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# HUFFPOST DETROIT



[Rana Florida](#)

CEO, The Creative Class Group & Best-Selling Author, Upgrade

## A World-Class Global City-Building Forum: The First-Ever in Detroit

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Great cities shape their own narratives and they create new lessons for the world. Though Detroit has been the poster-child for urban distress, it is also charting a new path back.

I grew up in Detroit and spent my early years working for some of its marquee companies and cultural institutions--I have an insider's view into the city's incredible untapped potential. My husband is the urbanist [Richard Florida](#), who has spent a lifetime studying urban transitions. Detroit, he wrote at *The Atlantic's CityLab*, "has the assets needed to underpin economic recovery....Its economy is larger than New Zealand's and not too much smaller than that of Hong Kong or Singapore."

Detroit's downtown is densely-constructed and filled with landmark architecture; its skill-base in design and engineering is legendary and its airport is world-class. Wayne State is a major university in its own right and Ann Arbor's University of Michigan, a tier-one research university, is just a short drive away as is Michigan State University. Add to that the city's pioneering musical history (from jazz and blues to Motown, Electronica and hip-hop); its distinguished cultural institutions like the Detroit Institute of Arts and the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, and most important of all, its diverse and talented population and its legendary grit and determination, and it's clear that the city has the DNA that it needs not just to better itself but to truly thrive.

Three years ago in Detroit Rising, [a five-part video series](#) for *The Atlantic's CityLab*, Richard Florida profiled some of the city's most promising new developments. At the first annual [Create: Detroit](#), by the [Creative Class Group](#) and sponsored by [Rock Ventures](#), he will moderate panels with [city-leaders, city-builders, place-makers, urbanists, and urban journalists](#) from across North America, who will [share what they've learned](#) from their own ventures and observations in Miami, San Francisco, Toronto, New York, Las Vegas, and of course Detroit.

Anchor businesses can help struggling downtowns, but is it a two way street? [Don Katz](#), the founder and CEO of [Audible.com](#), the world's largest seller of downloadable audio books, bet that it was when he moved his company to Newark, New Jersey - and he will answer that and other questions at Create: Detroit. Can one deep pocket help turn a downtown around? Maggie Hsu, the chief of staff of [Tony Hsieh's](#) Las Vegas project, will discuss their efforts in transforming downtown Las Vegas. [Jukay Hsu](#), the founder of the [Coalition for Queens](#), will talk about whether tech is the answer to downtown transformations. "As Detroit reurbanizes and its Creative Class grows, attracting new investment from organizations like Google, Endeavor Global and creative institutions like Brooklyn's Galapagos Art Space are key," says [Director of Cities and Research](#) for the [Creative Class Group](#), [Steven Pedigo](#). "What better place to come together as urbanists and city builders to share best practices for building a creative and more inclusive city."

A feast of ideas for everyone and a workshop for change-agents, [Create: Detroit](#) will have something for everyone who cares about Detroit, and about America's cities in general.

The event takes place on Tuesday, June 30th at the [College for Creative Studies](#) and space is limited. [Tickets are on sale now](#). Supporting partners include, [Shinola](#) and [M1/DTW](#).

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