



HOW PPS DRIVES CHANGE

a prospectus

About Us

Over the past 40 years, [Project for Public Spaces](#) (PPS) has grown from a small group of dedicated out-of-the-box thinkers studying how people use public space, to the leader of a global movement for [placemaking](#) that is changing places and lives around the world. Currently, with an action oriented and interdisciplinary team comprised of around 30 people, we have directly helped over 3,000 communities in 47 countries to build stronger and more dynamic public spaces.

Strong indicators that placemaking has become a leading movement include our significant recent partnerships with the [Brookings Institution](#), the [U.S. Conference of Mayors](#), [Southwest Airlines](#), [UN-Habitat](#), [National Main Street Center](#), and [Kaiser Permanente](#).

Today, too many cities still operate within siloed, top-down bureaucracies that do not meaningfully engage communities in planning for the future. Placemaking, on the other hand, offers an alternative way to transform cities, starting with people and places, and [it's taking hold globally](#) and ready to be scaled. PPS's seminal conference, [Placemaking Week](#), held in October 2017, brought together over 400 leaders from 46 countries as advocates [are also mobilizing regionally around the world](#).

Today we also find ourselves at a critical juncture for the organization. As we begin a promising transition, both programmatically and in terms of our senior leadership, PPS is emerging as a very different organization than we have been in the past—not shedding our past accomplishments and work, but building on them.

A Three-Pronged Approach for Driving Change



1 TRANSFORMING PLACES

We help communities and cities shape their future through individual public spaces and broad placemaking campaigns. For over 40 years, our teams have worked with communities to identify, plan, and execute successful [placemaking projects](#) across the globe.

Places We Work

- [Streets and Transportation](#): from “wider and faster” to [streets as places](#)
- [Squares](#): from centerless city to hearts of the community
- [Parks](#): from passive green space to natural gathering place
- [Downtowns and Districts](#): from top-down bureaucracy to place-led leadership
- [Public Buildings](#): from forbidding monoliths to centers of civic life
- [Public Markets](#): from big box wastelands to market cities
- [Waterfronts](#): from deserted promenades to [multi-use destinations](#)
- [Rural Communities](#): from bypassed backroads to community crossroads



Rockefeller Center, New York City, USA



Flint Farmers Market, Flint, MI, USA



Perth Cultural Centre, Perth, AU

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BUILDING THE PLACEMAKING MOVEMENT

We convene, amplify and build the capacity of the placemaking movement globally and locally. Through our influential social media presence, pioneering online publications, far-reaching newsletter and numerous international meetings, conferences, and trainings, Project for Public Spaces reaches millions of constituents annually. Founded in 2013, PPS's [Placemaking Leadership Council \(PLC\)](#) has over 1800 members in 83 countries. Our biannual [Walk/Bike/Places](#) Conference is the premier conference in North America for walking and bicycling professionals from the public and private sectors, and this year's 2018 conference in New Orleans expects to draw over 1500 city planners, transportation engineers, public health professionals, elected officials, community leaders, and professional active transportation advocates.



Placemaking Week 2017, Amsterdam, NL



PPS Trainings



Walk Bike Places 2016, Vancouver, CA

CAMPAIGNING FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE

We make the case for placemaking and engage with like-minded people and movements to influence policies, disciplines, hearts and minds. Every day, public space touches so many people's lives in so many ways, and that is why the policies, disciplines and norms that shape public space provide such a high-impact opportunity for collaborative interventions that generate multiple outcomes.

Together with multiple partners, we are working for systemic change at all levels, including:



Future of Places III, Stockholm, SE

Global Campaign: 1400 people from 100 countries attended our three [Future of Places](#) conferences, which led to the incorporation of public spaces as a core element of UN-Habitat's New Urban Agenda, adopted in 2016 in Quito, Ecuador at Habitat III. To implement the New Urban Agenda, and building on efforts like Placemaking Week, PPS is working to mobilize a global network that will empower people, organizations, and communities to transform their public spaces by giving them the technical and financial resources they need to succeed. To help grow the movement, in 2018-19 PPS will encourage and facilitate local and regional Placemaking

Week events in cities around the world. Also in 2019, we will host our next global Placemaking Week as well as our 10th International Public Markets Conference in London.

National Campaigns: The hyper-partisan divisions in the U.S., along with recent tax legislation that compels cities to find new ways to fund local development, indicate the urgent need for drilling down to the "place level" of communities, where politics become problem solving. [Place Governance](#) offers new opportunities for PPS to partner with major national organizations which have strong, local constituencies. Working with the walkable urbanism team at the [Center for Real Estate and Urban Analysis \(CREUA\) at the George Washington University School of Business](#), a new national partnership is unfolding with a specific focus to advance placemaking. The question is: how can we fast-forward to building and stewarding the kinds of walkable urban places that the market has overwhelmingly said it wants? How do we take placemaking and place management to scale? How can we foster equitable and inclusive communities?



The Citizens' Institute on Rural Design™ is a national campaign to provide rural communities access to the resources they need to convert their own good ideas into reality.

State Campaigns: As PPS's partnership with the [National Main Street Center](#) has demonstrated, states are not just closer to cities and local, [rural communities](#), but they also have the flexibility to be more innovative and adaptable than any program coming from Washington, D.C. Working with Main Street's organizations in ten states, more than 650 community activists and civic leaders attended PPS trainings, resulting in the generation of \$14 million for 100+ placemaking projects using our "[Lighter, Quicker, Cheaper](#)" approach. Our partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts for the [Citizens' Institute on Rural Design](#) also seeks to build the capacity of rural communities to develop locally-driven solutions to their long term vitality. The state of Michigan is [taking placemaking to an unprecedented level](#), putting it at the center of their economic development and place-based governance strategy.



Leading a statewide placemaking campaign with the Michigan Municipal League



Streets Renaissance Campaign, Times Square, NYC

City Campaigns: To advance placemaking throughout a city, city agencies must move away from top-down, siloed approaches and begin to work collaboratively to mobilize community-based action. Cities from [Adelaide](#) to [Detroit](#) are developing innovative new ways to support placemaking. In New York City, PPS's home base, we co-founded [The New York City Streets Renaissance](#) campaign in 2005. This grassroots initiative catalyzed the transformation of the city's transportation policy and brought sweeping change to NYC streets.

District Campaigns: Whether it is a food market, cultural district, arts district, innovation district, central business district, or an economically growing neighborhood, urban districts or "hubs" create the building blocks for supercharging and transforming entire cities. In a global scan of over 40 districts around the world, which PPS conducted with The Brookings Institution for the [Anne T. and Robert M. Bass Initiative for Innovation and Placemaking](#), we determined that the hyper-local "urban hubs"—dense, diverse districts with employment and economic impact on their host city—are the scale at which systemic change can be best achieved. These districts are often fragile and endangered, and they need innovative and tangible solutions to finance, governance, placemaking, and inclusion. This is a primary goal of our work with Brookings and other partners going forward.



Demonstrating the value of place-led development with the Brookings Institution

TRANSFORMATIVE AGENDAS

A good solution solves many problems. There are many worthy causes that affect communities around the world, but what makes placemaking different is that it is where these otherwise divergent causes converge.

The Systems We Influence

- **Place Governance:** Changing the culture of government to foster creativity, community ownership, and numerous public benefits. Through a “[Market Cities](#)” framework, for example, a municipality can connect people and places to community, healthy food, and economic opportunity.
- **Disciplines:** Changing the education, culture, and processes of the key professionals that shape the built environment—including [architects](#), [traffic engineers](#), [artists](#), economic development and public health professionals, and others.

The Outcomes We Achieve

- **Equity & Inclusion:** Ensuring shared community ownership and engaging all users to better support openness and bring diverse people together.
- **Economic Development:** Fostering the interplay between inventive people and the places they share to accelerate the exchange of ideas, resources, and talent.
- **Sustainability & Resilience:** Driving change and innovation through dynamic human environments—places—that produce not only environmental benefits, but broad social and economic returns as well.
- **Health and Wellbeing:** Making sure that the design and planning of our built environment and public spaces benefits the physical, mental, and social health of individuals and communities as a whole.



Public Markets Conference



Pratt Urban Placemaking and Management Program