

CPSI Placemaking Project: Three Month Example

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Introduction

The Center for Public Safety Initiatives at Rochester Institute of Technology is supporting efforts to implement a placemaking project to transform the community on Jefferson Avenue from Columbia Avenue to Frost Avenue. The goal of creative placemaking within this neighborhood of Rochester is to facilitate revitalization in hopes of reducing crime and making the community a safer place to live in (Alzheimer, 2024).

Overall, the placemaking project is hoping to instill different activities along Jefferson Avenue to help the physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing of the community residents. These activities will also build a feeling of community, which will help reduce violence and criminal activities along this corridor. By revitalizing this area, a better sense of community will be formed, and a reduction will be seen in violence and crime (Alzheimer, 2024).

Three Month Example

To explore how these changes can be made in this community, we have set up a conceptual three-month outline of placemaking activities for June 2025 to August 2025. There are three types of placemaking activities that will be offered to residents along Jefferson Avenue: Community, Creative/Art, and Health/Wellness. Community placemaking activities were created with the intention of promoting a sense of community among residents in the target area. The main goal of these activities is to get the community together and for them to build relationships amongst each other. Creative/Art placemaking activities were created with the goal of promoting different forms of art among the community to get members involved in new hobbies (Urban Institute, 2018). Health/Wellness placemaking activities were created to

better the residents' physical and mental health. Throughout the three-month plan, there will be at least one of each of these types of activities (PPS, 2024).

Below is a table outlining the various placemaking activities that will occur throughout the months of June, July, and August of 2025. Each activity is labeled with the type of activity it is, when it will occur, where it will occur, who is in charge of the activity, and the services it provides for community members. These are examples of what could occur through the CPSI Placemaking Project; therefore, none of the organizations are obligated to work with CPSI on these activities.

Table 1. Breakdown of Various Placemaking Activities

Activity	Activity type	Start time	Location	Organization/ Head of Activity	Services Provided
Health Fair	Health/Wellness	6/1/2025	579 Jefferson Ave	Monroe County Hospital	Provides several healthcare services free of charge: mammograms, blood pressure screenings, cholesterol screenings, blood sugar screenings, vision and hearing exams, vaccinations, mental health resources, and more.
Art with Chalk	Creative/Art	6/7/2025	729 Jefferson Ave	RIT College of Art and Design Students	Provides community members of all ages the chance to be creative and have fun with chalk.
Mental Health Fair	Health/Wellness	6/13/2025	579 Jefferson Ave	The Mental Health Association (MHA) of Rochester	Provides information regarding different mental health disorders and illnesses, free therapy sessions, stress management, self-care services, offers wellness strategies, and more
Community Barbecue	Community	6/15/2025	622 Jefferson Ave	RIT Criminal Justice Professors	Offers a variety of free food as well as the opportunity to build relationships with fellow residents in the area.
Painting a Mural	Creative/Art	6/27/2025		RIT College of Art and Design Students	Provides residents of all ages to work with local artists, create a design, and paint their own mural that represents their culture.
Fourth of July Celebration	Community	7/4/2025	The Streets of Jefferson Ave	RIT College Activities Board	Provides a day and night celebration of the Fourth of July where residents play lawn games, eat free food, and enjoy fireworks together.

Health Fair	Health/Wellness	7/6/2025	579 Jefferson Ave	Monroe County Hospital	Provides several healthcare services free of charge: mammograms, blood pressure screenings, cholesterol screenings, blood sugar screenings, vision and hearing exams, vaccinations, mental health resources, and more.
ABC Community Outreach	Community	7/11/2025	612 Jefferson Ave	Community Building in Action (CBA)	Provides training and services to residents in need of jobs.
ABC Community Outreach	Health/Wellness	7/20/2025	612 Jefferson Ave	Protect Your Circle (PYC)	Offers education to the community about COVID-19 vaccines; helps books appointments for vaccinations; provides transportation for vaccination appointments.
ABC Community Outreach	Community	7/25/2025	612 Jefferson Ave	Save Our Youth (SOY)	Works with the at-risk youth; provides dispute mediation and conflict resolution in a safe space; works with the youth to develop alternatives to violence life plans; supplies referrals to local agencies in the area; provides information on training and technical assistance for at-risk youth.
Art Fair	Creative/Art	7/27/2025	579 Jefferson Ave	Rochester Institute of Technology	Allows community members to sell any of their artwork to RIT students and other members of Rochester.
Health Fair	Health/Wellness	8/2/2025	579 Jefferson Ave	Monroe County Hospital	Provides several healthcare services free of charge: mammograms, blood pressure screenings, cholesterol screenings, blood sugar screenings, vision and hearing exams, vaccinations, mental health resources, and more.
Free Haircuts	Health/Wellness	8/8/2025	647 Jefferson Ave	New Creations Barber Shop	Offers free haircuts to residents of all ages.
Calisthenics Workout	Health/Wellness	8/10/2025	640 Jefferson Ave	Rochester Planet Fitness Trainers	Provides several different calisthenics workouts throughout the day; some for children and some for adults.
Community Barbecue	Community	8/16/2025	622 Jefferson Ave	RIT Criminal Justice Professors	Offers a variety of free food as well as the opportunity to build relationships with fellow residents in the area.
Street Concert	Creative/Art	8/24/2025	The Streets of Jefferson Ave	Danielle Ponder	Provides a space for residents to enjoy music from artists from their area.

The first month in this outline begins in June of 2025. There will be five placemaking activities during this month. The first placemaking activity will promote Health and Wellness through a Health Fair on the first of June. The Health Fair will be set up in the parking lot on 579 Jefferson Avenue with Monroe County Hospital leading the event. Several services will be

provided, including mammograms, blood pressure screenings, cholesterol screenings, blood sugar screenings, vision and hearing exams, vaccinations, mental health resources, etc. All services and programs offered by the Health Fair will be free of charge for the residents along Jefferson Avenue. The main goal of this placemaking activity is to better the physical and mental health of the community members. The second activity that will take place is using chalk to create art in an empty lot on Jefferson Avenue on the seventh of June. This placemaking activity falls under the Creative/Art activity type and allows residents of all ages to utilize their creativity and build on their socialization skills with fellow community members. The third activity will take place on the thirteenth of June in the parking lot on 579 Jefferson Avenue. This activity will be a Mental Health Fair through The Mental Health Association (MHA) of Rochester. The Mental Health Fair will provide several different services including information regarding different mental health disorders and illnesses, free therapy sessions, stress management, self-care services, wellness strategies, and more. The main goal of this event is to promote a healthy mental well-being among the community who may be struggling due to crime and violence. The fourth placemaking activity is planned to take place on the fifteenth of June. There will be a community barbecue on 622 Jefferson Avenue where various foods will be served, music will be played, and people will get to know each other. The hope of this activity is to build that feeling of community along Jefferson Avenue. The final activity in June will be on the twenty-seventh and will involve painting a mural. Community members will team up with local artists to find a space for a mural, create a meaningful design, and paint the mural together. Not only does this mural painting promote creativity, but it also helps build up the community.

In July of 2025, there is expected to be at least six diverse placemaking activities. The

first activity is planned to occur on the fourth of July and will be a celebration of this holiday. Throughout the streets of Jefferson Avenue, there will be food served, lawn games, face painting, and fireworks for all to enjoy. This activity will help raise the sense of community along Jefferson Avenue and maintain social relationships. The second activity will take place on the sixth of July and will be the second Health Fair. The same services will be offered to all residents as were offered at the first Health Fair, and it will be in the same lot. The third activity is planned for the eleventh of July. Action for a Better Community's (ABC) outreach *Community Building in Action* program will be set up on 612 Jefferson Avenue to provide job training and services for community members. On the twentieth of July, ABC's outreach *Protect Your Circle* program will be set up in the same lot to provide education about COVID-19 vaccines, help book appointments for vaccinations, and provide transportation for vaccination appointments. ABC's outreach will visit Jefferson Avenue one more time this month on the twenty-fifth. Their *Save Our Youth* program will set up in the same lot and will work with at-risk youth, provide dispute mediation and conflict resolution in a safe space, work with youth to develop alternatives to violence life plans, supply referrals to local agencies in the area, and provide information on training and technical assistance. The programs offered by ABC outreach will help the community overall and promote the health and well-being of residents. The final placemaking activity that is planned for this month is an Art Fair organized by the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT). Community members will be encouraged to create and sell their own art pieces – which can include ceramics, paintings, drawings, embroidery, knitting, and more. Students from RIT and any other Rochester community members will be invited to the Art Fair to purchase any art from Jefferson Avenue residents. Not only does this promote the community to be more creative,

but it also helps individuals who may be struggling to meet their financial obligations.

August 2025 is the third month highlighted in this outline. During the beginning of the month, on the second, there will be another Health Fair. The fair will take place in the same lot as the first and second fairs and will provide the same services for all members of the community to promote their physical and mental health. On the eighth of the month, New Creations Barber Shop will be offering free haircuts for all residents. These haircuts will help community members feel more confident in themselves and their appearance – further fostering better well-being. On the tenth of August, a series of workouts will be offered throughout the day at Calisthenics Park to encourage more residents to get active. There will be workouts for adults and children, so that the entire community is able to get more involved in physical activity. The third activity is planned for the sixteenth of the month. There will be another community barbecue on 622 Jefferson Avenue where various foods will be served, music will be played, and people will get to know each other even better. The last activity of the month will be on the twenty-fourth of August. Throughout the streets of Jefferson Avenue, there will be a street concert with local musicians from Rochester, including Danielle Ponder. This activity provides residents with the space to enjoy the artistry of music and how that music connects them.

Conclusion

Throughout the three-month example outlined here, several forms of placemaking activities will be created to achieve different effects within the community. The activities will either be related to creativity and art, health and wellness, or building the community. Some of these activities may contain more than one of the above categories, but they will all be created with

the same intention – to improve the entire neighborhood’s quality of life in hopes of reducing crime and violence. Through all the different placemaking activities, we hope to create a prosperous life for neighborhood residents and their families.

References

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About the Center for Public Safety Initiatives

The Center for Public Safety Initiatives (CPSI) is a multi-disciplinary research center that examines strategies to reduce crime and enhance the administration of justice. It provides program evaluation, data analytics, and project management services to area law enforcement, community non-profits, and other criminal justice professionals, and it contributes to general knowledge generation of the nature and causes of crime and violence. Its educational goals include training graduate and undergraduate students in strategic planning, program evaluation, and policy analysis.

The foundation of the Center is the practice of action research in which relevant data and analyses are brought to bear on the day-to-day decision-making processes of organizations. The Center serves the practice of policy development and implementation in real time and is a testing ground for 21st century university engagement, demonstrating how rigorous research and analysis can play a role in improving the lives of society's most marginalized citizens.

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