

including the Mission San Buena Ventura and the Museum of Ventura County. Through the city's Cultural Affairs Division, they created policy and implemented the Art Walk and two street fairs that attract 20,000-30,000 people per event.

In addition, the Artist Village in Santa Ana, which embarked on a partnership with California State University Fullerton to renovate the historic Grand Central Building,

a city-owned property in downtown, for artistic and cultural use. The Artist Village has been instrumental in making the neighborhood attractive, with First Saturday events bringing in 1,000-5,000 visitors.

San Pedro artist Debbie Marr commented that, "What the community needs to hub around is an artists' cultural center, an interactive multi-purpose facility," similar to the one in Santa Ana's Artist Village, which includes grad student apartments, studios, a gallery, a theater, basement classrooms, with retail space like a restaurant and a print shop. Marr suggested that, "the Liberty Auditorium building as a perfect place" for such a facility.

Without the benefit of having an official community Art center—the Eleven/Seven Gallery seems to fill this function by default—what Long Beach has done has created an artistic social network, almost organic in growth. Eleven/Seven's Larry Bott indicated, "We had people sleeping in the doorways 11 years ago, now we don't have a storefront that stays vacant more than a few days."

Even on a Monday in the early afternoon there was foot traffic, people walking in out of the few galleries that were open. Richard Saldana, owner of The Village Grind coffee house on First St., smiled broadly and explained, "It is one of the busiest nights of the month for me, when we have a Second Saturday Art Walk."

San Pedro has sown the seeds to build a vibrant new rededicated downtown, whose growth will over time create a unique arts district with willing support from the City of L.A., the local property owners and forward thinking entrepreneurs who see the value of aesthetics in urban environment.



A typical night at Ray Carofano's 478 Gallery during San Pedro's First Thursday Art Walk—a meeting place for the area's artists and intelligentsia. Above, it is possible to get a little bit of everything in Long Beach's East Village, from the blues to urban dystopian toys.