

AMERICA WALKS



DREAM PLAY BUILD

HANDS-ON COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
FOR ENDURING SPACES AND PLACES

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PRAIRIEFORM

landscape | design | engagement



ENGAGING PEOPLE THROUGH THEIR HANDS AND SENSES IN CREATING A MORE WALKABLE WORLD

• OVERVIEW

1. BRIEF BACKGROUND ABOUT OURSELVES/WORK

5 Models Afloat

Art Inspired by the L.A. River Clusters &
A Conceptual Model Building Charette

February 11 through March 18

Sponsored by
Friends of Los Angeles River
Mia Lehrer

A photograph of four young women standing outdoors at a table. The woman on the far left has long dark hair and glasses, wearing a yellow hoodie. The woman next to her has curly brown hair and is wearing a black jacket with a police badge on the left chest and a grey sweater. The woman in the center has long dark hair and glasses, wearing a black t-shirt with a 'LOS ANGELES' logo. The woman on the far right has long blonde hair and is wearing an orange sweater. They are all smiling. In the background, there is a man in a blue shirt and a black cap, and another man in a white shirt and blue cap. There are green umbrellas and a building in the background. A table in the foreground has a pink water bottle and a colorful craft project made of paper and other materials.

OVERVIEW

2. THE PSYCHOLOGY OF WORKING WITH OUR
HANDS AND SENSES

OVERVIEW

3. PROJECT PROFILES / HOW WE DO IT



OVERVIEW



4. Q AND A

1. BACKGROUND

BOTH SAW HOW COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

WASN'T WORKING / PROBLEMS WITH

TOP-DOWN DESIGN / INITIALLY DEVELOPED

NEW WAYS THROUGH ARTMAKING

5 Models Afloat

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Community Building Charette

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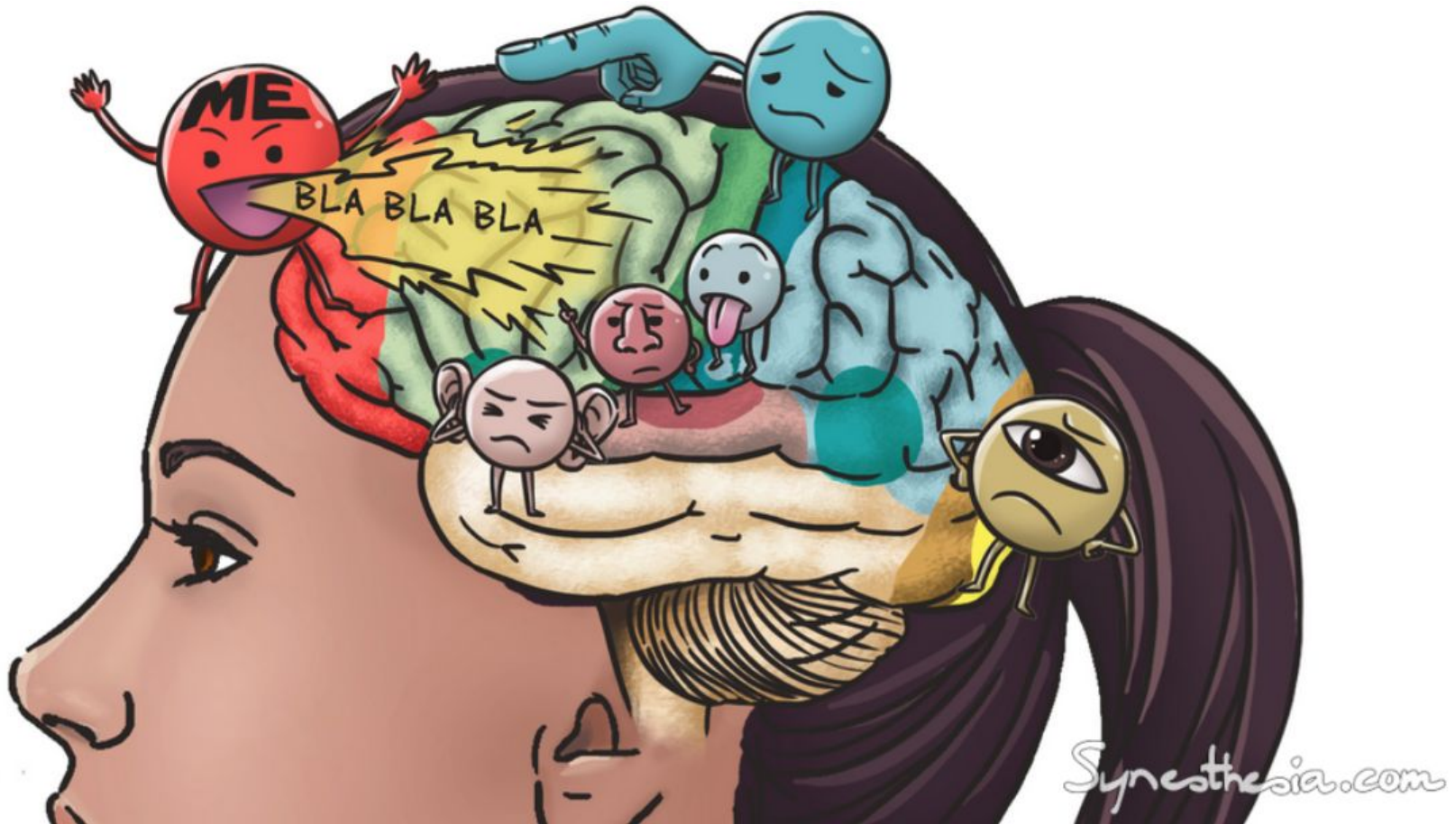


SINCE THEN, 1,000s of WORKSHOPS,
SENSORY-BASED WALKING TOURS, WEED
WALKABOUTS, POP-UP MODELS, PUBLIC-SPACE
PROTOTYPING, AND MORE

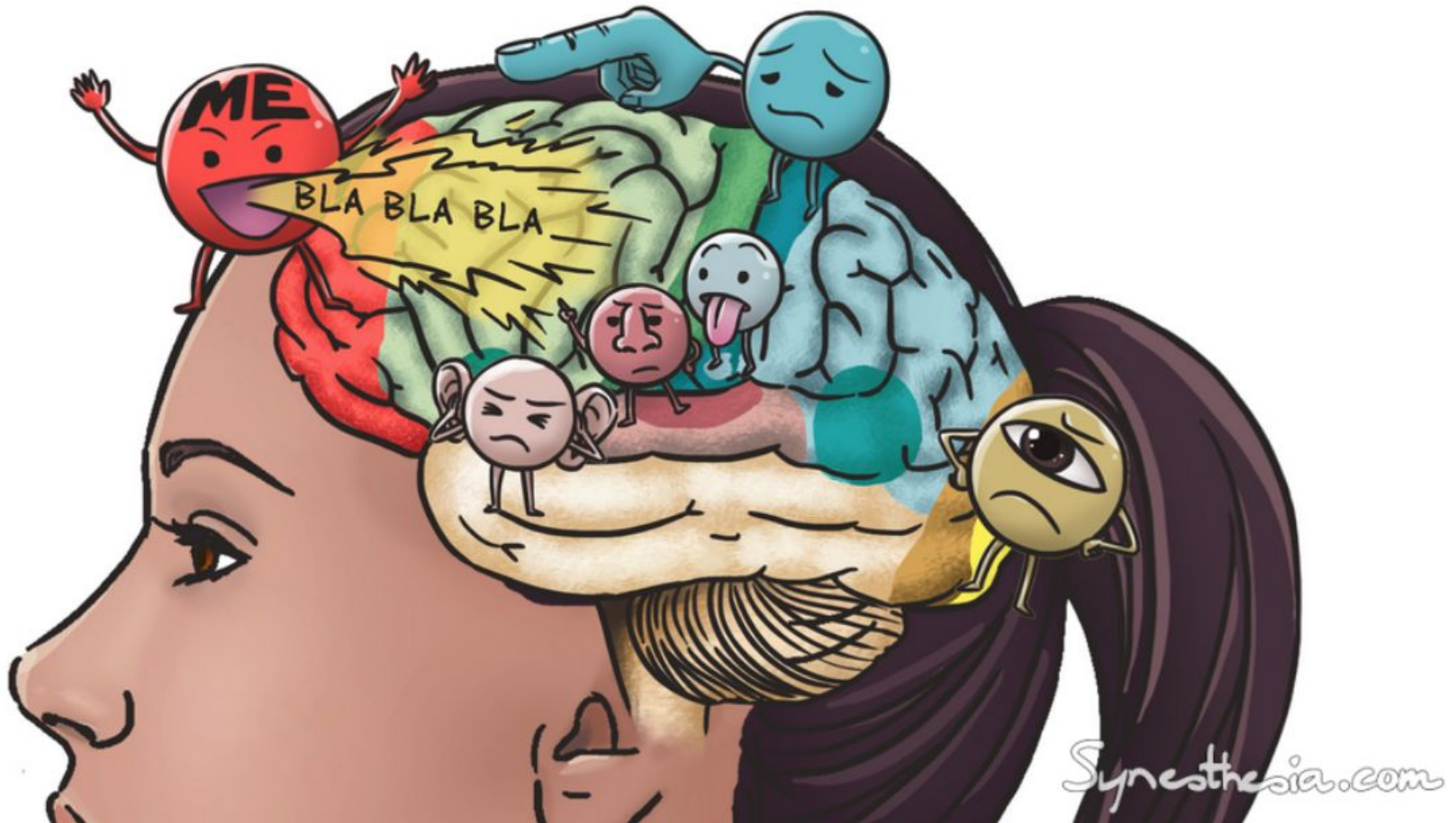


ALL WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF ENGAGING
PEOPLE THROUGH THEIR HANDS AND SENSES
TO DREAM UP, BUILD, AND CREATE A BETTER
WORLD FOR ALL

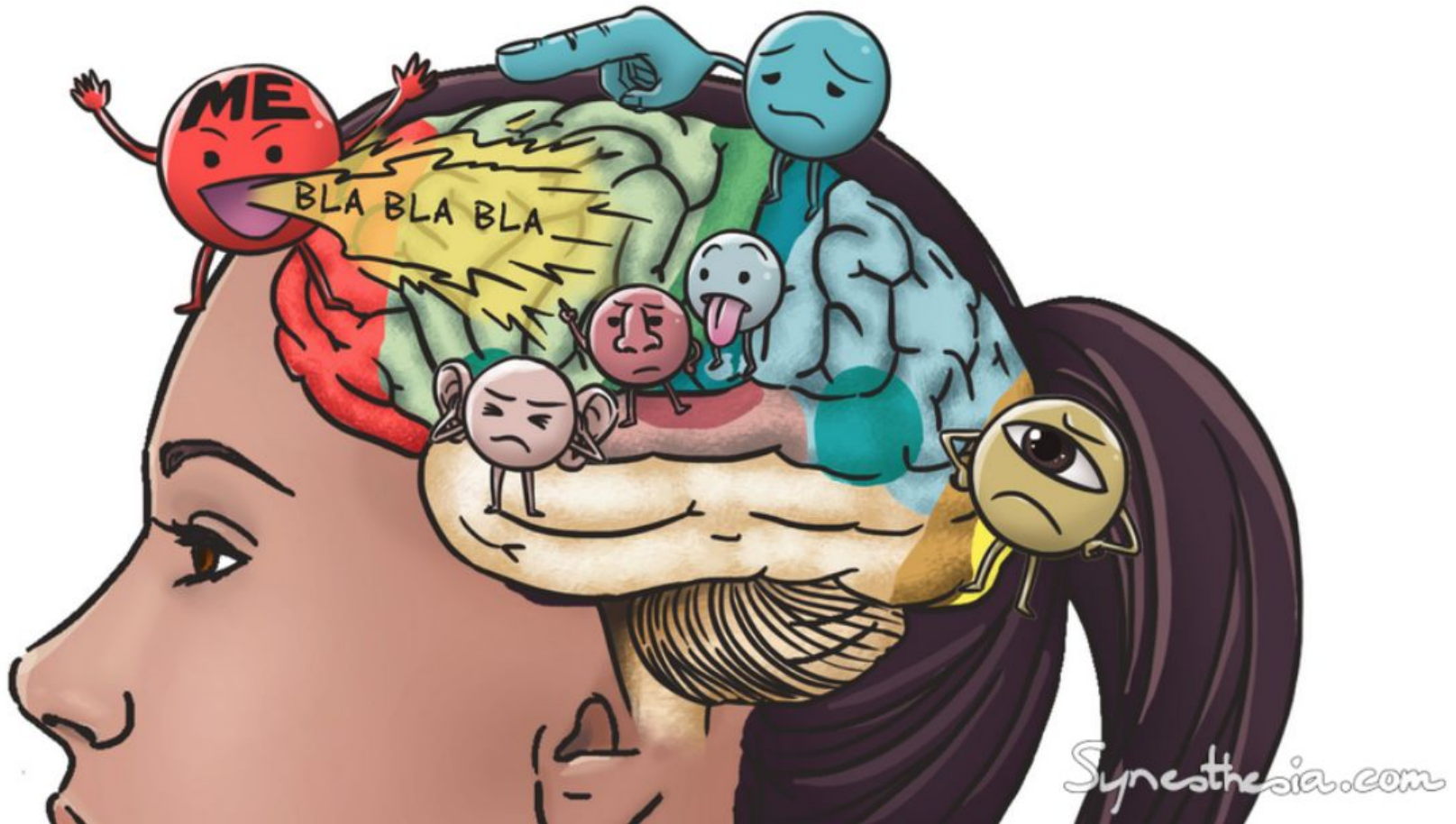
2. THE PSYCHOLOGY OF ENGAGING PEOPLE THROUGH THEIR HANDS AND SENSES



WHY THROUGH THE HANDS AND SENSES?



THE TALKING BRAIN IS, LOOSELY SPEAKING, THE
PRE-FRONTAL CORTEX



KEEPS US FOCUSED ON THE HERE AND NOW
AND (PERCEIVED) NEEDS FOR SURVIVAL.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TYPICALLY INVOLVES LANGUAGE AND SPEAKING, FIRING UP THE SELFISH/SURVIVAL-FOCUSED PART OF OUR BRAINS.



THIS IS LARGELY WHY PEOPLE SAY SIMILAR THINGS AT COMMUNITY MEETINGS AND FOCUS LARGELY ON NEGATIVES.



“MORE PARKING!”



“LESS TRAFFIC!”



“NO DENSITY!”



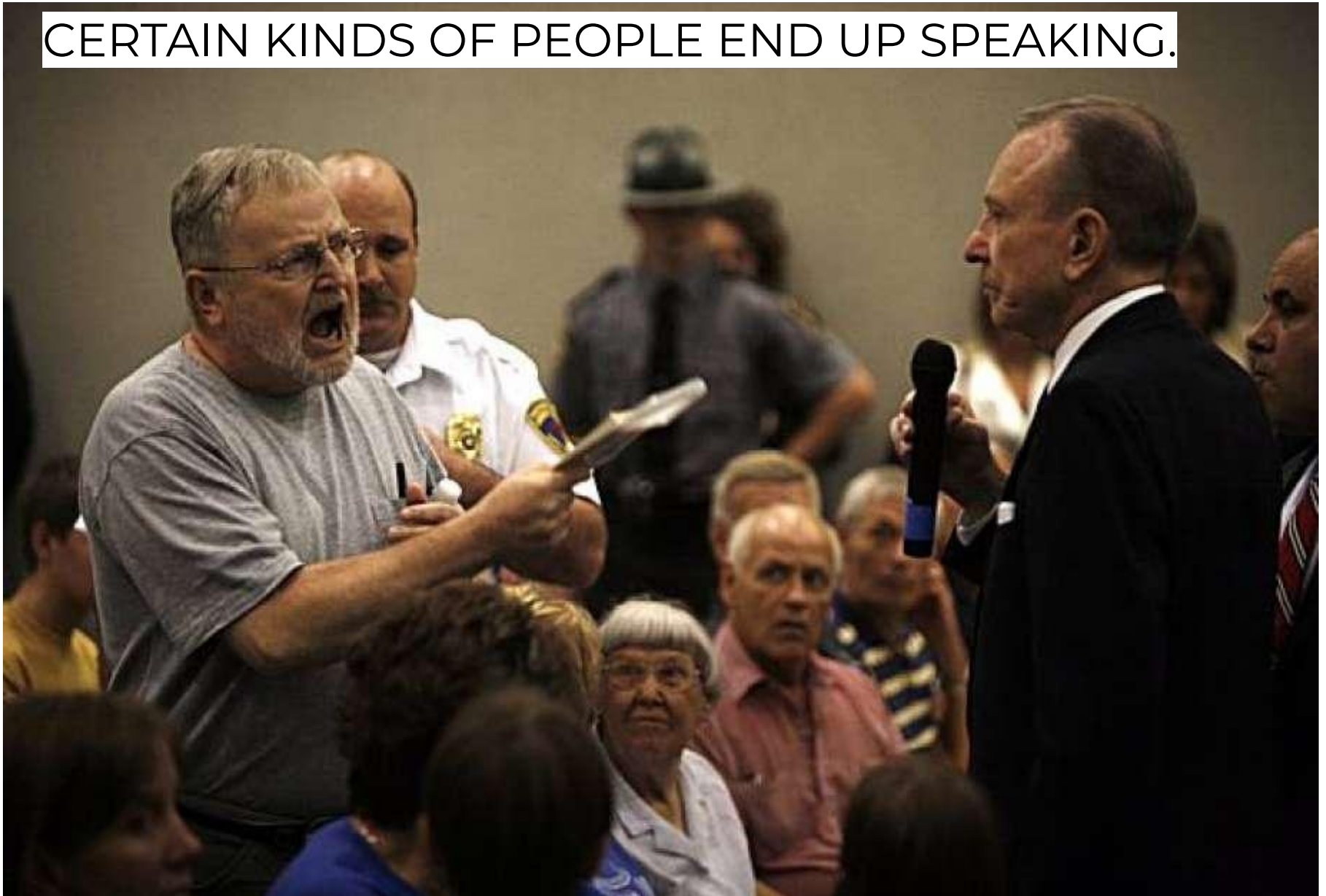
TALK-BASED COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GIVES US THE FALSE SENSE THAT PEOPLE DON'T HAVE IDEAS BEYOND THESE TYPICAL CONCERNS.



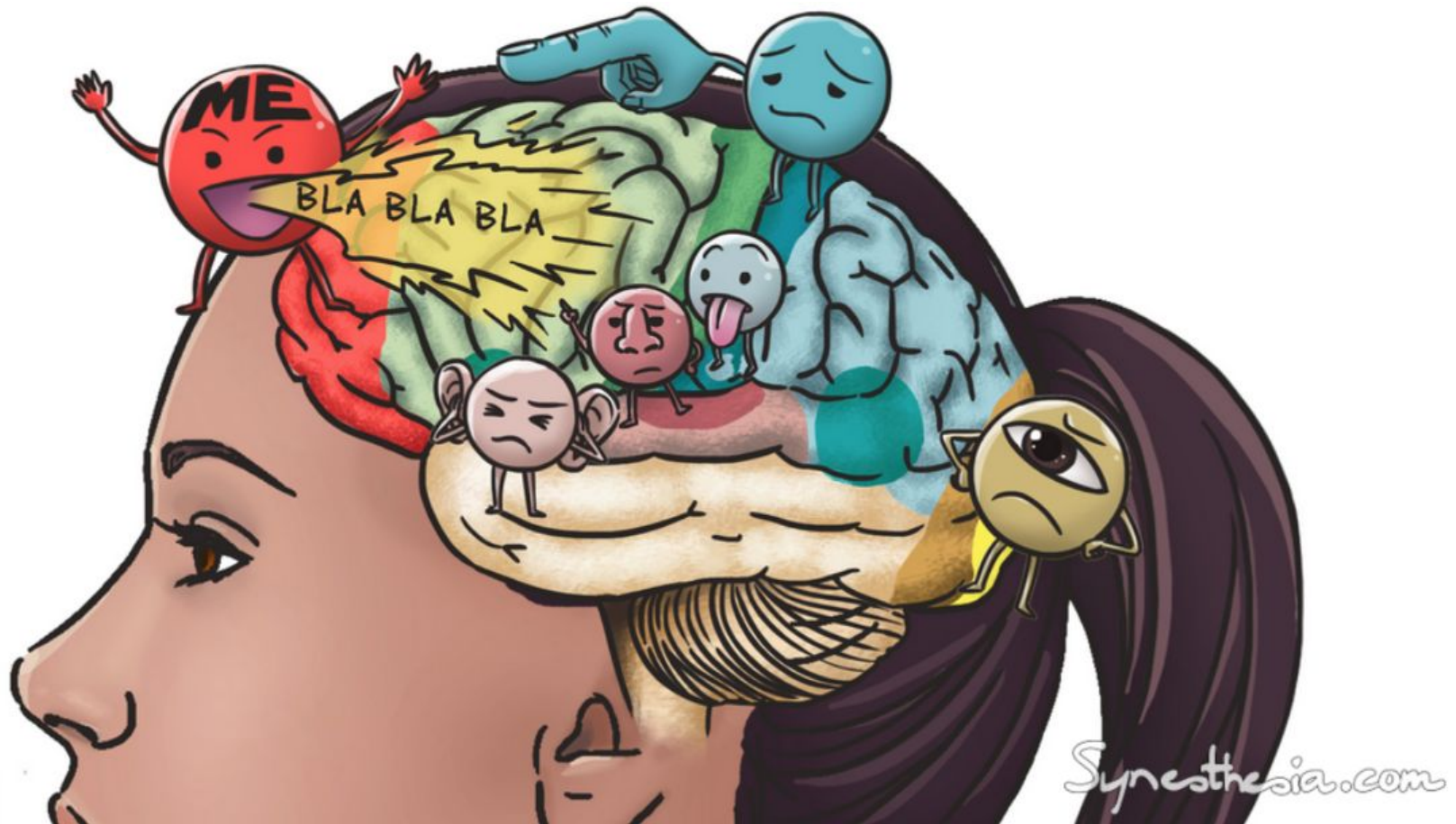
IT ALSO FAVORS THOSE WHO ARE LESS AFRAID
OF CONFRONTATION AND WHO ARE
COMFORTABLE WITH PUBLIC SPEAKING.



THIS FURTHER SKEWS OUTCOMES AS ONLY CERTAIN KINDS OF PEOPLE END UP SPEAKING.



AS SUCH, OUR OBJECTIVE IS TO GET PEOPLE
OUT OF SURVIVAL MODE SO THAT THEY CAN BE
EXPANSIVE WITH THEIR THINKING.

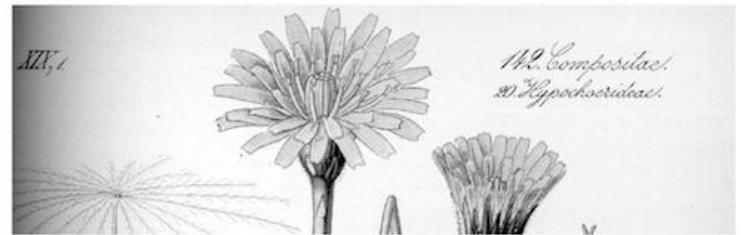




WORKING WITH OUR HANDS AND ENGAGING
OUR SENSES DOES JUST THAT.



WE FIRE UP DIFFERENT
PARTS OF OUR BRAIN,
NOT JUST THE
EXECUTIVE OFFICE.






AND THEN CAN SINK
INTO A STATE OF PLAY.

WE CAN BE ASPIRATIONAL AND
COLLABORATIVE






**BUILD YOUR
IDEAL DIRIDON
STATION AREA**

**USE THE OBJECTS ON THE
MODEL TO DESIGN...**

**A PLACE THAT LOOKS,
FEELS, AND SOUNDS COOL!**

EVENT BROUGHT
TO YOU BY:

 SAN JOSE JAZZ


PLACE IT!
INTERACTIVE PLANNING

TAP INTO OUR CORE VALUES.



EQUITY WITHOUT SAYING EQUITY.



AND TAP INTO OUR SENSORY KNOWLEDGE OF SPACE.

3. PROJECT PROFILES / HOW WE DO IT



SENSORY-BASED WALKING TOURS



My favorite place in my neighborhood is this sidewalk.

USING WALKING AS A TOOL FOR SPARKING PEOPLE'S CREATIVITY



EXPLORING 63RD STREET WITH YOUR SENSES



63RD RUNS EAST-WEST THROUGH OAKLAND, BERKELEY, AND EMERYVILLE


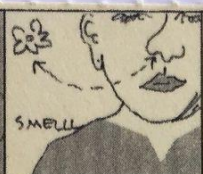






IT IS NOT A MAIN THOROUGHFARE; ITS CHARACTER
CHANGES IMMENSELY THROUGHOUT ITS LENGTH, AND
THUS IT IS A PERFECT STREET FOR A SENSORY-BASED
WALKING TOUR



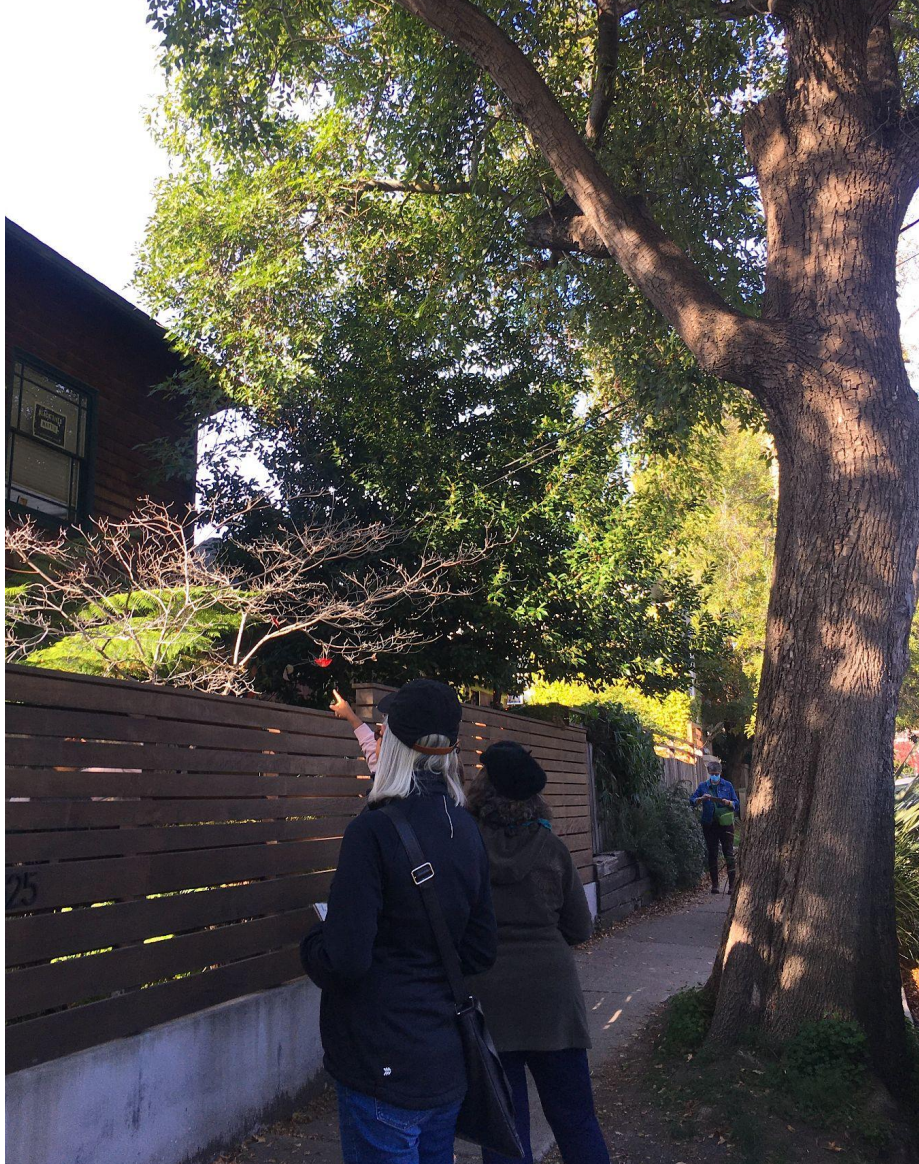
ONE GROUP STARTED AT ONE END, ONE AT THE OTHER



<p>SENSE</p> <p>PLACE</p>	 <p>SEE</p>	 <p>SMELL</p>	 <p>HEAR</p>	 <p>TASTE</p>	 <p>TOUCH</p>	 <p>IMAGINE</p>

WALKED TOWARD EACH OTHER WHILE
 EXPLORING THE STREET WITH OUR SENSES

INSTEAD OF ONE GUIDE, EVERYONE'S SENSES
ARE THE GUIDE



IN THE PROCESS, PEOPLE GET INTO A SENSING
STATE - THE PERFECT SPACE TO BE IN FOR
BEING CREATIVE



CONVERGED ON AN ARTSPACE DEDICATED TO
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - MACHINALOCI



THERE PEOPLE BUILT MODELS OF A
REDESIGNED 63RD STREET

THERE PEOPLE BUILT MODELS OF A REDESIGNED 63RD STREET



THEIR MODELS WERE INFUSED WITH THEIR
SENSORY IMPRESSIONS FROM THE WALK



PEOPLE BUILT TREEHOUSES, WATERWAYS
DOWN THOROUGHFARES, FIGURED OUT HOW
TO CREATIVELY MAKE CERTAIN CROSSINGS
FUN TO WALK ACROSS AND NOT SCARY, ETC.



THESE WALKING TOURS CAN ACTUALLY BE DONE VIRTUALLY AS WELL.

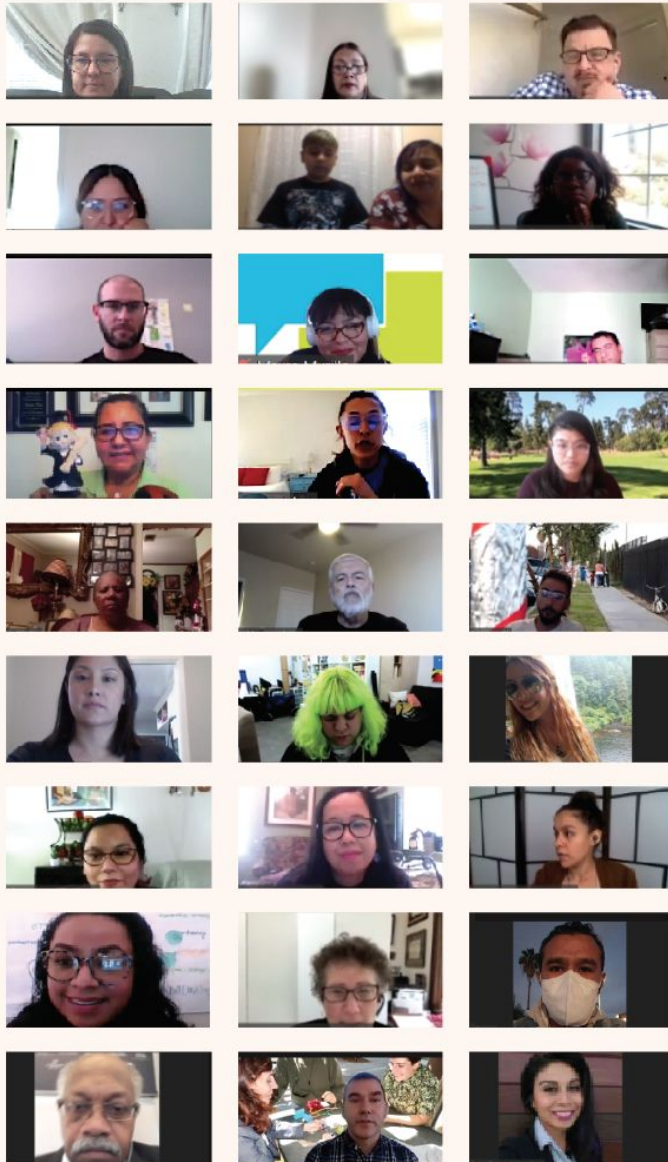


My favorite place in my neighborhood is this sidewalk.

DURING THE PANDEMIC, WE TRANSLATED THE
MODEL-BUILDING WORKSHOPS AND
SENSORY-BASED EXPLORATIONS INTO A VIRTUAL
FORMAT



My favorite place in my neighborhood is this sidewalk.



WINTER OF 2021 WE WERE APPROACHED BY HABITAT FOR HUMANITY TO DEVELOP A SERIES OF ONLINE ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES FOR A LOWER-INCOME NEIGHBORHOOD IN LONG BEACH



PEOPLE WENT TO PLACES THEY LOVE IN THEIR
NEIGHBORHOOD AND FILMED THEMSELVES TALKING
ABOUT WHY THEY LOVED THEM

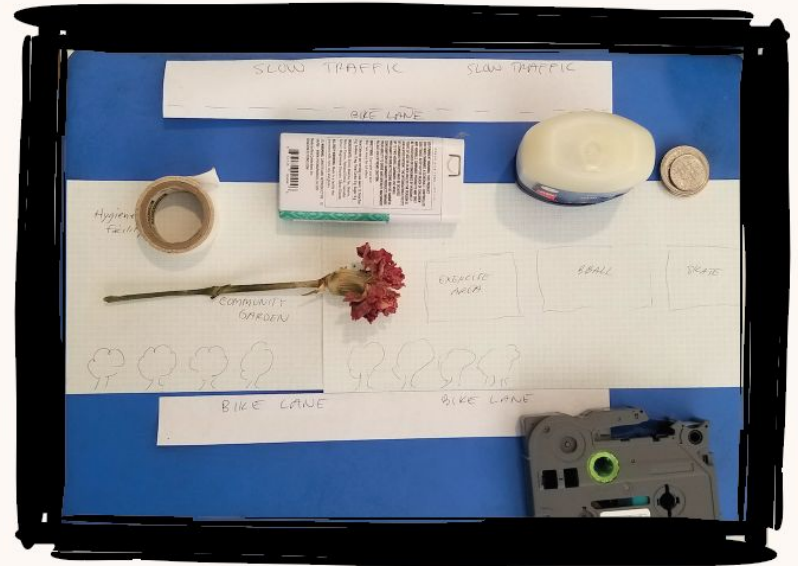


My favorite place in my neighborhood is this sidewalk.

WE THEN SPLICED THE VIDEOS TOGETHER INTO A VIRTUAL WALKING “TOUR,” WHICH WE WATCHED ONLINE



PEOPLE THEN BUILT
MODELS OF THEIR
IDEAL WASHINGTON
NEIGHBORHOOD.



USED
HANDS-ON
METHODS TO
TRAIN THE
RESIDENTS IN
HOW TO
ADVOCATE FOR
THEIR
PLANNING
IDEAS AND
STRATEGICALLY
ENGAGE WITH
PLANNING
PROCESSES



AVENUES EXPLORED

LONG-RANGE PLANNING

For exploring the creation of a plaza zone and other zones that could include many of the creative ideas that have emerged.

OFFICE OF SUSTANABILITY

For creating a tree-planting and maintenance plan and strategy for the neighborhood; learn about how to create thriving spaces for more plants and wildlife.

COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANZATIONS

For consulting about organizing larger campaigns and involving more people.

COUNCIL OFFICE

For establishing relationships in support of projects, lines of communication, perspective, strategies; establishing the Anaheim Corridor as a learning corridor.

PARKS AND REC

For maintaining new green/gathering spaces and creating/promoting cultural programming for the spaces.

OTHER RESIDENTS

For uniting people within the Washington Neighborhood around these projects; engaging with more people; organizing the community to promote safety; for residents being involved in and leading their own model-building workshops.

APPLIED FOR A GRANT TO FUND A PLAZA
PROTOTYPING EVENT WHERE RESIDENTS COULD
TEST OUT THEIR IDEAS FROM THEIR AT-HOME
MODELS IN REAL TIME AND SPACE



THEY ALSO GOT TO
CREATE MOCK
BIKE/PED
CONNECTIONS TO THE
SPACE



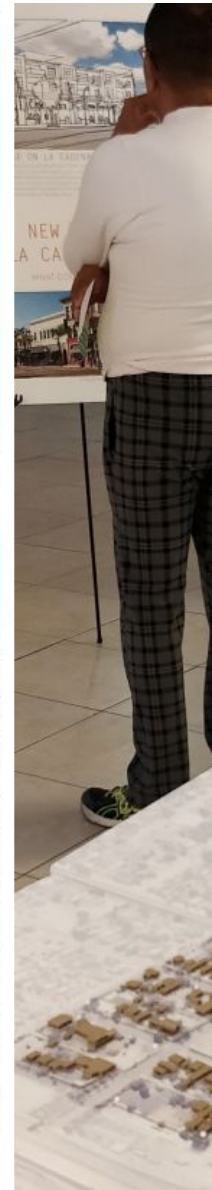
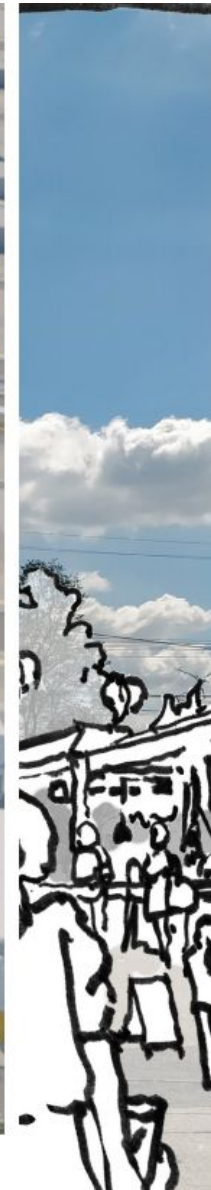
WE DOCUMENTED THE PROCESS AND ALSO TRAINED PARTICIPANTS IN HOW TO LEAD THEIR OWN MODEL-BUILDING WORKSHOPS.



THEY NOW HAVE THE PLANNING, DESIGN, AND
ADVOCACY TOOLS FOR MAKING THEIR DREAMS FOR A
PLAZA COME TO LIFE.



PROJECT 2: THE SOUTH COLTON LIVABLE CORRIDOR PLAN



SOUTH COLTON
LIVABLE CORRIDOR PLAN

Strategies for Community
Resilience and Upliftment



A YEAR-LONG PROJECT IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF SOUTH COLTON IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA



SOUTH COLTON HAS SUFFERED FROM YEARS OF PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL BARRIERS TO THE REST OF THE CITY AND REGION.



INCLUDING THE CITY TRANSFORMING ONE OF SOUTH COLTON'S MAIN STREETS INTO A TRUCKING ROUTE.

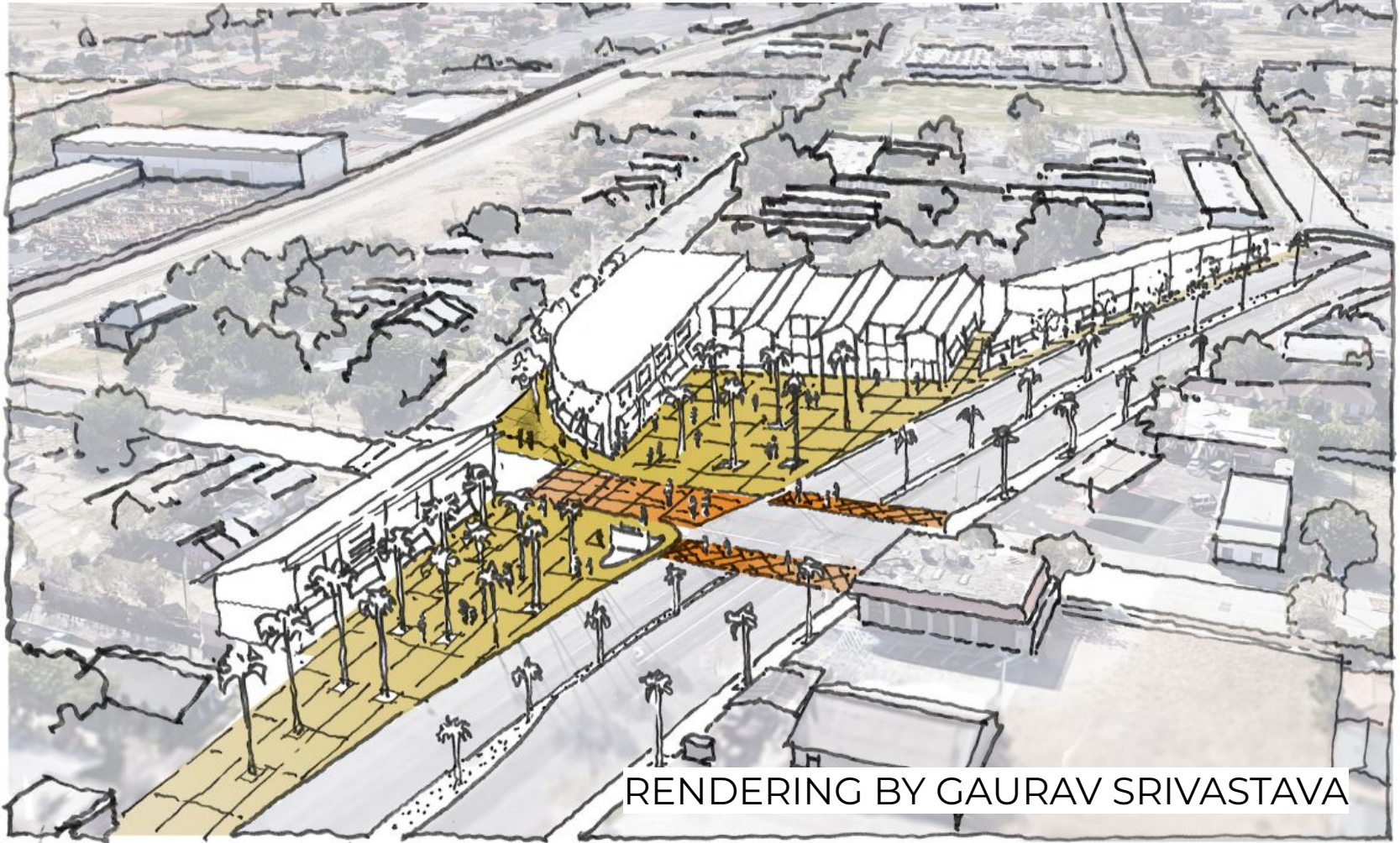


IN AN EXIT INTERVIEW FOR THE BOOK, LONGTIME RESIDENT ADRIAN CHAVEZ SAID OF THE SOUTH COLTON OF TODAY, “EVERYBODY DRIVES. EVEN IF IT’S ONE BLOCK. NOBODY WALKS.”

WOULD ULTIMATELY RESULT IN PROPOSED ZONING CHANGES, DESIGNS, DRAWINGS, AND A PLANNING DOCUMENT - THE LIVABLE CORRIDOR PLAN



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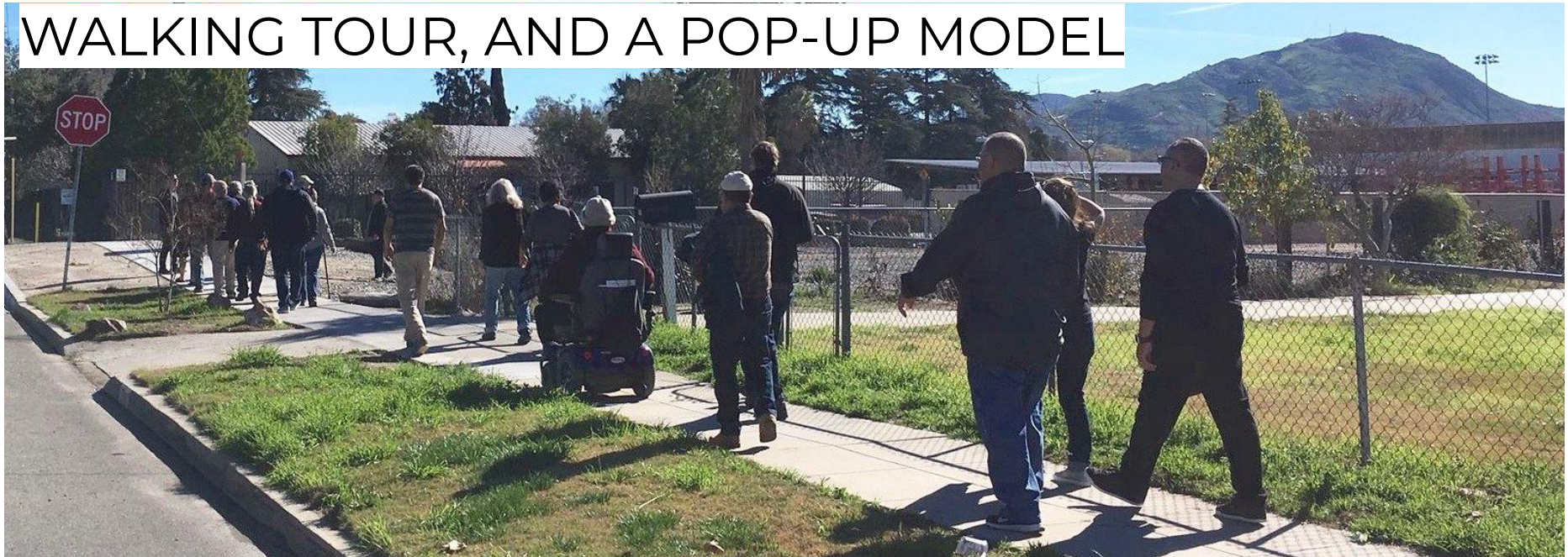
RENDERING BY GAURAV SRIVASTAVA



UNLIKE TRADITIONAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, WE ENGAGED THE RESIDENTS THROUGH THEIR HANDS AND SENSES TO GENERATE CREATIVE IDEAS FOR HOW TO BETTER THE NEIGHBORHOOD



THESE EVENTS INCLUDED A HANDS-ON
MODEL-BUILDING WORKSHOP, A SENSORY-BASED
WALKING TOUR, AND A POP-UP MODEL



THE HANDS-ON
AND
SENSORY-BASED
NATURE OF THE
ENGAGEMENT
UNEARTHED
INFORMATION
ABOUT THE
NEIGHBORHOOD
THAT COULD NOT
HAVE EMERGED
THROUGH, SAY, A
SURVEY.



LED TO A NEW AND
GROUNDBREAKING
KIND OF DESIGN
OVERLAY WHERE
THE RESIDENTS
PLAYED JUST AS
MUCH A ROLE IN IT
AS THE DESIGNERS.



UNCOVERED A
DIY URBANISM -
HOW RESIDENTS
WERE TAKING
WALKABILITY
AND ENHANCING
THE PUBLIC
REALM INTO
THEIR OWN
HANDS



DIY URBANISM -



DIY URBANISM



FLIPPING THE SCRIPT:
WE
PLANNERS/DESIGNERS
LEARNED AS MUCH
FROM THE RESIDENTS
ABOUT IMPROVING THE
PUBLIC REALM AND
WALKABILITY AS THEY
DID FROM US.



TREATING THE STREET
ITSELF AS A PLAZA AND
EXTENSION OF THE
FRONT YARD.





THE STREET AS A
TRANSACTIONAL SPACE
- SIMPLY A MEANS OF
SHUTTLING CARS FROM
POINT A TO B.

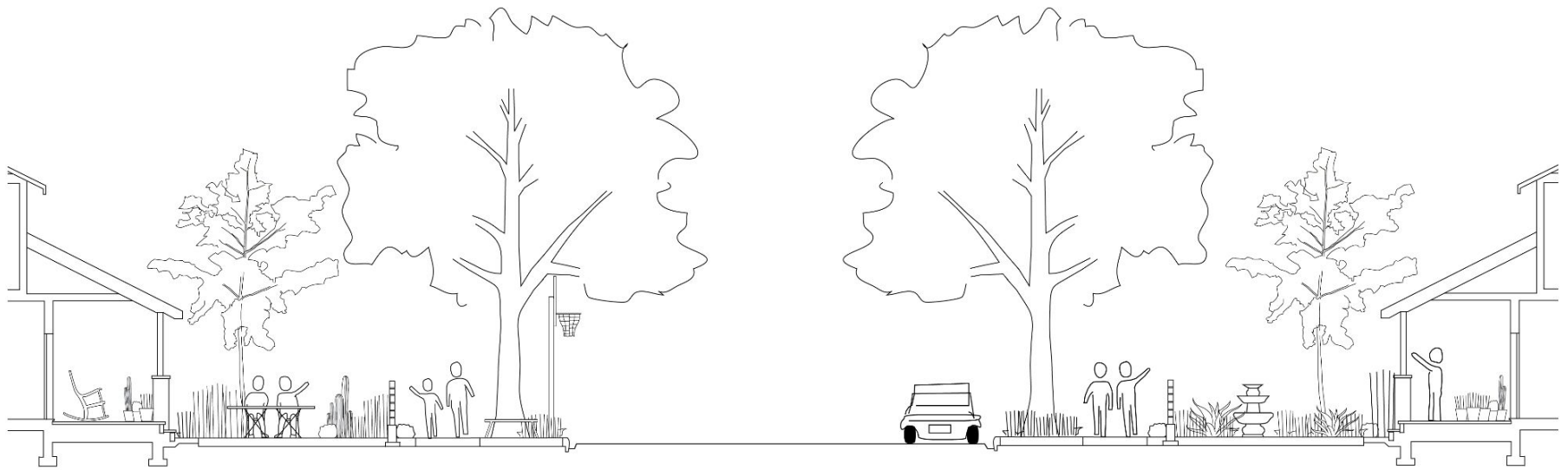


THE STREET AS A
SPACE THAT
CREATES A
RELATIONSHIP WITH
ITS USERS.

RATHER THAN FORBID THESE KINDS OF DIY INTERVENTIONS IN THE STREET, SIDEWALK, AND PARKWAY, THE RESULTING PLAN ENCOURAGED THEM.



SAMPLE STREET SECTION ENCOURAGING DIY INTERVENTIONS IN THE PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY.



MAXIMUM WALK AND ROLL



PROJECT 3: MAXIMUM WALK AND ROLL

HIRED BY THE SAFE ROUTES PARTNERSHIP TO
CREATE A SET OF TRAINING TOOLS FOR ENGAGING
YOUTH IN URBAN DESIGN



Safe Routes
PARTNERSHIP
Active Paths for Equity & Health

A hand is shown placing a gold coin into a miniature town model. The model is built on a pink base and features various colorful structures, including a blue and white striped building, a green building, and a red building. There are also small figures of people and animals, and a silver tinsel tree. The background is a vibrant, multi-colored scene with blue, green, and pink elements.

A

PLACE IT!

GUIDE TO

SAFE ROUTES TO

SCHOOL

How to engage students, families, and staff of all backgrounds in imagining, designing, and building more walkable and roll-able routes to school



ONE TOOL WE WANTED TO CREATE WAS A VIDEO SHOWING HOW YOU CAN ENGAGE KIDS IN...



1. EXPLORING STREETS WITH THEIR SENSES

2. BUILDING MODELS OF THEIR IDEAL STREETS FOR WALKING AND ROLLING



THE KIDS WERE THE PERFECT AGE FOR THE PROJECT, AS THEY WERE VERY UNFILTERED WITH WHAT THEY SAID.



MAXIMUM
WALK
AND
ROLL



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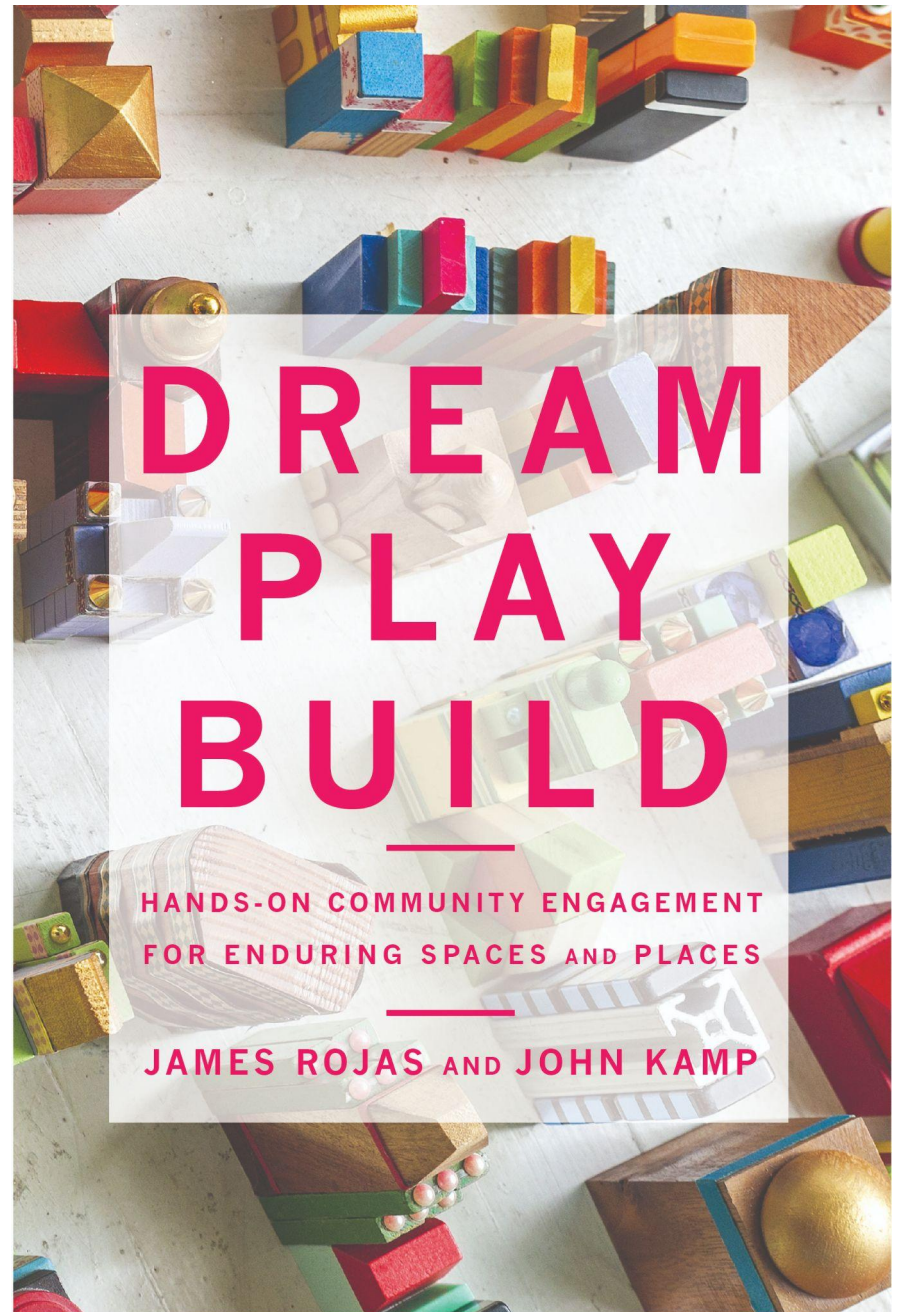
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Discount code for

DREAM PLAY BUILD:

SMART





THANK YOU / Q AND A