

MassAve*Next*

Arts, Culture, and Experience Workshop

September 14th, 2026



...what's *next*?

Intro + Outline

1

Where We Are in Process (5 Min)

Discovery is complete — Opportunity I.D. is underway

2

Engagement Recap (10 Min)

What We've Heard Related to Arts and Experience

3

Arts, Culture, and Experience Rationale (15 min)

Why is AC+E a framework?

4

Arts, Culture, and Experience Roundtable (1 hr)

Some ideas, your thoughts on them



8 months into a
12-month plan

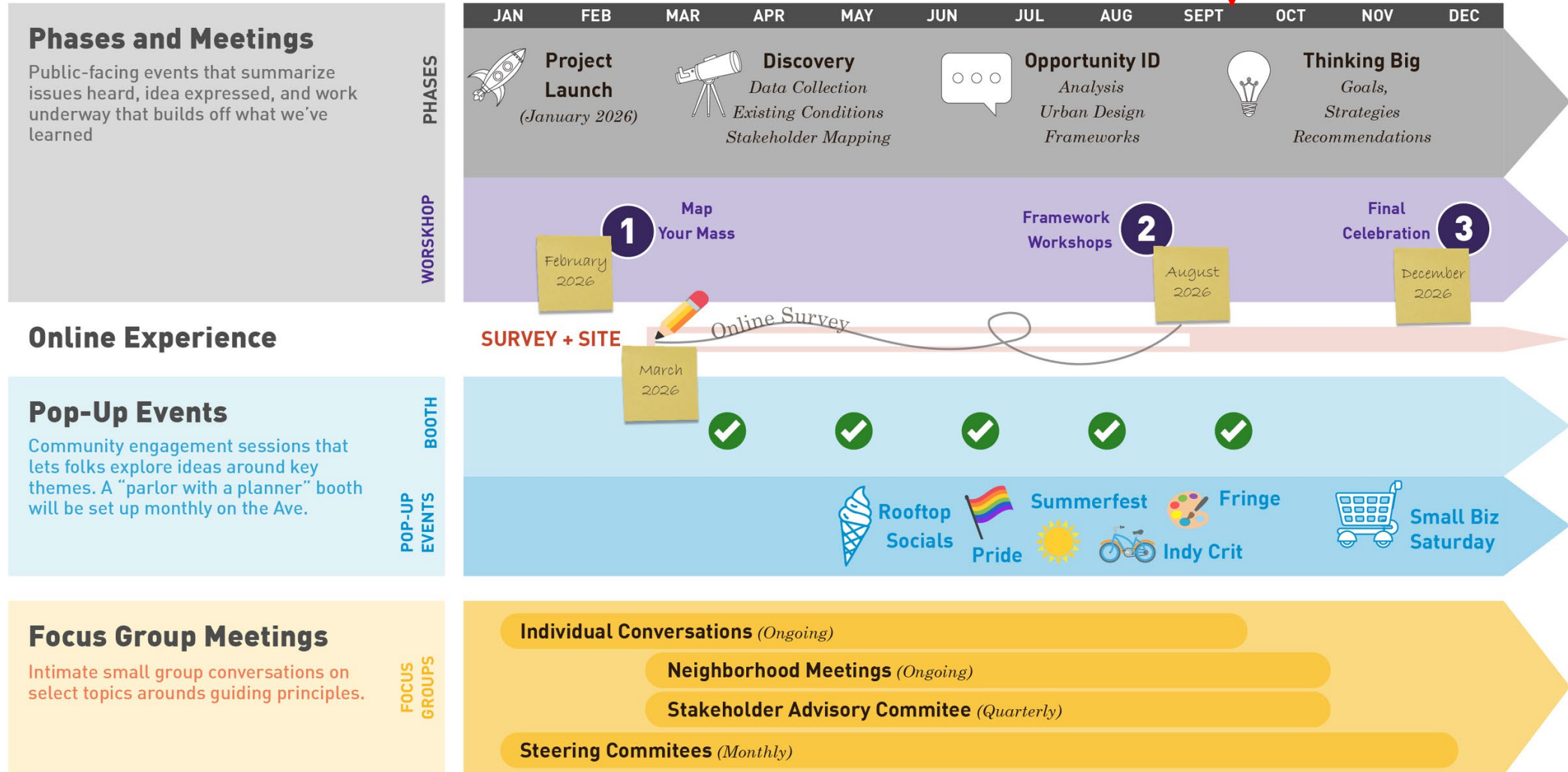
Final report:
Dec 2026

Study Area

Mass Ave Cultural Arts District



Where We've Been



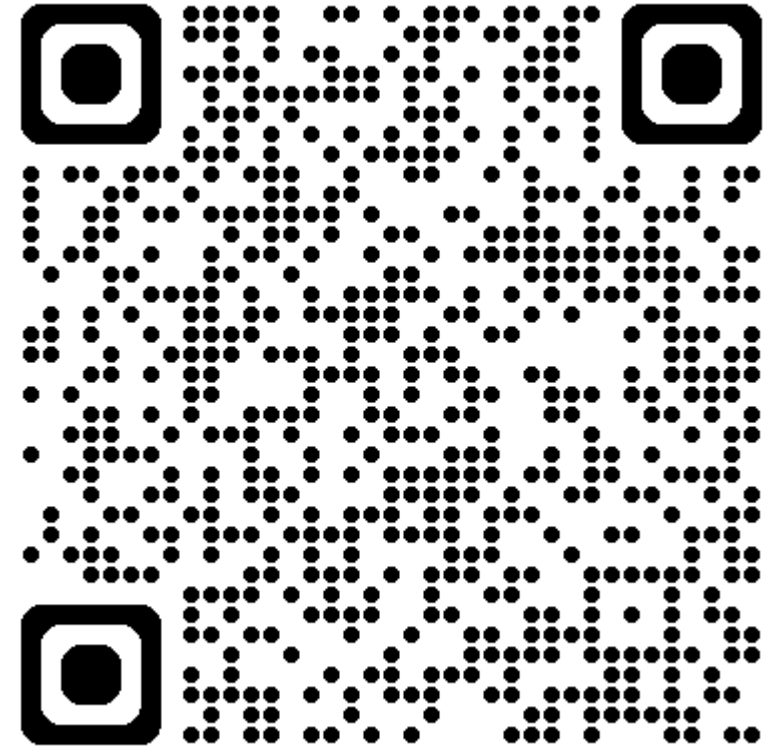
Strategic Framework

Where We Are in the Process



Map-Based survey

Give us your feedback!



Land Use Workshop

District Should:

- Be respectful of historic districts
- Think carefully of places outside just Mass Ave
- Prioritize corner lots and infill development
- Think about ways to convene development capital
- Be a development partner?

Connectivity Workshop

District Should:

- Improve connections on district boundaries to outlying neighborhoods (Ohio St, Fort Wayne Ave, College, Park came up)
- The interstate should offer a green “loop” connecting Monon with Lockerbie
- Vermont St could become a “neighborway” connector

Open Space and Nodes Workshop

District Should:

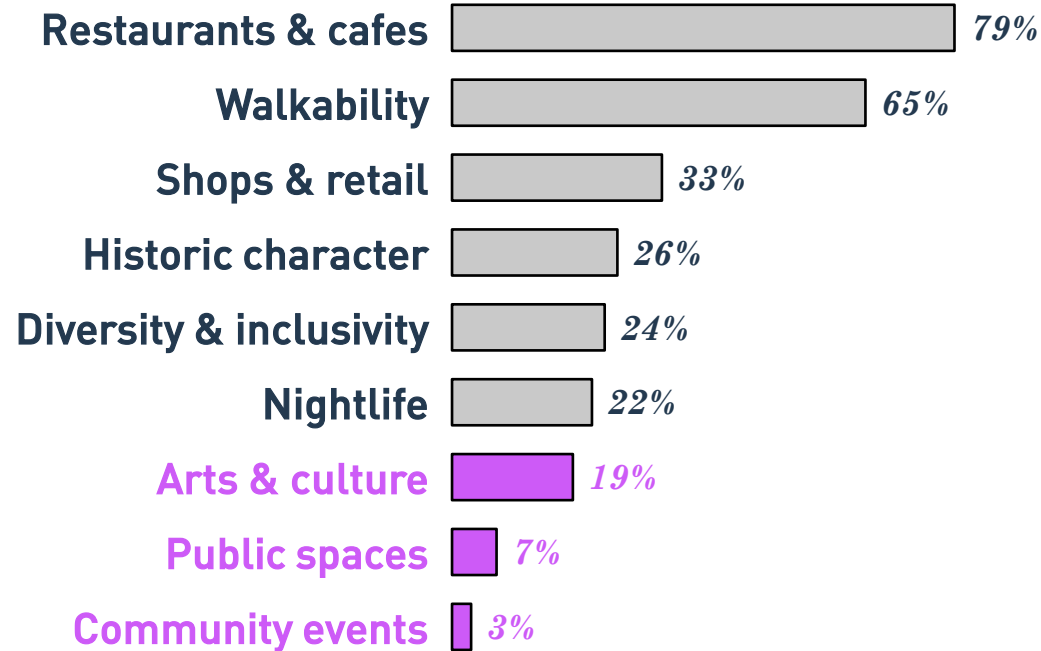
- Create “emerald necklace” along Interstate connecting Lockerbie with Monon
- Create a network of pocket parks that allow all residents to be within a 5 minute walk to parkspace.
- Create anchor recreation destinations for daily programmatic enjoyment

...questions?

**Brief analysis of what
we've heard related to
arts, culture, and
experience...**

Why Arts & Experience? *The Brand Outruns the Experience*

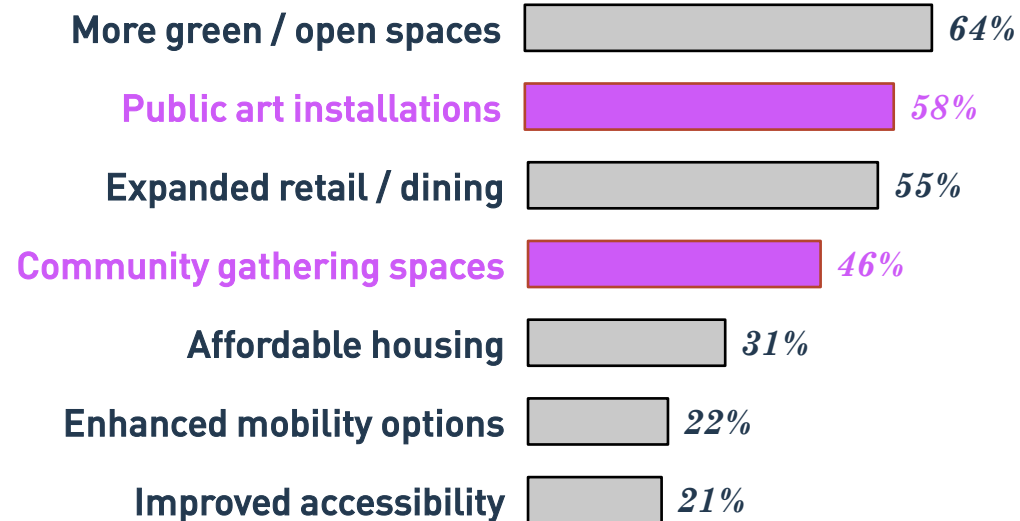
What Do You Love Most About Mass Ave? — Select up to 3 (% of respondents)



Restaurants and walkability define the experience today. In a Cultural Arts District, arts & culture ranks 7th of 9.

Why Arts & Experience? *What People Want More of*

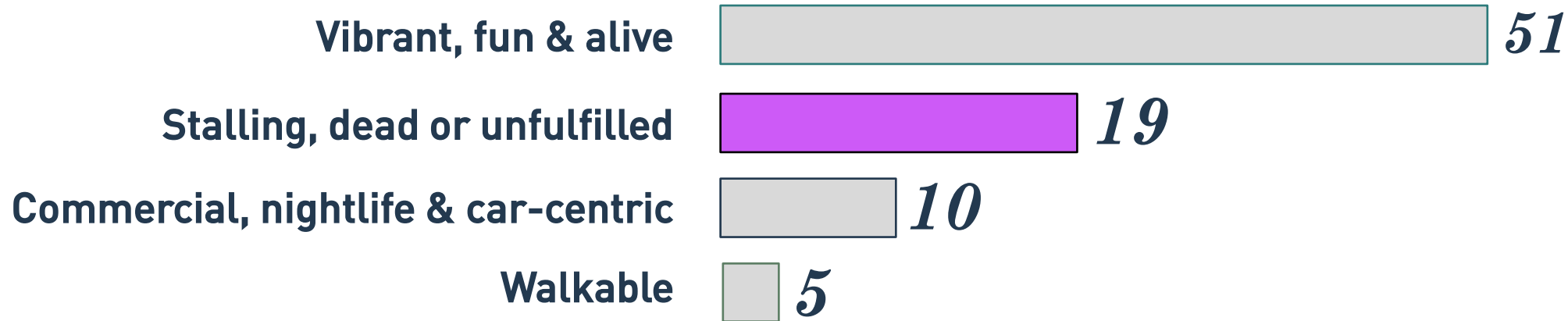
What Do You Love Most About Mass Ave? — Select up to 3 (% of respondents)



Public art is the #2 ask and gathering spaces #4. The experiences people want more of are the ones the “cultural district” moniker already promises.

Why Arts & Experience? *Mass Ave Today, in one word*

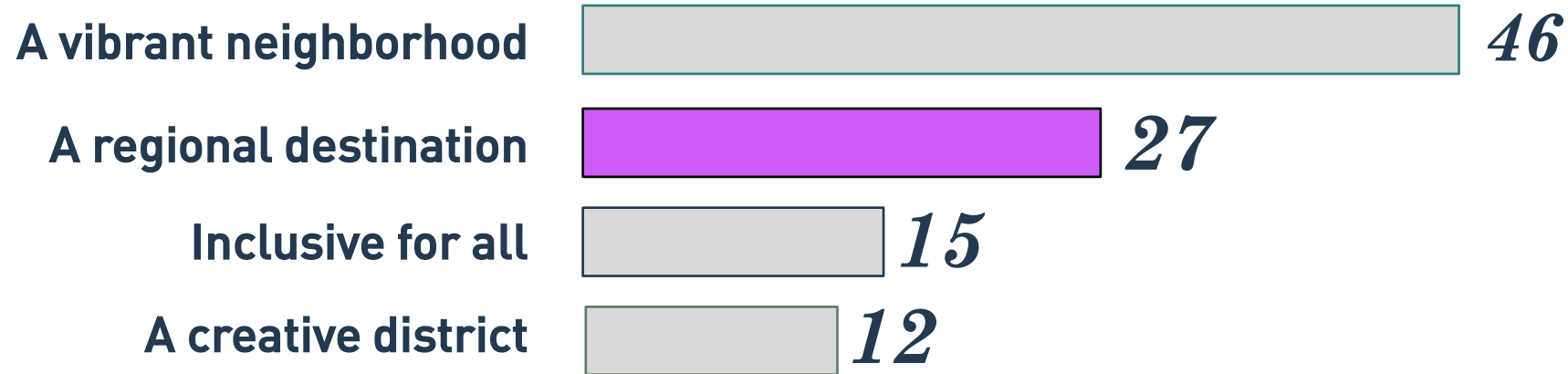
How Would You Describe Mass Ave Today? — Open-ended, coded by theme (# of mentions)



“Vibrant” leads but more than one in five describe Mass Ave as stalling, dead, or short of its potential.

What Should Mass Ave Be Known For?

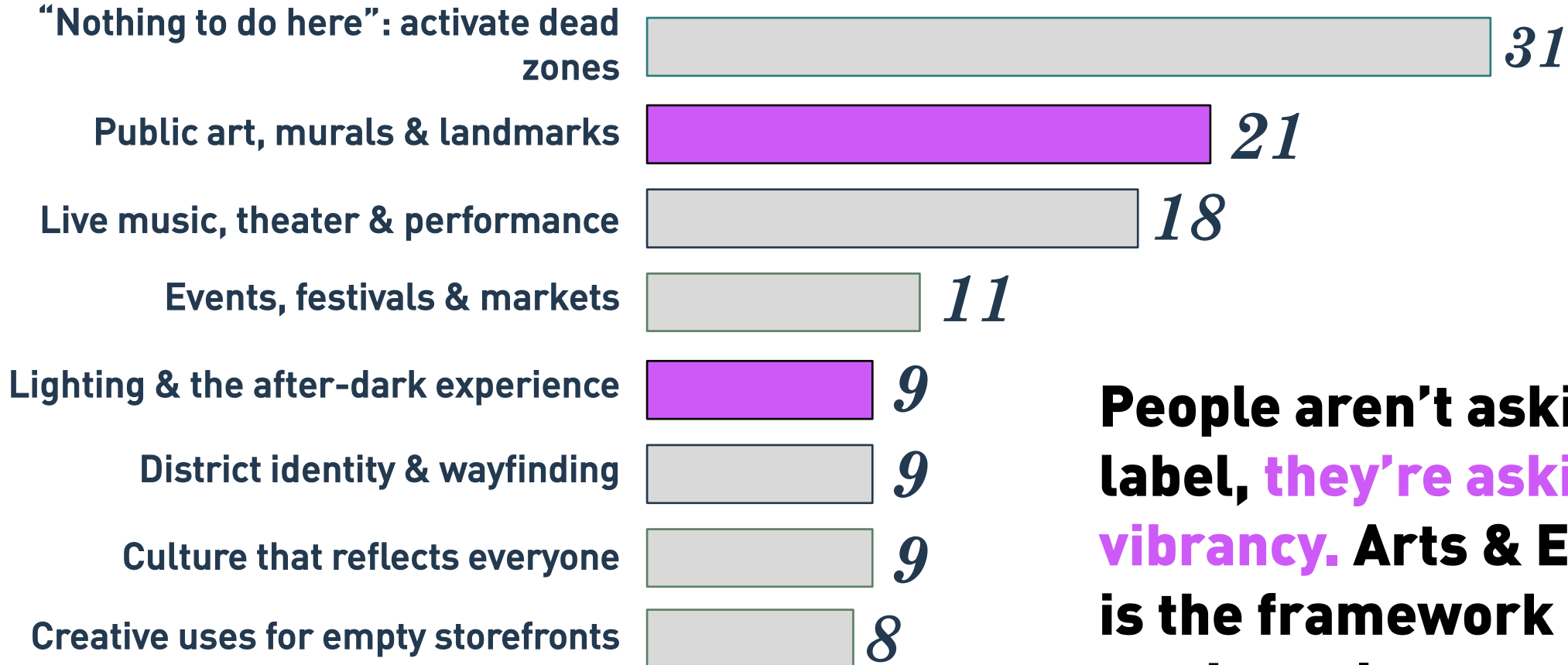
By 2036, Mass Ave Should Be Known As... — Single choice (% of respondents)



People aren't asking for the label, they're asking for vibrancy. Arts & Experience is the framework that produces it.

Why Arts, Culture & Experience? *In Your Own Words*

Arts & Experience-Related Comments Across 524 Comments and Pins (# of mentions)



People aren't asking for the label, they're asking for vibrancy. Arts & Experience is the framework that produces it.

Why Arts, Culture, and Experience? *In Your Own Words*



“Actually have more ‘Arts’ vs restaurants.”

“Bougie. In the 90s I would have said artsy and cool.”

“...a million things happening annually and NOTHING to do.”

“IndyFringe is one of the few remaining venues that make this feel like an ‘Arts + Culture’ district, not a ‘bar and restaurant’ district.”

“A pop-up art space is 100x better than an empty storefront.”

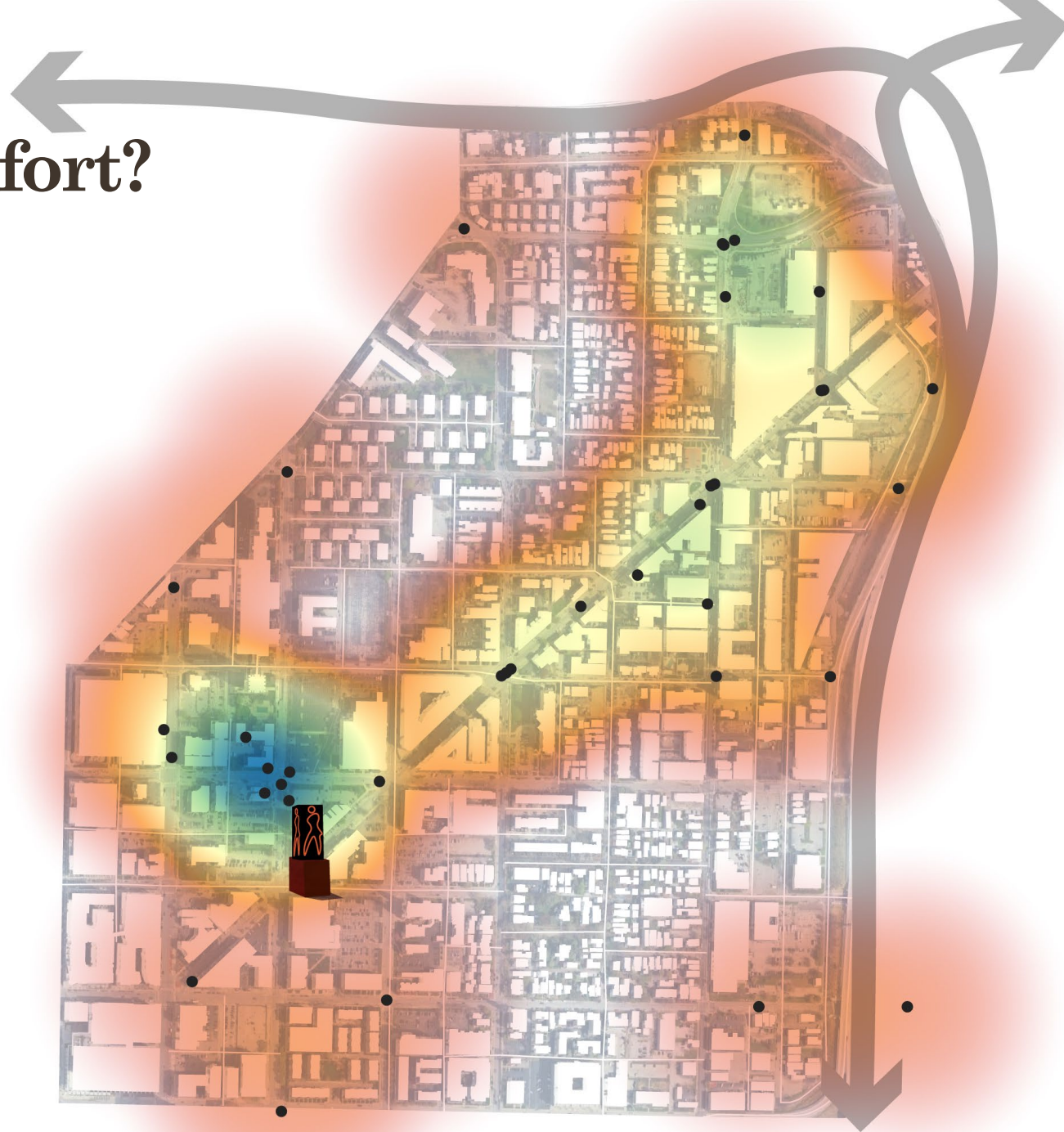
AirBnB Locations

Short term rentals are concentrated in historic neighborhoods meaning visitors have to walk or rideshare to amenities



Where Do You Experience Discomfort?

**The Marathon station
and surrounding
shelters come up as a
red flag for visitors.**



Total Crime

- (less reported crime)



+ (more reported crime)



Source: Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department incident reports via IndyGIS, exported May 15, 2026. Reported incidents (not victimization or rates) within the Mass Ave Cultural Arts District, January 2 – May 14, 2026 (n = 410)

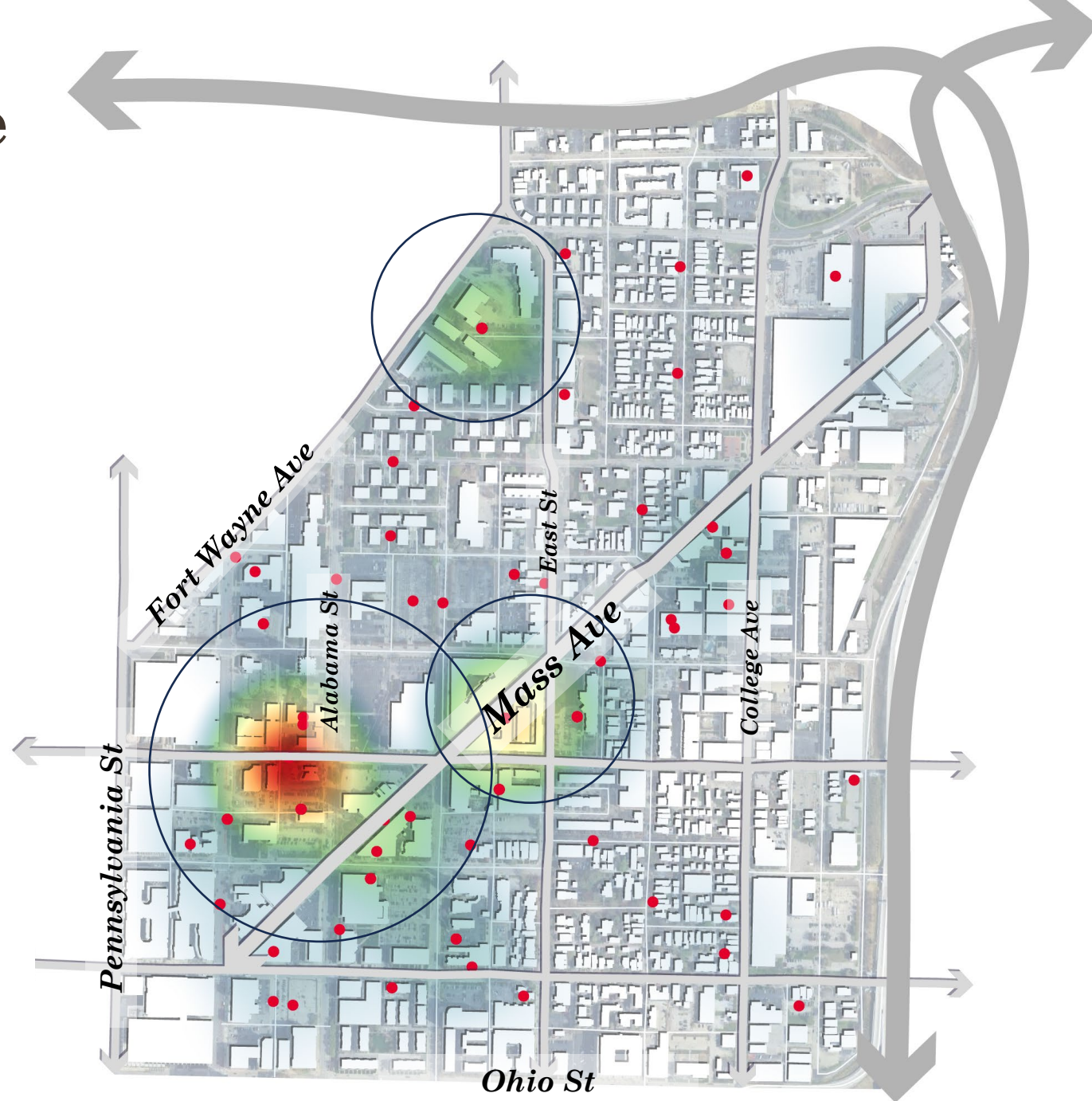
Nonviolent Crime

- (less reported crime)



+ (more reported crime)

Source: Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department incident reports via IndyGIS, exported May 15, 2026. Reported incidents (not victimization or rates) within the Mass Ave Cultural Arts District, January 2 – May 14, 2026 (n = 410)



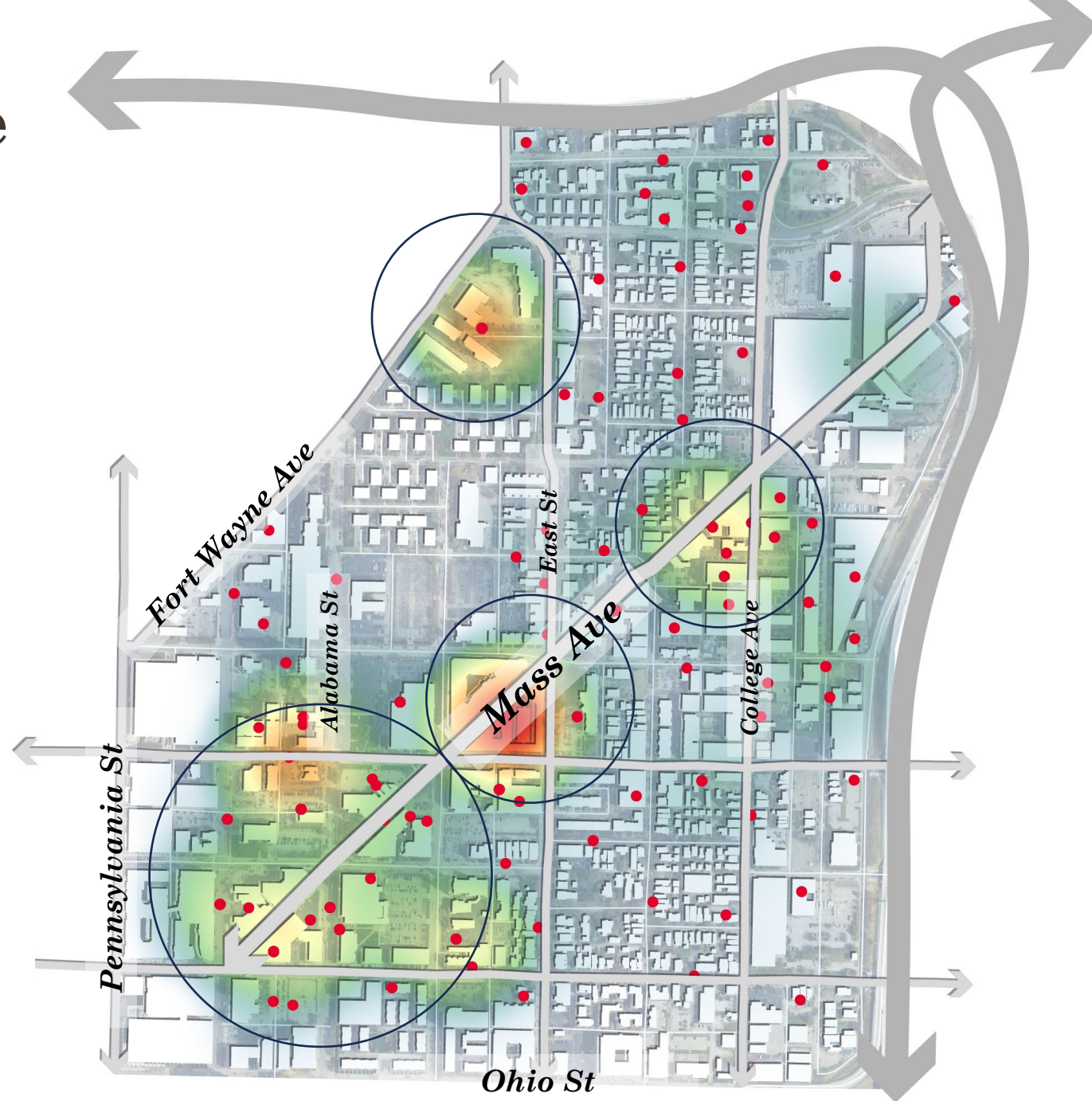
Nonviolent Crime

- (less reported crime)



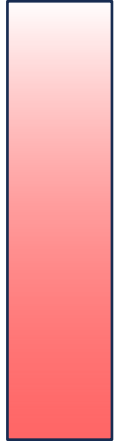
+ (more reported crime)

Source: Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department incident reports via IndyGIS, exported May 15, 2026. Reported incidents (not victimization or rates) within the Mass Ave Cultural Arts District, January 2 – May 14, 2026 (n = 410)



Urban Amenities

- (less amenities)



+ (more amenities)

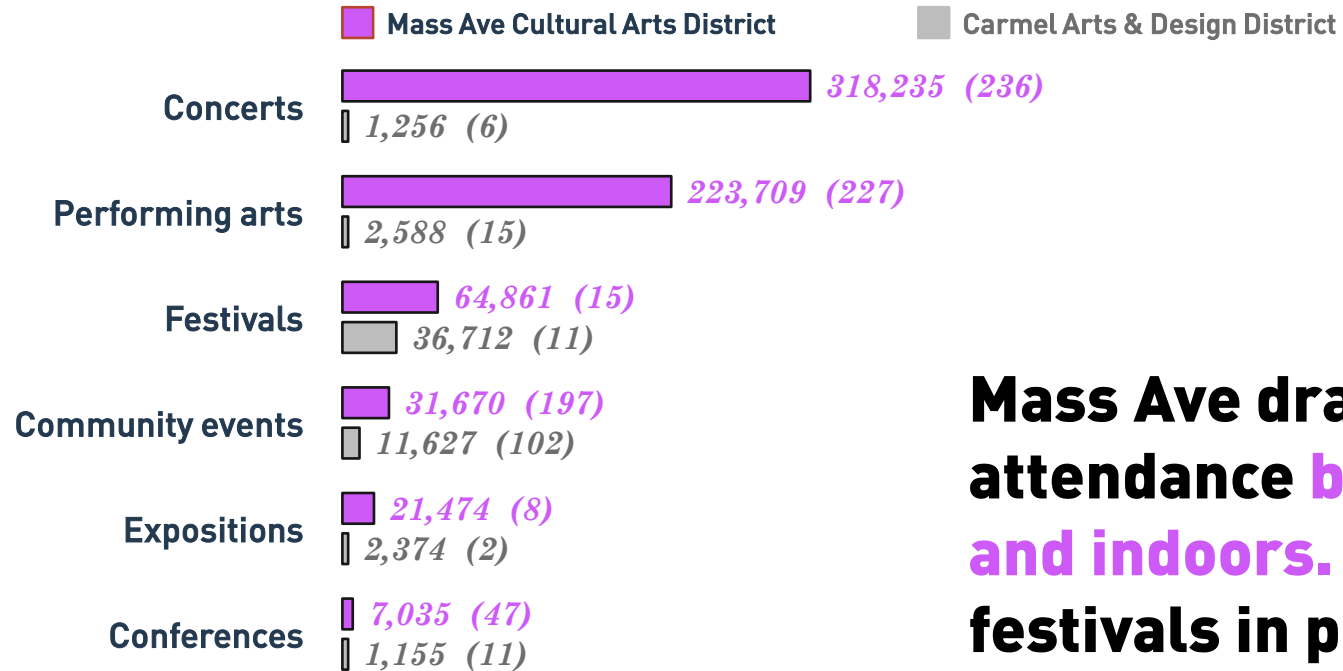
OpenStreetMap, the community-maintained map database, covering everyday destinations from cafés and theaters to libraries and pharmacies..



Current Activity



Event Attendance by Type, 2025 — Mass Ave vs. Carmel (Placer.ai; attendees, events in parentheses)



Mass Ave draws 12× Carmel’s event attendance but 81% of it is ticketed and indoors. Two-thirds of Carmel’s is festivals in public space.

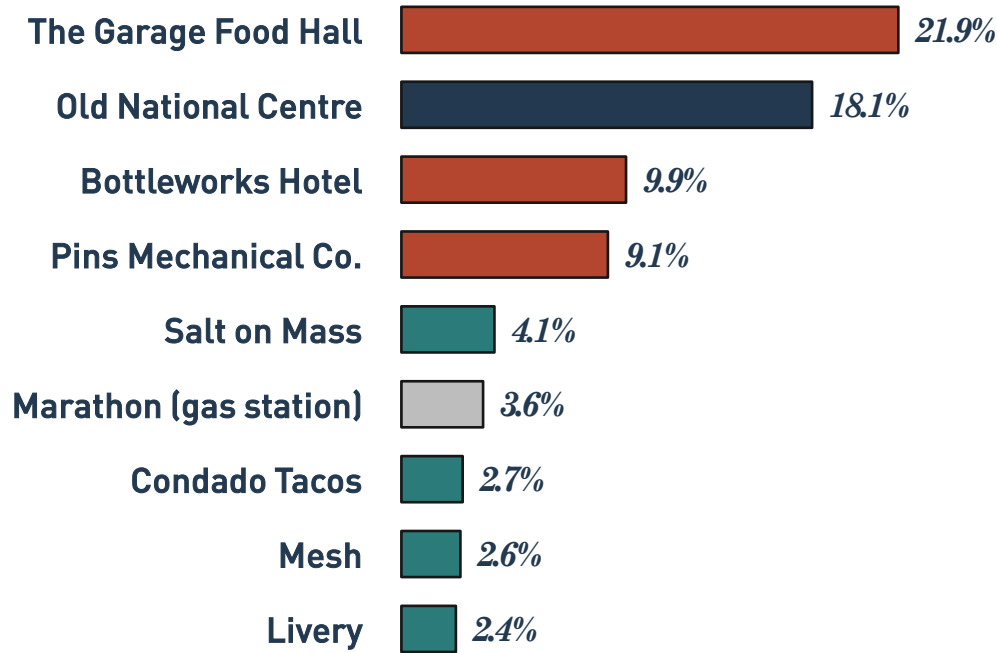
Total: 732 events/667,202 attendees vs. 148 events/55,812 attendees

Placer.ai Market Events reports, Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2025, for the Mass Ave Cultural Arts District and Carmel Arts and Design District market polygons; attendance is Placer’s modeled estimate per event. Sports games omitted (2 events / 218 attendees vs. 1 / 100). All bars share one scale.

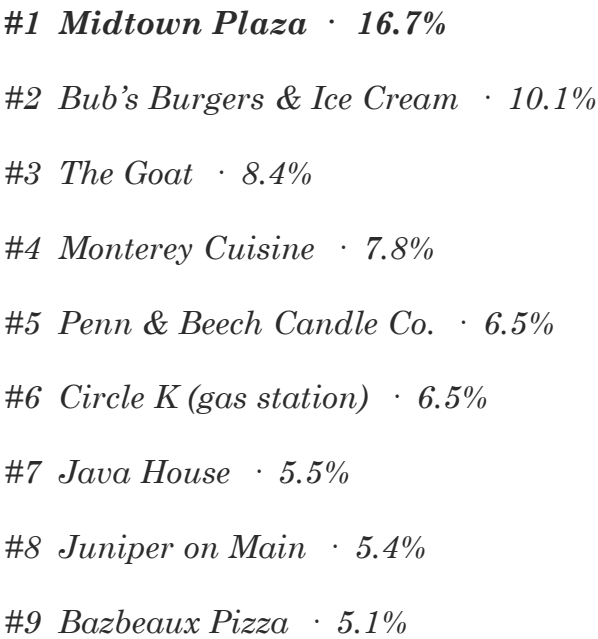
Current Activity

Visitors' Top Places, 2025 — Share of District Visitors Who Stopped There (Placer.ai)

MASS AVE — TOP PLACES



CARMEL — SAME RANK



■ Bottleworks District (north end) ■ Old National Centre (ticketed venue) ■ Historic Mass Ave spine

Placer.ai Market Visitors reports, Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2025, audience type = inbound visitor. Visits and visitors are Placer's modeled estimates from mobile location data; YoY compares to Jan 1 – Dec 31, 2024. Percentages = share of the district's visitors observed at each place; a visitor can be counted at several places. Duplicate "full site" listings for gas stations omitted.

Four anchors at Mass ends capture visitors. The spine has inconsistent activity. Carmel's #1 draw is a central public plaza.

What is a district framework?

An urban design framework organizes key challenges into actionable scenarios and strategies guided by a unifying idea (e.g. “Arts, Culture, and Experience”)

Place Frameworks

How the Themes Become Site-Specific

Land Use

Infill, housing mix, and ground-floor activation — targeting the parcels where value-per-acre lags the district.

Connections

Intersections, trails, links, and making movement through the district as good as the destination.

Open Space

How do we convert underused land into the commons residents asked for?

Arts, Culture + Experience

Cultural folkways and the places that produce it, public art and programming, understanding where existing activity occurs and where future opportunity lay

**How does a district
remain a cultural
hub?**

Emerging Arts, Culture, and Experience Framework



Anchors

Institutions and Venues



Canvas

A permanent art layer



Calendar

Programming



Commons

The economic platform

The framework includes ideas for Anchors, the **Canvas**, the **Calendar**, and the **Commons** to connect the district as a necklace of recreation.



Anchors
Institutions and Venues



Idea 1

“Mass Ave Cultural Center”

A music-and-artist-forward cultural center built through a partnership with local investors and business owners; a production home base and the district's programming engine. Site TBD



Idea 2

“Live Music as Catalyst”

Treat live music as the district's signature experience: a small-venue strategy (ala the Chatterbox), a busking and pop-up performance permit, and music woven into walks, markets, and park programming



Idea 3

“Museum Without Walls”

Pop-up exhibit zones where regional institutions stage satellite pieces on the Ave *(like a 3D printed mammoth skeleton from the State Museum, a Newfields LOVE-style loan)*. Reciprocal partnerships that bring collections into the district rather than asking people to leave it



Anchors
Institutions and Venues



Idea 4

“Dress Up Davlan”

A management and programming model for Davlan Park (small performances, gatherings, markets) that can create a Great Public Space for the district



Canvas
A permanent art layer



Idea 5

“Interactive & Immersive Art Program”

Blink Cincinnati is the precedent; a rotating program of immersive pieces in vacant storefronts and pop-up areas. Interactive sidewalk projectors plus temporary projection-mapped façades



Canvas
A permanent art layer



Idea 6

“Light the Ave”

A district street lighting plan: canopy and tree lighting, façade uplighting, alley lighting, and lit art to reinforce the cultural identity.



Canvas
A permanent art layer

Idea 7

“Block-by-Block Themes”

Each block carries a distinct identity expressed through colorful crosswalks, banners, planters, and art, with the crosswalk as the ground-plane signature.



Canvas
A permanent art layer



Idea 8

“Activated Alleys”

Alleys as galleries and micro-venues: murals, string lighting, small stages, vendor nooks, and after-hours programming.



Canvas
A permanent art layer



Idea 9

“Mass Ave Virtual Wayfinding”

Develop art, history, and architectural digital wayfinding, tours, and signage. For example a sign on a building can link to video or text or VR describing its past, its architectural significance, etc.



Canvas
A permanent art layer



Idea 10

“Infrastructure as Art”

The built environment of the districts reads as one with a congruent toolkit of bike racks, bollards, seating that is replicated across the district



*Calendar
Programming*

Idea 11

“Culture Walks”

Recurring merchant-supported arts walks with spring and fall editions; Goulding & Wood Organ Builders as an open-studio/organ demonstration stop, galleries and studios as the spine.



*Calendar
Programming*

Idea 12

“Merry Mile, Year Round”

Extend the holiday model into a year-round window and merchant activation program: seasonal window competitions, storefront art, merchant-led micro-events.



*Calendar
Programming*



Idea 13

“Main Street of Downtown”

Position Mass Ave as the city's parade and festival street with a signature calendar: Summerfest, Fourth of July parade, Culture Walks, Winter Wanderland, parades, and Davlan and University Park as staging grounds



Idea 14

“Kiosks, Stalls & Restrooms”

Permanent kiosk and vendor stalls with public restrooms and a visitor center, on the Washington Park (OTR) model; University Park and the polygon plaza as candidate sites



Commons
The economic platform



Idea 15

“Tiny Sheds / Incubator Stalls”

Micro-retail sheds for entry-level entrepreneurs and artists on underused lots and plazas, on rotating short leases



Commons
The economic platform



Idea 16

“Corner-Lot Markets & Merchant Fairs”

Recurring markets and fairs on corner lots and surface parking, with a district vendor program



Commons
The economic platform



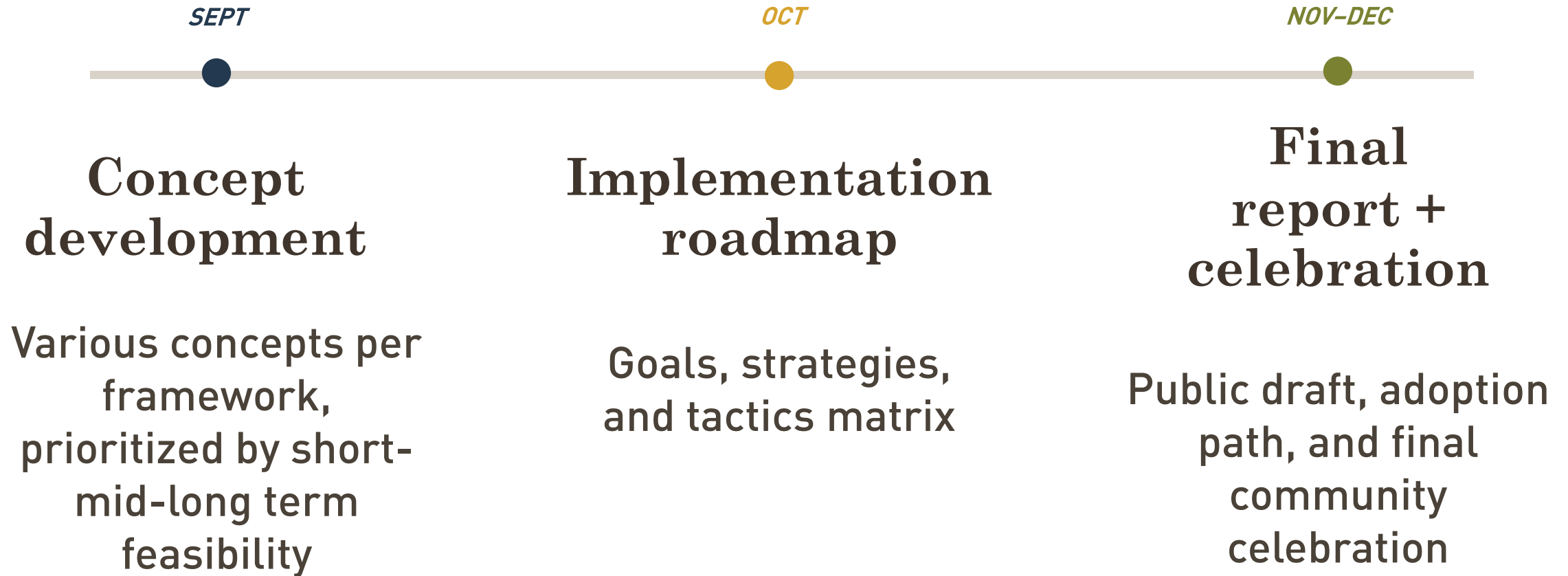
Idea 17

“Café Culture / Parklet Patios”

**Incremental buyouts of on-street stalls for patios as
the everyday experience layer**

What's Next

Sept – December 2026



Mark your Calendar!

Upcoming Workshops

Advisory Council Meeting – Thursday, Sept 17, 3:30 PM



Mass Ave Next Vision Plan

Arts, Culture, and Experience Workshop 8/12/2026

Thank you!

next.massaveindy.org

...what's **next**?