighted block in the heart of the Mission into the Mercado Plaza, a world-class public space. The Plaza will serve as a model platform for convening community partners through civic engagement, community health, and shared stewardship. This plaza aims to reflect the historical and diverse community residents that call the Mission their home.

The Bartlett Street (or, Mercado Plaza) renovation is a partnership between the Planning Department, Department of Public Works, Rebar Design Group and MCM. The newly created space will be located on Bartlett Street, between 21st and 22nd Streets in the heart of San Francisco's Mission district.

Mission Community Market serves the diverse Mission district populations through producing a weekly outdoor market, developing strategic partnerships, providing bilingual nutrition outreach, and lowering the barrier to fresh, healthy foods—which are often perceived as inaccessible to low-income households. MCM is also proposing to model the idea of public markets as points of delivery for health interventions. With the new public space, MCM aims to create a flexible urban space that provides opportunities to gather children and families, neighbors, and to offer healthy, social, cultural and educational activities that expand the vibrant life of the Mission district.

The Community Assessment process was vitally important to the Mission because it strived to gather intelligence and data from residents who had limited input thus far in developing the open space project. This Community Assessment's target group was organized to ensure the new public space would meet the social and health needs of the Mission's population, especially the Latino families that have historically resided in the Mission. MCM believes it is critical to capture the perspectives of these long-time residents to ensure MCM stewardship of the new space reflects their health and social needs.

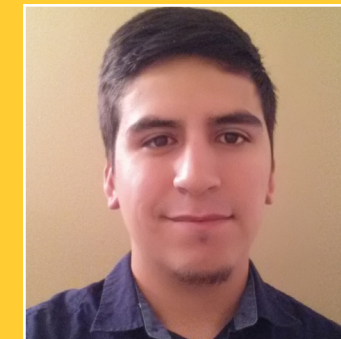
At the cusp of the implementation of the community survey, the lower 24 Street corridor was deemed a special cultural district by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. This new designated area (Calle 24 Latino Cultural District) is bounded by 22nd and Cesar Chavez Streets and Potrero and Mission Streets. Outside of these boundaries it will also include La Raza Park, Precita Park and the Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts. This community initiative is one of many community-based advocacy efforts aimed at maintaining and preserving the Latino cultural identity of the Mission as demographic shifts in the neighborhood take place. For the Mercado Plaza project, the goal is to anchor this new neighborhood asset within the social, cultural, and historical characteristics of the Mission.



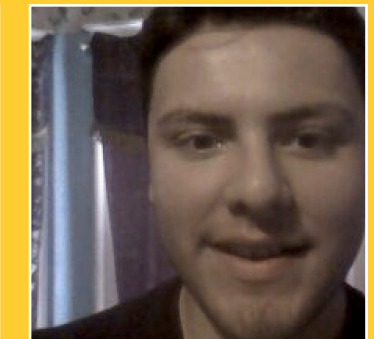
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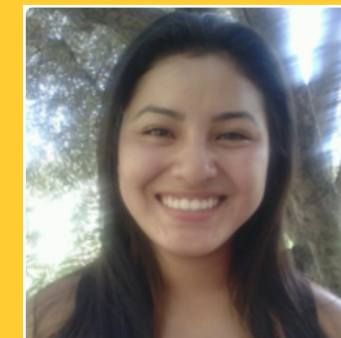
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# PROJECT TEAM

The MCM Community Assessment team consisted of the lead community survey consultant, a field supervisor, and MCM staff. The lead consultant had the responsibility of designing focus group and survey instruments, staff training, and overseeing all aspects of the Community Assessment processes. The field supervisor was responsible for hiring and supervising six youth staff members, assisting with the training and coaching of staff and communicating with the lead consultant on survey implementation. The primary responsibility of the staff was to implement the community survey. The focus groups and community survey took place during the summer of 2014. The entire project is scheduled for completion October 31, 2014. The MCM Executive Director managed the project and provided overall guidance to the process. The MCM Board provided input to maintain continuity between earlier community workshops, the City's streetscape project, and this Assessment.

The Community Assessment project consisted of:

1. A review of Mission district health-related reports and data
2. The implementation of three community focus groups, and
3. The implementation of a community survey

## MISSION DISTRICT HEALTH DATA REVIEW

Prior to the development and design of the focus groups and community survey, a review of reports was conducted to inform the project design and understand the demographic composition of the community as well as the health issues facing Mission residents. The reports included the Mission Neighborhood Health Center's Needs Assessment Report 2009, 2010-2011, and the Health Demographics and Health Outcomes Data from the Department of Public Health.

The Community Assessment targets long-term residents and workers, especially Latino Mission residents. MCM wanted to ensure the new public space would be responsive to this specific population to prioritize activities based on their current needs as a community.

## METHODOLOGY

### FOCUS GROUPS

Three community focus groups were held during the months of May and June 2014. The focus groups were held at various community sites in the Mission district. The recruitment process targeted Mission residents and parents and/or caregivers of children attending local schools. The first focus group was held at the local K-8 school close to Bartlett Street – Buena Vista Horace Mann K-8 on 23rd Street on May 22, 2014. This site was selected because of the readily available pool of adults easily accessible through the local food bank distribution center located at the school. A total of 10 Latinas participated in this focus group, which was conducted in Spanish.

The second focus group was held in the Women's

Building located on 18th Street in the Mission. Parents/caregivers were recruited from the Head Start program located on the first floor of the building. Permission was granted to recruit parents during the after-school pick-up time. This focus group consisted of five participants and was held in the Women's Building auditorium. Both English and Spanish were used in this focus group.

The third focus group was held at San Francisco's City College Campus on Mission Street with the six Latino young adults (18-24 yrs. old) hired for the project. Four of the six young adults are Mission residents along with their families. The two remaining staff members are San Francisco residents that frequent - "hang out" in the Mission. To ensure minimal bias and contamination, the focus group took place BEFORE the project orientation and staff training.

The focus group protocol was designed to solicit Mission residents' perspective on:

1. current experience with the weekly market;
2. ideas of what activities and programming they'd like to see at the new public space;
3. strengths and assets of the Mission district and what characteristics make a great plaza; and,
4. opinions about the elements they'd like to see within the new public space.

The focus groups were designed to last one hour and as an incentive, all focus group participants were offered \$4 worth of MCM market vouchers for the use at the weekly farmer's market. The questions focused on identifying current resident health issues, soliciting suggestions for activities and programming by age groups and ideas for amenities and elements for the new space. The focus group findings were used to inform the survey development process by helping define the response categories for some of the survey questions. The focus group protocol in Spanish and English are attached as Appendix A and Appendix B.

### COMMUNITY SURVEY

The community survey was developed by the lead consultant with the guidance and review of the ED and the board of advisors. The survey questions, survey protocols and procedures were drafted by the lead consultant. Subsequent survey drafts were reviewed primarily by the ED and the lead consultant. Efforts were made to keep the survey length short to increase participation rates. A total of 50 questions were included in the survey. The survey's main objective was to inform program and design of the new renovated space.

Six young Latino adults (18 – 24 years old) were hired as survey administrators – three men and three women, a good gender balance. Unfortunately, we lost one female staff member. The survey administrators underwent approximately 15-20 hours of training, role playing and coaching prior to entering the field work. Coaching was offered throughout survey implementation. The training consisted of 1) learning about MCM and the Mercado Plaza project goals; 2) activities for survey team building; 3) skill building in outreach and interviewing techniques; 4) training on survey protocols and procedures; and 5) survey administration role playing. The training was conducted by the lead consultant and the field supervisor. MCM's Executive Director (ED) participated by providing staff an overview of MCM mission, vision and projects.

The surveys were administered by using a Samsung 3 tablet. CTM Software was used on the tablet to enter the data. The use of the tablet allowed for daily electronic upload and review of survey respondents' characteristics that informed our outreach efforts and ensured we were sampling our target population. The survey was pilot-tested and edited based on the pilot testing feedback. The data collection period began July 1st and ended July 28, 2014. The project goal to collect 200 community surveys fell short by one survey. The team collected 199 surveys at the end of the data collection effort. The average survey administration time was 37 minutes.

### SURVEY SAMPLING DESIGN

A convenience sample was used to collect the community survey data and the goal of collecting 200 surveys was determined after taking into account budget and timeframe. The data collection period estimated to collect 200 surveys was six-weeks. The survey was piloted tested by staff after survey administrator training was completed. The results of the pilot test informed the survey changes.

While the target population was long-time Mission residents/workers, specifically Latino residents, the board also requested the survey outreach include surrounding market neighbors (including businesses). To accommodate this request, the first phase of data collection focused on going door to door around a two-block radius from Bartlett Street. This data collection phase lasted about one week. Through staff debriefs and review of the survey results, it was clear the door to door surveying resulted in very low rates of Latino participation. It became very apparent that the majority of survey respondents resulting from this approach yielded majority White respondents.

We oversampled Latinos to ensure a strong representative sample of Latino respondents in the overall data sample given that they comprise of the majority of residents in the Mission. Staff was deployed in teams of two for security purposes. The team of two survey administrators went out together but surveyed individually within a particular outreach area. The outreach areas included some of the busiest Latino areas of the Mission corridor - the heart of the Mission. These areas included sites such as churches, laundry mats, non-profits, restaurants, parks and local Mexican businesses. On Thursdays, survey administrators also surveyed patrons of the Mission Community Market.

## SURVEY AREAS

Survey areas included but were not limited to the following:

- Two-block radius of the Mission Community Market
- 25th and Harrison (Garfield Park)
- 23rd and Bryant (El Metate)
- 23rd Street from Bryant to Valencia
- 19th Street and Valencia (Mission Pool and Playground)
- Mission between 25th and 24th Street (Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts)
- Dolores Park
- 18th Street between Guerrero and Dolores (Women's Building)
- The following places along 24th Street:
  - Corner with Mission St. (Café La Boheme)
  - Panaderia La Victoria
  - St. Peter's Catholic Church
  - Modern Times Bookstore
  - Casa Sanchez
  - La Palma

On an average day with all staff present, the project managed to complete between 16-19 surveys a day. To increase our survey completion rate and surpass our 200 survey goal, staff worked on one Sunday around St. Peter's Church. St. Peter's Church serves many of the current and former Latino families in the Mission. The pastor assisted by announcing the survey efforts underway. Much to the surprise of the survey staff and field supervisor, this effort yielded very few surveys – only 10 surveys were collected that Sunday.

## SURVEY SECTIONS:

The community survey was designed to solicit Mission residents' perspective on the following:

1. strengths and assets of the Mission district
2. health and quality of life issues facing residents in the Mission
3. the type of activities and outdoor elements residents would like in the new public space
4. alternative uses for the new public space

*Close to 95% of respondents agree or strongly agree that the new Mercado Plaza project will help create more community connections with those living in the Mission neighborhood.*



## COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUPS

The focus groups provided valuable information for the overall project. The major focus group findings are included below.

### WHAT MAKES THE MISSION SPECIAL?

It is clear and there is consensus that the Mission district provides many positive amenities and social and cultural benefits to its residents and visitors alike. The district is visited and acknowledged for its numerous Latino restaurants, diverse and affordable social activities, including murals and cultural events. The district's Latino identity is celebrated and there is a belief that the resources and services available to residents is vast and still somewhat accessible to working families. There are stores that still exist that are affordable even though more expensive ones have opened up. Accessibility to public transportation via BART and affordable stores combined with a large network of community-based organizations offering social services to those in need make the Mission an attractive neighborhood to live in. The sun is also appreciated and makes the district attractive as a neighborhood.

### TOP PRESSING COMMUNITY ISSUES

All three focus groups heralded the need for affordable housing as the most pressing issue facing Mission residents. Safety and security concerns were highlighted and deemed extremely important and pressing. Focus group respondents noted the presence of gangs, police brutality, and clusters of people with mental illnesses in public spaces. They also cited the desire for decreased marijuana smoking and loitering in public areas, more clean streets, street improvements and increased police presence without the accompanying police brutality. Unemployment as a community issue was raised and the acknowledgement that the cost of living in San Francisco was relatively high, making it difficult for families to live in the Mission. The feeling that the Mission is losing some of its characteristic was noted.

## WHAT MAKES A PLAZA INVITING?

To help think through the creation of a new plaza space, the focus group asked participants about the characteristics of an inviting plaza – a place where adults felt comfortable going and taking their families to. Focus group participants felt that a pleasant plaza is a plaza: 1) that felt safe and secure, 2) where lots of people (intergenerational) used the space to meet others; and 3) with good food and fun activities. The plaza was viewed as a community asset and resource, providing a space where friends and families can socialize and eat good at affordable food/snacks.

Focus group participants stated that an inviting plaza would periodically hold various events that appealed to individuals of all ages. The plaza would be a clean and decorative space. It was also clear from the focus group respondents that the plaza include programming that offered FREE or affordable activities -accessible to working families. Accessibility and affordability are key factors to ensuring all families feel welcomed and could participate. The focus group with 10 Latina women (all mothers/caregivers) particularly supported offering opportunities for children and adolescents to learn about their Latino history and culture and well as to learn Spanish in a group and experience cultural presentations.

### WHAT ACTIVITIES ARE DESIRED IN THIS NEW PUBLIC OPEN SPACE?

#### Children

It is quite clear that focus group respondents want activities that engage children through all their senses. Fun activities such as reading time, face painting, bubbles, sports, music, dance and arts and craft activities are priorities. Respondents report they want a space that allows children to run and play freely. Portable play structures, including slides, tables, chairs and game structures are desired in this new open space. Activities such as arts & crafts and reading out loud are intergenerational activities viewed as a positive way for children to interact with adults. Offering opportunities for the elderly to volunteer their time in useful activities and engage with young people was very popular.

#### Adolescents (18 yrs. of age and under)

Activities for adolescents included having music activities (concerts, DJ nights), dancing, games (dunking booths), movie nights, car shows, job fairs, health and educational workshops were seen as positive activities to have in the public space. There was a strong interest in one focus group in providing educational workshops on culture, language, education and Latino history for adolescents.

#### Young Adults (18 – 25 yrs. of age)

For young adults, the activities as desirable included activities such as job fairs and job training, workshops on urban gardening and farming, along with fun activities such as music, and dancing.

#### Adults (26 – 64 yrs. of age)

Desired activities for adults included activities such as live music concerts (Jazz/Blues/Latino/Symphony); a place to socialize, food demonstrations and dance classes. Creating workshops, forums or panels on various topics was also mentioned. Having good tasty and affordable food is seen as an attraction for individuals of all ages. Dance and exercise classes such as Zumba, Salsa and other dance genres are welcomed. Whether as a class or as a performance, focus groups respondents communicated a high interest for dance in the new public space. Language classes for non-English speaking individuals were also suggested.

#### Elderly (65 yrs. and older)

Board games, community garden, dance classes or open dancing, arts & crafts (crochet, knitting, papel picado, papalotes etc.), games (dominos, cards) and painting were identified as activities that would attract the elderly population. The elements necessary to make the elderly comfortable included the presence of seating (benches or chairs), shading (tree) and having access to water. Included in the list were massage chairs.

## COMMUNITY SURVEY

### DEMOGRAPHICS

A total of 199 community surveys were completed. Sixty-four percent of respondents report they live in the Mission. Of those living in the Mission (127), 46.5% have lived in the Mission for over 10 years,

22.83% between 5 to 10 years, resulting in close to a 70% respondent rate living in the Mission more than five years.

Two-thirds of our respondents were Latino (66%) while Whites made up 21% of respondents followed by 4% mixed race and 3% African American. A little over half of the respondents were women, 55.3%, while 42.2% were male and 2% transgender or other.

Sixty-seven percent of Latino respondents reported speaking English fluent or well, with about a third of the sample (29.5%) reporting not speaking English well. Half of respondents (50.3%) reported English as the primary languages spoken at home while 43.9% reported Spanish as the primary language spoke at home. Sixty percent of respondents preferred to take the survey in English while 40% opted to take it in Spanish.

Half of our sample (53.2%) were single (never married) while 35% were married or living with domestic partner. The average size of our respondent's households was 3.54, similar to household size as reported in other community assessment reports that indicate this service area at 3.82 persons per household in 2009.

Close to 60% of respondents worked in the Mission while 41% did not. Seventy-three percent of those working in the Mission were employed full or part-time (including self-employed). Five percent reported being out of work and looking for work. A little over a third (36.7%) had a household income of less than \$25,000; 20.6% had an income between \$25-50,000 and close to 15% had a household income between \$50,000 and \$99,999. Eight percent of respondents had a household income of over \$100,000. Close to 20% declined to answer.

Among Latino respondents, 18% completed a bachelor's degree and 3% a graduate degree, while 23% only completed elementary school. Ten percent completed high school or GED and 21% completed some college/technical. Generally, Whites reported higher educational levels, 54% completed a Bachelor's degree, 14% completed graduate degree and close to 12% completed some college/technical school. The respondent sample had good representative

sample among different age groups with the 45 – 54 year olds and elderly age group having the least representation, 15% and 14% respectively.

Age	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55+
Percent	19%	27.6%	23%	15%	14%

### MISSION AS A SPECIAL PLACE

In answering the question, “What makes the Mission District a special place for you to live/work/hang out in?” respondents noted that the Mission was special due to the its Latino culture and diversity, particularly through its Latino businesses, stores and markets and food.

#### What makes the Mission district a special place for you to live/work/hangout in?

Latino businesses (stores/markets)	112	56%
Food	89	45%
Diverse Community	85	43%

The survey asked respondents to identify those characteristics that make for an inviting plaza – a place they would be motivated to take their family members to spend time. The top three characteristics of an inviting plaza according to respondents are 1) cleanliness (bathrooms and space) (17%), safety (12.4%), and good food (9.55%). Music came in fourth. When broken down by race/ethnicity, cleanliness was also the top factor for Latinos, followed by safety (13.38%), followed by music (7.32%). Among Whites, good food was top priority (18.25%), safety (10.3%) and followed by the presence of green spaces and cultural events (8.73% respectively).

While the Mission district has many assets and strengths, the Mission is also challenged by many community health related issues. Asked about the top two related health issues in the neighborhood, respondents reported the lack of affordable housing (10.3%), unsafe and dirty streets (9.0%) to be among the most pressing issues.

### Top pressing health-related issues facing Mission residents

Substance Abuse (Alcohol and Drug)	55	13.0%
Lack of Affordable Housing	41	10.3%
Unsafe Streets	36	9.0%

However, when you combine alcohol (6.5%) and drug (6.2%) abuse into one substance abuse category, this category quickly emerges as the top health related issue among respondents (13%). The “Other” category highlighted dirty streets, cancer and gentrification as being very problematic in the neighborhood. Gentrification is very much linked in people’s minds to the lack of affordable housing.

When asked about the top pressing Quality of Life Issues facing Mission district residents, the survey respondents reported the top two community issues as lack of affordable housing and unemployment, 18.8% and 14.8% respectively. When responses

*Mission residents consistently answer that cleanliness and safety are the most important needs in a public space.*

related to public streets are merged, issues related to problematic streets come in 3rd place. Street issues such as dirty streets, violence in streets and lack of public space quickly emerge as 3rd place. When the “other” category is analyzed, issues related to affordable housing and unemployment are evident and reaffirm the top two issues.

### Top Two Pressing Quality of Life Issues facing Mission residents? Top two answers (multiple options)

Not enough affordable housing	75	18.8%
Unemployment	59	14.8%
Problematic Streets (dirty, unsafe, violent and lack of open space)	56	14.0%



### WHAT MAKES A PLAZA INVITING

The most important characteristics of an attractive plaza as reported by respondents is its cleanliness (space & bathrooms) 17.9%, followed by safety (12.4%), followed by good food/vendors (9.5%) and music (7.3%). As important is having open green space for children and families to socialize, relax and enjoy activities and events. While affordability did not emerge as one of the top characteristics in the survey, the focus group findings did highlight the importance of having activities and events at low or free of charge, especially for working families.

### WHAT RESPONDENTS WOULD LIKE TO SEE IN NEW PUBLIC SPACE

Respondents were asked to give their ideas on what activities would be attractive to audiences by age groups. In addition to naming the types of programming and activities, survey respondents were asked to name the elements needed to offer the activities they named. Examples of elements are those physical structures, surfaces or equipment needed such as portable play structures, chairs, etc.

#### Children

The top three children activities include having a play area (22%), arts and crafts (17.95%) and music (13.26%). In the “other” category, equipment suggestions were instruments, bubbles, books, toys, etc. The idea of having a protected space for kids to play was mentioned in the focus groups as well as reported through the survey. This area would be spacious enough to allow children to roam/run around and have space for group activities that bring children together through classes or workshops.

The elements (amenities and objects) reported as needed for these activities include arts and crafts tables (16%), portable play structures (hoola hoops, balls, etc.) (13.7%), and small benches/chairs/tables (11.1%). Tables can serve as double duty – for activities as well as for chess or other board games. For the arts and crafts, art supplies are needed.

#### Adolescents

The activities that emerged from the survey include concerts/music (17.3%), physical space to hang out (15.5%) and educational workshops (13.8%). Movie



nights (13%) came close at fourth. When the “other” answers are categorized, art (photos, art making) and body movement opportunities (exercise, sports, skateboarding, dance) emerge as activities desired for young people. In addition, topics such as urban farming, health, alcohol and drug prevention, counseling, healthy living, inspirational speakers, cultural themes are reported. The space must be safe and clean and be youth-friendly for adolescents to feel comfortable and get involved in healthy activities. The elements needed for these activities were technology and music making equipment as well as chairs/tables/benches and a screen for movie nights.

**Adults**

Music concerts (11.8%), food demonstrations (11.5%) and cultural events (10.2%) were reported as the top three activities desirable for adults. These were prioritized over body movement/exercise classes, educational workshops (history/culture) and informational tabling. As part of creating this social environment, activities such as group classes (cooking, art, exercise, dance, etc.), availability of good food, alcohol and wine and a safe space to gather were reported as important. The socializing aspect of the new open space is very important, to create a friendly community space with affordable and accessible of prices.

The elements reported as important for the adults are comfortable chairs/benches, tables, as well as community information boards. While information tabling about daily living did not emerge as a popular activity, the idea of having a community board where information about jobs and other activities can be communicated out seems to be desired.

**Elderly**

Arts and craft classes (16%), opportunities to volunteer (16%) and games all tied as the top activities survey respondents identified to offer the elderly population. Dance classes and concerts were not as popular. Concerts, an activity high among all other age groups, came in fifth for this age group. The activities highlighted for this age group focus on creative and socially engaging activities.

Elements reported as needed to accommodate elders include comfortable chairs/benches (25.4%), shade

structures (17%), and game tables (16.3%). A water station and domino table came in fourth.



*Music and concerts were the most consistently desired activities across all age groups.*

**MOVABLE/PORTABLE ELEMENTS DESIRABLE AND MAINTENANCE VIEWED AS A COMMUNITY PRIORITY**

The majority of survey respondents (91%) reported they would feel comfortable using portable/movable items in the plaza while 4% of respondents reported they would not be comfortable or were unsure. The respondents were split about the safety and maintenance of the public space elements (45.7% with concerns vs 45% with none). Seven percent of respondents reported “not sure”. When asked about the responsibility of on-going maintenance, the majority of respondents (71.1% ) reported that the maintenance of the movable furniture as a community priority. Only 16% of respondents reported not seeing it as a community priority.

**ART IN PUBLIC SPACE**

A resounding 97.5% of all respondents want to see public art in the new plaza space. Only 2% responded no and only one individual was not sure. All across racial/ethnic groups responded at a 95% or higher as did all age groupings.

**Percentage of respondents who want to see more public art in new public space**

Yes	194	97.5%
No	4	2.0%
Not Sure	1	0.5%

When asked about the type of public art individuals wanted to see, murals and sculptures were high on the list, with temporary art included in the possibilities.

**Type of Public Art Desired in the Mission**

Murals	167	38.2%
Sculptures	128	29.3%
Temporary Art	116	26.5%

All but one age group (45-54 year olds) preferred murals over sculptures and temporary art. The 45- 54 age group preferred murals and sculptures equally. Latinos and Whites equally preferred murals over the other two types of public art.

When asked about which themes people wanted to see in new works of public art, respondents affirmed the importance of representing Latino art and culture, followed by racial/ethnic diversity (including Pan Latino themes) followed by wanting images around the themes of family, peace and love.

**Desired Community Art Themes**

Latino art and culture	119	12.0%
Racial/ethnic diversity	85	8.6%
Family	84	8.5%
Peace	79	8.0%
Love	75	7.5%



*97% of all respondents wish to see public art in the new plaza.*

## PROGRAMMING AND ACTIVITIES

The following were the responses for desired activities by age group. The findings below parallel quite nicely with the data gathered through the three focus groups.

When asked about the type of board games respondents would like to see played in the new public space, Latinos number one choice was Loteria (22.28%), followed by Chess and Domino, 18.2% and 17.5% respectively. Bingo was favored over card games by Latinos slightly at 13.6% and 11.1% respectively. Among white respondents, Chess was favored by far at 24.4% followed by domino and general board and card games at 16.5% and 14.39% respectively. (As noted in the tables below, the total adds to more than 299 responses because respondents were allowed multiple answers)

### What kind of board games would you like to see happening in the plaza? (multiple options) (among self-identified Latino/Hispanic)

Loteria	90	22.28%
Chess tables	74	18.32%
Domino games	71	17.57%
Bingo	55	13.61%
Card games	45	11.14%
Board games	35	8.66%
Other	32	7.92%
Don't know	2	0.50%
	<b>404</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

### What kind of board games would you like to see happening in the plaza? (multiple options) (among self-identified White/Caucasian)

Chess tables	34	24.66%
Domino games	23	16.55%
Board games	20	14.39%
Card games	20	14.39%
Bingo	16	11.51%
Other	15	10.795
Loteria	11	7.91%
Don't know	0	0.00%
	<b>139</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## STREET RENOVATION AND COMMUNITY AWARENESS

Respondents were asked a series of questions about their awareness of the Bartlett renovation and their perception that the new public space would make a difference in creating community. Sixty-one percent of the respondents were not at all aware of the renovations about to take place on Bartlett Street while 30% were slightly, moderately or somewhat aware of the renovation plans. Only 8% of the respondents were extremely aware of the renovation plans. The renovation of Bartlett Street provides an excellent opportunity to bring Mission neighbors together and create stronger community bonds and connections through the creative use of this new public space.

### Were you aware about the plans to renovate Bartlett Avenue between 22nd and 21st streets and create a Plaza?

Not at all aware	123	61.81%
Moderately aware	24	12.06%
Slightly aware	19	9.55%
Somewhat aware	17	8.54%
Extremely aware	16	8.04%
	<b>199</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Close to 95% of respondents agree or strongly agree that the new Mercado Plaza project will help create more community connections with those living in the Mission neighborhood. Respondents can envision increased community gatherings, socializing and increased public life with the new space. While there is a strong belief that this new public space will help create connections, only 57.8% of respondents reported as believing that things in the community are changing for the better, with close to 42.2% of respondents disagreeing or strongly disagreeing that things are getting better. The consequences of gentrification and lack of affordable housing, coupled with unemployment rates, evictions and economic inequality could be reasons why those 42% report not seeing things as getting better. Respondents might not see that anything is being done to halt the current situation.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
34. Believe new Mercado Plaza will create more community connections	44.2%	50.7%	3.5%	1.5%
35. Believe things in the community are changing for the better	14.6%	43.2%	35.7%	6.5%

## THE MISSION AND PUBLIC SPACE

The survey set out to understand the types of activities residents went outside the Mission for to inform programming through the new public space. When asked about activities outside the Mission, survey respondents reported they left the Mission to participate in the following top three activities.

### Type of public activities engaged in outside the Mission

Entertainment (Concerts/cultural events/fairs & festivals/movies)	88	35.8%
Shopping	50	15.2%
Work/job	33	10.3%

Entertainment was the number one reason why respondents left the Mission district. This is followed by shopping (15.2%), work/job (10.3%). 13.6% of the responses were "other," including activities such as going to parks, hiking, biking, walking and visiting family, activities predominantly done outdoors

## OTHER POTENTIAL USES FOR THE NEW PUBLIC SPACE

Respondents believe the new public space can be used for individuals to come and barter/exchange (swap meets) their wares and/or skills (28%), utilize for public meeting space (21.2%), for street cafes (15%) and exercise classes (14.7%). More specifically, the other category highlights and reaffirms the idea of using the plaza for public meeting spaces such as concerts, cultural events, dance, meditation, ballet folklórico, poetry readings, story-telling and public speaking opportunities.

## Other Potential Uses for the Plaza

Public Meeting Space	117	21.27%
Exchanges/barter fairs (garden produce, products & services ) w/neighbors	90	16.4%
Street Café – place to drink tea/coffee in open	83	15.0%
Exercise Classes	81	14.7%

*95% of respondents view the plaza as an excellent opportunity to offer children, families and adults of all ages a place to feel connected and engaged in the neighborhood.*

## WHAT'S IN A NAME?

When asked to select amongst several names for the plaza, El Mercado Plaza and La Placita emerged as the most favored, 28.1% and 27.1% respectively. El Mercadito came in a close third with 23.6% of the vote. When disaggregated, among Latino respondents, La Placita and EL Mercado were evenly tied at 28%. Among White respondents, El Mercadito was slightly favored (28.5%) over La Placita (26.1%).

## COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS

As part of their project objectives, staff talked about the survey findings to the community members through two forums. In August 2014, the youth survey administrators presented at the Mission Community Market and at Sunday Streets in the mission, under the oversight of the field supervisor.



The presentation consisted of poster boards of survey results, an original song and a community voting process to name of the new public plaza space. The production of two 3-panel presentation boards used the “Loteria” theme and highlighted some basic survey results (see below). The staff thanked the public for their engagement by gifting them free strawberries donated by one of the market’s vendors.

The survey results were organized by using the format of ‘Survey Says’ from “The Family Feud” TV show. The presentation consisted of writing out the questions and then hiding the answers so that the public would interact with the presentation board and be invited to guess what the survey respondents answered.

The second presentation element consisted of the staff singing a song titled “Que Quiere La Gente”/ “What do the people want”. The song developed by the field supervisor used some of the survey results to create a song with a call-and-response format. The song communicates out the types of activities desired at the new plaza by the survey respondents. The team and field supervisor sang this song hourly to attract attention and engage the market and Sunday Streets participants.



The third element of the presentation entailed asking people to vote on the potential name of the new public space. The survey included an opportunity for survey respondents to give their opinion on the name they liked best for the plaza space. The results yielded a “tie” between Mercado Plaza and La Placita. The staff suggested it would be exciting to continue a voting process through the community presentations to inform MCM on the community’s preference. Therefore, voting took place at each of the events. Staff engaged community members by asking them to vote and then by having their attention provided them with additional survey results from the community survey. The voting results from the two community presentation yielded the following results: Mercado Plaza with 109 votes and La Placita with 244 votes.

## SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

- A busy and active plaza is a welcomed addition to the neighborhood. The new plaza is perceived as an exciting opportunity for intergenerational activities that engage children, families and elderly: a place to feel connected, engaged and part of the neighborhood
- Cleanliness and safety consistently emerge as high priorities. Both are critical issues to ensure the new community space is welcoming to all.
- Substance Abuse (27%) is identified as the top health issue in the Mission, followed by lack of affordable housing and unsafe and dirty streets (22% and 21% respectively).
- The lack of affordable housing is the quality of life issue respondents identified as the top priority needing to be addressed in the Mission. Unemployment came in second
- Ninety-seven percent (97%) of all respondents wish to see public art in the new plaza
- Respondents want to see the public space be used for diverse social and cultural activities such including music, Latino cultural presentations, and arts & crafts workshops
- Ninety-five (95%) of respondents view the plaza as an excellent opportunity to offer children, families and adults of all ages a place to feel connected and engaged in the neighborhood.
- Music and concerts were the most consistently desired activity across all age groups. Offering music genres appealing to each age group is important
- 71% of respondents view maintenance of movable elements as a priority
- While survey respondents did not have a clear preference for the potential name options, the name, La Placita, was twice as popular as El Mercado Plaza among individuals at the two community presentations.
- Respondents value and recognize the importance of maintaining this new public space as Latino in character
- Intergenerational and family oriented activities are important to offer in this new public space
- Affordability is critical for the plaza to be utilized by all families, especially working class families
- Children activities offered must be mindful that children need space to play and run; provide activities that engage them in educational activities and create a protected area where parents feel they are safe
- Offering adolescents activities that engage their creativity is important and these activities include music, dance and art.
- Adults are looking for a safe space to socialize and engage with others through music, food and social activities
- Activities targeting elderly residents should be socially engaging and interactive in characteristic. Potential activities named include arts and crafts, games, volunteer opportunities etc.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

This community assessment was designed to better understand community needs and to inform programs which serve those needs. The survey results, supplementing years of outreach at the market and MCM-led public workshops, provide the foundation for programming the Mercado Plaza. In parallel, the design of the Plaza will reinforce these programmatic efforts with pedestrian-oriented urban design, landscape elements, and flexible infrastructure designed to address community needs. MCM recommends partnerships and activation of the Plaza to improve family health and nutrition, economic resilience and civic engagement among all generations of Mission residents.

Based on the findings in the previous section, the following strategic directions and programmatic recommendations provide the foundation for addressing salient community needs through public space and activity.

The next section discusses the urban design context and provides design recommendations to support the recommendations below.

## MAINTENANCE AND SAFETY

- Maintain a clean and safe community public space.
- Prioritize safety, including adequate lighting. Cleanliness and green spaces will go far in helping people feel safe.
- Develop a strategic plan for activating the space and generating revenue.
- Implement an operations and maintenance plan for stewarding the public space and movable elements.

## COMMUNITY IDENTITY

- Integrate children's activities and movable tables while maintaining open space for children/adolescents.
- Name the new urban space to reflect the values of MCM and the community is key.

## CULTURAL IDENTITY

- Offer diverse music as well as culturally-relevant activities for each age group.
- Reflect the Mission district's historical Latino roots through social and cultural programming, as well as other cultures. Central American activities, in particular, would resonate with the heritage of many Mission residents.
- Open areas for group activities, such as dance classes, concerts, and for children playing is desired.
- Explore innovative uses which bring diverse people together and build on the Plaza's potential as a safe gathering space
- Prioritize public art, especially murals, in the new public space.

## ACCESS

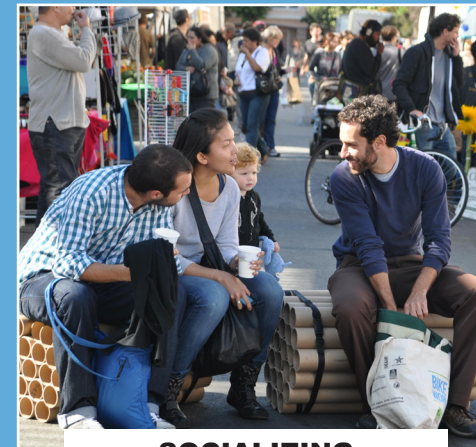
- Ensure free and affordable activities are part of the Plaza to ensure access and participation of all socio-economic levels.
- Provide seating that allows all generations to enjoy the space, regardless of activities in the plaza
- Provide information exchange (e.g. kiosks, tables, boards) about community events.
- Host community festivals and support people finding community services and affordable housing.
- Offer health fairs, prevention workshops and programs to address public safety.



**MUSIC**



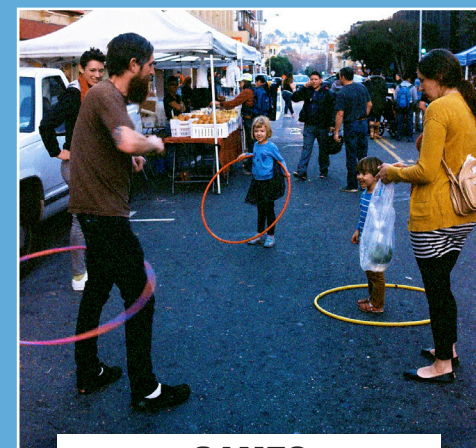
**ART**



**SOCIALIZING**



**DANCE**



**GAMES**



**EATING**

## BACKGROUND & CONTEXT THE MARKET PLAZA VISION

Public markets encourage economic development, enhance the tax base, and keep money in the neighborhood. They offer low-risk opportunities for emerging entrepreneurs and microenterprises, which form more than 87% of all businesses.<sup>1</sup> Studies have shown that money spent on locally-owned micro-enterprises multiplies within the community up to three times as much as non-locally-owned businesses.<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps most important is the way markets serve as public gathering places for people from different ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic communities. As one of the few places where people comfortably gather and meet, markets are our neighborhoods' original civic centers.

The Mercado Plaza can be the civic center for Mission neighborhood families and visitors. The Mission has needed a central plaza and neighborhood public space for decades. MCM has begun to serve in this function. With new public infrastructure, a safe space and activation in the heart of the Mission throughout the week and year, the Plaza and programming – coordinated and planned together – will foster long-term neighborhood economic development, civic engagement, and community health.

<sup>1</sup> Association for Economic Opportunity, 2009, "Prosperity For All Through Entrepreneurship," [www.microenterpriseworks.org](http://www.microenterpriseworks.org)

<sup>2</sup> Wasserman, Wendy. "An Interview with Economist Michael Shuman." Civil Eats. 9 Dec. 2009.

## BACKGROUND

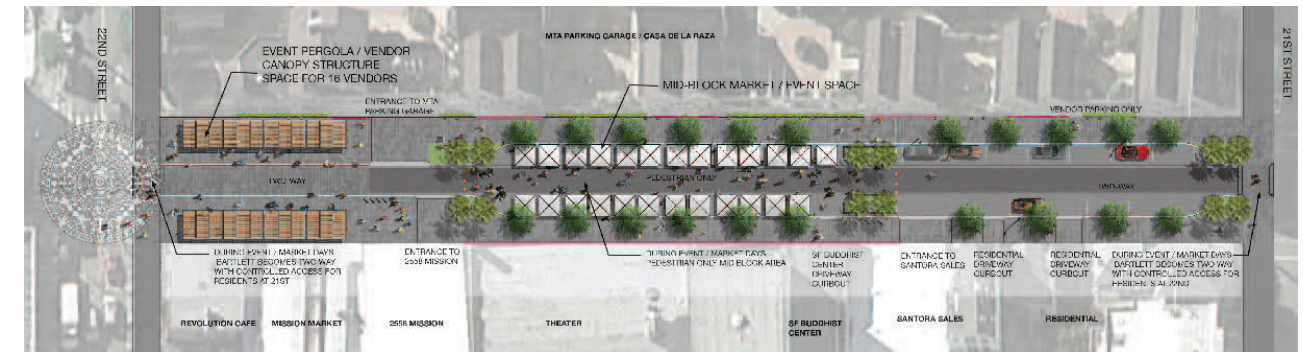
After seeing the potential for community improvements brought about by a farmers market and neighborhood programs, San Francisco Public Works dedicated \$1.6 million to creating the Mercado Plaza on Bartlett Street. Building on the place-making efforts of the Mission Community Market, the Mercado Plaza is designed to provide a beautiful, safe and much needed public space for more activities that support family health, promote small businesses and bring diverse communities together.

In parallel to conducting this assessment, the City of San Francisco designed the Mercado Plaza as a "shared public way." The shared public way street design has characteristics of a Plaza, and will serve as a model platform for convening community partners through civic engagement, community health, and shared stewardship.

The design, shown in the following renderings, includes safer street design for pedestrians and at night, programmable space and overhead canopies, added trees, special paving and a curbsless area to create a plaza space during events.

The City provided the foundation for a community space, while in parallel the Mission Community Market has been working to design the programming elements.

Based on previous activity at the Market, MCM-led community workshops and experience over the years, MCM has initiated some of the mobile elements that provide the stepping stone to a permanent plaza. In addition, elements like mobile seating and vendor kiosks are consistent with survey findings and can be used in the Plaza after buildout. Some of the mobile elements in use or design include: movable seating, lights, a street stage to highlight local and youth performances, and a Plaza marquee (in design and fundraising stage).



Plan view of shared public way on Bartlett. the new plan adds trees, lighting, and canopies to enable markets, festivals and safe street activity.



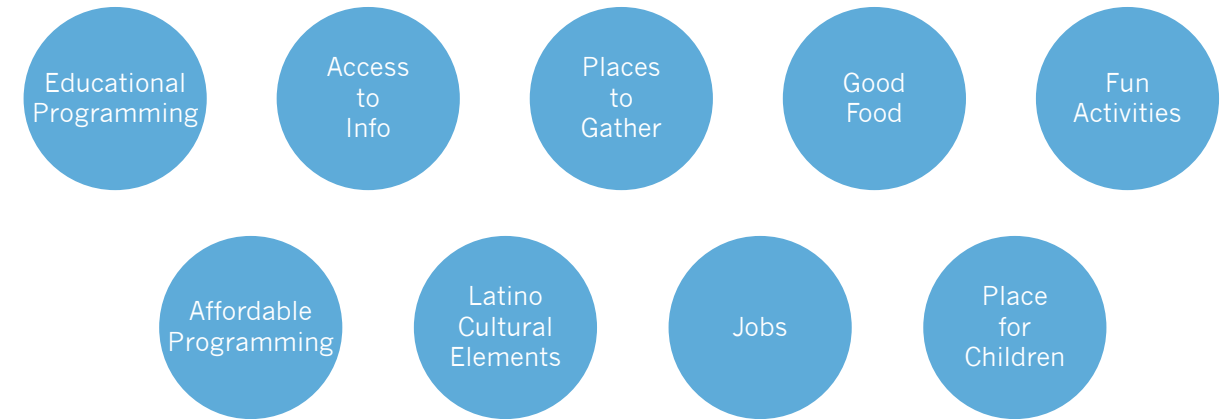
Rendering of Mercado Plaza and canopies, during community activity (updated design has removed the curbs to created the "shared public way").



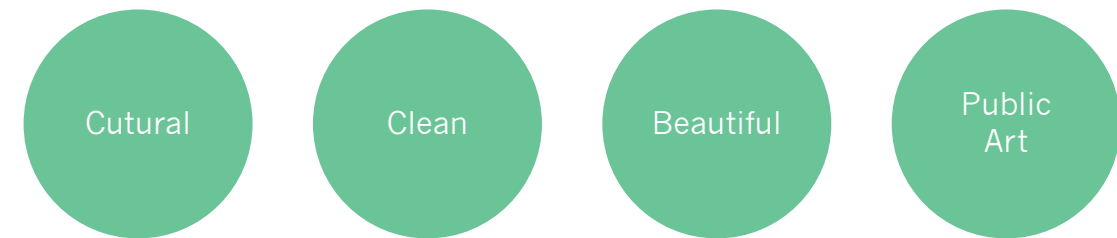
Rendering of Mercado Plaza during a normal day. Traffic remains, but pedestrian safety is improved and activation increased.

Source: Rebar Design Group

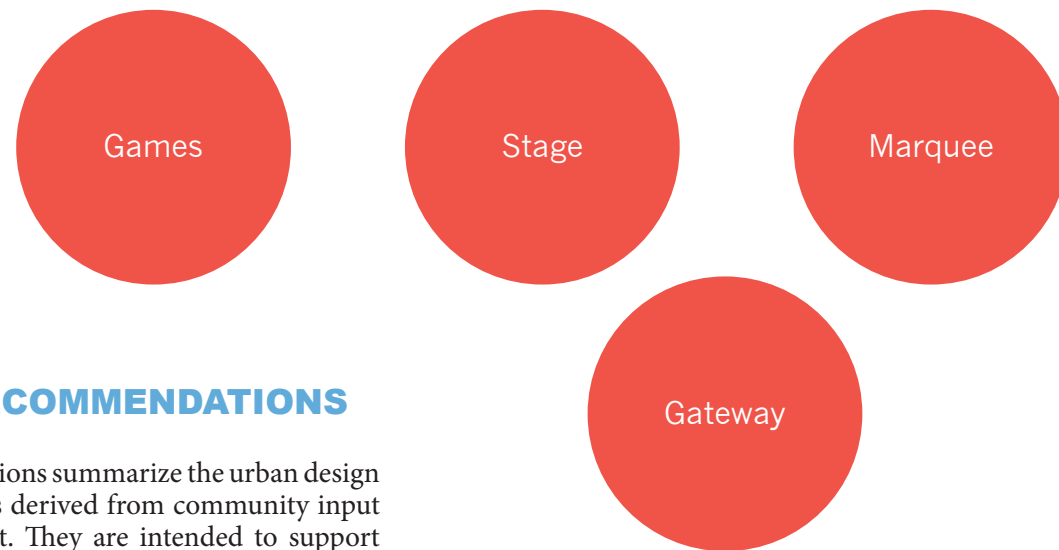
## COMMUNITY NEEDS



## PRIORITIES



## PROGRAM + DESIGN STRATEGIES



## DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

The following sections summarize the urban design recommendations derived from community input to this assessment. They are intended to support programming and serve local needs identified in the previous sections.

The intent of this project, as graphically depicted above, was to better understand what the diverse communities of the Mission value and need. Out of those values and needs we determined priorities based on the frequency of survey responses, focus group and public comments, issues which could be

addressed in public space, and the project feasibility. The result was a series of design recommendations that, in addition to the City's street design plans, would help activate the street and engage the communities in the Mission.

A clear outcome of the survey was the need for movable seating to make the space accessible and engaging for all. As such, MCM conducted a movable seating study. Taking off from previous movable furniture ideas, the current study was intended to engage market goers while also soliciting feedback on the furniture and project.

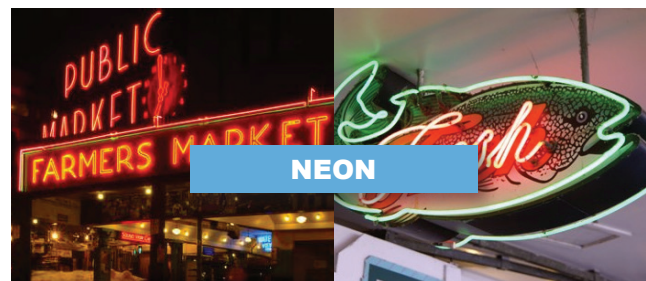
Finally, a gateway and marquee are recommended. Based on the need to activate the plaza, engage the community on all days of the week, and physically announce to the space, MCM worked with local designers on a series of alternatives for a marquee-gateway element at Bartlett and 22nd Streets. Possible design scenarios are summarized in the following section.

The next step of the project is to determine which design is most desirable and feasible based on communication with local stakeholders, costs, and the permit structure with the City. MCM has raised part of funds for the marquee and gateway. It will continue to refine the designs and raise funds to install the infrastructure along with the canopies (which are funded by the City) in 2015.

## SUCCESSFUL GATEWAY DESIGNS INCLUDE:

1. Language
2. Art
3. Lighting
4. Information
5. Placemaking properties
6. Cultural elements
7. Meeting points
8. Adaptable

## INSPIRATION



NEON



HAND-PAINTED



TILE



LOW-TECH

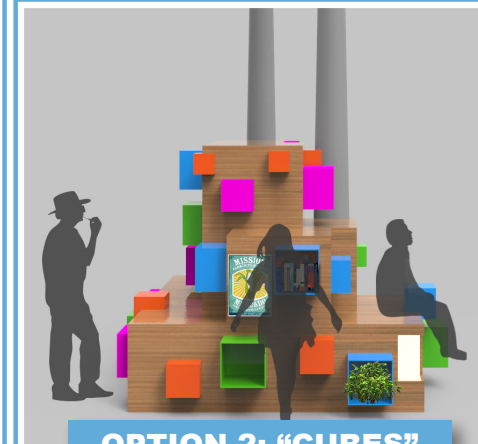


LIGHT MARQUEE



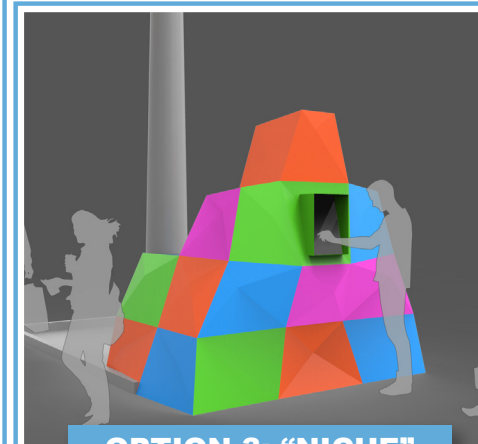
OPTION 1: "HUACAL"

The "Huacal" option evokes fruit and vegetable crates of Latin American markets and palettes seen in the Mission District. The simplest and likely most affordable gateway design option, the materials are mostly wood. Replacement parts would be simple, although wood may not be as durable as other materials. Air and LED lights between the staves would contribute to its lightness and make it attractive. Customizable boxes can be used and removed from the structure for seating, planting, book shares and games. Seating can be used during organized events or informally during lunch.



OPTION 2: "CUBES"

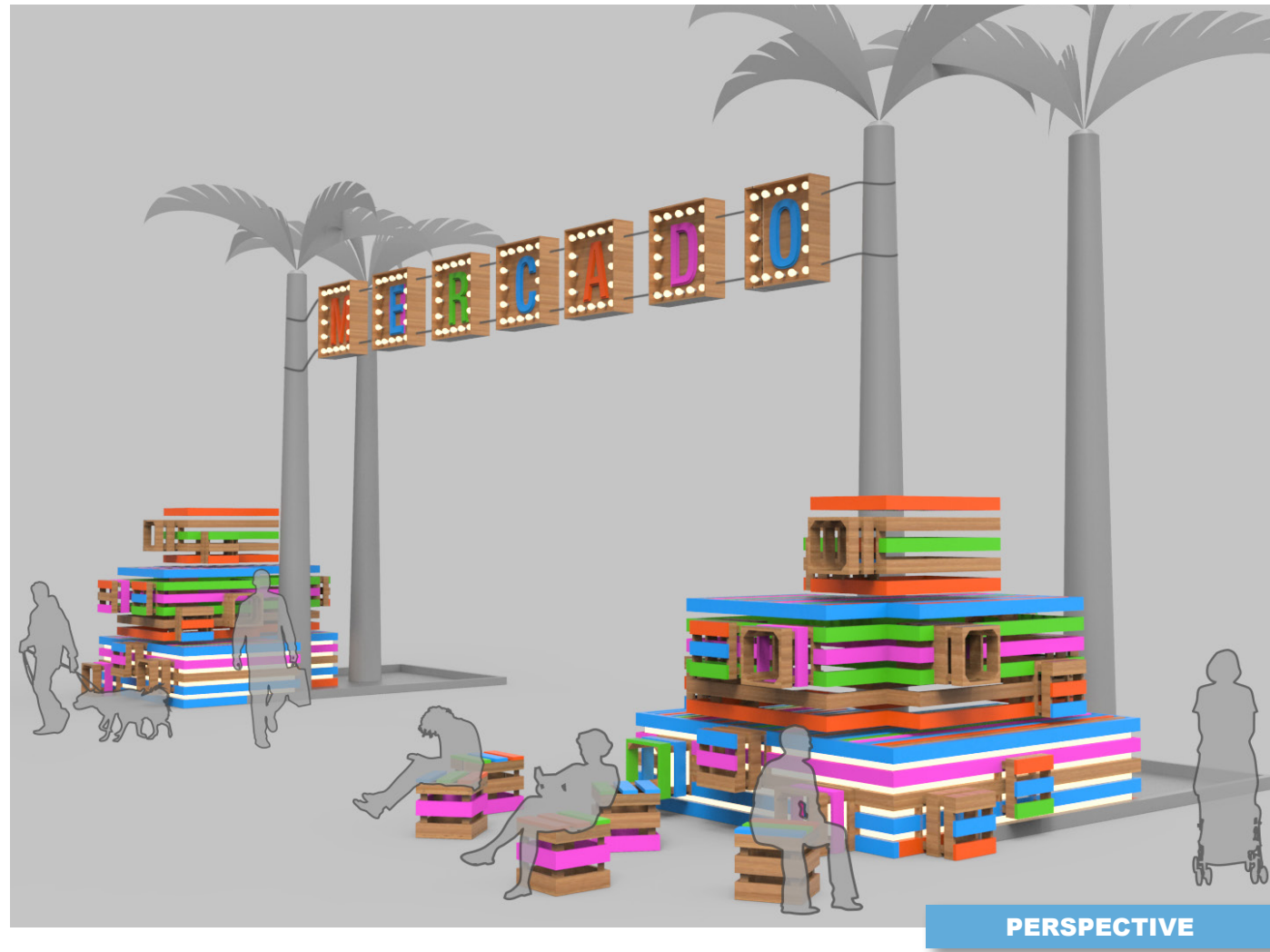
"Cubes" takes the concepts of sharing, seating and playfulness from Huacal and carries it one step further. With a combination of wood and steel, the materials may last longer and therefore be more inviting to neighbors and passerby. Steel boxes also suggest the opportunity to keep permanent infrastructure, planters and perhaps digital screens or signage more secure. Vendor equipment, art materials or other supplies could be stored for use during community events.



OPTION 3: "NICHE"

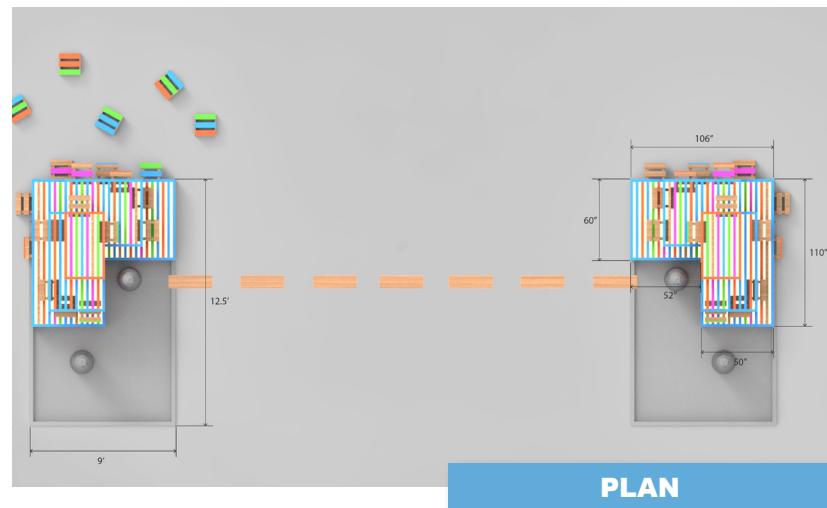
"Niche" takes community engagement one step further than the other two designs. It includes an interactive, digital interface embedded in the gateway and a programmable LED marquee above. The touch screen can be used to engage residents and the public in an ongoing conversation about the public space, neighborhood and community programs. People can share notes and announcements. At the same time, passersby can interact with the words, art and announcements on the marquee above. The design is intended to draw a direct link between people's activity and what they see in the street.

# HUACAL



PERSPECTIVE

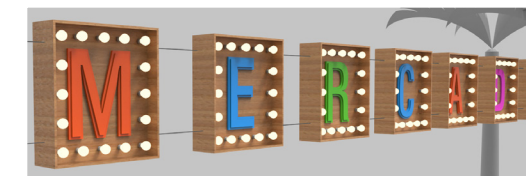
This concept evokes the fruit crates popularly used in markets throughout Latin America and other regions. Within the space surrounding the palm trees, the “Huacal” will serve as a community hub where residents and visitors alike can interact and communicate. The idea is that the community can customize their own hub and use it to promote social and cultural activities.



PLAN



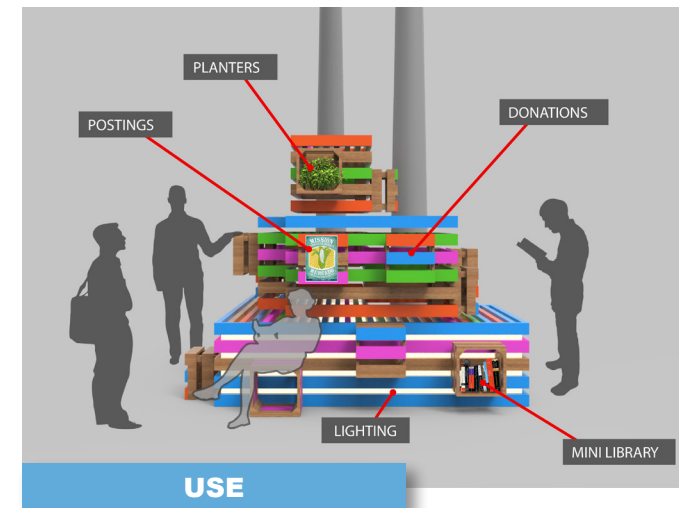
FRONT



Other crates will be detachable and can be used as seating during a Market, by local restaurants or for special events. The ‘gateway’ can lock and unlock these seats and the users can easily detach them to enjoy food, listen to music, or just to relax for a while.



BACK



USE

By being playful, movable and functional in ways that neighbors, local businesses and schools can decide, the “Huacal” at once creates an attraction and a shared ownership of the public space. Some of the crates provide customizable spaces: for planters, mini libraries, donation boxes, posting spaces, and more.

This installation stands at 7.5’ at its highest point but becomes lower at the sides (at 64” and 28” respectively) to allow for pedestrian visibility. The structure is mainly formed by 2”x4” cedar boards and the base is covered by white acrylic panels to diffuse the lighting. The letter boxes that form the marquee are 36” x 32” and contain 16 light bulbs on each side, with each of the letters being 23” tall.



# CUBES



PERSPECTIVE

This concept brings together wood and metal to form a popping community hub that blends with its surroundings at the same time. As with the Huacal concept, these Cubes have fixed and detachable powder-coated steel “boxes”, so the community can use them as seating or small tables for eating.



PLAN

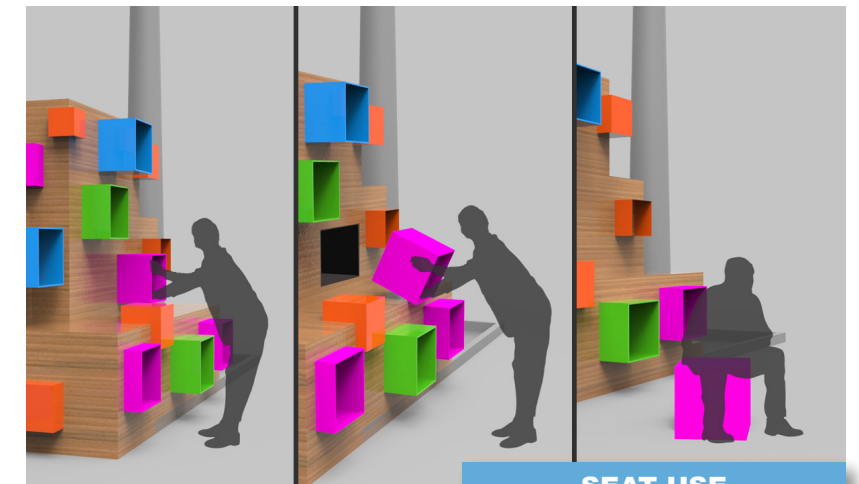


FRONT

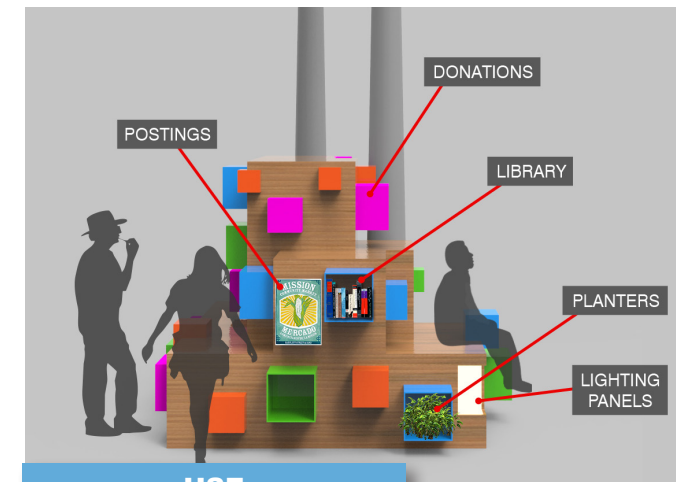


The structure provides several extrusions that become light panels to provide a safer environment. The Cubes serve as a tool to integrate the different members of a community and engage them in activities that will enhance the way they experience their neighborhood.

In addition, this community hub can host interactive screens and speakers to promote participatory activities. From recording small stories, playing music, or uploading pictures and written stories that would be displayed in screens, this structure can function as a tool that fosters communication and connections between the community.



SEAT USE

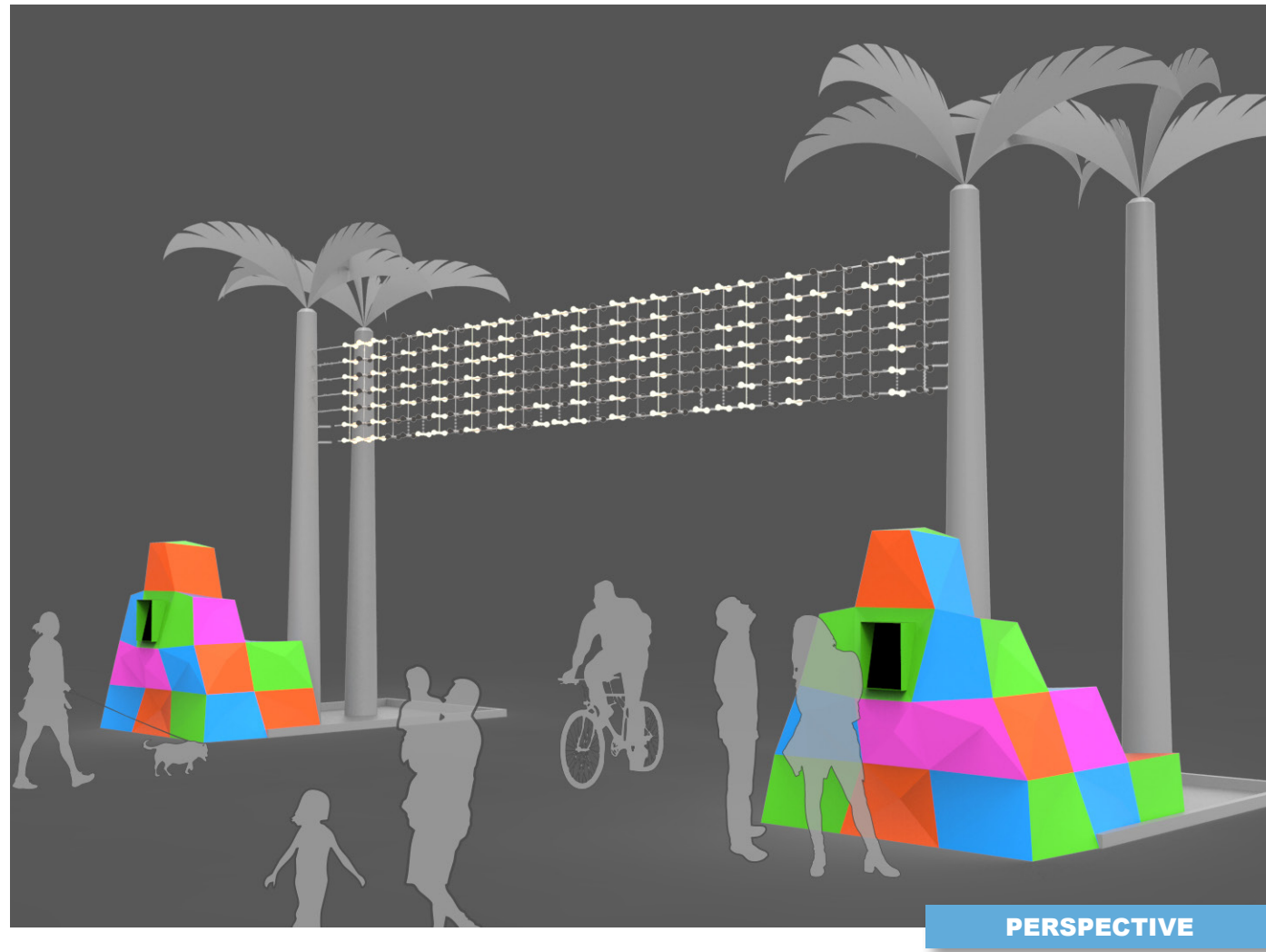


USE

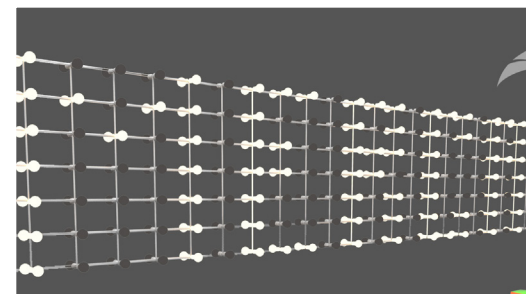
The seats can be easily removed by the community and put back when needed. The maintainer or administrator of the Market will be in charge of locking the seats when they're not in use.

Each seat slides into a 'drawer' that can be used for other purposes while the seats are detached. The hub can provide different sizes of seats so everyone in the community can use them.

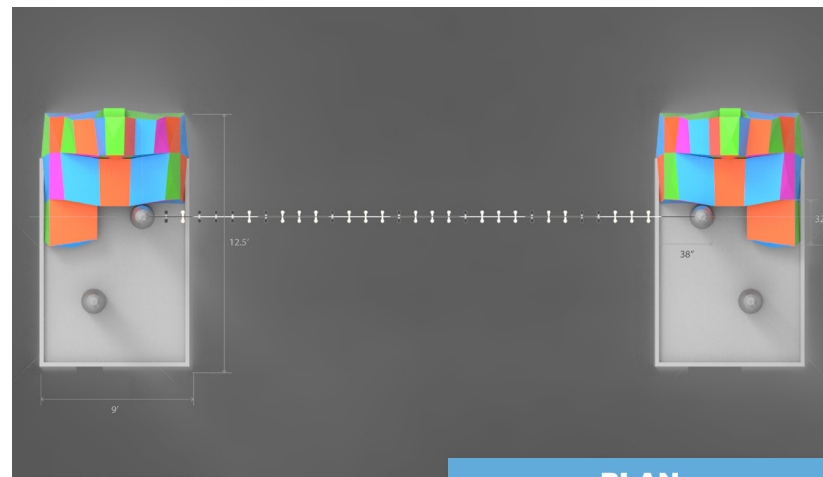
# NICHE



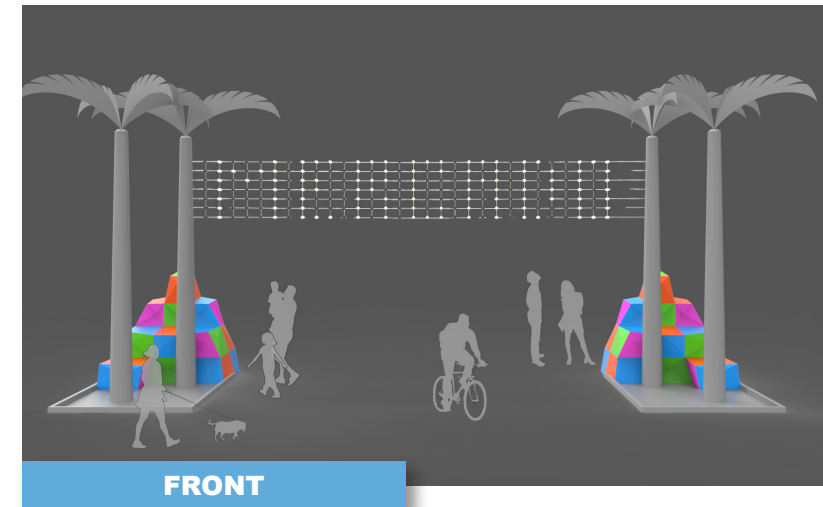
PERSPECTIVE



The Niche is an interactive tool that allows the members of a community to engage with the LED marquee that forms the gateway to the Mercado Plaza.

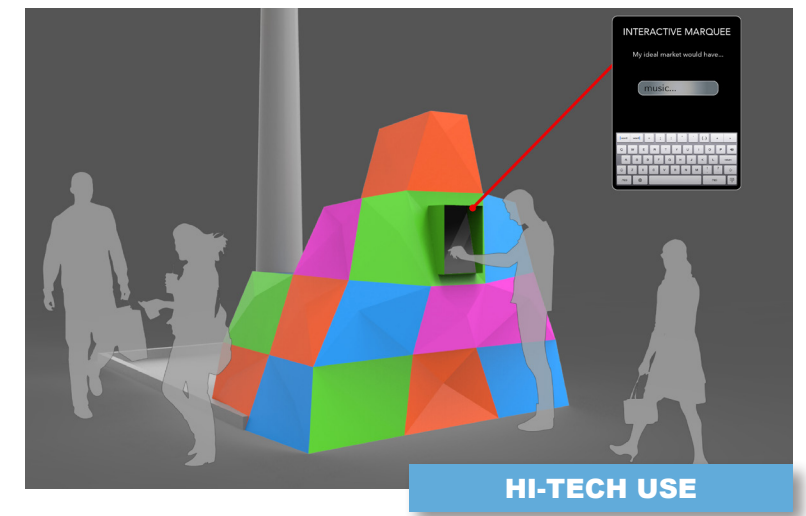


PLAN

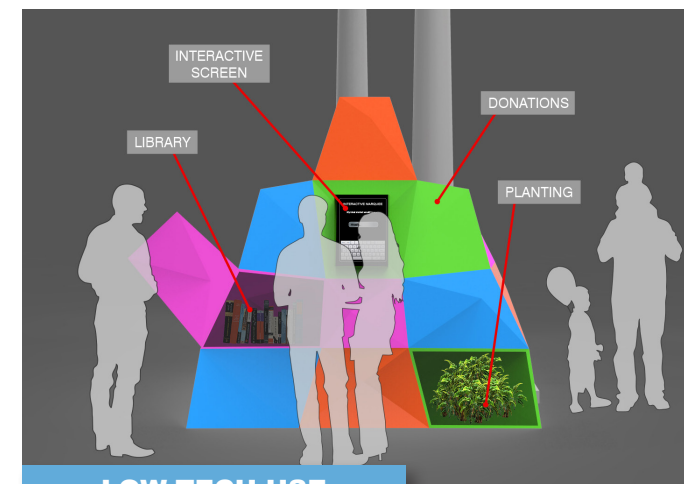


FRONT

The programmable LED marquee above the street would be managed by MCM or a community steward. But the interactive screen at street-level would prompt residents and visitors to interact with the space, share opinions and ideas for the Plaza, and exchange community announcements. It will enable MCM to keep the conversation about the Plaza dynamic and ongoing.



HI-TECH USE



LOW-TECH USE

Programs can be designed that allows passersby to change the art or words on the marquee - creating a direct link between community residents and passerby with the ever-changing art and design of the space.

While the digital screen may engage different populations more than others, the intent is to maintain low-tech elements in the Niche design. Movable seating can be added, as with any of the gateways, during events or by local businesses.

# SEATING STUDY

## SCOPE

In an attempt to understand the seating needs and behaviors of Mission Community Market users, the team spent a Thursday evening (4-8 PM) observing how users interacted with 10 simple 16" x 16" wooden boxes. Zone 1 contained three blue boxes. Zone 2 was located about 6 feet away and contained 7 green and red boxes. The two zones were separated by a picnic table & chairs, and were located in close proximity to a street stage and several food vendors.



**ZONE 1**



**ZONE 2**

### USER GROUPS

- Elders
- Diners
- Parents
- Friends
- Children
- Passersby
- Families
- Lovers



People of all ages can enjoying a resting place.



Lovers watching other market passersby.



Child climbing on boxes.

## FEEDBACK

Visitors to the Mission Community Market seemed to be enthusiastic and interested in the new seating additions.

“LOOK! BOXES!” and “I like the new seating” were among many of the positive comments overheard.

An elderly couple using the boxes to eat a meal suggested that one of the boxes be made slightly taller to perform more effectively as a table. Furniture should be design in a variety of different sizes to be more adaptable for different uses.

## CHILDREN

**Observation:** The market seems to have a wide attendance of young mothers and their children. Children seemed to be attracted to the simple, and colorful form of the box seating. Many stopped to interact with the furniture, sometimes climbing on top of and in between the boxes.

**Recommendation:** Design furniture that is colorful, differing in size, sturdy, without splinters to be more playful and safer for children.

## MEETING PLACE

Many times, the boxes appeared to function as a meeting place or hub for social interaction. For example, two strangers sitting on adjacent boxes were having a conversation about a nearby food vendor. On another occasion, a woman located a group of people who she was acquainted with. They all greeted each other and moved closer to the boxes to rest and continue the conversation.

## WAITING PLACE

The boxes were often used as a convenient place to sit while one waited for food from nearby vendors without interrupting the flow of pedestrian traffic.

## RESTING SURFACE

The boxes often functioned as a clean and even surface to place items. A number of women used the boxes to dig through their purses or to organize items purchased from the market.

## PROVIDING OPTIONS

People in groups of three or smaller seemed to sit on the boxes instead of having to share a table with others. Providing a variety of seating options can allow users to choose whether or not they want to interact with others.

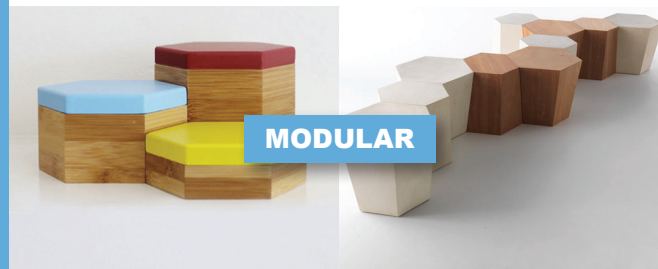


## NOTES

- Boxes received more activity after 6 PM when people seemed to be returning from work and are looking for groceries and dinner.
- The boxes were mostly used by people who were waiting for or eating food from nearby vendors.
- The boxes were only moved between Area 1 and Area 2 once in order to make enough seating for a large family.
- Boxes did not seem to undergo much change in position over the course of the evening.

**ALL SUCCESSFUL URBAN FURNITURE IS:**

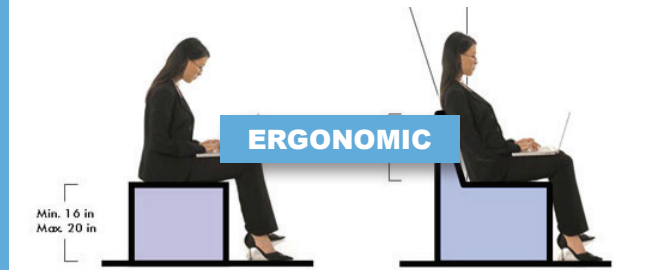
- 1. Adaptable + Modular
- 2. Resilient
- 3. Ergonomic
- 4. Playful
- 5. Affordable
- 6. Culturally Relevant
- 7. Colorful
- 8. Easy to stack + store



**MODULAR**



**EXISTING**



**ERGONOMIC**

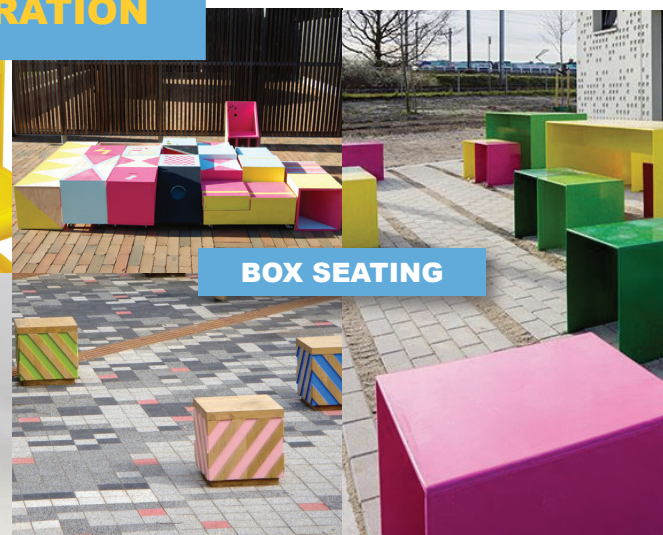
Min. 16 in  
Max. 20 in



**AFFORDABLE MATERIALS**

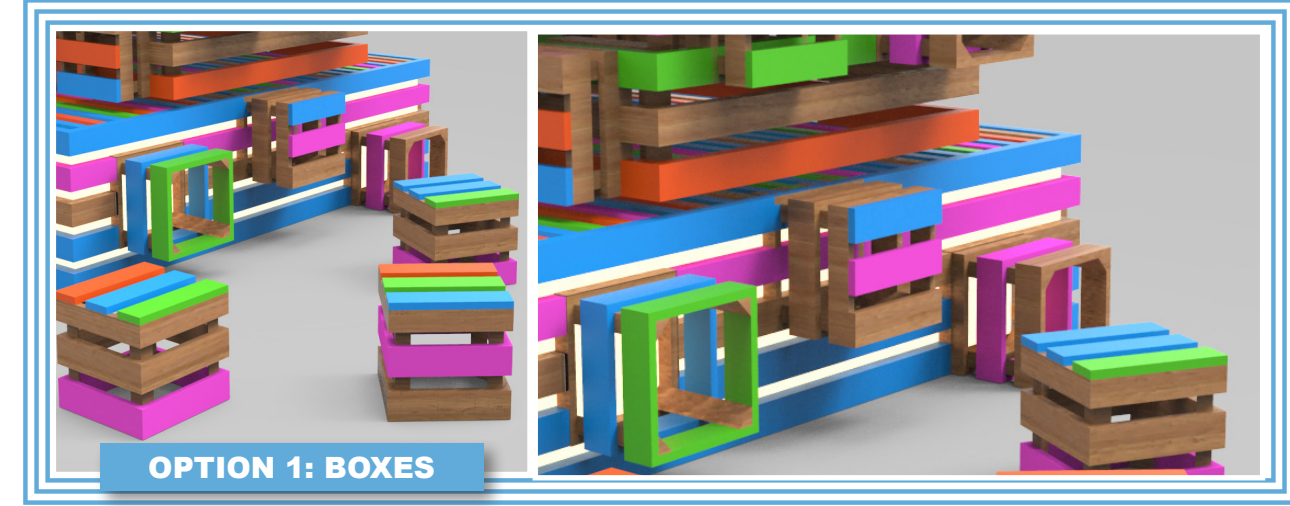


**STORAGE**

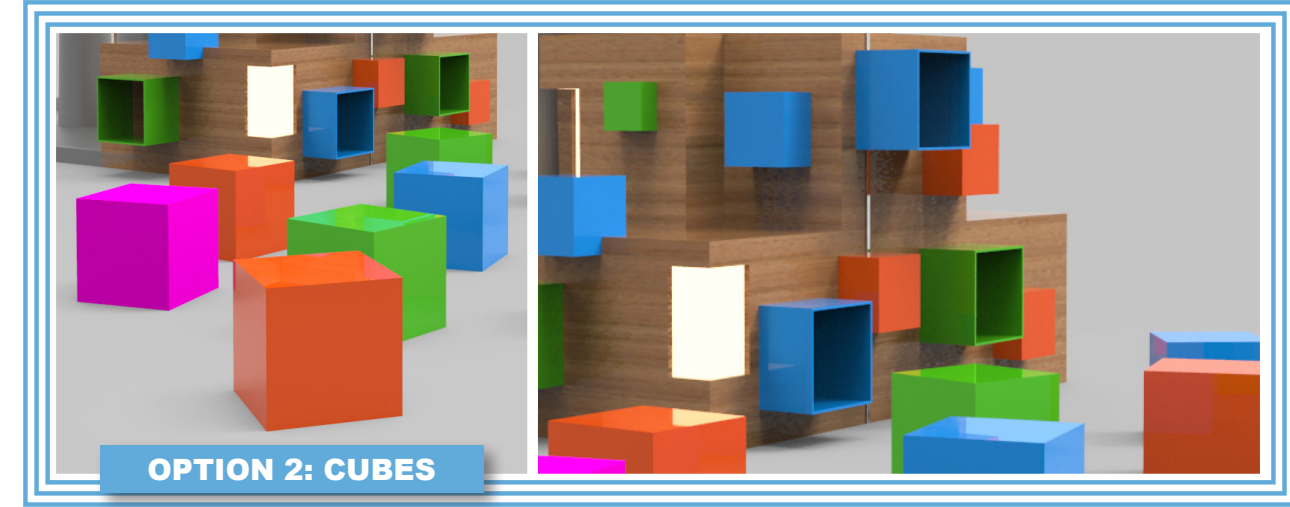


**BOX SEATING**

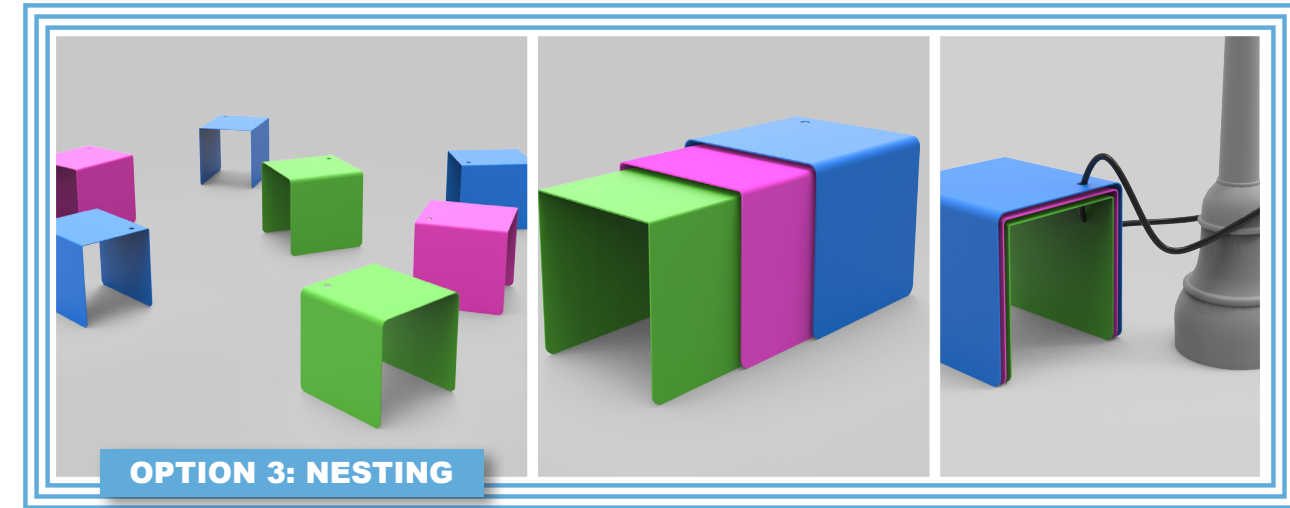
**INSPIRATION**



**OPTION 1: BOXES**



**OPTION 2: CUBES**



**OPTION 3: NESTING**



## CREATING A GREAT PUBLIC SPACE IN A COMMUNITY UNDERGOING GENTRIFICATION

The Mission Community Market’s (MCM) had the task of gathering information to inform the new public space to be built on Barrett Street between 21st and 22nd Streets in the Mission District of San Francisco. This new urban public space lives in the Mission District of San Francisco, a historically low-income and Latino community. This neighborhood is experiencing gentrification in all its forms – skyrocketing rents, poor and working class Latino families trying to keep financially afloat, lack of affordable housing, increase in tenant evictions, increase in housing development projects, changing neighborhood resident populations, local businesses catering to historical families struggling and of course, influx of middle to upper-income residents or home owners in the once dominant neighborhood of poor and working class families. What does it mean to build out a new public space within the context of a historically low-income and Latino community experiencing gentrification? As MCM plans the development of a new and

creative public space that hopes to respond to the community desires and programming needs, the community assessment process required the team to navigate and engage multiple stakeholders within the neighborhood to ensure the successful completion of the project. Planning and implementing any urban space project generally comes with challenges

however, developing a new public space in a neighborhood involved in contentious gentrification politics, the care and intentionality of the work became even more critical to ensure the community resident responses and neighborhood data collected was done with integrity and reflected the long-time residents (Latino families living in the Mission historically) as well as the newcomers.

Given this reality, what do projects need to take into account when gathering community data to inform a public funded community project within these conditions? Below are some lessons learned MCM walked away during the implementation of the community assessment process during project implementation in the Mission district.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING

MCM conducted a community assessment process that targeted predominantly Latino, poor and working class community in the Mission district. This decision came as a response to the limited input the aforementioned community had up to this point in the planning process for the new urban space. Therefore, the overall strategy was to focus on contacting and engaging individuals, organizations and businesses that reflected this population and to build a project team that was highly knowledgeable and sensitive to the impacts of gentrification on this population so as to increase the response rate and generate data from this community. This strategy drove every decision made on the project, including, who was hired, what partnerships were developed, what data collection methods would be used, where data collection was to happen, survey question development, survey outreach strategy and data analysis.

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND PARTNERSHIPS

Community initiatives and community dynamics are shaped and guided by the many community leaders and organizations in a community. If you are new to the community, or whether you are a long-time community entity, it is important to communicate to other community stakeholders your newly funded project for several reasons. First, it is important to keep information flowing in a very busy and quick paced community. Second, informing other fellow community organizations, you lay the groundwork for potential collaboration or at minimum, assistance. Depending on your project goals, establishing solid working relationships can help you successfully outreach your target audience. Deepening working relationships with other community based organizations in the neighborhood is a positive step in developing strong collaborations for the present and future.



## CHECKLIST

- As soon as feasible, communicate purpose and timeline of community assessment process to community stakeholders as well as community organizations working with your target audience. Include use of social media and push out information via already established community events and activities by sponsor agency.
- Make personal contact with local community based organizations and/or social service agencies to determine level of assistance they can provide in outreaching to local residents about the survey
- Flyer local laundromats, churches, local eateries and stores where target audience frequent.
- Research other survey / community assessment projects in geographic area to develop working relationships and share information already collected.

## HIRING YOUR TEAM

Hiring the right team of survey administrators is critical and even more so in this context. You are looking to find the right balance of community knowledgeability, familiarity with neighborhood, self-confidence, intelligence, and resident match. The following are tips that helped us build the best team for the survey implementation

### Field Supervisor

The following are important elements to consider when hiring a field supervisor. This individual is critical to reading and understanding the nuances of community dynamics, keeping the team motivated when residents perceive them to be outsiders, and completing the survey implementation process successfully.

The **FIELD SUPERVISOR** should possess the following:

- Strong familiarity with and/or lives/works in the community in question
- Is knowledgeable of the community demographics, the community assets, and community history
- Strong bilingual (Latino), bicultural skills (in this case Latino cultural traits and Spanish speaking)
- Strong social and communication skills
- Proactive, creative and a problem-solver who is good on their feet – critical as may need to recommend strategic shifts in data collection strategy.
- Strong extrovert and not afraid to create new opportunities to engage with community members
- Has worked with young people in past work situations and enjoys working with young people
- Charismatic individual that enjoys seeking solutions
- An educator

The following are suggestions for hiring strong young adult candidates:

## SURVEY ADMINISTRATORS

- Hire survey administrators from the target community and/or that work in the community to ensure familiarity with community and its norms
- Hire survey administrators that match neighborhood resident characteristics, including language, racial/ethnic group, age, etc.
- Have clear job duties, project timeline, job requirements and minimal skill set for the position
- Clear recruitment plan for hiring survey administrators. Community partnerships with local workforce development agencies, in this particular case, sped up the recruitment process
- Has a “can do” attitude and not afraid to push self out of comfort zone
- Interview candidates and conduct follow-up as quickly as possible as strong candidates find jobs quickly
- Have the Field Supervisor interview each candidate and participate in the hiring process, if not lead it. The field supervisor will be working with staff directly and must feel comfortable with candidates that are hired
- Work towards a gender balanced survey team
- If working with a local workforce development agency, ensure clear communication and responsibilities and expectations are agreed upon for each partner

## TEAM SUPERVISION

- Staff supervision is critical in running a smooth and productive operation. The field supervisor is the point of contact for the survey team.
- Establish a working schedule as part of the recruitment process so candidates self-select ahead of time
- Staff worked in teams of two for both safety reasons and to support each other in the field
- Establish working schedules and keep to the weekly schedule to prevent absences with the team
- Team Supervisor worked best when able to move around and check-in on the survey administration teams both for motivation and for coaching



## INVOLVING YOUNG PEOPLE

One of the objects of this project was to involve and engage young people in the process. This project offered Latino young adults (18-25) with an opportunity to 1) work as survey administrators, 2) learn about community development project, 3) receive interview training, 4) conduct surveys, 5) review data results and 6) offer data analysis with the community survey team. This summer survey experience provided young adults with valuable skills that are transferable to other work environments. They gained skills relevant for other community development projects and provided them with valid and strong research experience thereby building their resume and strengthening their marketability for future jobs.

An important piece of the project's work was to communicate to staff that the field supervisor and lead consultant were available and interested in supporting them through their educational experiences as well as providing them with references for other potential job opportunities. Providing young Latino adults support in this way is very important as they are able to link with resources and/or networks they may not have otherwise developed on their own. For example, after the completion of the project, the lead consultant assisted one of the survey administrators to meet with the Executive Director of one of the legal non-profits in the community for a legal internship. This same staff member was also successfully placed working for a local official's political campaign.

## SURVEY ADMINISTRATOR TRAINING

A thorough and well organized training for survey administrators positions staff to address any issues or questions that come at them in the field. The goal is to prepare the survey administrators to successfully engage and educate neighborhood residents into the process, motivate residents to answer the survey, be ready to answer questions regarding to the survey and community individuals may have about the project and lastly, successfully implement the survey.

There are some additional considerations when working in a community undergoing gentrification because of the distrust permeating through any

community driven process. Aside from the general technical training on survey basics, survey protocols, interviewing skills, additional care must be taken to provide sufficient community information and context for survey administrators to understand the dynamics they are working in. While some staff may live in the community, this may be the first time they receive a community level understanding of the changes they experience on a daily level. This community context is important for staff to understand.

The training schedule should include 1) An overview of the community organization sponsoring the project, its' mission, and role in the community, 2) the specific project history and goals, 3) explanation of current community dynamics and context 4) survey goal and survey question rationale, 5) interviewing skills they will acquire and 6) role playing opportunities. Pilot testing the survey should also be integrated into the overall process itself.

The community organization overview should be provided to staff by the Executive Director (ED) of the community organization for several reasons. First, it provides the ED an opportunity to meet and build rapport with the survey staff. This is especially important if they are not involved in the project implementation. Second, the ED is the best person to provide the strongest history and understanding of the role of the community organization and the role they've played with the local community in ways that others cannot. It is at this time that the ED offers its rationale for the project within the community gentrification dynamics and situates their project within this context. The more staff understands the community context the easier it will be for them to situate the organization and the project while out surveying in the community.

For this specific project, it was very important to explain the Mission Promise Neighborhood (MPN) project given its' high visibility in the neighborhood and because they were conducting a household survey during the same timeframe as MCM's survey process. Staff was educated on the MPN, the mission and goals of the project in order for them to clearly explain the differences between MPN's survey and MCM's, if requested to do so. MCM staff then could

explain the specific goal of the survey as soliciting ideas, recommendations around the new public space being constructed in the Mission district. Because of these multiple survey efforts during the summer of 2014, educating the residents was important to help minimize survey fatigue and resident confusion.



## CHECKLIST

- Training provides thorough history, rationale and community context of the project, including project funding sources so administrators can clearly articulate back to residents who may be weary of survey
- All survey administrators thoroughly understand the current community issues and realities of gentrification, what it is and current demographic data (as much as possible) in order to respond to resident's questions
- Staff have role played potential scenarios and questions BEFORE entering the field to feel confident in answering questions, particularly around the gentrification issues
- Community news and/or any information about other community projects coming on line while in the field is reported out so staff is knowledgeable and ready to answer questions about other community activities.
- The training schedule includes project mission, goals, objectives, including sponsoring agency role
- Training location secured and all necessary resources are identified (tables, Wi-Fi, outlets screens, PPT, etc.)
- All training materials are developed, printed, copied and distributed
- Final Survey Tool completed BEFORE training begins
- Communication with staff clear and concise regarding training schedule and expectations
- Survey implementation schedule is confirmed and start/end dates have been determined Weekend schedules, if exist, should be communicated far in advance as possible for staff to plan accordingly
- Training budget should include funds for snacks, water and end of project celebration.



## SURVEY DEVELOPMENT

It is important and critical for any organization to know exactly what it is they want out of a survey before the survey tool is developed. With a clear mission, the survey tool is easier to produce. Here are some important items to remember when developing the survey questions:

- Keep it short. Individuals are more apt to agree to participate when survey is easy and short in length
- Write questions clearly and focused
- Spend time on ensuring survey questions are specific enough for the data you are soliciting and are sensitive in the way they are written. There is a missed opportunity if you do not worded correctly and if specific questions are overlooked. For example, in hindsight, we should have asked more nuanced question regarding the design elements of the public space or asked residents who they thought could offer the programming and how best to promote the programming.
- Surveys are time consuming and expensive and partners may see your survey as an opportunity to gather data of their own. If you are requested for space, balance costs and benefits to including questions to your survey, especially if they have no link to the project at hand.
- Tablets are low cost and easy to work with for survey implementation. Tablets require extra time for training in the end, this project found the use of tablets to be productive. Having real time data ensured survey sample was representative of target group and helped guide outreach strategy.
- Given the gentrification issues within the community, pay extra attention to the wording to ensure questions are neutral
- When writing and finalizing survey questions, review questions through the lens of a community member experiencing gentrification and ensure sensitivity in way questions are written.

## DATA COLLECTION

MCM specifically engaged community-based organizational partners, conducted focus groups, and implemented a community survey to solicit information to help guide the development of the new public space.

Focus groups provided important data and helped inform the survey. The focus groups were used to 1) help MCM understand community residents perceptions about the market, capture initial responses for the new public space, solicit ideas for programming and activities and ask feedback about the elements of this new space. The focus group responses aided in developing the survey response categorization.

### CHECKLIST

- Create opportunity to conduct more age specific focus groups, especially with the elderly as this age group was the smallest sample of all the age groups in this project
- Focus Group facilitators should be staff that are knowledgeable on the community gentrification dynamics and are prepared to respond to questions that answer general questions but are able to keep focus group process on task
- With more time, sample more plaza neighbors and consider an online survey
- Incentives are extremely helpful in encouraging residents to participate in any data gathering process. It is even more so important if and when working with low-income residents. Future projects should include an incentive line item for participant incentives
- Data collection timeline should take into account the learning curve period – the time it takes administrators to feel comfortable

- and establish their comfortability and daily completion rate
- Incentives for survey administrators is helpful to motivate staff

## COMMUNICATING SURVEY RESULTS

Conducting a community assessment process in the community that is linked to a new public space requires the final results of the data collection be reported out and be done in a clear and user-friendly manner. There are several methods for reporting out survey results in the community. The format and avenues of communication should be chosen based on the target audience you are trying to reach. Take time to discuss the various options with your stakeholders in addition to considering the availability of time, budget and resources.

Very basic and easy ways of communicating out survey results include:

- Use of organization social media sites (website, twitter, newsletter, Facebook page) etc.
- Conduct presentations at on-going organizational events and/or activities such as meetings, community forums and weekly farmer's market in this particular case
- Create a new community events specifically for the purposes of presenting survey data
- Utilize existing community events as opportunities for publicity and communicating out survey results. In this case, the team presented results at the Mission District Sunday Streets event which occurred a few weeks after our initial data analysis was completed
- Engage organizational board members to assist in the distribution of results
- Collaborate with other community ally organizations in the neighborhood to help distribute findings through their communications, i.e. newsletters, websites, list serves, etc.

### CHECKLIST

- Determine who your primary audience is based on a conversation with your stakeholders.
- Identify the best effective format to communicate out data results taking into account your audience characteristics.
- Ensure community presentation is created in bilingual format if presenting in a predominant Latino and Spanish speaking community.
- Based on who the major target audience is, determine how best to reach this audience.
- The type and format of a community presentation will be determined by the project budget available. Ensure you match your resources and staff time with the format of the presentation, taking into account time for development, practice and production of any props you might use.
- Ensure community survey participants who provided contact information are communicated about the community survey results, whether by inviting them or pushing out survey results and/or report through email, or by posting on website.
- Create and follow-through your process for communicating data results to residents. If residents provide personal contact information, make sure reports, community presentation invitations and other communication is provided to them. Residents offer their time and ideas, if they request the summary, make sure you provide it to them.



