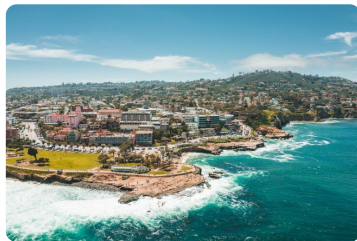


Planning for Arts and Culture in San Diego

By Ann Berchtold, Director of Marketing and Communications at MIG, Inc. and David Malmuth, Partner at I.D.E.A. Partners, LLC

Ann Berchtold is the Director of Marketing and Communications at MIG, Inc. MIG plans, designs and sustains environments and organizations that support human development. Ann has also served as an independent curator and arts program advisor. Her most notable achievement was launching San Diego's first contemporary art fair in 2009 – Art San Diego, and the Open Walls Project, public exhibitions that transform commercial spaces. Ann is well known for her advocacy on promoting the arts and art education in San Diego. Her efforts have included the co-creation of the San Diego Art Prize, overseeing the direction and exhibitions at the L Street Fine Art Gallery, and working with Downtown San Diego Partnership to increase placemaking opportunities and art programming downtown.

David Malmuth has led a 35-year career in real estate, including senior roles with The Walt Disney Company, TrizecHahn Development, and most recently his own firm, entailing the completion of over \$1 billion in high-profile projects, David has demonstrated the ability to conceptualize and implement unique solutions for each site he has encountered. No two projects are the same. Each place, whether the New Amsterdam Theater, Plaza Pasadena, Hollywood and Highland, or IDEA1, draws its inspiration from the site's specific context and history, and is therefore fully integrated into its surroundings.



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The San Diego Chapter of the American Planning Association, in partnership with MIG San Diego, recently launched a new program called *SDAPA Better Buzz*, a quarterly series designed to inspire creative thinking around integrated planning processes. The inaugural session focused on sharing insights on how art and artists can integrate more effectively into the planning process of mixed-use projects yielding a more vibrant cultural mix.

The discussion explored a range of strategies that could enable arts programming to flourish in the region. Panelists included Jonathon Glus, Director of San Diego's Commission for Arts and Culture; Susanna Peredo Swap, Executive Director of Vanguard Culture; David Malmuth, Co-Developer of the IDEA1 project; and moderator Ann Berchtold, Director of Marketing and Communications for MIG San Diego.

The program was held at the IDEA Box at IDEA1, a meeting room designed as a greenhouse that overlooks the central social space in the project, The HUB. The venue provided an ideal setting to discuss how one unique partnership emerged between the three project developers, I.D.E.A. Partners; LaSalle Investment Management; Lowe; and Vanguard Culture, a nonprofit arts organization dedicated to advancing San Diego's creative industries.

The developer's vision for IDEA1, which includes 295 apartments, 8,000 square feet of office space, and two restaurants, was to fashion a mixed-use project that spoke to the sensibilities of people who wanted not only a great apartment but also a vibrant community of creatives who could inspire exciting collaborations. A major challenge was determining how to integrate art and develop high-quality programming that could consistently showcase the rich artistic talent pool in San Diego in a way that aligned with their economic interests.

The developers committed \$250,000 to commission six major art pieces and designed a 12,000 square foot courtyard, the HUB, that would serve as both a community gathering place and experiential, cultural space. Planning elements to facilitate performances in the HUB included lighting positions, strategic electrical access, rear-screen projection for film screenings, movable furniture for maximum flexibility, flooring suitable for different types of performances, sound capabilities, and a natural stage surrounded by balconies.

The missing link was the programming. That is where Vanguard Culture entered the picture. In early 2018, Vanguard Culture was searching for two things:

1. A location where they could be in residency
2. A venue that would allow them to produce events that showcased their ability to create extraordinary artistic and culinary collaborations

Complicating matters, they sought both of these with a limited budget.

Fortunately, IDEA1 was seeking a programming partner that would deliver on the promise of the project and create a strong differentiator from competing multifamily projects downtown. The developers were willing to entertain the notion that Vanguard could occupy a unit on-site, facing the HUB, in exchange for producing a season of events that delighted residents, their guests, and the greater community of arts lovers.

However, before a deal was struck, all parties agreed to 'test drive' a Vanguard event to ensure that it was a fit with the project. Vanguard's initial production was called *Sensorium @IDEA1*, in which more than 80 local artists transformed 15 IDEA1 lofts with immersive, experiential, and multi-sensory art experiences themed around the 5 Senses. The evening included a fashion show by Fashion Week San Diego, live dance performances by San Diego Dance Theatre and the PGK Dance Project, and an industry mixer with 10 notable arts organizations. The event was included in Episode 3 of a 4-part television series about San Diego, produced by National Geographic.

Despite the very real challenges of solving liability and insurance issues, the team was able to come together and deliver an extraordinary evening for residents, 500+ guests, and the entire San Diego arts community. The coverage from the Nat Geo series not only promoted the rich cultural offerings of San Diego, but it also underscored the ability of creative groups to partner with real estate projects in ways that elevated both.

IDEA1 and Vanguard Culture proceeded to consummate a deal that provided the nonprofit with an office and a venue where they can program cultural events and professional development programs at no cost. This also gave IDEA1 a consistent series of exceptional events, both large-scale and more intimate, that utilize multiple locations throughout the property.

Vanguard Culture's second season at IDEA1 is themed "Ripple Effect," and the highlights will include exciting creative "mash-ups" pairing artists with chefs, musicians with visual artists, and much more. Significant cultural institutions like the San Diego Opera, San Diego Italian Film Festival, Fleet Science Center, and UC San Diego are participating.

The property also wins in this partnership because it provides exceptional programming opportunities to its residents – either free or at a steep discount when food and beverages are provided. The cultural events also serve to enliven the surrounding neighborhood and strengthen the greater San Diego arts community.



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As Jonathan Glus commented during the program, "This is the kind of collaboration that should become a model for how arts organizations and developers can work together to their mutual benefit."

How it can be extended to other partnerships and other locations was discussed during the *SDAPA Better Buzz* program. The developer's perspective is that while they can't control the broader housing market, they can make an effort to engage early with local arts organizations to explore the potential for exciting collaborations. While it is undoubtedly true that San Diego needs to create more housing affordable to artists, it is also true that artists need many more opportunities to create and to show their work. By creating spaces that can showcase artistic talent at little or no cost to the artist or the patron, developers can make a significant contribution to the viability of the local arts community.

The role of government, and the planning community, is perhaps to facilitate these kinds of partnerships and make it easier for serendipity to occur. While many cities mandate a portion of the development budget toward art, this will not necessarily result in an ongoing benefit to the arts community as in most cases the budget is used for public art projects versus creating opportunities for cultural programming.

Rather than relying solely on this mandate, planners might want to consider educating developers with examples and case studies about the myriad ways that artists can participate in the development process. Likewise, outreach and education for the arts community about what role they can play in projects may stimulate a dialogue that can yield great results. In this sense, the planning community can be an invaluable translator in helping all parties to discover a richer, more inspiring, common language.

Vanguard Culture:

Vanguard Culture is an inclusive 501(c)3 nonprofit dedicated to advancing San Diego's Creative Industries. Vanguard Culture provides award-winning arts journalism, cutting edge events, and professional development that create arts jobs, bring diverse communities together and inspire collaboration among the visual, performing, and culinary arts.

Vanguard Culture envisions a thriving, diverse, and inclusive arts and culture community in San Diego, serving as a creative and economic catalyst for the region and beyond.
www.VanguardCulture.org

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The Future of Work: After the Virus

by [Jessie Feller Hahn](#)

My take-aways from this interview:

1. The world swapped commercial real estate for residential real estate overnight, and as Robert says, our homes are now our castles. The ripple effects this will bring to the workplace and the real estate economy will be far spread and difficult to unwind once the pandemic is resolved. This is a pivotal moment for digital connectivity – Robert calls it the “big bang moment for online.”
2. Among the many problems commercial real estate has right now – elevators are definitely one of them. Robert describes this is ways I hadn't thought of, and I don't look forward to.
3. Business travel will lose its cool – which could be a net benefit for climate change, but will require business development teams and convening organizations (ahem... like ours...ahem) to recalibrate our business models and not just for the short term.

From Fixed Routes to Flex Routes: Additional Responses to the May 13 Webinar

by [Dave Hahn](#)

Earlier this month we hosted a live webinar featuring Alex Gibson from TransLoc, and Josh Powers who is serving as a member of the County Manager's Office and is the contract administrator and regional transit liaison between Johnson County Government and the Kansas City Area Transit Authority (KCATA). Josh shared his unique perspective and insights from service changes and the re-utilization of infrastructure to creative ways to avoid driver layoffs and the allocation of resources with CARE Act funding.

Included in this post are responses to additional questions we were not able to answer during the live session.

Reopening Our Cities in the Midst of COVID-19 Calls for Inclusive Community Engagement

by [Katrina Johnston-Zimmerman, Urban Anthropologist & Director at THINK.urban](#) and [Marisa Denker, Co-Director & Founder, Connect the Dots](#)

Though public life has been put on pause by the COVID-19 pandemic, the recovery period is predicted to bring a sequence of phases returning us gradually into public spaces with varying levels of social distancing as Coronavirus cases decline. The way to recovery is through collaboration; across sectors, across stakeholders, and across equity gaps. We believe that the careful engagement of all voices, in a collaborative, thoughtful way is critical when forming solutions to the challenges we are facing and to moving forward with confidence and trust.

We hope to provide a framework for addressing the challenges that will come with building back our necessary social infrastructure, by and for the community. From our perspectives as an urban anthropologist at THINK.urban and as a director of stakeholder engagement firm Connect the Dots, we see the following key points as a good place to start.

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