CREATIVE PROJECT: Art and Culture as Catalyst for Sustainable Economic Development

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PAGES: 96

The arts are now recognized as a powerful instrument for economic development; however, equity among artists in many arts districts is often neglected. Though often the initial catalyst of revitalization in a community, artists are frequently forced out of neighborhoods as economic activity increases and property values rise. This project aims to develop a proposal for the Mass Ave Arts District and the Circle City Industrial Complex in Indianapolis, Indiana, utilizing culture and the arts as economically sustainable and socially equitable development tools. Special emphasis is placed on affordable housing for artists, industry clusters, and the pedestrian experience. This project explores how the arts can be leveraged as an economic development catalyst, how social equity can contribute to economic development, and how social equity can be protected as culture-focused development evolves.