



MEADVILLE NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

# Pop-Up Guide

A GUIDE TO HOSTING A  
SUCCESSFUL POP-UP EFFORT IN  
YOUR COMMUNITY

DEC. 2016







# *Why do a Pop-Up?*

**THIS ANSWER  
WILL DEPEND A  
BIT ON WHAT  
YOU'RE TRYING  
TO ACCOMPLISH**

## **SMALL BUSINESS**

- **TEST A NEW REVENUE STREAM**
- **ENGAGE CUSTOMERS OFFLINE**
- **ENGAGE NEW CUSTOMERS "WHERE THEY ARE"**

## **COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION**

- **TEST HAVING A PHYSICAL LOCATION**
- **GET MEMBERS DIRECTLY INVOLVED**
- **ENGAGE NEW MEMBERS "WHERE THEY ARE"**

## **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

- **ACTIVATE UNDERUTILIZED SPACES**
- **CREATE A PUBLIC SPACE**
- **PLACEMAKING PURPOSES**
- **SHOWCASE NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVES**





# Step 1

## CHOOSING A LOCATION

### PRIVATE OR PUBLIC?

**PUBLIC:** IF YOU CHOOSE TO WORK IN A PUBLIC SPACE SUCH AS A COURTHOUSE, CITY BUILDING, ETC. YOU WILL WANT TO GIVE YOURSELF MUCH MORE TIME TO SECURE THE LOCATION. YOU SHOULD ALSO EXPECT TO HAVE A STRONG INSURANCE POLICY TO FULFILL THEIR EXPECTATIONS OF A PARTNERSHIP.

**PRIVATE:** THESE SPACES ARE EASIER TO COME BY AS THEY OFTEN ONLY TAKE A "YES" FROM ONE LANDLORD OR REAL ESTATE MANAGER. IT'S ALSO MORE LIKELY THAT YOU WILL ACTUALLY BE HANDED A KEY RATHER THAN HAVING TO BE LET IN TO THE SPACE EVERY TIME YOU NEED ACCESS.

### HIGH OR LOW VISIBILITY?

IT'S GENERALLY A GOOD IDEA TO PICK A SPOT WHICH STANDS OUT IN THE COMMUNITY'S MIND AND THAT YOU CAN EASILY DIRECT THEM TO. ("IT'S ACROSS FROM THE LIBRARY ON MAIN STREET") YOU WILL ALSO WANT TO ASK ABOUT PRACTICAL MATTERS SUCH AS ACCESS TO A RESTROOM, ACCESS TO ELECTRICITY, AS WELL AS HEATING AND WATER. THESE ARE ALL THINGS WHICH COULD MAKE OR BREAK A SUCCESSFUL POP-UP.





# *Step 1*

## **CHOOSING A LOCATION**

### **STORY: LOCATION**

WHEN WE HELD OUR POP-UP GALLERY IN NOVEMBER OF 2016, WE BEGAN BY CALLING REAL ESTATE AGENTS LISTED ON UNOCCUPIED BUILDINGS AROUND TOWN. WHAT WE QUICKLY FOUND WAS THAT REAL ESTATE AGENTS WEREN'T REALLY INTERESTED IN THIS IDEA BECAUSE THERE WASN'T REALLY ANY MONEY IN IT FOR THEM.

OUR LUCK TURNED, THOUGH, WHEN WE HEARD A LOCAL RENTAL COMPANY HAD PARTNERED WITH OUR CITY'S REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY IN THE PAST. WE CONTACTED THE RENTAL COMPANY AND THEY WERE VERY WILLING TO LET US USE ONE OF THEIR SPACES FOR FREE.

TO THEM, OUR USING THE SPACE WAS FREE PUBLICITY FOR THE COST OF A FEW WEEKS OF ELECTRICITY. WE PARTNERED WITH THE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY TO POST SIGNS ABOUT THE PROPERTY AND HOW TO RENT IT AS WELL AS ITS HISTORY AS A SPACE. THIS ENSURED THE RENTAL AGENCY THAT WE VALUED THEIR PARTNERSHIP AND WANTED TO SEE THE BUILDING RENTED ONCE WE FINISHED.





## Step 2

### COLLABORATING WITH PARTNERS

#### WHO CAN I PARTNER WITH?

**EVERYONE.** IF YOU WANT A SUCCESSFUL POP-UP, DO NOT TRY AND DO IT ON YOUR OWN. YOUR RESOURCES WILL RUN DRY AS WELL AS YOUR IDEAS AND CREATIVITY. PARTNERSHIPS ADD SO MANY UNEXPECTED SUCCESSES TO YOUR INITIATIVE. IT WILL BE THESE SUCCESSES, FAR MORE THAN YOUR ORIGINAL INTENTIONS, WHICH COULD TRANSFORM YOUR POP-UP FROM "OKAY" TO "AMAZING."

IT'S UNDERSTANDABLE THAT A COLLABORATION MIGHT NOT STICK OUT TO YOU AT FIRST, BUT IT IS BETTER TO INVITE A PARTNER AND BE REJECTED THAN NOT INVITE THEM AT ALL. IN THIS WAY, YOU ARE SHOWING THAT YOU ARE WILLING TO WORK WITH OTHERS AND SHARE YOUR SUCCESS.

#### WHO AM I FORGETTING?

TENANTS AND NEIGHBORS CAN BE YOUR BEST FRIEND OR YOUR WORST ENEMY. BE SURE TO TALK WITH THEM AS SOON AS YOU GET ACCESS TO THE SPACE TO MAKE SURE THEY KNOW WHAT IS GOING ON AND HOW YOU CAN MAKE SURE THEIR VOICE IS NOT FORGOTTEN WHEN PUTTING YOUR POP-UP TOGETHER.





## *Step 2*

### **COLLABORATING WITH PARTNERS**

#### **STORY: PARTNERS**

IN JANUARY OF 2016, WE HOSTED A POP-UP CAFE AT THE PROPERTY OF A LOCAL LANDLORD. THE LANDLORD WAS EXCITED ABOUT OUR USING THE SPACE AND WAS VERY ACCOMMODATING OF OUR NEEDS. WHEN WE MOVED IN, I NOTICED THERE WERE APARTMENTS ABOVE BUT WAS UNSURE IF THEY HAD TENANTS.

FOR OUR ADVERTISEMENT OF THE EVENT, WE PLAYED ON THE LANGUAGE THAT THE SPACE WAS UNOCCUPIED SINCE IT WAS IN AN AREA SO CENTRAL TO OUR TOWN. UNFORTUNATELY, THE LANGUAGE QUICKLY BECAME TROUBLESOME WHEN A TENANT FROM THE SPACE PUBLICLY COMMENTED HER OFFENSE OF OUR LANGUAGE OVER SOCIAL MEDIA AND, AT ONE POINT, MADE A CALL TO THE LOCAL CITY PLANNING OFFICER TO QUESTION OUR LEGALITY. SINCE WE WERE COMPLETELY LEGAL, NO ACTIONS WERE FILED. AND LUCKILY, ONE OF OUR PARTNERS KNEW THE TENANTS AND WAS ABLE TO SPEAK TO THEM.

WHILE THIS WAS UNFORTUNATE, IT DEMONSTRATES HOW ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL IT IS TO INVITE AND INVOLVE PARTNERS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. IN THIS WAY, YOU CAN BE SURE NO ONE IS EXCLUDED OR LEFT WITHOUT A VOICE.

# *Resources:*

[WWW.SHOPIFY.COM/GUIDES/ULTIMATE-GUIDE-TO-POP-UP-SHOPS/WHY-RUN-A-POP-UP](http://WWW.SHOPIFY.COM/GUIDES/ULTIMATE-GUIDE-TO-POP-UP-SHOPS/WHY-RUN-A-POP-UP)

[WWW.PPS.ORG](http://WWW.PPS.ORG)

[WWW.POPUPFORCHANGE.ORG/](http://WWW.POPUPFORCHANGE.ORG/)

[WWW.DOWNTOWNPITTSBURGH.COM/WHAT-WE-DO/PROGRAMMING/PROJECT-POP-UP](http://WWW.DOWNTOWNPITTSBURGH.COM/WHAT-WE-DO/PROGRAMMING/PROJECT-POP-UP)

[WWW.POP-UP.ORG.UK/COMMUNITY/](http://WWW.POP-UP.ORG.UK/COMMUNITY/)

[WWW.POPUPMUSEUM.ORG/](http://WWW.POPUPMUSEUM.ORG/)

[WWW.POP-UP.ORG.UK/COMMUNITY/](http://WWW.POP-UP.ORG.UK/COMMUNITY/)

The development of this guide  
is ongoing. Please email Lee  
Scandinaro at  
[leescandinaro@gmail.com](mailto:leescandinaro@gmail.com) for  
more information.