nodes st. lawrence square

east price hill, cincinnati, oh.







NODES St. Lawrence Square in East Price Hill is a community engagement project rooted in an interdisciplinary collaboration between the University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati & Hamilton County Public Library, and community development corporation Price Hill Will. The DAAP team has joined their expertise in healthy cities, visual identity, communications, and public space design to create a welcoming, wi-fi-connected, outdoor living room at St. Lawrence Square. The St. Lawrence Square NODES is part of a bigger initiative to extend digital library resources into underserved communities with the ambition to reach beyond the library's walls, activate public spaces, and bridge the digital divide in Hamilton County, Ohio.

The Cincinnati Public Library looks to extend its resources beyond its walls and into underserved communities. In East Price Hill, Price Hill Will is invested in activating St. Lawrence Square, a parklet in a culturally diverse neighborhood where the 2020 Census shows that 17% of participating households lack home internet access. In partnership with these organizations, NODES St. Lawrence Square responds to these needs and opportunities by combining a mobile-friendly wi-fi enabled interface, a cohesive visual identity, and a physical installation of urban furniture to welcome the community into the space.

The project builds on relationships the DAAP team fostered over the past year with neighbors, business owners, and community leaders in East Price Hill and around St. Lawrence Square. The visual identity design helped forge a relationship with the broader population around the square via a public bulletin board where the community expressed their wishes and needs for the space. The designers shared these responses through a website, social media, and print materials to amplify the community's voice and foster ownership of the NODE.

These activities and design engagements provided invaluable insights including the community's desire to connect cross-culturally and learn about neighborhood activities. They also revealed that some neighbors were unaware that libraries are free and a tremendous community resource. These insights shaped the design of the physical NODES, an outdoor living room (coming spring 2023) where neighbors can connect to library resources and the internet, meet one another, and be engaged in their community.



DAAP SAID & SOD

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