

# DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

*Economic Development Division*

## **m e m o r a n d u m**

**TO:** Public Arts Commission  
**FROM:** Pauline Tannos, Public Arts Coordinator  
**DATE:** December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
**SUBJECT:** Discussion on Open Scene

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### **Background**

Open Scene was awarded a \$50,000 Our Town grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in spring 2016. Through this project, the City of Urbana is partnering with the Urbana-Champaign Independent Media Center (UCIMC) to create a plan for reclaiming the city's center through arts-based dialogues that directly incorporate the experiences of youth ages 16-24, especially those who feel disconnected from the downtown scene.

Open Scene's team leadership approach – youth partnering equally with adult community stakeholders – intends to empower local youth and works as a creative means of civic engagement in Urbana.

### **Update**

Project leaders, which include adult stakeholders and youth participants, have been selected from the application pools to participate in Open Scene. They had the opportunity to meet one another and to share their objectives and expectations at a launch event at the Independent Media Center on December 3.

The community stakeholders selected to be a part of Open Scene are Nicole Anderson-Cobb (University of Illinois Departments of Journalism and African American Studies), Phil Edwards (City of Urbana), Shaya Robinson (Speak Café), Lindsay Aikman (Centennial High School), Jason Keist (Parkland College), Susan Parenti (School for Designing a Society), Linda Turnbull (Champaign-Urbana Days Fashion and Talent Show), Kate Insolia (The Urbana Dance Company), Antonial Lotts (CU Fresh Start), Matt Cho ([co] [lab]), Barbara Gillespie (Urbana School District), and Amanda Harris (Urbana School District).

The youth leaders selected are Madison Gardner, Chiley Nsokoshi, Cedric Jones, Naakai Smith, Lateef Bridgewater, Tyler Camp, Collette Harmon, Anika Evans, Saskia Bakker, Alleya Weibel, Jamie Gatson, and Nicole Magerko.

A call for artists was announced last month, and 49 applications were received by the December 5 deadline. The selection will be made later this month, with inputs from youth participants. Two area artists and two artists from other parts of the country will be selected. Selected artists will lead arts engagement activities for project leaders and the public in the spring.

## **Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Public Arts Commission share any comments or questions they might have on Open Scene.

Prepared by:

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Pauline Tannos