



BOGOTA CREATIVE ARTS TEAM

CREATIVE PLACEMAKING PLAN

2021-2026



INTRODUCTION

The Bogota Creative Arts Team (CAT) was established by the Borough of Bogota in 2020 to foster a vibrant arts and culture community, and to contribute to Bogota earning a Sustainable Jersey certification. It is a project of Bogota Beautiful, a community organization founded in 2013 that is committed to improving the quality of life for residents via beautification and improvement projects, and community building events.

CAT's initial objective was to identify and map creative assets and opportunities. Next, it undertook the task of developing this plan using community feedback and insights from its diverse team. An uncertain future during the COVID-19 pandemic make flexibility a priority with implementation. CAT will modify objectives when deemed necessary to accommodate unforeseen circumstances.

We are excited for this next chapter in Bogota's story, and invite you to join us in nurturing a vibrant creative and fine arts culture in the Borough.

OUR MISSION

The Bogota Creative Arts Team nurtures a vibrant creative and fine arts culture within the Borough encompassing art, music, wellness and community building in accordance with Sustainable Jersey guidelines. Its goal is to establish a vision for the community to determine how arts, culture and the creative arts are harnessed to enhance the well-being of Bogota residents.

OUR VISION

The Creative Arts Team will be the instrument for expanding the arts and creativity in Bogota to invigorate its community, culture, and economy.

OUR VALUES

We are respectful of our neighbors and community.

We encourage and empower creativity in all our doings.

We identify, acknowledge, appreciate, enhance, and promote our cultural diversity and heritage.

We believe that Art and Creativity is a pathway to success and harmony



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Creative Arts Team
could not exist without the
contributions of its
members and partners.

OUR TEAM

Amaru Bustamante, Co-Chair (Bogota Beautiful)
Chelsea Dodd Coleman, Co-Chair (Bogota Public Library)
Jodie Wu, Secretary (Bogart Memorial Reformed Church)
Adriana Bingen, Treasurer (Bogota Beautiful)
Daniele Fede, Council Representative

Patricia Adriance (Educator)
Bob Calleja (Bogota High School Art Teacher, retired)
Rita Flores (Artist)
Joseph Gallagher (Green Team member & Artist)
Alexander Hernandez (VFW Post 5561)
Lucy Lebron (Healthcare professional)
Stephen Mazzella (Bogota Blog NJ)

OUR PARTNERS

Borough Mayor & Council
Borough Department of Public Works
Borough Environmental Commission
Borough Green Team
Borough Recreation Commission
Borough Rescue Squad

Bogart Memorial Reformed Church
Bogota Beautiful
Bogota Blog NJ
Bogota Board of Education & Schools
Bogota Public Library
Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 5561

ABOUT BOGOTA

The Borough of Bogota, New Jersey is home to an estimated 8,335 residents in Bergen County. Founded in 1894 and smaller than one square mile, Bogota has a history of deep community connections amid a burgeoning diversity. Here are some key characteristics of the Borough.



18 arts and culture/wellness businesses in Bogota

AGES

19% under 18

69% 25 to 64

12% over 65

DIVERSITY

33% foreign born

47.5% speak a language other than English at home

23% identify as Black, Asian or other

42% identify as Latinx

EDUCATION

13% enrolled in K-12

29% earned a Bachelors degree or higher

HOUSING

2,980 total housing units

32% renter-occupied

34% have a least one child in the household

COMMUTE

30% commute to New York

95% work out of town

INCOME

\$83,517 annual household income

7.6% in poverty



BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ARTS IN BOGOTA

From school plays and talent shows to art displays and community festivals, Bogota has a long history of celebrating arts and culture over its 125 years. CAT aims to instill a cohesiveness to arts and culture activities while expanding cooperation among its member organizations.

Here is a small list of the many activities that have taken place over the years:

- Borough 125th Anniversary Fence Weaving
- Bogota Day community festival
- VFW concerts, Veterans Day essay and speech contests
- Library art gallery, open mic night, craft programs and history lectures
- Bogota Beautiful pop-up art spaces and annual International Potluck Dinner
- Steen School International Nights
- Week of the Arts at elementary schools
- St. Joseph Church Fall festival
- St. Joseph Academy Follies variety show
- Bogart Memorial Church Pottery studio
- Bogota High School plays, spring musicals, talent shows



Borough's 125th Anniversary Fence Weaving, 2019.
Photo courtesy of Bogota Beautiful.



COMMUNITY ANALYSIS

Focus groups, surveys and Facebook polls were used to gather community input to assist the team in analyzing the opportunities and challenges that exist in Bogota.

FOCUS GROUPS

Three focus groups were conducted to collect community input. Despite low attendance in part due to the 2020 pandemic, insights gathered assisted in developing this plan. The audiences for the focus groups included the Bogota Council, its Environmental Commission and Green Team, and the Creative Arts Team. Overall, eleven community members provided feedback through concentrated discussion.

Overwhelmingly, the sense of community and location of Bogota received the highest accolades. Most focus group participants appreciated the small-town atmosphere that allows residents to feel an affinity to their town. Parents and those who grew up in Bogota also cited close connections as an advantage for raising kids in the Borough.

Participants were unanimous in agreeing that a major town strength is its proximity to New York City in one direction and the mountains in the other. Participants reflect on the changing culture of the Borough, one going as far as to label three different “castes”: old Bogotians, longtime

residents and recent arrivals. The conversation often focused on the need to improve inclusion and bring the various segments of the Borough together. With an influx of New Yorkers and renters, some lamented the Bogota of the past; others revered what they consider to be untapped potential to improve the community.

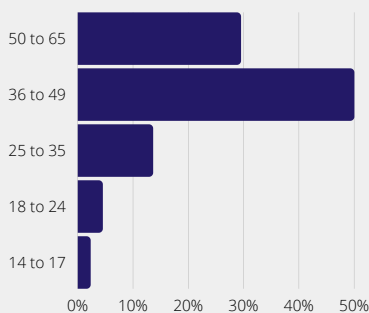
The most important knowledge gathered from the focus groups are the areas needing improvement. Many complaints have been on the radar for years, such as the high taxes, poor storefront aesthetic and little celebration of Bogota’s growing diversity. The 2020 pandemic brought additional issues to light, for instance the need for more usable outdoor space in parks and for outdoor dining. Without improvements in most of these areas, Bogota will continue to be a pass through town and not a destination as many would like it to be.

While the wish list collected from the focus groups is lengthy, much of the creativity and insightful ideas inform this plan’s objectives.

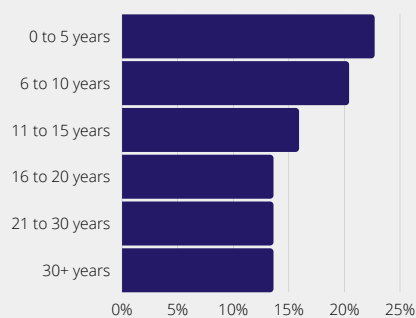
SURVEYS

A survey in English and Spanish was conducted virtually from June through August 2020. Due to the pandemic and heightened screen fatigue, it was a difficult time to gather a high level of community participation in an online survey. The survey was also limited to those with computer or smartphone access, thereby inhibiting responses from many in Bogota's senior community and those on the wrong side of the digital divide. There were unfortunately no responses on the Spanish-language version, although some members of the Latinx community contributed to the 44 responses on the English survey.

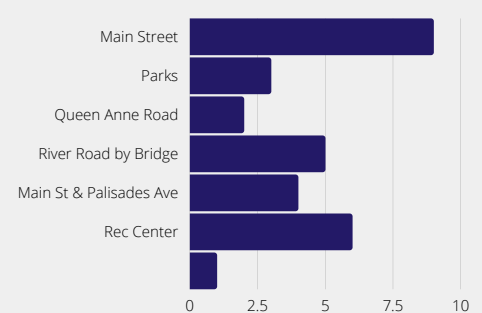
How old are you?



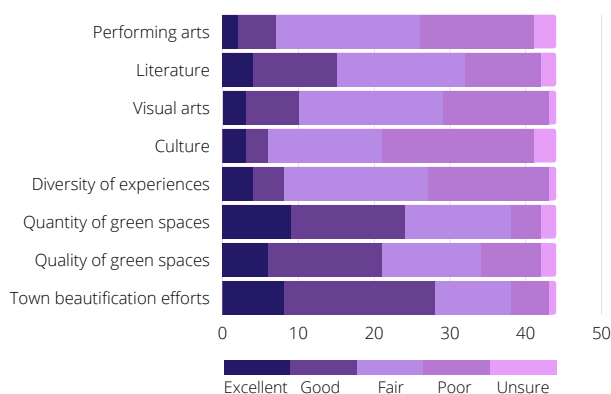
How long have you lived/worked in Bogota?



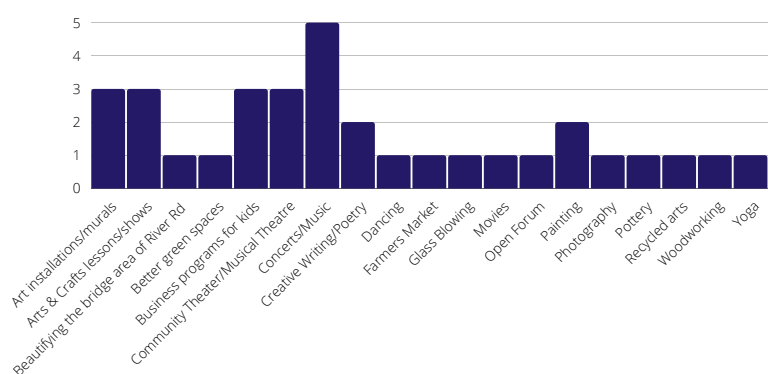
What one area should be improved aesthetically?



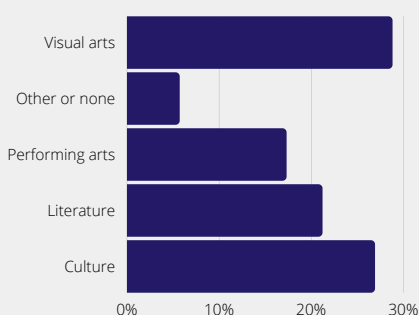
How would you rate Bogota for each of the following?



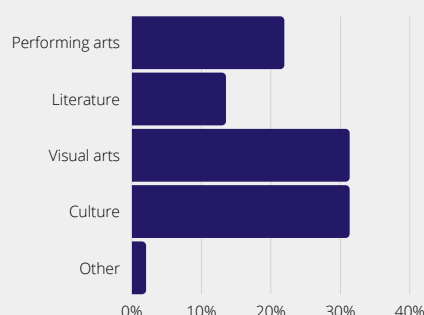
What community programs or projects would you like the Creative Arts Team to consider?



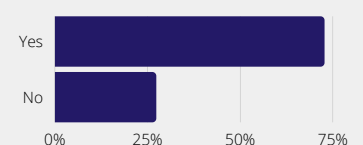
What arts and cultural activities do you currently participate in?



What arts and cultural activities would you like to have better access to participate in?



Are you interested in participating in virtual arts and culture activities?

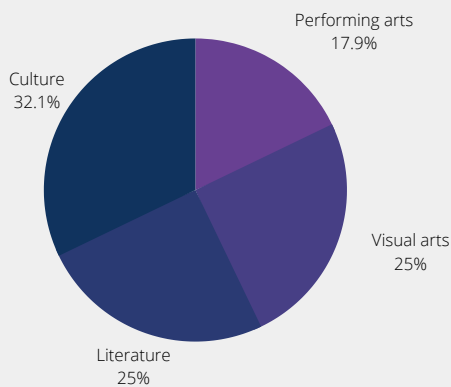




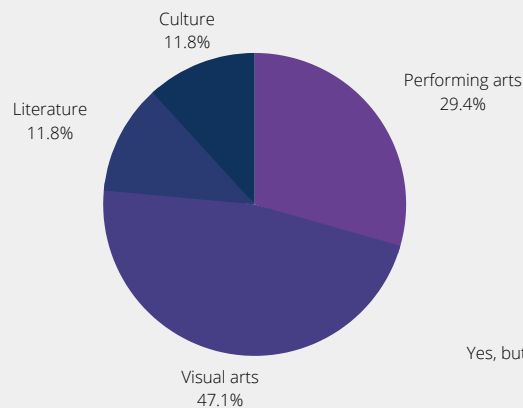
FACEBOOK POLLS

A community Facebook group was used to survey those who are regularly vocal about the Borough. Five polls with invitations to provide additional feedback in the comments. The responses greatly aligned with the focus group and survey results.

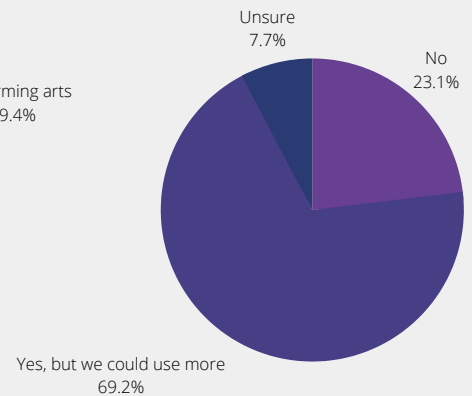
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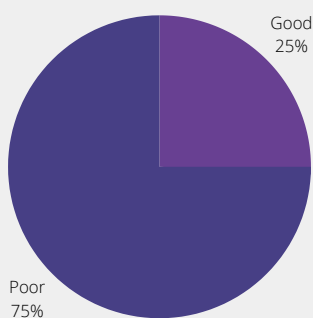
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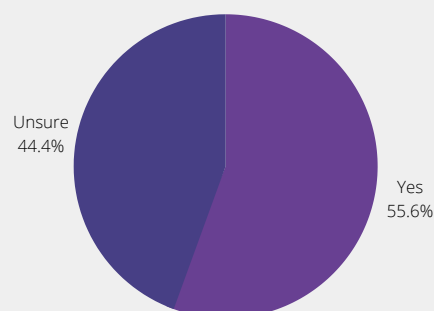
Do you see diversity in the current arts and cultural experiences in Bogota?



What is the quality of community green spaces in Bogota?

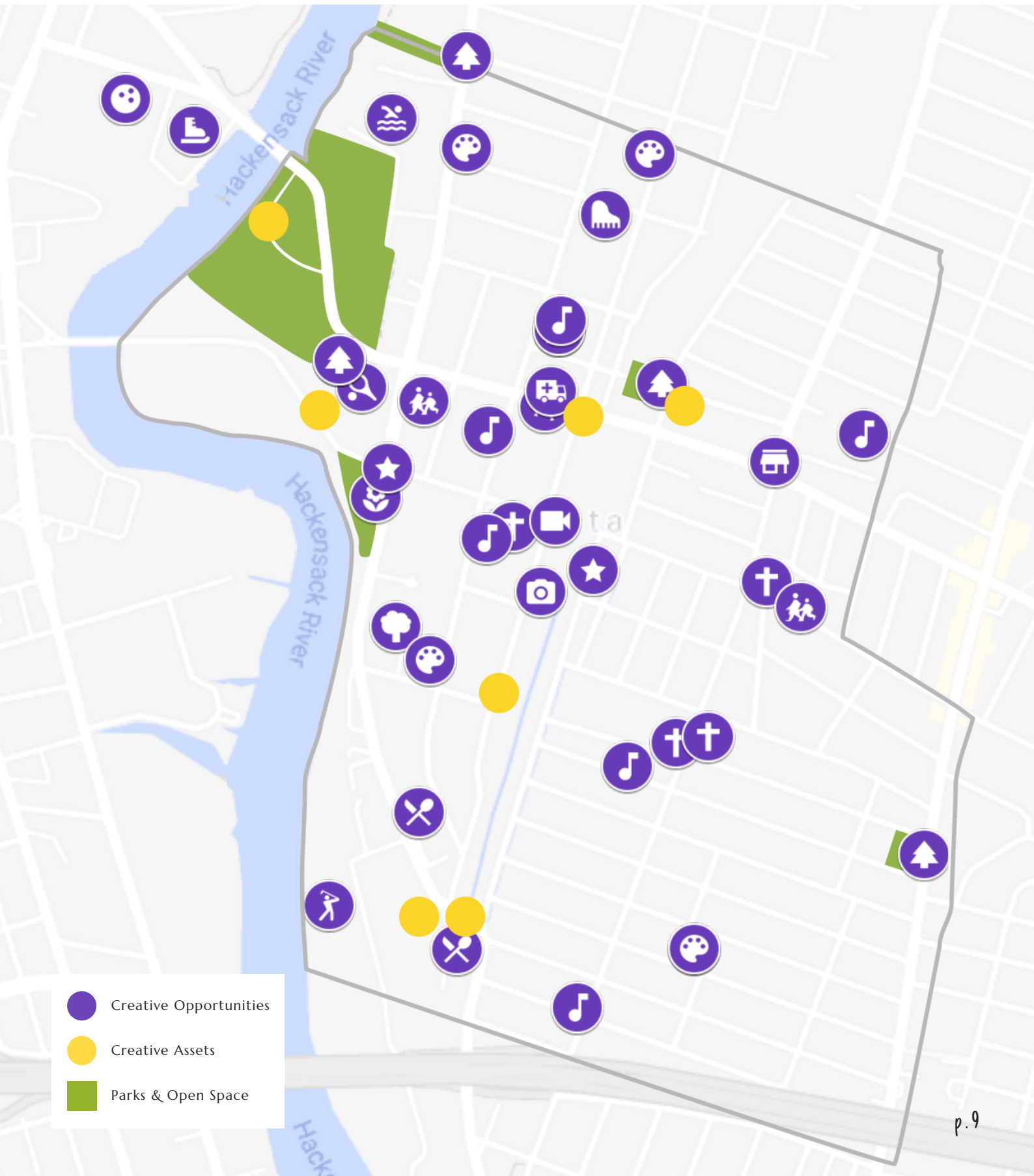


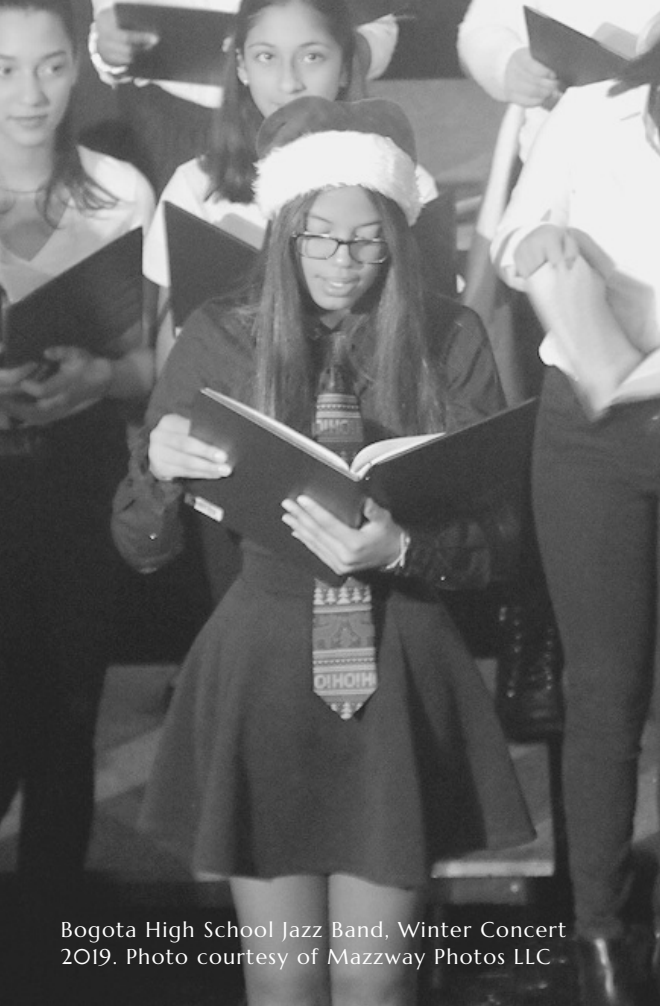
Do you feel some areas of town are neglected in terms of arts, cultural and beautification efforts?



CREATIVE OPPORTUNITIES & ASSETS

The team has identified a variety of creative opportunities and assets that exist in Bogota. This map charts the locations of businesses, organizations and people in town that contribute to arts and culture, or have the capacity to help CAT achieve its vision.





Bogota High School Jazz Band, Winter Concert 2019. Photo courtesy of Mazzway Photos LLC



Bogota High School's production of A Fairy Tale Christmas Carol, 2018. Photo courtesy of Mazzway Photos LLC

CREATIVE PLACEMAKING GOALS

Strategic goals were developed using the team's research. Each has measurables to encourage results. It is important to note that this plan will be reviewed on a biannual basis to remove objectives that are no longer practical and to add those that become necessary due to unforeseen circumstances. This is to ensure the plan continues to remain relevant to the community's needs and desires. The following goals are not listed in any particular order.

- 1 Make Bogota a destination
- 2 Celebrate the performing arts, culture and diversity
- 3 Increase the aesthetic appeal of Bogota
- 4 Secure funding for sustainability of this plan



MAKE BOGOTA A DESTINATION

OBJECTIVE 1.1

Attract local artists to regularly perform or exhibit in town

Measuring Success:

- Host one annual outdoor and/or virtual art event by October 2021
- Investigate opportunities to host open mic nights periodically by January 2022

OBJECTIVE 1.3

Encourage local businesses to expand their marketing efforts and provide education on resources to do so with a primary focus on Bogota's restaurant scene

Measuring Success:

- Sponsor virtual and/or in-person training opportunities by May 2021

OBJECTIVE 1.2

Investigate availability of outdoor space for events and dining

Measuring Success:

- Create a guide detailing park usage opportunities for organizations and the public by June 2021
- Communicate outdoor dining opportunities and regulations to Bogota restaurants by April 2021

OBJECTIVE 1.4

Alleviate parking frustrations for residents and visitors frequenting Bogota businesses

Measuring Success:

- Investigate and endorse necessary parking limit adjustments near all business districts by December 2021
- Develop parking map for business districts by December 2022
- Promote walkability and bikeability by December 2022



CELEBRATE THE PERFORMING ARTS, CULTURE AND DIVERSITY

OBJECTIVE 2.1

Identify locations to host events

Measuring Success:

- Create a guide detailing venue opportunities for organizations and the public by June 2021

OBJECTIVE 2.2

Establish an annual event promoting the diversity of Bogota

Measuring Success:

- Launch the event by December 2023

OBJECTIVE 2.3

Work with the schools to build on already established efforts

Measuring Success:

- Contribute to at least one event at each amenable school annually by December 2025

OBJECTIVE 2.4

Help sustain local artists and musicians

Measuring Success:

- Provide opportunities for artists and musicians to participate in Bogota arts and cultural events on a quarterly basis by December 2024

OBJECTIVE 2.5

Cultivate art walks and/or public art

Measuring Success:

- Develop plans for temporary installations at least once annually by December 2021



INCREASE THE AESTHETIC APPEAL OF BOGOTA

OBJECTIVE 3.1

Encourage businesses to maintain their storefronts

Measuring Success:

- Create recommendation guide for Bogota businesses by December 2024
- Advocate for prompt response by the Code Enforcement Department for any businesses not in compliance beginning by December 2024
- Initiate a Business Recognition Program to acknowledge businesses that meet Code Enforcement criteria and implement sustainable business practices by December 2023

OBJECTIVE 3.2

Invest in clean-up and beautification projects for unattractive and/or dilapidated areas

Measuring Success:

- Research and create plans for one area each year beginning in 2022. Areas considered a priority include: Main Street, River Road by the railroad bridge, Queen Anne Road and West Ft. Lee Road



SECURE FUNDING FOR SUSTAINABILITY OF THIS PLAN

OBJECTIVE 4.1

Identify grant opportunities

Measuring Success:

- Maintain a calendar of grant opportunities beginning March 2021

OBJECTIVE 4.2

Identify top funding needs requiring Borough financial support

Measuring Success:

- Finalize needs prior to the annual Council budget meeting beginning in 2022



bogotacreativearts.org