

# PLACEMAKING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Tuesday, January 20, 2026  
9:00 AM

## DTLB Alliance Conference Room

100 W Broadway, Suite 235  
Long Beach, CA 90802

**Present:** Solimar Salas, Max Beach, Jitka Dekojova, Nick Russo, Jason Gallup, Stuart Takehara, Ellyse Steindorff

**Absent:** Samantha Mehlinger, Katie Greenler

**DTLB Alliance Staff:** Rodrigo Rodarte, Koda Strider

**Guests:** N/A

1. Call to Order – Solimar Salas, Chair.  
[Meeting Presentation](#). Called to order at 9:03 AM.
2. **ACTION: Approval of Minutes from the [December 16, 2025, Placemaking Committee Meeting.](#)**  
**MOTION: 1<sup>st</sup>: Beach; 2<sup>nd</sup>: Dekojova.**  
**VOTE: None opposed. 1 abstention. Motion passes.**
3. Staff Report – Rodrigo Rodarte, Senior Placemaking & Activations Manager
  - a. Budget Overview
    - i. The committee is currently slightly under budget for the year, though some pending holiday-related expenses may still come in.
    - ii. Additional funds are allocated for projects such as potential Pine Avenue improvements and a general project that may be moved earlier to support new outdoor furniture.
  - b. Staff update
    - i. Justine Nevarez, the former Events manager, is no longer with the Alliance.
    - ii. The Alliance will soon open hiring for two new roles: an Events Manager and a Placemaking Coordinator.
  - c. Past projects
    - i. January 6<sup>th</sup> Paws on the Promenade
      1. Large turnout, no theme, sponsored by Furball Fitness.
    - ii. January 10<sup>th</sup> Friends of Lincoln Park Cleanup
      1. Good turnout of around 15 people who collected a large pile of trash.
    - iii. January 19<sup>th</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> Street Planting Day
      1. About 30 volunteers helped repaint 1<sup>st</sup> Street planters in a coastal theme and install native coastal plants, along with litter cleanup and minor beautification.
      2. Ongoing plant maintenance and watering will be handled by the Clean & Safe team using operations budget funds.
4. 2025/26 Projects Discussion
  - a. Walls
    - i. Committee plans to launch a community call for wall submissions for future murals, with a tentative ~2-week response window before reviewing top candidates.



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## MEMBERS

Solimar Salas, Chair

Samantha Mehlinger, V. Chair

Max Beach

Jitka Dekojova

Katie Greenler

Nick Russo

Jason Gallup

Stuart Takehara

Ellyse Steindorff

## STAFF:

Rodrigo Rodarte  
Senior Placemaking &  
Activations Manager

Koda Strider  
Administrative Services  
Coordinator

James A. Ahumada  
Sr. Vice President & Deputy  
CEO

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- ii. Tools like CoStar and Salesforce may help identify property owners when permission is needed for proposed mural sites.
    - iii. Emphasis was placed on encouraging community suggestions and participation in identifying potential mural locations.
  - b. LB Lights
    - i. The lights installation project is currently in fabrication and expected to be installed on the Promenade by early April, ahead of the Acura Grand Prix and that month's Art Walk.
  - c. Nature Walk
    - i. Team members are gathering images, refining species graphics, and preparing final design specs so cost quotes and vendor options can be reviewed at the next meeting.
    - ii. Coordination with the Alliance will help confirm vendors, budget fit, and next steps toward production.
- 5. Old Business
  - a. The Alliance may highlight the North Pine mural again on social media to build momentum for the walls program, including possibly bringing the artist back to add a signature or program branding.
  - b. Members discussed ways to encourage property owners to participate such as visibility, promotion, and recognition for donating wall space.
  - c. A recent case at Leo's Mexican Grill was shared where a mural was painted over after graffiti and code-enforcement pressure, highlighting risks when maintenance responsibility and artist contact info are unclear.
  - d. Committee noted the importance of clearly defining mural upkeep responsibility in agreements and recognizing limits compared with established programs like Long Beach Walls.
  - e. Protective anti-graffiti coatings we discussed but can be costly; practical steps like adding identifying tags/contact info and placing murals higher up were suggested to reduce issues.
  - f. Ideas included creating a public art database/map, improving communication with property owners, and possibly exploring funding or grant options for mural maintenance in the future.
- 6. New Business
  - a. MOLAA is celebrating their 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year and will be having a party on January 22<sup>nd</sup> as well as celebrations throughout the year.
- 7. Public Comment (three minutes on all non-agenda items)
- 8. Adjournment  
Adjourned at 9:44 AM.

**NEXT PLACEMAKING COMMITTEE MEETING:**

**Tuesday, February 17, 2026**

**9:00 AM**

**Location: DTLB Alliance Conference Room (100 W Broadway, Suite 235)**

***Mission: Cultivate, preserve, and promote a healthy, safe and prosperous Downtown for all***

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