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Dear Lawrence Cultural Arts Commission,

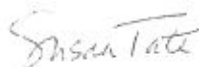
I am writing this letter in support of Better Block Lawrence. This project was initiated by Matt Kleinmann, a KU Professor of Architecture, and his students at the University of Kansas as a way to foster community design collaboration between local artists, arts organizations, and businesses to envision a Lawrence Arts District along 9th Street, between Massachusetts and Pennsylvania streets. Better Block is a grassroots model of neighborhood design activism, and is directly related to the Lawrence Arts Center's focus on creative placemaking as a tool in sustaining resilient communities.

By encouraging local artists and arts organizations to centralize their presence along 9th Street in conjunction with the April 25th Final Fridays event, as well as proposing small scale interventions that have the potential to register a larger shift in how we see our community and its inclusion in public infrastructure, we believe that the Better Block Lawrence event and its documentation can play a catalytic role in facilitating a dialogue between residents, local artists, and civic processes.

Better Block Lawrence is a grassroots approach to community development, and it is our hope that through projects like Better Block Lawrence, we will be able to create greater capacity for residents, artists, designers, community organizers, and others to come together and propose a better future for all. With the envisioning of a Lawrence Cultural Arts District, the Better Block Lawrence finds a welcome partner in the Lawrence Arts Center, and we are excited about the potential such a project can hold, as evidenced by recently successful Better Blocks demonstrated around the country. As an organization, our current efforts with the National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Grant speak to similar themes, and we find the Better Block Lawrence efforts to closely align with our own in how sustainable and social design can shape our environment.

It is with my full enthusiasm that I highly recommend that the Better Block Lawrence project be awarded funding through the Lawrence Cultural Arts Commission Community Art Grant Program.

Sincerely,



Susan Tate

