



*We Are Here!
You Are Here!*

A Public Art Plan for Concord, NC



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Executive Summary

Over the past decade, there has been a growing interest in public art in Concord, N.C., a rapidly growing city just to the northeast of Charlotte. This can be seen in the historical and interpretive projects that have been incorporated into buildings and pedestrian passageways downtown; murals that have been sponsored by city and businesses downtown and surrounding neighborhoods; interpretive sculptures that were recently added along the greenway system; and temporary sculptures that are on display in the neighborhoods around downtown.

This plan is the outgrowth of the work of the City’s Public Art Advisory Committee, which was first established in 2014 with an interest in bringing murals and a temporary sculpture exhibition to the City. The charge of this plan was to look more broadly at what type of public art programming would be most beneficial to the City and at how to fund and manage such a program. It was developed in collaboration with the PAAC and City staff, and through extensive engagement with people throughout Concord. This plan offers a **vision** for how public art can be embedded more deeply in the life of the community, identifies potential projects that the City could take on, outlines processes through which the City can manage public art projects, and shows how the City’s efforts can catalyze resources from the community and the private sector.

Concord’s vision is for public art to be a unifying feature in the City: strengthening Concord’s overall identity, uplifting authentic community stories and resources, and adding beauty and meaning to public places and facilities. To that end, the plan identifies two basic themes for public art to focus on. “**We Are Here!**”

gives voice to the diverse communities in the city, recognizing their presence, affirming their contributions to the life of the city, and strengthening Concord’s social fabric. “**You Are Here!**” strengthens the identity of Concord as seen by others, whether people commuting back and forth to work or people visiting its tourist destinations.

Concord expects to work towards that vision by keeping several **core values** front of mind, including respecting everyone’s creative voice, working inclusively through intentional engagement and collaboration, and operating with accountability and transparency.

The plan outlines a variety of **strategies** that Concord will follow to achieve this vision. These include integrating public art into new and upgraded parks, placing public art at key visual locations (Union Street, Concord-Padgett Regional Airport, roundabouts, other gateways), incorporating public art into the facilities and infrastructure people experience throughout the city (greenways, transit, fire stations), and developing equitable processes for community-initiated projects and murals. The plan also describes how Concord can incorporate the creative traditions and practices of its



Bloom, a tribute mural to The Avett Brothers. Caswell Turner / Cicada Studios. Courtesy L.J. Weslowski/City of Concord.

communities into public art – from encouraging murals and temporary art exhibitions to organizing permanent public art projects that local artists can contribute to. And it presents ideas about how community-based storytelling can be woven into projects throughout the city.

The plan also outlines an **operational framework** for managing public art. The bulk of the work in planning and commissioning public art would be managed by a professional public art manager and a revamped Public Art Commission (PAC), consisting largely of community representatives. The PAC would develop a structured Public Art Work Plan each year, identifying opportunities of the highest priority. At the outset, funding for public art would be allocated each year through the City’s budgeting process, based on requests in the work plan; in the long run, public art would be funded through both dedicated capital funding (budgets of public-facing capital improvements would include allocations for public art) and a continued annual allocation (perhaps based on the population of the city) to support other projects.

Finally, the plan outlines **guidelines** for managing the program and individual projects. Over the years, the field

of public art administration has evolved a variety of best practices for administering local public art programs. The final part of Concord’s public art plan describes how those best practices can be adapted for Concord’s circumstances. Topics include artist selection, community engagement, maintenance and conservation of artworks, accepting donations of public art, deaccessioning artworks from City ownership, and evaluating progress.

Concord’s evolution – from an agricultural community to a bustling city of fabric mills, from an historic Southern courthouse town to a regionally integrated city focused on distribution, manufacturing, tourism and housing for a mobile workforce — is front and center on people’s minds. For Concord, discussions about public art are very much bound up with a public yet introspective conversation about who the city is and what it is going to be. Public art will be part of the process of looking at its history, at its life right now, and at its future at the very same time – of embracing and connecting everyone who has come to live and work in this place, and building something new from their collective spirit.



2022 Concord International Festival.
Courtesy L.J. Weslowski/City of Concord

INTRODUCTION

We Are Here! You Are Here!



Over the past decade, there has been a growing interest in public art in Concord. This interest can be seen in projects all over the city: historical and interpretive artworks installed along the pedestrian passageways off Union Street; murals downtown and on businesses in surrounding neighborhoods; interpretive artworks along the Greenway; temporary sculptures that artists put on display in neighborhoods around downtown; a temporary, community-based artwork in City Hall.

Concord's leaders, and the community at large, have taken notice. They have come to understand that public art can help Concord achieve some of its important goals – strengthening the city's overall identity, uplifting its diverse communities, and adding beauty and meaning to City facilities.



Community public art workshop with Namaste Artists, led by Francene Greene. Courtesy Sarah Gay/City of Concord..

This plan is the outgrowth of the work of the City’s Public Art Advisory Committee, which was first established in 2014 with an interest in bringing murals and a temporary sculpture exhibition downtown. The purpose of this new plan is to gather this energy towards a new vision for how public art can be integrated throughout Concord’s public spaces, and to clearly define what the City’s role should be in working towards this vision, through its own projects and by supporting community initiatives.

The plan sets out a roadmap for the City to expand its support of public art, not only the leadership role that City government can play, but also processes that will support community and private-sector initiatives. It focuses on processes that can result in imaginative and meaningful contributions to the cityscape, and that can engage the city’s creative community as much as possible.

In short, this is Concord’s plan for making public art part of the everyday life of the city.

HOW THIS PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

This plan was developed over the course of a year, starting early in 2022. It was led by consultants Todd W. Bressi and Amina Cooper, supported by City leaders and the Cabarrus Arts Council (CAC), and guided by Concord’s Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC). Sarah Gay, director of the ClearWater Arts Center & Studios, and Council Member Andy Langford (chair of the PAAC), provided ongoing direction. Concord artist Francene Greene assisted with community engagement and Concord resident Tara Bengle conducted 29 field interviews.

The planning process involved foundational research into the City of Concord’s plans, programs, policies and priorities, through review of planning documents and interviews with key City staff. The consulting team also reviewed public art initiatives in ten communities in North Carolina, as well as elsewhere in the country, to provide context for how a city like Concord could evolve its public art activities.

The planning process involved extensive community outreach. The planning team organized an on-line survey from April 8 through June 4, which garnered more than 600 responses. The team engaged the public from a booth at the April Art Walk on Union (with support from the CAC), and followed up with intercept interviews in various city parks to learn more about people’s perceptions of public art in parks.

The team also organized smaller community conversations in a variety of formats, and with focused outreach to Concord’s Black, Latino, South Asian and LGBTQ communities, as well as artists, high school students and homeowners’ associations. These gatherings included five art-making and discussion sessions that Greene convened at ClearWater and elsewhere in the city, and resulted in an artwork, We Are Concord, which was displayed in City Hall in the fall.

In addition, the team conducted interviews with City leaders, past and present — including Council members, the City Manager and department leaders, as well as with representatives of arts, business, economic development and tourism organizations.

The planning team worked closely with the PAAC throughout the project. In a series of monthly meetings,



Community engagement at ArtWalk on Union, April 2022. Courtesy Todd W. Bressi.



Community public art workshop at El Puente Hispano, led by Francene Greene. Courtesy Amina Cooper.

the PAAC provided initial guidance for the planning process and then reviewed the research and engagement findings, recommendations for projects and future governance of the City’s public art efforts, and a draft of the full plan. The team also met with an internal City agency stakeholder group to receive direction early in the process, and then individually with City representatives to review recommendations related to specific City departments and governance processes.

The resulting plan is truly a community effort, reflecting the inspiration and excitement, guidance and strategy received through these different channels of engagement. The hope is that people throughout the city will see their contributions reflected in this plan, and that they will ultimately see their hopes for the city expressed in the public art that is created.

WHERE IS CONCORD HEADING?

The theme of this plan is “We Are Here!, You Are Here!” This theme reflects the underlying spirit of the conversations that led to this plan.

“We Are Here!” expresses the idea that public art should reflect the variety of voices, cultures and histories that exist in the city, making them visible and valued, fostering dialogue and strengthening civic connections. Public art should convey this in shared spaces, like parks and greenways, downtown pedestrian streets, fire station community rooms and transit.

“You are Here!” expresses the idea that public art should warmly greet people who are visiting Concord, whether they are coming downtown for a special evening out; visiting a tourist destination like the outlets or speedway; or simply commuting to work each day. Public art should convey Concord’s welcome, its warmth and the fascinating stories it has to tell to the world.

PROJECTS

This plan focuses on several core initiatives that can guide the city towards its vision for public art.

First, it outlines a process for including public art in the facilities, infrastructure and public spaces that public agencies build and maintain. Over the next few years, this could include the Union Street streetscape project, fire stations, Rider Transit facilities, parks and greenways, and catalytic downtown projects.

Second, it identifies general locations for place markers that welcome people to Concord and anchor important locations in the city’s circulation framework. These can create a sense of progression throughout the city, as well as provide an opportunity for different communities to express their identities.

Finally, it proposes strategies for supporting and catalyzing public art efforts initiated by the community and private developers. These include encouraging murals, streamlining approvals for art installations and clarifying

the Concord Development Ordinance to help developers see how they can use public art to meet the City’s urban design requirements.

PROCESSES

The plan proposes a revised process for Concord’s public art decision-making that is centered on a revamped Public Art Commission and professional city staff.

The reorganized and renamed Public Art Commission (PAC) would be composed of members of the public, providing Council and staff with a more direct opportunity to receive direction on priorities from the community at large. For many projects, Selection Panels assembled by the PAC would advise on the selection of projects and the approval of artist concepts.

Public art activities would be guided by an Annual Work Plan, which would be developed in conjunction with the City’s budget process. Major projects would each be guided by an Individual Project Plan, which would outline details about the process that would be followed for each specific project.

PUBLIC ART IS CONCORD’S STORY!

For Concord, public art will very much be bound up with the ongoing public, yet introspective, conversation about who the city is and what it is going to be. There is hope that public art can embrace, value and reflect the city’s full diversity, especially those who have been overlooked. There is hope that public art can be part of Concord’s process of looking at its history, at its life right now, and at its future at the very same time. And there is hope that public art can send a clear message to everyone who lives in, works in and visits Concord: We Are Here! You Are Here!



Barred Owl, Walter Stanford, Hector Henry Greenway.
Courtesy Sarah Gay/City of Concord.



Community public art workshop with Namaste Artists, led by Francene Greene. Courtesy Amina Cooper.

WHO IS CONCORD?

Tradition & Transition

A public art plan provides an opportunity for a city to pause and look at itself — to ask itself who it is, where it has come from and where it is going. This exploration is important to inform what a city’s priorities for public art are, and how public art can be part of broader conversations that are taking place in the community.

The following portrait of Concord has emerged from the many conversations the consulting team had over the course of the project, as well as a citywide survey. People’s perspectives on Concord are overwhelmingly positive, touching on topics like its small-town, family-friendly feel. The changes the city is experiencing are front of mind, and the geographic, economic and social changes it is experiencing are creating a struggle for its identity. But the conversations indicate a cautious optimism that change will bring better days for Concord, in terms of diversity and opportunity.

Concord City Hall. Courtesy ADW Architects, Jim Graziano/snapWerx LLC.



One of eight mural panels, lining the Union St.–Market Street passageway, that explore themes in Concord's history. Sharon Dowell. *Courtesy L.J. Weslowski/City of Concord.*

CONCORD'S HISTORY

Concord's history is very present in people's minds. Many people are well-versed in the story of Concord's settlement in the colonial era and its evolution from an agricultural town to a mill and textile center, which helped shape the pattern of its historic downtown, its neighborhoods, and its foundational institutions and traditions. People value how this history creates a throughline, particularly regarding the city's current cultural and visual landscape, as well as families who have been in the city for many generations. There is a desire for these histories to remain a part of what grounds Concord's identity.

At the same time, as the textile era fades and its history is being revisited, there is a recognition that there are some histories, such as those of Blacks and Native Americans, that need to be better known, shared more widely, and absorbed into Concord's understanding of who it is and how it got to be. Cabarrus County was established on lands traditionally inhabited by Native Americans, who were pushed out by successive wars. Today, there is a recognition that there are historic institutions and resources (such as Barber Scotia College and old Camp-ground Cemetery), that are at risk of being left behind. There is a concern that these aspects of the city's history are in danger of erasure, and there is a desire to pull them forward, recognize them, and include them in defining Concord's shared identity and vision.

THE NAMING OF CONCORD AND UNION STREET

Concord's origin story is unique and still resonates today. The name "Concord" refers to the peaceful settlement of a dispute between the German Lutherans and Reformed, and Scotch-Irish Presbyterians who settled in the area over where the county seat should be located; the name of Union Street also commemorates this agreement.

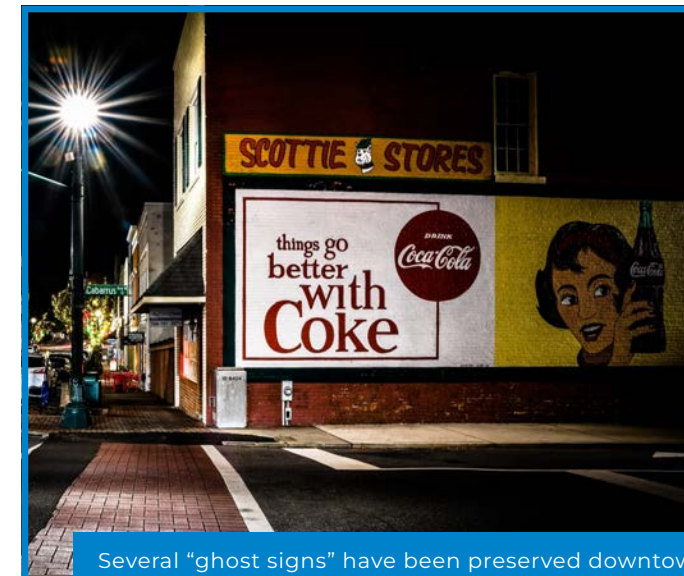
There is hope that this spirit can still live on in the city. As one participant in the planning process put it, "The origin of the name of Concord reflects the diversity of the original inhabitants and the desire to live in harmony despite differing language, religion and traditions. Art should reflect the diversity of our community and should be seen/displayed throughout the community."

A TIME OF CHANGE FOR CONCORD

Concord is also aware that this is a time of change. The city's population has doubled in the last 20 years, mostly because of its rapid expansion from the familiar and historic eastern areas of the city into annexed suburban and rural areas to the west and south.

This geographic change has introduced new dynamics. It has resulted in an increasingly diverse population, which has been welcomed. But it has also been disorienting: there is not a good understanding among many residents of where the city begins or ends, and there are communities where work and social life are associated more with Charlotte (which is right next door) as opposed to Concord's distant historic downtown.

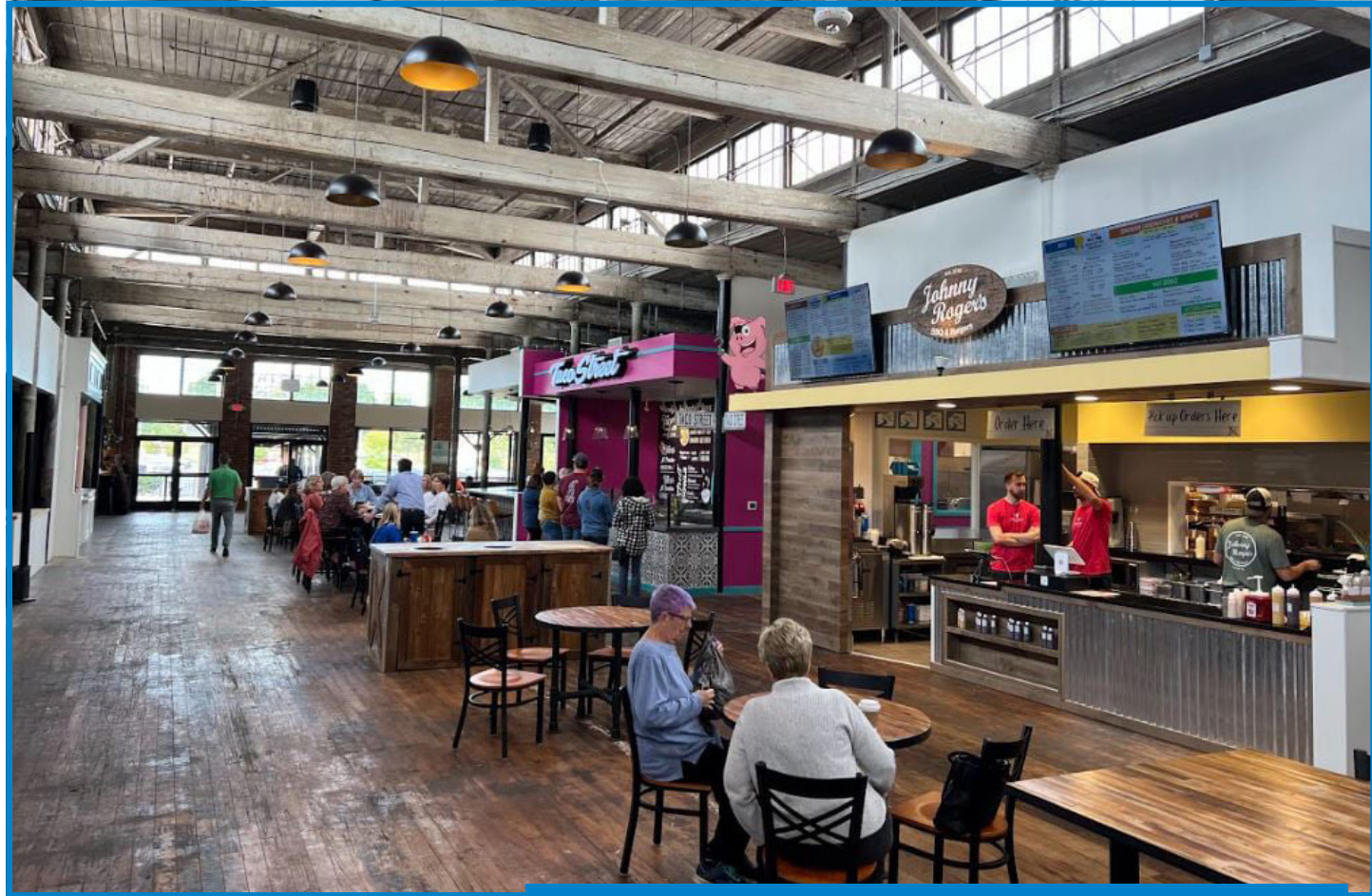
Generally there is optimism about these changes. There is hope that the history and traditional qualities of Concord can be sustained as the city grows. And there is hope that the city's new energy will offer new opportunities and a sentiment that newcomers to the city will bring fresh perspectives and openness.



Several "ghost signs" have been preserved downtown, contributing to Concord's historic, small-town feel. *Courtesy Michael A. Anderson*



Barber Scotia College, a Historically Black College historic Concord. *Courtesy L.J. Weslowski/City of Concord.*



The former Gibson Mill has become a hub for creative enterprises, including a food hall. *Courtesy Mark Plemmons/Independent Tribune.*

A NEW ECONOMY

Concord is successfully reinventing its economy and the opportunities it offers.

In recent decades, Concord's economic base has been shifting from tobacco and textiles to distribution, industry and tourism-sports-entertainment – a shift from an economy that is rooted in the surrounding landscape and regional traditions to one that is driven by consumer and popular culture. Today Concord's economic advantages are its access, whether via I-85 or Concord-Padgett Regional Airport, and readily developable land.

Concord is now a regional tourist destination, with attractions like the Charlotte Motor Speedway, the



Día de los Muertos display, Concord International Festival. *Courtesy L.J. Weslowski/City of Concord.*

Concord Mills Outlet Mall, and the Great Wolf Lodge and Conference Center. In addition, Concord's landscape is dotted with new distribution centers for companies like Amazon and Federal Express, and new manufacturing plants for companies that make products like vehicles, beverages and pharmaceuticals.

These accomplishments have brought a sense of excitement and energy, purpose and pride, though they also contribute to the sense that Concord is evolving into a new and different kind of city. Meanwhile, historic Downtown Concord has been named one of the most charming small-town destinations in the country, and retains its claim to being the heart and soul of the city.

CONCORD IS DIVERSE

Concord's diversity is important to residents of the city.

In addition to the white and Black communities that have lived in Concord for more than two hundred years, there has been a growing Latino population and South Asian population as well. While some people note that Concord's diversity is a result of its increasing population and newly arriving groups, others noted that Concord has always been diverse but that its diversity has not always been reflected or respected.

Twenty nations were represented at the 2022 Concord International Festival. There is a strong message that public art should make this diversity more visible to the city at large – and should especially respect and reflect voices that not have been heard as strongly.

Creative Plan

This section of Concord’s public art master plan outlines why public art is important to Concord and what types of projects the City should take on.

The next two pages set out a vision, values and goals that address the question, “Why public art in Concord?”

Following that, the plan outlines recommendations for projects, including specific goals, timing, funding and artist selection processes for each. The projects are divided into four categories that reflect the themes of the plan.

PUBLIC ART IN CITY FACILITIES

- ◆ Downtown Catalyst Projects
- ◆ Future Projects
- ◆ Parks and Greenways
- ◆ Parks Infrastructure (Citywide)
- ◆ Greenway Infrastructure (Citywide)
- ◆ Fire Stations
- ◆ Rider (Concord-Kannapolis Area Transit)
- ◆ Transportation

WE ARE HERE!

Telling the Stories of Concord’s People & Places

- ◆ Fire Station Community Rooms
- ◆ Concord International Festival Annual Artwork

YOU ARE HERE!

Marking Arrival to the City & Downtown

- ◆ Concord-padgett Regional Airport: Terminal Interior Wall
- ◆ Roundabouts
- ◆ Fire Station Gateways
- ◆ Charlotte Motor Speedway Gateway
- ◆ General Areas to Consider for City and Downtown Gateways

ONGOING INITIATIVES AND STRATEGIES

- ◆ Community-Artist Partnerships
- ◆ Creating Opportunities for Murals
- ◆ Creating Opportunities for Outdoor Sculpture
- ◆ Partnerships with Developers
- ◆ Partnerships with the County



Groundbreaking, Ramseur Park.
Courtesy L.J. Weslowski/City of Concord.

HOW THE LIST WORKS

The adjacent criteria have been used to prioritize the opportunities identified in this plan. These criteria should also be used by the Public Art Committee in evaluating projects to be included in an Annual Work Plan.

Each of the potential projects includes a brief description, including goals for the project and a potential budget. The proposed budget is an estimate of an appropriate budget for the specific opportunities, based on budgets for similar projects elsewhere. This may be more or less than a “traditional” percent for art allocation might yield.

Potential projects are discussed in three categories, which overlap to some degree.

Public Art in City Facilities and Infrastructure is organized to demonstrate, department by department, opportunities for public art in anticipated construction projects. **We Are Here!** projects are specific opportunities to commission artworks that reflect the stories of Concord’s people and places. **You Are Here!** projects are specific opportunities to mark gateways into the city and into downtown, and are opportunities to tell the city’s story overall.

PROJECT PRIORITY CRITERIA

- ◆ Is the project in alignment with other City plans?
- ◆ Is the project viable, in terms of agency support, coordination with an upcoming capital project, and technical feasibility?
- ◆ Does the project enhance the functionality of a City asset or community-serving facility?
- ◆ Does the project result in a wider geographic distribution of public art in Concord?
- ◆ Is the project highly visible to the public at large, or does it provide access to public art for a group of people who might not otherwise experience public art?
- ◆ Does the project have the potential to express the identity of Concord’s communities, and/or connect people across Concord’s various communities?
- ◆ Does the project have the opportunity to raise Concord’s profile in the region, in a way that helps people understand Concord better and makes them interesting in exploring the city?

VISION

Concord's investment in public art is meant to achieve the following:

Public art is a unifying feature of Concord: strengthening the City's overall identity, uplifting authentic community stories and resources, and adding beauty and meaning to public places and facilities.

VALUES

Values describe the ways in which Concord's public art program will do its work:

- ♦ Respect everyone's creative voice
- ♦ Respect and reflect the context, both cultural and natural
- ♦ Work inclusively, through intentional engagement and collaboration
- ♦ Operate with accountability, transparency and trust
- ♦ Operate in way that is relational rather than transactional

GOALS

Goals are what Concord's public art program hopes to achieve in the next five years, to move towards its vision:

Integrate public art into Concord's public realm, both newly constructed and existing facilities

Encourage developers to include public art in their projects

Encourage arts and other community organizations to pursue public art strategies on public and private space

Integrate diverse community voices into the projects that are created

Connect Concord's diverse communities

Make public art part of the way that Concord tells its story to visitors

STRATEGIES

Strategies are the steps that Concord will take to achieve its vision for public art:

Commission public art for key visual locations: Union Street, city and downtown gateways, Concord-Padgett Regional Airport

Integrate public art into new and upgraded parks

Create strategies for public art projects that appear throughout the city in facilities and infrastructure: greenways, fire, transit

Develop an effective, equitable and manageable process for community-initiated projects on public property

Develop a framework for a murals program, downtown and elsewhere

Create tools for encouraging developers to include public art

Develop public art projects as a tool to bring communities together

Develop processes for centering engagement with Concord's diverse communities in the creation of public art projects

Cultivate partnerships outside City government (businesses, County agencies, arts organizations)

OUTCOMES

Over the next five years, Concord will seek these public art outcomes and develop processes to measure them:

Public art is balanced, geographically, throughout the City.

Public art is integrated routinely into parks and greenways.

Public art is integrated into other City facilities, when appropriate.

Public art is integrated into private development projects.

Community arts organizations exhibit public art on City property.

Communities feel that their cultures, histories and priorities are reflected in the work that has been done.

Projects feature the work of Cabarrus County artists.

Concord receives regional recognition for the work that has been done.

Cultivate partnerships outside City government (businesses, County agencies, arts organizations)

DOWNTOWN CATALYST PROJECTS

There are several catalytic projects referred to in the Concord Downtown Master Plan. Each of these projects should be evaluated as a public art opportunity when it advances through the planning and design phases.

UNION STREET STREETScape

Opportunity

The new Union Street Streetscape will add to the vitality and sociability of downtown Concord by adding pedestrian amenities and increasing pedestrian safety. The new street design includes more generous sidewalks, areas for planting and street furniture, and areas for informal gathering. The design provides approximately five spaces where sculptural installations could be located.

As the Union Street Streetscape has already been designed and is in construction, there is no opportunity for integrated public art features. In the short term, these spaces could be locations for temporary sculptures; in the long run, they could be locations for permanent sculptural installations.

There are a variety of models for organizing a temporary sculpture exhibition, and numerous potential partners for sponsoring and promoting the exhibition. Those should be investigated further by the Public Art Administrator and the PAC.

Goals

- ◆ Celebrate revamped Union Street
- ◆ Provide opportunities for sculptors in the region to display their work
- ◆ Provide an additional attraction for people to come downtown
- ◆ Create features that encourage and support informal gathering

Timing

The construction is expected to be complete in winter, 2024. The first sculptures should be installed in spring of 2024, which would mean a solicitation and selection process should happen in the last quarter of 2023.

Potential Budget

\$25,000. Five sculptures at \$5,000 each for site prep, artist fee, transportation and documentation. This project could be an opportunity for a private sponsorship.

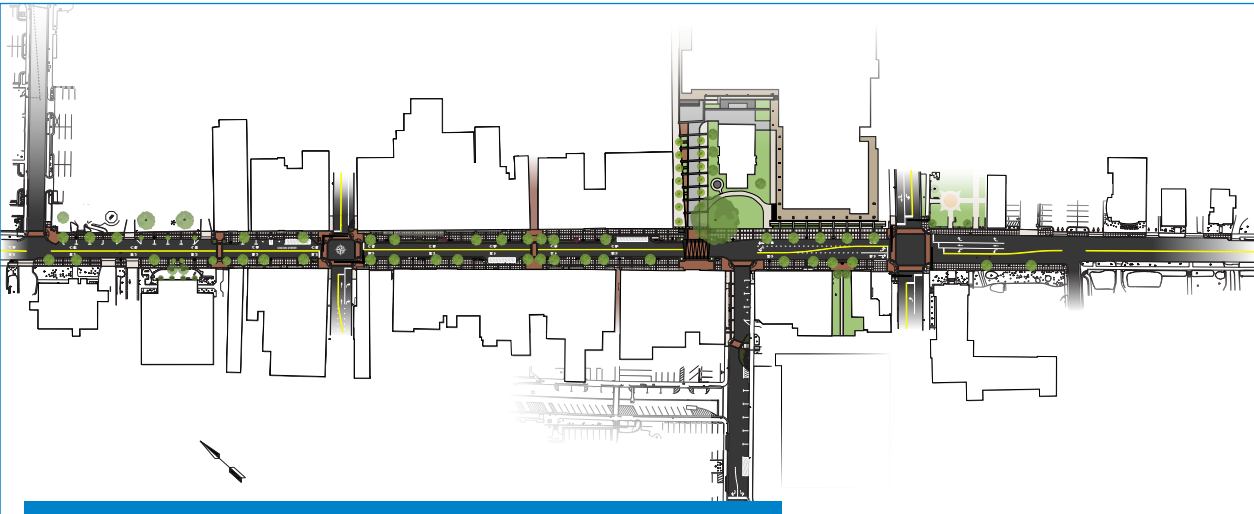
FUTURE PROJECTS

Greenway Park and Event Space

The Downtown Plan proposes a greenway park and event space in the area of the McEachern Greenway trailhead and County Governmental Center. If this project advances into further planning and design, public art should be considered as a component.

Bicentennial Plaza Parking Garage

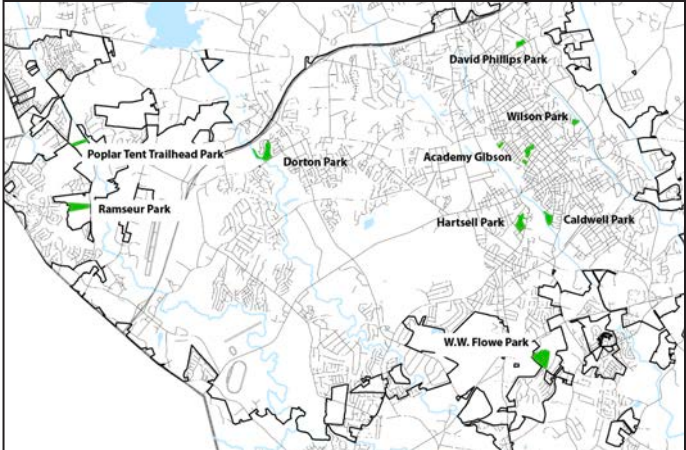
The Church and Cabarrus Street corridors are envisioned as major growth areas for downtown. To accommodate that growth, a parking garage is proposed for Bicentennial Plaza surface parking lot. If this project advances into further planning and design, public art should be considered as a component.



Union Street Streetscape design. Courtesy City of Concord.



Groundbreaking for Union Street Streetscape project, June 2022. Courtesy L.J. Weslowski/City of Concord.



Parks that will be constructed or upgraded with funds from the bond issue approved in 2022.

PARKS AND GREENWAYS

Concord is embarking on an ambitious, decade-long expansion and upgrading of its parks and greenways. The City has proposed the construction of four new parks, the renovation and/or expansion of five parks, and the extension of four greenway segments within the park projects, much of which would be funded through a bond issue recently approved by the voters. The City also draws on other sources of funds, particularly for adding small segments of greenway each year.

The scope of park designs is developed through a multi-stage planning and design process that allows for the tracking of public art opportunities and funding needs as projects evolve. The timing of park projects, though, can change depending on current Council priorities and funding opportunities. Therefore, the identification of public art opportunities and costs should take place within the overall park planning process, so that public art can be incorporated seamlessly into park plans and construction.

In November, 2022, Concord voters approved a referendum to issue up to \$60 million in bonds over the next

seven years to fund new construction or renovations / upgrades in nine city parks. Though master plans have been completed for these parks, the final scope of improvements, designs and phasing had yet to be approved at the time this plan was completed.

Because there are a number of projects that are likely to roll out in the near future, Concord should consider recruiting artists through a roster process. In this process, Concord would outline a series of potential art projects expected to be commissioned in parks and greenways for the next few years and ask artists to submit qualifications to be considered for any or all projects. The pool would be juried at one time, and then final selections of artists could occur more quickly when projects are ready to be commissioned.

Also, Concord should explore how small design details of park and greenway construction, such as the ornamentation of seatwalls or pilasters that mark the entrance to greenways, can incorporate artist-designed elements (such as ceramic tiles or mosaics) as an ongoing design feature, in addition to more ambitious site-specific public art commissions.



James L. Dorton Park. Courtesy L.J. Weslowski/City of Concord.



Ramseur Park master plan. Courtesy City of Concord.

J.E. “JIM” RAMSEUR PARK (NEW, SHORT-TERM)

J.E. “Jim” Ramseur Park is a new park proposed for rapidly expanding northwest Concord to serve the rapidly growing population there. The park will offer a comprehensive set of facilities, including an amphitheater, splash pad, adventure playground, boardwalk and basketball and pickleball courts. Future phases call for a recreation center. The theme of the park is “river flow,” and there will be a design feature that suggests the movement of water and connections to the Hector Henry Greenway and the Rocky River.

Opportunity

- ◆ Explore opportunities for integrated artworks that may be concurrent with the finalization of the design:
 - ◇ Surface area surrounding the splash pad
 - ◇ Picnic structure
 - ◇ Amphitheater
- ◆ Consider a sculpture located as a gateway for the park, and as a marker for the future community center

- ◆ Explore opportunities for integrated artwork in future phases
 - ◇ Recreation center

Goals

- ◆ Create features that support community gathering and identity
- ◆ Enhance functional park elements, such as the amphitheater and greenway bridge

Timing

Early artworks could be implemented as early as fall, 2023. Additional artworks would depend on future funding.

Potential Budget

Art features integrated into the design could range up to \$100,000, depending on the artist’s scope and the scale of the project.



Caldwell Park master plan. Courtesy City of Concord.

MARVIN CALDWELL PARK (RENOVATION, SHORT-TERM)

Caldwell Park is a community park in the Logan Community. It includes the Daniel Pharr Community Building, Logan Optimist Club Shelter and the Robert Mathis Amphitheater, and is connected to the Irish Buffalo Creek Greenway. The park will be renovated in phases; some grant funding is in hand to begin the first phases of work in 2023 and the remainder of the improvements are expected to be funded through the recently-approved bond issue.

Opportunity

The first phases of work offer several public art opportunities: a new splash pad, the relocation and renovation of shelter, and greenway connections to the neighborhood at both ends of the current trail. The basketball court could be painted with a ground mural. Playgrounds could have artist-designed features.

Goals

- ◆ Create features that support community gathering

- ◆ Create artworks that support the experience of play
- ◆ Create artworks that reflect the community’s history and identity
- ◆ Enhance functional park elements, such as the splash pad, shelter, basketball court and play features

Timing

Caldwell Park will soon go into a schematic design process. The design team should be scoped to consider the recommendations of this plan either during the schematic design phase or after the schematic design is approved, with consultation from the Public Art Administrator.

Potential Budget

Allocate \$40,000 for an artist-designed basketball court.

Allocate up to \$100,000 for permanent public art, depending on budget for the renovations and the scope of the project that is identified.



Hartsell Park master plan. Courtesy City of Concord.

HARTSELL PARK (RENOVATION)

Hartsell Park is a neighborhood park near downtown Concord. The campus includes a recreation center and sports fields.

Opportunity

The concept plan for Hartsell Park includes several elements that are opportunities for public art:

- ◆ Mini roundabouts near the entrance and in the parking area could be locations for focal artworks.
- ◆ A themed play area could be an artist designed features
- ◆ Small structures, such as a group shelter and restrooms, could provide opportunities for public art features.
- ◆ An outdoor shelter and learning area could be an artist designed feature
- ◆ A sculpture trail could connect to the ClearWater Arts Center and Studios.

Goals

- ◆ Create features that support community gathering
- ◆ Create artworks that support the experience of play
- ◆ Enhance functional park elements
- ◆ Create a sense of arrival

Timing

Dependent on timing of further design and construction phase of the park.

Potential Budget

Allocate up to \$50,000, depending on budget for the renovations and the scope of the project that is identified.



James L. Dorton Park.
Courtesy L.J. Weslowski/ City of Concord.

JAMES L. DORTON PARK
(RENOVATION)

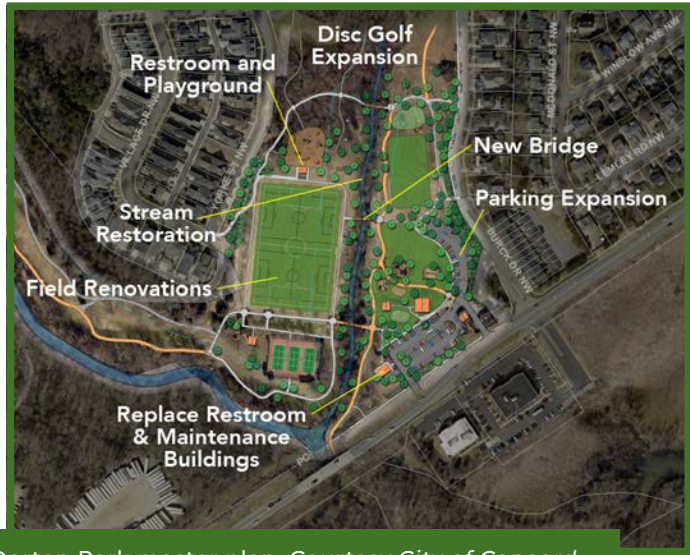
Dorton Park is a community park in Afton Village area of Concord, southwest of downtown, near Interstate 85. In addition to offering numerous recreation facilities, a connection to the Coddle Creek Greenway, and other amenities, Dorton Park has played host to numerous large-scale functions including the City of Concord sponsored Annual Bunny Bash and 5k Fun Run.

Opportunity

- ◆ The playground could include playful public art features.
- ◆ The education stations could include interpretive public art features, or a thematic sculpture.
- ◆ The restroom wall could provide an opportunity for a mural that could serve as a focal feature.
- ◆ An artwork at the entrance of Dorton Park could give the park more personality.

Goals

- ◆ Create features that support community gathering
- ◆ Create artworks that support the experience of play
- ◆ Enhance functional park elements
- ◆ Create a sense of arrival



Dorton Park master plan. Courtesy City of Concord.

Timing

Dependent on timing of further design and construction phase of the park.

Potential Budget

Allocate up to \$100,000, depending on budget for the renovations and the scope of the project that is identified.



Poplar Tent Trailhead Park concept plan. Courtesy City of Concord.

POPLAR TENT TRAILHEAD PARK

Poplar Tent Trailhead Park is a new park proposed for rapidly expanding northwest Concord to serve the rapidly growing population there.

Opportunity

The master plan for this park indicates several opportunities for public art.

- ◆ The rest room wall could provide an opportunity for a mural, depending on its design.
- ◆ The playground could include playful public art features.

Goals

- ◆ Create artworks that support the experience of play.
- ◆ Create an artwork that expresses the cultural traditions of the community that uses this park.
- ◆ Create a sense of arrival

Timing

Dependent on timing of further design and construction phase of the park.

Potential Budget

Allocate \$25,000 for rest room mural, depending on size.
Allocate up to \$50,000 for play features, depending on budget for the construction and the scope of the project that is identified.



ACADEMY-GIBSON PARK
(RENOVATION AND EXPANSION,
SHORT-TERM)

The master plan for parks in the Academy-Gibson area covers several fields and facilities, west of downtown Concord in the Gibson Village neighborhood. It comprises Academy Recreation Center and surrounding sports fields, as well as a connection to the ClearWater Arts Center & Studios via the Village Greenway. The City is completing a master plan for renovating the various Parks and Recreation facilities here, as well as for parcels of land adjoining ClearWater and along Kerr Street nearby, that will provide for park services expansion.

Opportunity

The City is still gathering public input for the elements that will be part of the first phase of work. Some of the features that have been discussed are a bicycle pump track, a skate park and restrooms, as well as a sculpture park at ClearWater and an amphitheater nearby. The restrooms offer an opportunity for a mural-type artwork on exterior of the structure. The sculpture park is an opportunity for permanent and/or temporary sculptures. The amphitheater, which could be located close to ClearWater, could be an opportunity for a signature canopy for shelter for arts performances.

Goals

- ◆ Create features that support community gathering
- ◆ Create artworks that reflect the community’s history and identity
- ◆ Enhance functional park elements, such as the pump track, skate park and splash pad

Timing

Academy-Gibson Park is actively in a planning and early design process. When the improvements that will be made in this phase of work are confirmed, parks planners and the Public Art Administrator should review the possibilities for public art and adapt the design plans accordingly.

Potential Budget

Allocate up to \$25,000 to provide infrastructure for installing a temporary sculpture in the park installation program. Allocate up to \$100,000 for permanent public art, depending on budget for the renovations and the scope of the project that is identified. Allocate a minimum of \$250,000 for an artist designed canopy or structure. Funding for this could be derived partly from the base construction budget for a canopy or structure, as well as sponsorships. The development of this feature, and fundraising for it, would be an important long-range goal for the city.



WILSON STREET PARK (NEW, LONG-TERM)

Wilson Street Park is a neighborhood park planned in northeast Concord. The planning concept is for a park that is a highly interactive children’s play area, designed with a “woodland fairy” theme.

Opportunity

Because of the theme of this park, it is not an appropriate location for a traditional public art commission. However, artists can work integrally on the design team to collaborate on the design themes and how the designs will reflect those themes.

Goals

- ◆ Support the overall theming of the park
- ◆ Enhance functional park elements, including play features

Timing

Dependent on timing of further design and construction phase of the park.

Potential Budget

Allocate \$10,000 for an artist fee to play a consulting role with the design team.



David Phillips Park master plan. Courtesy City of Concord.

DAVID PHILLIPS PARK (NEW, LONG TERM)

David Phillips Park will be in North Concord, on Burrage Road adjacent to the David Phillips Activity Center.

Opportunity

The master plan for this park indicates several opportunities for public art.

- ◆ A permanent sculpture could be installed at the entrance to the activity center, either in front of the building or along Burrage Road, to provide visibility, identity and arrival.
- ◆ The activity shelter could provide an opportunity for a mural, depending on its design.
- ◆ The outdoor classroom and work spaces could be created by an artist, potentially in collaboration with a landscape architect and/or educational professional.
- ◆ The tree house could be created by an artist, potentially in collaboration with an architect.
- ◆ The playground could include playful public art features.

Goals

- ◆ Create features that support community gathering
- ◆ Create artworks that support the experience of play
- ◆ Enhance functional park elements
- ◆ Create a sense of arrival

Timing

Dependent on timing of further design and construction phase of the park.

Potential Budget

Allocate up to \$100,000, depending on budget for the renovations and the scope of the project that is identified. Any of the five opportunities identified above could be achieved at smaller-scale in the range of \$20,000 - \$40,000 as an initial enhancement.



W. W. Flowe Park concept plan. Courtesy City of Concord.

W. W. FLOWE PARK(RENOVATION, LONG TERM)

W. W. Flowe Park is a community park in the southern portion of Concord. It was transferred from the County in 2021, and the City is working to develop a fresh vision for the park.

Opportunity

The concept plan for Flowe Park includes several elements that are opportunities for public art:

- ◆ A proposed entry plaza could be both a landmark feature and a gathering / orientation point.
- ◆ A gateway building with restrooms and storage could provide an opportunity for a mural, depending on its design.
- ◆ A tree-lined promenade could provide an opportunity for an artwork incorporated into the surface of the walkway, or a sculpture to terminate the view at the farthest end of the promenade
- ◆ An overlook with bench settings could be an artist-designed feature.

- ◆ A seating shelter could be an artist-designed feature.
- ◆ A sheltered playground area could be an artist-designed feature.

Goals

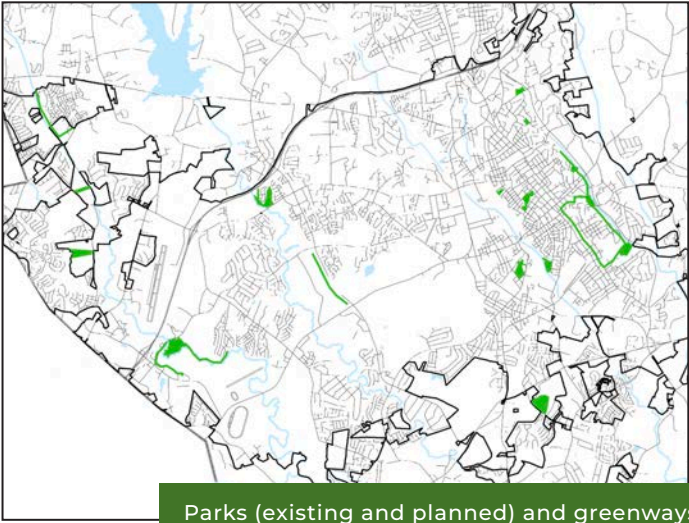
- ◆ Incorporate features that reflect community identity
- ◆ Create features that support community gathering
- ◆ Create artworks that support the experience of play
- ◆ Enhance functional park elements
- ◆ Create a sense of arrival

Timing

Dependent on timing of further design and construction phase of the park.

Potential Budget

Allocate up to \$150,000, depending on budget for the renovations and the scope of the project that is identified.



Parks (existing and planned) and greenways (existing) in Concord.



Trailhead for Hector Henry II Greenway. Courtesy L.J. Weslowski/City of Concord.

PARKS INFRASTRUCTURE (CITYWIDE)

Concord’s parks projects, whether renovations or new construction, contain numerous design details that could provide opportunities for small-scale integrated public artworks.

These projects not only add meaningful touches to everyday parks features but also provide opportunities for artists less experienced at public art to have opportunities to do projects. These public art features could be incorporated at the time of construction, and incorporated into the project budget, or added later when funding permits.

Opportunities

- ◆ Concrete walkways can include stamped designs or texts
- ◆ Fences can include segments that are designed with custom metalwork
- ◆ Seatwalls and planter walls can include areas reserved for insets of mosaic, tile or terra cotta reliefs

- ◆ Bridge piers and trailheads could include ornamental pilasters that have public art insets or small sculptures set atop

Goals

- ◆ Enhance functional park elements
- ◆ Create artworks that reflect the community’s history and identity
- ◆ Integrate diverse community voices into the projects that are created

Timing

Develop templates for standard design details immediately, as design plans are being finalized for parks funded by the recently approved bond issue. Implement projects when funding allows.

Potential Budget

Integrated design features could range from several hundred dollars (stamped concrete; small insets) to several thousand dollars (ornamental pilasters).

GREENWAY INFRASTRUCTURE (CITYWIDE)

Concord has an ambitious vision for building a greenway system that connects all corners of the city, and into the larger Carolina Thread Trail system. The main greenway routes currently follow stream and creek corridors, which primarily run north to south, but future east-west routes have been proposed as well. The City’s connectivity plan, small area plans and parks master plans all detail a strategy for extending the greenway system. Currently, the City has 17 miles of greenways and trails, and it is budgeting funds to build about a mile of greenway per year, as well as connections to and segments in new and renovated parks.

The greenways traverse a variety of landscapes in the City and there will likely be opportunities as specific segments are built and connected to parks, and those should be considered as they arise. This plan focuses on two ideas that are about integrating public art into the greenway system.

Currently there are two standard design elements that create a visual appearance for the greenways, banners and distance markers. Currently, the banners are branded with the Parks and Recreation Department logo. The public art program could create a new set of designs that differentiate each of the greenway corridors. The designs could be replicated on new banners and added to mile markers. Each design could reflect some aspect of the context of the trail it is marking. This can also easily allow local artists an entry opportunity into public art design, and could be run as a contest, or hire new artists on a published annual or semi-annual schedule.

The greenway is often accessed from parks, but also connects into the city street system. These entrances to the greenway system are important transitions. These locations of transition could be marked by an artistic feature, which could be created in a format that is standard throughout the system but allows for a unique artwork in each location. Examples of this idea would be to replicate the metal panels on the Hector Henry Greenway throughout the system, or to create plinths that support small sculptures, or to embellish the masonry

markers that can be found in many parks with insets such as tile, terra cotta or concrete reliefs.

Finally, greenways offer opportunities for painted surface murals. These can be located at key areas such as junctions or related to interpretive strategies.

These projects not only add meaningful touches to everyday parks features but also provide opportunities for artists less experienced at public art to have opportunities to do projects. These public art features could be incorporated at the time of construction, and incorporated into the project budget, or added later when funding permits.

Opportunities:

- ◆ Banners
- ◆ Distance markers
- ◆ Ornamental pilasters at trailheads
- ◆ Trail ground murals

Goals

- ◆ Integrate public art into Concord’s public realm, both newly constructed and existing facilities
- ◆ Make public art part of the way that Concord tells its story to itself and to visitors
- ◆ Give communities a voice in what is created, and connect Concord’s diverse communities

Timing

These projects could occur at any time. Identify a park construction project where a prototype trailhead project could be created.

Potential Budget

Greenway infrastructure design features could range from several hundred dollars (banners and distance markers) to several thousand dollars (ornamental pilasters, trail ground murals).



Fire Station 11. Courtesy L.J. Weslowski/City of Concord.

FIRE STATIONS

Emergency services (fire and police) are vital city services that connect Concord residents because everyone relies on them. Concord has a dozen fire stations spread throughout the city, often on main arterials, and is planning one more. Concord’s fire stations are important civic assets because they are highly visible and symbolic of the City’s presence. Four of the current stations also include community rooms, which are busy as gathering places for events ranging from community meetings to family birthday parties. New stations, existing stations and community rooms are all potential locations for public art.

FIRE STATION #6 (REPLACEMENT)

Fire Station 6, which serves Concord-Padgett Regional Airport and surrounding areas, will be replaced in order to accommodate the growth of airport traffic and conform to FAA requirements, including providing easier access to the runways.

Opportunity

Artwork should be considered on any part of the station that is public-facing, either integrated into the station building or in a space visible from the street.

Goals

- ◆ Integrate public art into Concord’s public realm, both newly constructed and existing facilities.

- ◆ Make public art part of the way that Concord tells its story to visitors.
- ◆ Build public awareness of the emergency response resources that serve the airport.

Timing

The fire station is currently scheduled for design in FY23-24 and construction in FY24-25. With this schedule, an artist should be engaged in FY23-24.

Potential Budget

Approximately \$75,000, depending on the nature of the project.

FIRE STATION #13 (NEW CONSTRUCTION)

The City is in the early stages of planning for a new fire station on Flowes Store Road to serve areas that are approved for annexation in the southern section of the City.

Opportunity

Artwork should be considered on any part of the station that is public-facing, either integrated into the station building, in a space visible from the street, or in a community room.

Goals

- ◆ Integrate public art into Concord’s public realm, both newly constructed and existing facilities
- ◆ Make public art part of the way that Concord tells its story to itself and to visitors
- ◆ Create artworks that reflect the community’s history and identity

Timing

The fire station is currently scheduled for design in FY23-24 and construction in FY24-25. With this schedule, an artist should be engaged in FY23-24.

Potential Budget

Approximately \$75,000, depending on the nature of the project.

TRANSPORTATION

TRAFFIC SIGNAL CONTROLLER BOXES

Opportunity

The City of Concord maintains traffic signals on local roads, and each traffic signal has a controller box nearby. These controller boxes can be embellished with vinyl wraps designed by local artists. This is also a common approach to public art and would be easy for Concord to model.

Goals

- ◆ Integrate public art into Concord’s public realm and infrastructure
- ◆ Create artworks that reflect the community’s history and identity

Timing

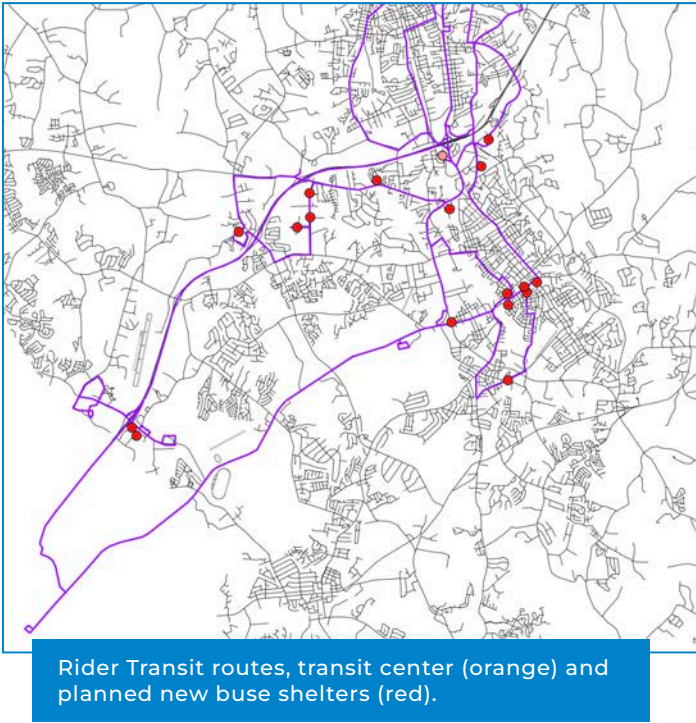
This project could occur at any time.

Potential Budget

The budget would be modest, as the only costs are artist fees, printing and installation. Allocate \$2,500 per controller box.

RIDER
(CONCORD-KANNAPOLIS
AREA TRANSIT)

Rider Transit is a partnership entity that serves Concord, Kannapolis and southwestern Cabarrus County. Rider is open to a multi-faceted collaboration that could bring public art to its transit center, bus shelters and bus interiors. Several of the project approaches recommended here are well-established and would be easy for Concord to model.



Rider Transit routes, transit center (orange) and planned new buse shelters (red).

RIDER TRANSIT CENTER
WINDOW REPLACEMENT

Rider’s eight routes depart from and arrive at its Transit Center, located near the Concord-Kannapolis boundary at the interchange of I-85 and Concord Parkway. The routes connect residential, employment and education centers in the cities, and also provides connections to Charlotte’s transit system.

Opportunity

Artwork can be integrated into the windows that are specified to replace the existing clerestory windows of its central shelter canopy. The most likely process to consider is film applied between layers of glass, or film applied to the outside of the glass, though other approaches could be explored. Artwork here could reflect the stories of Concord or could be a non-representational approach that brings color or otherwise interacts with the light coming through the windows. Several of the project approaches recommended here are well-established and would be easy for Concord to model.

Goals

- ◆ Integrate public art into Concord’s public realm, both newly constructed and existing facilities
- ◆ Create artworks that reflect the community’s history and identity, especially the area where the shelter is located

Timing

Rider Transit is interested in proceeding with this project in the very near term, so this is an immediate opportunity.

Potential Budget

Further investigation of fabrication and installation costs is necessary to establish a budget. In a project like this, the base cost of replacing the windows would be credited against the cost of the project, and the public art budget would only cover the additional cost of integrating the public art.



Rider Transfer Center. Courtesy L.J. Weslowski/City of Concord.

RIDER TRANSIT SHELTERS

Opportunity

Rider is installing approximately 17 new bus shelters in Concord. The shelters typically have perforated metal panels. Public art could be installed by printing images on the panels, or by replacing one of the metal panels with a glass panel that would have artwork applied with film.

Goals

- ◆ Integrate public art into Concord’s public realm, both newly constructed and existing facilities
- ◆ Create artworks that reflect the community’s history and identity, particularly of the groups who use Rider Transit the most
- ◆ Communicate to transit riders that they are valued and their experience matters
- ◆ Enhance the experience of transit infrastructure and encourage more ridership

Timing

Rider Transit is interested in proceeding with this project in the very near term, so this is an immediate opportunity.

Potential Budget

Further investigation of fabrication and installation costs is necessary to establish a budget.

In bus systems with shelters that have glass panels, the cost of commissioning and installing glass panels can be approximately \$2,500 per panel.



Rider bus and transit shelter.
Courtesy L.J. Weslowski/City of Concord.

RIDER TRANSIT
INTERIOR PANEL INSERTS

Opportunity

Rider maintains a fleet of 10 buses for its eight routes. The bus interiors include space for cardboard panels for advertising, but Rider does not use those spaces in that way. Artist designs could be printed on panels and inserted in those spaces. Artists could be solicited through a formal RFQ process or through a portal that accepts applications on a rolling basis.

Goals

- ◆ Integrate public art into Concord’s public realm, both newly constructed and existing facilities
- ◆ Create artworks that reflect the community’s history and identity

Timing

This project could occur at any time.

Potential Budget

The budget would be modest, as the only costs are artist fees and printing. Allocate \$5,000 for a pilot project.

RIDER BUS WRAPS

Opportunity

Rider maintains a fleet of 10 busses for its eight routes, which operate from a hub near the Concord-Kannapolis border and connect destinations such as Rowan-Cabarrus Community College, Afton Village, Concord Mills, the LYNX light rail system and downtown Concord and Kannapolis. The bus exteriors are currently marked by Rider’s logo. The buses could be wrapped with designs created by local artists.

Goals

- ◆ Integrate public art into Concord’s public realm and infrastructure
- ◆ Create artworks that reflect the community’s history and identity

Timing

This project could be undertaken at any time.

Potential Budget

Artist designed bus wraps can cost between \$10,000 to \$15,000, with the artist fee set at about 20 percent of the total cost.

Concord has many stories to tell, and one of its strongest goals for public art is to put those stories on view so people can learn about each other, and the world can learn about Concord. The following projects provide opportunities for story-telling about Concord’s people and places.



Old Campground Cemetery, established in 1876 by Warren C. Coleman and others at Zion Hill AME Zion Church.
Courtesy Victoria Young/Independent Tribune

TELLING COMMUNITY HISTORIES IN PARKS

There are several parks projects in Concord that primarily serve communities that have historically been under-resourced: Academy-Gibson, Marvin Caldwell Park and Hartsell Park / Recreation Center.

There are many opportunities for incorporating public art into the renovations that are planned for these parks. Concord should consider developing them through a comprehensive storytelling approach, particularly focusing on the narratives of the communities who have historically lived in these neighborhoods or recently moved in.

This process could be developed through a collaboration between multiple artists and the community, using a variety of methodologies and artistic media to collect, document and present community stories. This work could then be transformed into public artworks so that altogether the artworks in these parks tell a rich and multidimensional story about these communities. The work could also result in temporary installations elsewhere in the city, or inspiration for other projects such as Rider bus shelters and bus inserts.

This would be an appropriate project for the City to seek external funding from a program such as the National Endowment for the Arts “Our Town” program.

Goals

- ◆ Create artworks that reflect the community’s history and identity
- ◆ Integrate diverse community voices into the projects that are created
- ◆ Connect Concord’s diverse communities

Timing

This process could be developed on a timeline agreeable to the public art program and the Parks and Recreation department. A public history component of the project could begin first, with commissioned in the future as park renovations continue and further funding is available.

Potential Budget

Allocate up to \$100,000 for this project, which could be funded half by the NEA and half by the City. About a third to half of the budget would be dedicated to the storytelling process, and the balance to the creation of public art.



Concord International Festival. Courtesy L.J. Weslowski/City of Concord.

CONCORD INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL ANNUAL ARTWORK

The Concord International Festival is rapidly growing as Concord's premier celebration of the diverse cultures in the city and the region. This street-fair style event allows people to enjoy food, entertainment, crafts and games from around the world. Educational booths allow people to learn about different countries' and cultures' costumes, music, language and traditions. It is held each year on Union Street downtown and is produced by the City of Concord and El Puente Hispano.

Opportunity

The International Festival could include a temporary artwork each year that highlights an aspect of the city's multicultural traditions. Artworks could take a variety of forms, such as a temporary installation or mural. An annual temporary artwork at the festival could evolve into one of Concord's signature public art projects.

Goals

- ◆ Create artworks that reflect the community's history and identity

- ◆ Integrate diverse community voices into the projects that are created
- ◆ Connect Concord's diverse communities
- ◆ Make public art part of the way that Concord tells its story to visitors

Timing

As the festival is generally held late summer or early fall each year, artist selection should begin early in the calendar year and the artist should be under contract in March, in order for there be adequate time for the artwork to be produced, transported and installed.

Potential Budget

For an annual temporary project, consider beginning with a minimum budget of \$10,000. Consider increasing the budget in future years based on the experience that is gained. The City's role in this project should be to assist with siting, permitting and installation. Funding should be sought from the private sector through sponsorship.

FIRE STATION COMMUNITY ROOMS (8, 9, 12)

Opportunity

Three Concord fire stations (#8, #9, #12) have community rooms available for use by community organizations and members. For many people, this is their main experience of entering into a City facility.

Though each fire station and community room is designed differently, each of these four stations offers an opportunity for an interior artwork. Because of the nature of the space, the artwork focus on storytelling about Concord – particularly about a facet of its history or an aspect of its culture. This will allow people to see their own stories, as well as the stories of others, in public space, and will help both to raise community voices and connect Concord's diverse communities.

Though each project would be developed separately, the overall storytelling should be managed as a collection, so that each fire station tells a different aspect of Concord's story. The process of developing the storytelling could be a project of its own, involving a cross section of the community and public history experts. The storytelling should provide a broad framework and resources that artists could then work with.

Goals

- ◆ Create artworks that reflect the community's history and identity
- ◆ Integrate diverse community voices into the projects that are created
- ◆ Connect Concord's diverse communities

Timing

These projects are not tied to any capital project and could be developed on a timeline agreeable to the public art program and the fire department. A public history component of the project could begin first, with fire station displays created as further funding is available.

Potential Budget

Allocate up to \$105,000 for all four stations. The process of curating the storytelling should be budgeted at \$5,000, and each of the four installations should be budgeted at \$25,000.

Concord is a large, sprawling and growing city, and a comment often made about the city is that it is hard to tell where it begins and ends. For this reason, it is particularly important to create markers, particularly with public art that indicate when one has arrived in Concord. These markers cannot always be at the actual city boundary (which in any case is changing over time) but they can be more legible and meaningful when they are located in highly visible places that are associated with a perception of arrival.

ROUNDAABOUTS

Roundabouts are relatively new to Concord and there are plans to add more. Those built so far tend to be experienced along major regional corridors, such as Concord Parkway, and busy roads that distribute traffic throughout the city, such as Poplar Tent Road. Thus, they are appropriate locations for public artworks that welcome people to Concord or remind Concord residents of where they are. These roundabouts are often built by the North Carolina Department of Transportation, or on roads maintained by NCDOT, so coordination with that agency will be necessary.

Opportunities

There are two existing “city gateway” roundabouts:

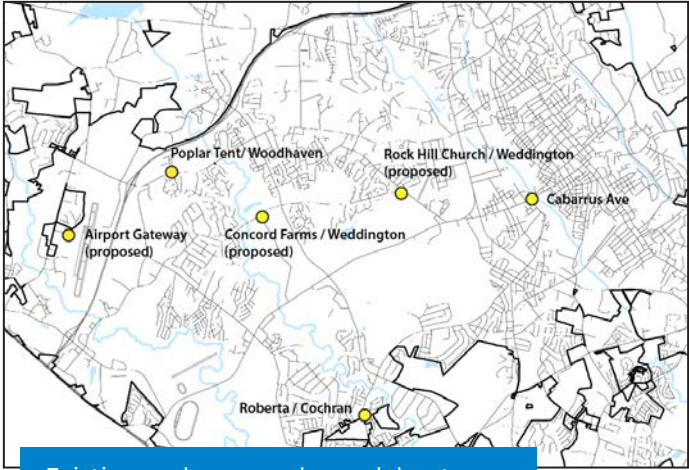
- ◆ Poplar Tent Road and Woodhaven Place NW
- ◆ Roberta Road and Cochran Road

There is one existing “downtown gateway” roundabout:

- ◆ Cabarrus Ave. W / Old Charlotte Rd. SW / Cascade Dr. NW

There are three proposed or potential “city gateway” roundabouts:

- ◆ Concord Farms Road and Weddington Road (George W Liles Small Area Plan)
- ◆ Rock Hill Church Road and Weddington Road (Weddington Road Corridor Plan)
- ◆ Aviation Boulevard entrance to Concord-Padgett Regional Airport (potential site)



Goals

- ◆ Integrate public art into Concord’s public realm, both newly constructed and existing facilities
- ◆ Make public art part of the way that Concord tells its story to visitors

Timing

Roundabout projects could occur at any time, though future roundabouts should be designed with the intention of placing an art feature within them.

Potential Budget

Consider a minimum budget of \$50,000 per roundabout to ensure project is of appropriate scale. Additional funds might be required for site preparation and lighting.

CONCORD-PADGETT
REGIONAL AIRPORT: TERMINAL
INTERIOR WALL

Concord-Padgett Regional Airport welcomes many business and leisure travelers to Concord. The main hall of its commercial terminal is a space can be accessed without going through airport security. It is a place where people linger: Departing passengers queue there to wait for security screenings; friends and family of arriving passengers wait there to pick them up; newly arrived visitors pick up cars at rental stands nearby. The space includes several large, double-height walls that are now occupied by oversized photographic prints of Concord views.

Opportunity

These walls are an opportunity for one or more signature two-dimensional artworks. These could include murals, photography, fabric installation, light installation, or other media that benefit from indoor display. Alternatively, this could be a location for a curated program of changing art. An important consideration is that airports are places whose physical plant is often modified, so it would be best to find an artistic media that could outlive any future changes to this space.

Goals

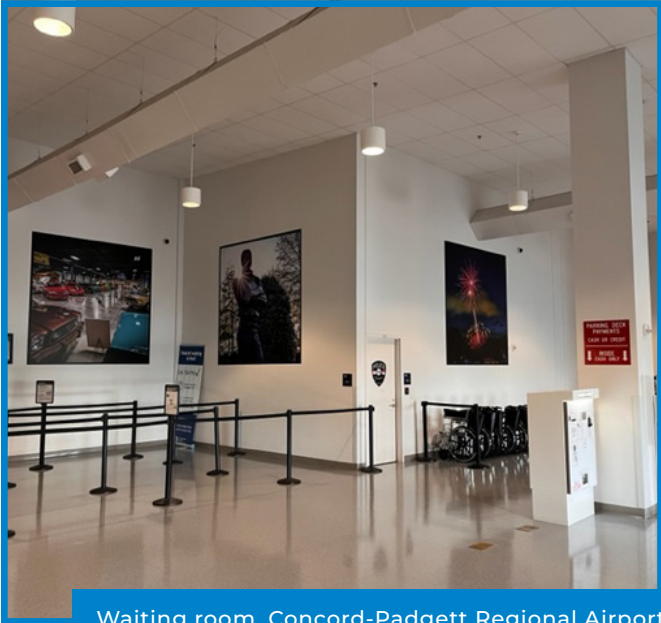
- ◆ Integrate public art into Concord’s public realm, both newly constructed and existing facilities
- ◆ Make public art part of the way that Concord tells its story to visitors

Timing

This project could occur at any time.

Potential Budget

Depending on the size and medium for the artwork, allocate a minimum of \$25,000. Consider additional funding for interior lighting to illuminate the artwork.



Waiting room, Concord-Padgett Regional Airport. Courtesy L.J. Weslowski/City of Concord.

CHARLOTTE MOTOR SPEEDWAY
GATEWAY

The Charlotte Motor Speedway is a major tourist destination in Concord, attracting visitors from the region and throughout the entire country. Though associated with auto racing, the speedway grounds are busy year round with musical and community events, in addition to multiple races. The company that manages the speedway (Speedway Motorsports) has worked with artists and other creative professionals in recent years, in branding and merchandising as well as creating temporary sculptures, light installations and artist-designed trophies.

Opportunity

Concord’s public art program should consider a collaboration with the Charlotte Motor Speedway management to create a signature artwork. The artwork can build on the theme of auto racing, and should be located so that it is visible and accessible to the general public, not just Speedway visitors.

The signature artwork can build on the Speedway’s recent projects, which involved commissioning a temporary sculpture made of salvaged auto parts, and commissioning an artist-designed trophy.

The artwork could be a permanent artwork, located in a highly visible location. Alternatively, it could be a recurring annual temporary artwork, such as the central features designed for the Bonnaroo festival (Nashville), Burning Man or Coachella Valley Arts Festival.

Goals

- ◆ Integrate public art into Concord’s public realm, both newly constructed and existing facilities.
- ◆ Make public art part of the way that Concord tells its story to visitors.
- ◆ Build on the creative talents and traditions of Concord’s auto racing industry.



The Coca-Cola 600, one of NASCAR’s premier events, held at the Charlotte Motor Speedway in Concord. Courtesy L.J. Weslowski/City of Concord.

OTHER POTENTIAL
GATEWAY LOCATIONS

Several other areas suggest themselves as locations for gateway artworks, based on their location on the City’s road network and their visibility. These sites could be locations for either permanent artworks, or temporary artworks that are sited until it is determined that a permanent artwork is viable and a priority for funding.

Opportunity

- ◆ Concord Parkway / Church Street traffic triangle, northern gateway to Concord
- ◆ Triangular parcel at Concord Parkway / Cabarrus Avenue / Warren Coleman Boulevard. Referred to in the Concord Parkway / Warren C. Coleman Small Area Plan, western gateway to downtown
- ◆ Church / Corban intersection, southeast gateway to downtown

Goals

- ◆ Integrate public art into Concord’s public realm, both newly constructed and existing facilities
- ◆ Make public art part of the way that Concord tells its story to visitors

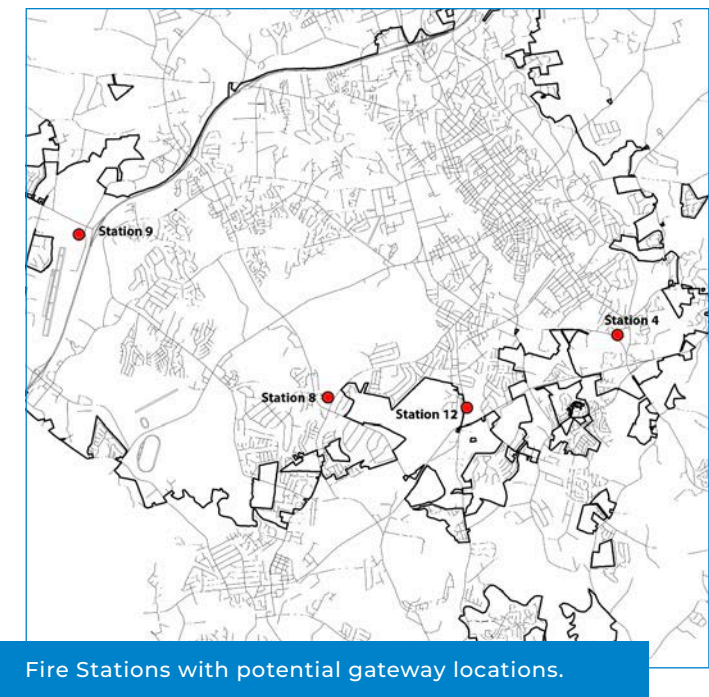
Timing

Gateway projects could occur at any time.

Potential Budget

For temporary artworks, consider a budget of \$5,000 for site preparation and installation of a pad for sculpture.

For permanent projects, consider a budget of up to \$100,000 to ensure the project is of appropriate scale and has the requisite design, engineering and construction to survive over time in a heavily trafficked location. Additional funds might be required for site preparation and lighting.



FIRE STATION GATEWAYS

Several of Concord’s fire stations (#4, #8, #9, #12) are fairly close to entryways to the city, usually on well-travelled roads. The grounds of these prominently-placed fire stations are opportunities for outdoor artworks that announce arrival in Concord to people passing by.

Opportunity

- ◆ Fire Station 4, southern gateway at Warren Coleman Boulevard
- ◆ Fire Station 8, southern gateway at Old Charlotte Road
- ◆ Fire Station 9, western gateway at Poplar Tent Road
- ◆ Fire Station 12, southern gateway at Roberta Road

Goals

- ◆ Integrate public art into Concord’s public realm, both newly constructed and existing facilities
- ◆ Make public art part of the way that Concord tells its story to visitors

Timing

Fire station gateway projects could occur at any time.

Potential Budget

Consider a budget of up to \$100,000 to ensure the project is of appropriate scale. Additional funds might be required for site preparation and lighting.

In addition to managing specific projects, Concord’s public art program should work dynamically with artists, arts organizations, the private sector and the County to inspire and support public art projects. Following are initiatives and strategies that should be pursued on an ongoing basis.

COMMUNITY-ARTIST PARTNERSHIPS

When creating artworks with a strong community focus, such as the “We Are Here!” projects as well as projects such as greenway banners and murals, the public art program should be attentive to incorporating the creative traditions and practices of the communities that are involved with the project. A wide range of community-based practices – such as spoken word and music, fabric making and design, paper making, beadwork and costume-making, print-making and photography to name a few – have successfully been incorporated into public art projects.

The public art program can connect with these practices in several ways:

- ◆ Consider how artists working on commissions can collaborate with artists work in these modes that are not traditional to public art. For example, printmaking practices or fabric designs could be incorporated into a mural.
- ◆ Consider how artists working with these practices can be supported in creating public art. For example, consider a presenting text works and photographs of non-visual arts projects as exhibitions in fire stations, Rider busses or at bus shelters.
- ◆ Consider offering community workshops or presentations when these practices are embraced in a public art project.



CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR MURALS

Concord can support the creation of murals by clarifying the permissions process, providing incentive funding, providing basic technical training, and helping the private sector find muralists to work with.

Murals Downtown and in Neighborhood Commercial Areas

Artists, businesses and property owners have expressed a strong interest in encouraging more murals downtown and other commercial areas. This was supported by the findings of other community engagement, including the citywide survey as well roundtables and community events.

In particular, there is support for murals that face the Church Street and Market Street corridors, and for murals on the walls of business in the neighborhoods adjacent to downtown. There is also the potential to incorporate murals into new development projects downtown and in other commercial areas.

The City can play three roles in facilitating mural proposals: ensuring that murals do not conflict with the City’s sign ordinance, ensuring that exterior murals can be reviewed in a predictable way by the Historic Preservation Commission, and to provide financial support if necessary.

Create a Mural Application Process

Concord should create a standard process for accepting, reviewing and approving applications for murals on private property. This will make it easier for artists and property owners to navigate the approval process. Applications should be available through the City’s permitting web page and reviewed, as necessary, by City staff, the Public Art Commission and the Historic Preservation Commission.

Eliminate Conflicts with Sign Ordinance

Concord should evaluate its sign ordinance to ensure that it is not inadvertently discouraging property owners and

artists from installing murals. Concord should consider implementing the following policy:

- ◆ Identify zoning districts where murals would be appropriate. Generally, this means downtown, commercial corridors, and mixed-use areas.
- ◆ In those areas, exempt murals from the sign ordinance.
- ◆ Require certification of murals at either a staff or Public Art Commission level. Establish standards to ensure that murals are artistic expressions and not commercial messaging (murals that are commercial messaging would be reviewed under the sign ordinance).

Facilitate Approvals in Historic District

Concord should evaluate its historic preservation protocols to establish processes and guidelines for reviewing exterior murals proposed for the historic district. Concord should consider implementing the following policy:

- ◆ Establish technical standards for the installation of murals on historic buildings, consistent with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards.
- ◆ Submit murals to Historic Preservation Commission for technical review and to Public Art Commission for aesthetic review.

Provide Funding for Murals

Concord should provide partial funding for businesses that would like to incorporate murals into their premises. Concord should consider implementing the following policy:

- ◆ Establish a mini-grant program, with grants in the range of \$500 to \$1,000, to encourage murals in private businesses. The model for this is facade enhancement grants.
- ◆ Limit eligibility to projects at businesses that are publicly accessible, such as shops and restaurants. Consider prioritizing target areas of the city.



Off Main Street mural adjacent to Bicentennial parking lot. Isaac Payne. Courtesy L.J. Weslowski/City of Concord.

- ◆ Limit eligibility to projects sponsored by business owners. Developers or property owners should not be eligible unless they are also business owners.
- ◆ Require business owners to commission murals from artists in the region, preferably Concord, and preferably from the roster, should one be created.
- ◆ Make payments directly to artists.

Develop a Muralist Roster

The public art program should consider creating a roster of muralists from Concord and Cabarrus County for businesses to consider for mural projects. This could assist businesses in finding artists, particularly ones they may not be familiar with, and provide artists with more opportunities. This roster could be managed collaboratively by the City and the Cabarrus Arts Council, because it would be of value elsewhere in the county.

Offer a Mural Training

The public art program should consider offering a muralist training workshop on an occasional basis to help artists learn the basics and enable them to obtain their first commissions.

This workshop could be managed collaboratively by the ClearWater Arts Center and the Cabarrus Arts Council, so that it is a resource for artists in both the city and the county. Successful completion of the workshop could be a pre-requisite for being added to the roster.

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES
FOR TEMPORARY OUTDOOR
SCULPTURE

Concord’s creative community has expressed an interest in being able to exhibit public art, primarily sculpture, in public spaces. Artists face the hurdle that there is no formal process for reviewing, approving and supporting public art proposals. Artists also face the hurdle of contracts that require levels of insurance coverage that not all artists carry.

As part of its public art initiative, Concord should encourage the exhibition of sculptural work on public property. In doing so, the City will benefit by having artwork on display at relatively low cost, in terms of finances and administrative time, and artists will have an opportunity to show their work.

In order to create a public art process that is more predictable and more friendly to artists, Concord should adopt the following policy framework:

- ◆ Pre-designate a variety of sites around the City as locations for temporary sculpture displays.
 - ◇ Consider sites that are designated as potential locations for future permanent artworks – Union Street streetscape, gateways, fire stations, greenway trailheads, parks. This will be a short-term way of achieving the City’s long-term goals and will test the viability of those sites for permanent installations.
 - ◆ Provide basic infrastructure, such as sculpture pads, at those sites.
- ◆ Establish an annual process for accepting and reviewing proposals for art installations.
 - ◇ Consider proposals from individual, non-profit arts organizations and independent curators; do not allow for-profit galleries to organize exhibitions for sale.
 - ◇ The PAC should review and approve proposals.
 - ◆ Provide a standard loan agreement.
 - ◇ The agreement should standardize terms for fees, insurance, the duration of the installation.
 - ◇ Allow individual artists to sell pieces at the end of display term.
 - ◇ Continue exploring how the City can waive insurance and indemnity requirements
 - ◆ Provide City staff assistance with installation and de-installation for artists who do not have commercial liability insurance.
 - ◆ Provide City insurance for sculptures while installed.



Non-profit *Fulltime Funkytown* organized an outdoor sculpture show in Concord in 2022.

PARTNERSHIPS
WITH THE PRIVATE SECTOR

*Coordination with Concord
Development Ordinance*

Concord can remove barriers and create incentives for developers to include public art and/or artist-designed features in the following ways.

Revise Concord Development Ordinance

- ◆ The Concord Development Ordinance can be amended to clarify when public art is a feature that can meet various site design requirements. These features include façade materials, amenities in setbacks and entryways, wall features, fence features, parking garage screening, vista features, entry features, and public amenity features.
- ◆ The Concord Development Ordinance definitions should be amended to include terms for Art Displays, Civic Art, Mural, Sculpture and Public Art.

*Create a Public Art Guidelines
as a Visual Supplement*

Concord can create guidelines that show developers how they can incorporate public art into their projects in a way that complies with the Concord Development Ordinance. These guidelines can consider how public art can be integrated into the following design elements that are referred to in the CDO: open spaces, façade features, greenway connections, focal point features, streetscape features, development entrances, termination of vistas, garage facades, murals, bicycle racks, sidewalk street crossings, decorative masonry walls, and decorative fences.

Downtown Opportunity Sites

Concord’s downtown plan identifies several sites that are viable for catalytic infill development. Each of these sites should be considered a potential location for public art. Concord should consider implementing the following policy:

- ◆ Require developers to attend a meeting of the Public Art Commission to discuss public art options for their site.
- ◆ Request that developers voluntarily include public art in their projects.
- ◆ Create a standard condition for incorporating public art in a development project, to be requested when any downtown development requires an approval upon which the City can apply conditions.

Major Industrial Locations

Concord is attracting major industrial development in the form of warehouse distribution centers and manufacturing plants. These developments are extremely large and can have an outsized presence on the landscape.

Opportunities

Two general opportunities to consider are gateway features at the entrance to sites, and large-scale murals on the blank walls of these buildings (an approach that Google has explored in the Data Center Mural Project). A systematic approach to encouraging large murals would be unique to Concord.

- ◆ In reviewing the land development applications of these projects, Concord should explore opportunities for public art and ask applicants to meet with the PAC on an informational basis.
- ◆ After exploring this idea further with developers, Concord should consider amendments to the Concord Development Ordinance that require or encourage murals on the blank walls of industrial facilities.
- ◆ In the long run, Concord should seek corporate funding for a “mural festival” that matches muralists to walls of existing large-scale industrial and warehousing facilities. One model might be like the “barn quilt tours” that are organized in rural areas, which would create a circuit of unusual murals throughout the city that would build civic pride, attract visitors and attract artists to the city. Another model that might garner private support is a “Concord Prize,” which would match a leading muralist to an industrial wall to produce one very large-scale mural a year.

IDEAS THAT INSPIRE US: PARKS AND GREENWAYS



Woven Scroll, concept for artwork commissioned at the Cabarrus County Courthouse. Courtesy RE:site.

PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE COUNTY

Concord, as the Cabarrus County seat, hosts County administrative buildings in the heart of the historic Downtown, and the County is an important stakeholder in discussions about public art downtown.

County administrators have expressed an interest in integrating public art in their facilities, and the City of Concord and Cabarrus County initiated a public art collaboration at the expansion of the downtown courthouse; City staff advised on the commissioning of Woven Scroll, by Norman Lee and RE:site in the main public lobby of the building.

There are opportunities for public art at a variety of other County locations in Concord. The City should initiate conversations with the County about how the public art program might encourage the County to pursue opportunities in those locations, and where and how partnering might leverage greater results. These include:

- ◆ The area between the historic courthouse (location of the Cabarrus Arts Council and Concord History Museum) and the courthouse expansion.
- ◆ Rotary Square
- ◆ Frank Liske Park
- ◆ Cabarrus County/ Concord Public Library façade or grounds
- ◆ Other locations that the County may identify

Fantastical Garden, Hagerstown, Md. Alison Sigethy. Courtesy Alison



Butterfly Gate, Mike Pennypacker, St. Louis. Courtesy Meridith



Alexandria Aerie, May + Watkins Design. Courtesy May + Watkins LLC. An original work owned and commissioned by the City of Alexandria, Virginia



Legacy, Baile Oakes. Courtesy City of Escondido, Calif.



Everywhen, Agustina Rodriguez, Austin. Photo by Chase Daniel. Courtesy artist.

Watermarks, D.I.R.T. Studio, Arlington Va. Courtesy Arlington County Public Art.



Nature's Sanctuary, Chandra Cox, Charlotte. Photo by JoAnn Sieburg-Baker. Courtesy Arts and Science Council.



IDEAS THAT INSPIRE US: WE ARE HERE



Excelsior, Stacy Utley and Edwin Harris, Charlotte. Courtesy Arts and Science Council.



Holding Grandmother's Quilt, Don Gensler. Courtesy Mural Arts Philadelphia.



Abrol de la Vida, Margureita Cabrera, San Antonio. Courtesy artist.

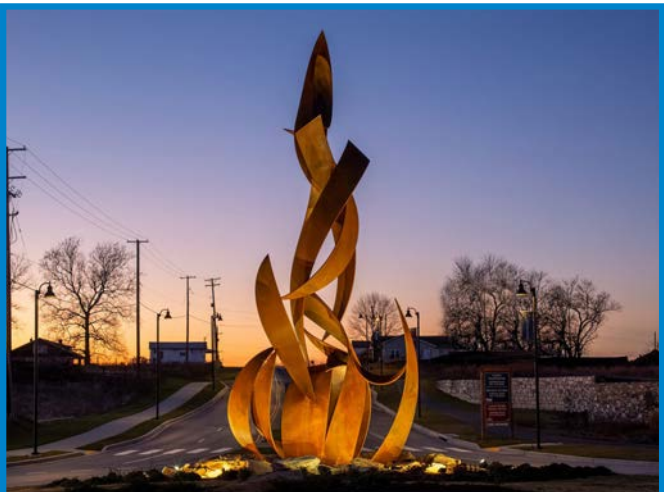


North Burial Ground Bus Shelter, Providence. Courtesy Klopfer Martin Design.

Theophilus Thompson: An Elusive Kinetic Portrait, Marguerite de Messières, Tsvetomir Naydenov, Frederick, Md. Courtesy artists.



IDEAS THAT INSPIRE US: YOU ARE HERE



Campfire, Joshua Weiner, Frederick County, Md. Photo by Doug Via. Courtesy Elm Street Development.



Rail, Fire, Ladder, Christopher Fennell, Allen, Tx. Courtesy artist.



Hand in Hand, Michael Stutz, San José. Courtesy artist.



Old Growth, Ben Butler, Memphis. Photo by Melissa McMasters. Courtesy Overton Park Conservancy.



Welcome to Boligee, Banks Compton. Boligee, Al. Courtesy artist.



Mr. Eggwards, Kimber Fiebiger. Courtesy City of Suwanee, Ga.

Implementation Framework

GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

Concord should develop the following framework for governing and managing its public art program. The three basic components of that framework (enabling legislation, program policies, PAC procedures) are outlined below. The following sections of the plan include much of the material that would be incorporated into this framework.

FUNDING AND GOVERNANCE

Council should adopt, by ordinance or other appropriate legal means, a simple governance framework that includes:

- ◆ Council, PAC and staff authorities
- ◆ PAC composition and appointment
- ◆ Funding sources and uses

Governance of the Public Art Commission (PAC) shall be consistent with North Carolina state law and local ordinances.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Concord should develop a Policies and Procedures document that covers the following topics. This should be developed by staff, recommended by PAC, and approved by Council.

To the extent possible, the Council should delegate future amendments to policies and procedures to the PAC / City Manager. Updates to Policies and Procedures should be reported to the Council and brought to Council for approval if necessary.

The Policies and Procedures document would include:

- ◆ PAC role and responsibility
- ◆ Process / criteria for identifying projects eligible for Percent for Art (should Concord enact such a policy)
- ◆ Process for developing Annual Work Plan
- ◆ Process for developing Individual Project Plans
- ◆ Artist selection processes
- ◆ Artist contracting
- ◆ Documentation, conservation and maintenance of artworks
- ◆ Process for reviewing and approving donations and loans of artworks (temporary installations)
- ◆ Process for reviewing and approving relocation, removal of artworks (de-accessioning)
- ◆ Public / community / stakeholder engagement processes

PAC OPERATING PROCEDURES

The PAC should have written operating procedures for processes such as electing officers, conducting meetings and keeping records, as well as conflict of interest policies.

FUNDING

MODELS AND METRICS FOR FUNDING PUBLIC ART

Successful public art programs adopt a funding model that can be sustained from year to year. Sustained and predictable funding enables a public art program to plan several years in advance, which helps staff ensure that project flow aligns with their capacity and that the future obligations of multi-year projects can be anticipated. Predictable funding also provides leverage for additional funding through partnerships and grant matches.

Other North Carolina cities have approached sustained, predictable public art funding in several ways.

- ◆ Several cities have percent for art funding policies for projects (Asheville, Charlotte–Mecklenburg County, Durham City-County, Raleigh, Wake Forest)
- ◆ Cary negotiates percent for art funding for projects on a case-by-case basis
- ◆ Raleigh also allocates per capita funding from its annual operating budget for arts and culture, some of which is allocated to public art. The amount is \$5 per resident of the city, each year.
- ◆ Other communities allocate flat annual funding for public art. This includes Matthews (\$15,000, or about \$0.50 per resident) and Gastonia (\$100,000, or about \$1.30 per resident).
- ◆ Several cities support professional staffing through dedicated staff positions or shared duties.

In the near term, Concord will fund public art through annual allocations based on requests through the Annual Work Plan, as part of the City’s annual budgeting process and the budgets that Council approves.

Funding levels will likely fluctuate from year to year. In the long term, Concord should consider funding levels that are commensurate with each year’s capital construction activity, as well as the City’s growing population.

- ◆ City departments should consider incorporating funds for public art into the budget proposals for major new capital projects, those with high visibility and a cost of \$1,000,000 or more. As a guideline, departments should consider minimum of one percent of the project cost, less land acquisition and soft costs, with a maximum public art cost of \$250,000 per project in most circumstances.

- ◆ The City should also consider incorporating an amount equal to one percent of the aggregate budget for greenway construction each year for public art related to the greenways, even if individual projects are less than \$1,000,000. These funds should be held in a reserve fund for public art anywhere along the greenways.
- ◆ When public art is integrated into the design for a park, or substituted for a functional feature (such as a splash pad or canopy) the City should consider a cost-sharing approach to help fund public art. In this approach, the basic budget for the feature is removed from the construction budget and allocated to the artist, and then supplemented with additional funds (such as the percentage allocation) to create the total budget for the public art.
- ◆ The City should consider making a general allocation each year that would support other public art projects recommended by the PAC in the Annual Public Art Work Plan (which would be developed concurrently with the City’s annual budget process). The amount of this general allocation should be in the range of \$1.25 per City resident, which could be adjusted over time. This funding could be used both for projects and contracted project management costs.

City funding can also serve as a model and incentive for other entities to support public art.

- ◆ The City should consider asking other public agencies, such as Rider Transit, to follow the City’s lead and make specific percent-for-art commitments voluntarily. (These could be incorporated by reference in the Annual Public Art Work Plan.)
- ◆ The City should consider asking developers to follow the City’s lead and make similar commitments for public art voluntarily, especially for projects in highly-visible or publicly accessible locations.

USES OF FUNDS

City-appropriated funds for public art, and any other funds received for public art, can only be used for the following activities:

- ◆ artist selection processes, including jury selection, artist travel costs and artist fees for concept development
- ◆ artist services, including design fees and the preparation of models or maquettes
- ◆ sub-consultant fees such as engineering or other specialty consulting
- ◆ materials, fabrication, delivery and installation related to artworks
- ◆ site preparation, landscaping and lighting related specifically to the installation of an artwork
 - ◇ For integrated artworks and for site preparation costs, only the incremental costs of integrating or siting the artwork, above the base project budget, shall be eligible for public art funds.
- ◆ identifying plaques/markers
- ◆ conservation and maintenance of public art that is commissioned by the City, including repair, replacement of works damaged beyond repair and not covered by insurance, surveys, curatorial services, re-siting and other conservation work necessary to keep all works of art in good condition
- ◆ relocation and/or removal of artworks
- ◆ contracted program administration, planning and project management services
- ◆ community education programs, outreach and dedications
- ◆ collection management, including software and database training and photo documentation.



Skew, Carl Billingsley, at ClearWater Arts Center & Studios. Courtesy Sarah Gay, City of Concord.

STAFFING

PUBLIC ART ADMINISTRATION

Concord’s public art activities should be led by a professional public art administrator who has a variety of professional skills, including cultural program management and budgeting, public art curating, public art project management, and community engagement. The general duties of a public art administrator include planning, project development, project management, community programming, collection management, and liaison with artists, arts organizations and developers.

PROVIDING NEAR-TERM CAPACITY

Because of the potential for front-loading public art projects related to the recently-approved parks bond, the City should consider the following strategies for accommodating its near-term public art workload:

- ◆ Retain one or more contract public art project managers to handle public art project management workload.
- ◆ Retain a contract public art administrator to develop grant applications.
- ◆ Contract with a local artist as a “public art fellow” who could handle administrative tasks such as managing an artist pool and artist selections.
- ◆ Develop a roster from which to select artists for all of the projects. This will reduce the administrative workload of multiple artist selection processes.
- ◆ Determine which projects can be installed after park construction is complete, so that the commissioning and installation process (and related administrative work) can be staggered across several years.



Sculpture by Jim Gallucci at ClearWater Arts Center & Studios. Courtesy Sarah Gay, City of Concord.

PUBLIC ART COMMISSION

Concord should re-organize its Public Art Advisory Committee to be a citizen-based Public Art Commission. This structure is essential for ensuring Council and staff can draw on the guidance of community leaders in developing the public art program.

DUTIES

The PAC’s general duties should be to advise the Council and staff on public art matters, and it should have specific duties related to approving Individual Project Plans, as well as recommending Annual Work Plans, artist selections and project approvals. The PAC shall work in collaboration with the Public Art Administrator and other City staff.

COMPOSITION AND ROLE

The City should create a Public Art Commission (PAC) whose role is to advise Council and staff on the implementation and general oversight of the public art program. The PAC should be constituted to include broad community representation as well as specific representation of people from professional art or design backgrounds, and involve members of key city agencies.

The PAC should consist of 11 voting members and 4 non-voting members:

- ◆ One voting member should be from each of the seven Council districts.
- ◆ Three voting members should be from the city at-large and should have professional art or design backgrounds.
- ◆ One voting member should be the Director of the Cabarrus Arts Council (CAC), or the Director’s designee.
- ◆ Up to four non-voting members shall be staff representing City departments, appointed by the City Manager

Nominations for the seven district members and three at-large members should be accepted through an application process; Council will review applications and approve appointments. All Council members should vote on all PAC appointments.

All district and at-large members shall serve a three-year term and shall be eligible to be reappointed for one additional term, after which they must wait two years before applying again. Terms shall be staggered so that in any year no more than four members are up for re-appointment or replacement.

In making appointments, the Council should ensure that the diversity of the PAC as a whole is representative of the diversity of the city’s population as a whole, including but not limited to consideration of race, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and neighborhood of residence.

The CAC Director may remain on the PAC as long as they hold that position; if the CAC Director appoints a designee, that person shall serve a maximum of two three-year terms.

The non-voting City staff members shall be appointed by the City Manager, and shall be chosen from the parks, planning, buildings and grounds and other departments that are involved with public art projects.

PUBLIC ART PLANNING

PUBLIC ART PLAN

Concord’s Public Art Plan provides the framework for the operation of a public art program. It outlines a vision and goals for a public art program, identifies opportunities and priorities for projects, and details the processes that will be used to manage the program, including funding, staffing and governance.

ANNUAL PUBLIC ART WORK PLAN

The Annual Public Art Work Plan outlines which new public art projects the City will initiate in the upcoming year, indicating where projects are located, what the proposed budgets will be, and how the projects align with the recommendations of the Public Art Plan. The Work Plan also outlines which projects are being carried over from previous years, as well as special initiatives and conservation / maintenance priorities.

In addition, the Work Plan should look forward two additional years to anticipate what projects will be recommended and what the budgets might be, as well as what projects will carry over in future years. This will help program staff and City Council anticipate future public art program opportunities and staffing and funding needs.

The Work Plan should be developed by staff in collaboration with the PAC, recommended by the PAC, and approved by the City Council. This will be City Council’s primary mechanism for confirming the priorities, expenditures and workflow of the public art program.

In developing the Work Plan, the staff and the PAC should use the project selection criteria outlined earlier in this plan, as well as the vision, values and goals expressed in this plan. It is important to recognize that the Work Plan is a process of balancing more than it is a process of prioritizing. That is, in any given Work Plan, the PAC should strive for a

diverse group of projects to work on, in terms of the type of project, location in the city, scale, media and community process. The three-year window is important because while it might be difficult to ensure a diverse set of projects in any given year, the PAC can achieve the desired balance of projects over time.

The Work Plan should be developed in conjunction with the City’s annual budget process. It should be completed by the end of each calendar year, in time to be included in the departmental budget requests for the next fiscal year.

IDENTIFYING AND PLANNING FOR PUBLIC ART IN CAPITAL PROJECTS

The Work Plan development would be led by the Public Art Administrator, in consultation with directors of other City departments to identify which upcoming projects are most likely to help the City achieve its public art vision and goals. For those projects where public art is recommended, the capital budget should include the required percentage for public art.

In practice, because the Annual Work Plan has a three-year look ahead, the Public Art Administrator and department directors should be able to identify several years in advance which capital projects are the best candidates for public art, and therefore build public art into the planning, design and fundraising phases. Departments should consider scoping their design teams to include coordination with the public art program.

INDIVIDUAL PROJECT PLAN

The Individual Project Plan is a project management tool that City staff and the PAC use to guide the planning and execution of a specific public art project. The Project Plan sets out the basic framework of the project, such as goals and location; budget and funding; timeline; the artist selection process and community engagement process; a marketing plan; a list of internal and external stakeholders; and protocols for collaboration with other entities. The Project Plan can be simple or in-depth, depending on the nature and scale of the project.

The Project Plan should be developed by staff in collaboration with the PAC, and approved by the PAC. (The PAC could delegate its role in developing the plan to a Selection Panel or Task Force, as described below, but should always review and approve the Project Plan.) The approved Project Plan should be referred to the City Manager or their designee and reported to City Council as an information item.

SELECTION PANEL OR TASK FORCE

A Selection Panel is a group that may be appointed by the PAC specifically for each project to make recommendations about the selection of an artist and about the approval of an artist’s concept. A Selection Panel should be established for larger or more prominent projects; the PAC can provide necessary oversight for smaller projects.

Generally, a Selection Panel should have at least five members. The panelists should include representatives of communities or organizations that are stakeholders to the process, as well as people who can bring art and design expertise. City staff, particularly from collaborating agencies, should attend these meetings so they can participate in the discussions, but they should not vote on key decisions, so that staff and council can have clear input from the community.

The Selection Panel should make recommendations to the PAC about the artist selection and the approval of the artist concept. The PAC would then review and refer those recommendations to the City Manager or their designee (Department Director) to contract with the artist. Artist selections and artist concepts should be reported to the Council as information items.

From time to time, a Selection Panel may be constituted more broadly as a Project Task Force, which would play a larger advisory role in the project. Additional duties for a Project Task Force could include working with staff to develop a Project Plan or assisting with community engagement aspects of a project.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE

The Public Art Administrator should be invited to attend meetings of the City’s internal Development Review Committee, which reviews both City capital projects and private development projects. The Administrator can serve as a resource for identifying opportunities for public art in projects, and also obtain feedback on proposals for integrating public art into projects.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

CITY COUNCIL

Initially:

- ◆ Approve Concord Public Art Plan and its recommendations
- ◆ Approve Concord Public Art governance framework, including the establishment of Public Art Commission and recognizing its membership, duties and responsibilities
- ◆ Approve public art staff funding and role

Annually:

- ◆ Approve Annual Public Art Work Plan, including projects, locations and budgets
- ◆ Approve annual public art funding
- ◆ Approve appointments to Public Art Commission

Throughout the year:

- ◆ Receive reports on Individual Project Plans; Public Art Commission recommendations

for artists selections and design concepts; public art project milestones; and other program matters

- ◆ Authorize City Manager to enter contracts for any projects needing consideration outside the Annual Public Art Work Plan
- ◆ Attend / speak at dedication events to celebrate the completion of public art projects in their district

As needed / scheduled:

- ◆ Approve amendments to public art funding and governance framework documents
- ◆ Receive reports on amendments to PAC bylaws, Public Art staffing changes and other matters
- ◆ Delegate the PAC to embark on Master Plan update within five years

PUBLIC ART COMMISSION (PAC)

Initially:

- ◆ Develop procedures for PAC operation

Annually:

- ◆ Collaborate with public art staff on development of the Annual Public Art Work plan
- ◆ Recommend Annual Public Art Work plan to City Council

For each project:

- ◆ Help public art staff develop Individual Project Plans, or delegate this role to a project-specific Task Force or Selection Panel
- ◆ Approve Individual Project Plan and refer to City Manager and City Council as information items
- ◆ Appoint Selection Panel and/or Project Task Force
- ◆ Approve artist selection and refer to City Manager for contract approval and to City Council as information item
- ◆ Approve artist concept and refer to City Manager for approval and to City Council as information item

As needed:

- ◆ Review and recommend revisions to public art policies and procedures documents as needed, at least every three years
- ◆ Make public art part of the way that Concord tells its story to visitors

SELECTION PANEL OR TASK FORCE

Ad hoc Selection Panels or Task Forces can be convened by the PAC:

- ◆ Help public art administrator develop Individual Project Plan
- ◆ Recommend Individual Project Plan to PAC
- ◆ Recommend artist selection to PAC
- ◆ Recommend artist concept to PAC

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

CITY MANAGER
OR DEPARTMENT DESIGNEE

Initially:

- ◆ Review and recommend Concord Public Art Plan
- ◆ Review and recommend Concord public art funding and governance framework
- ◆ Review and recommend public art staff funding and role

Annually:

- ◆ Review and recommend Annual Public Art Work Plan
- ◆ Incorporate public art project and staff funding in recommended annual City budget

Throughout the year:

- ◆ Manage or delegate management of public art program staff
- ◆ Review public art milestones (artist selection, approve artist concepts) and refer to City Council as information items

- ◆ Approve artist contracts
- ◆ Receive reports on Individual Project Plans and project progress, and refer to Council as information items
- ◆ Approve contracts for artists selected for projects included in Annual Public Art Work Plan
- ◆ Approve contracts for projects needing consideration outside the Annual Public Art Work Plan

As needed/ scheduled:

- ◆ Hire public art program staff
- ◆ Review and recommend amendments to public art funding and governance framework as recommended by the PAC
- ◆ Cultivate partnerships outside City government (businesses, County agencies, arts organizations)

PUBLIC ART ADMINISTRATOR

The Public Art Administrator, as lead staff person, along with any additional Consultant (or employee) project manager(s) hired, shall:

Initially:

- ◆ Establish and implement project documentation and collection management protocols
- ◆ Establish and implement conservation and maintenance protocols

Annually:

- ◆ Work with coworkers in relevant departments to identify public art opportunities, locations and project scopes and to plan, determine percent for art allocations
- ◆ Draft the Public Art Annual Work Plan and work with the PAC to finalize, approve and propose the Annual Work Plan to City Council for approval

For each project:

- ◆ Facilitate development of Individual Project Plans, in consultation with PAC and/or Project Task Force
- ◆ Faciliate artist selection processes, including development of RFQs / RFPs, recruitment of artists, and facilitation of selection panels
- ◆ Manage and oversee the logistics of each project, including artist contractor oversight, artist project

budget approval, coordination with government entities, approval of artwork progress, milestones and payments, documentation of process

- ◆ Coordinate technical review when necessary
- ◆ Support artists during project development

- ◆ Work with City Manager office and Public Affairs staff to appropriately announce and publicize public art milestones

- ◆ Coordinate dedication events and assist with public relations

Throughout the year:

- ◆ Participate in City Development Review Committee meetings
- ◆ Make public appearances to on behalf of Concord's public art program to build community support
- ◆ Work with developers and private business entities to identify potential private contribution and public art locations and help establish partnerships and liaisons
- ◆ As needed or scheduled:
- ◆ Facilitate amendments to public art governance framework, in consultation with PAC
- ◆ Orient any new PAC appointees to their role and duties.

Program and Project Tools



Historic Cabarrus County Courthouse, now home to the Cabarrus Arts Council. Courtesy L.J. Weslowski/City of Concord.

ARTIST SELECTION PROCESSES

There are a variety of processes for selecting artists for public art commissions. For each project, the process should reflect the circumstances and goals of the project, as well as best practices in the public art field. Any processes followed by the City of Concord would need to be followed in the context of the City's procurement requirements.

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF ARTIST SELECTION

Artist selection process should be designed with the following principles in mind:

- ◆ Selection processes should be competitive, except in situations where there are extraordinary circumstances, as expressed in the approved project plan.
- ◆ Artist selections should be recommended by a committee that includes project stakeholders and arts professionals. In Concord's Public Art Plan these are called Selection Panels or Task Forces.
- ◆ Artist selections should generally be made based on artist qualifications. If artists are asked to prepare concepts, the artist should be compensated.
- ◆ Artist selection processes must be consistent with the procurement approaches required by the funding source and/or the project sponsor.

ARTIST SELECTION APPROACHES

Open Competition

In an Open Competition, any artist may submit his or her qualifications, subject to the requirements established in a Call to Artists or a Request for Qualifications (RFQ). The RFQ should be sufficiently detailed to allow artists to determine whether their artistic practice or qualifications are appropriate for consideration.

An Open Competition allows for the broadest range of artists to compete and can bring in new, otherwise unknown, and emerging artists. However, an Open Competition can consume a large amount of staff and

Selection Panel resources, especially time. It can also discourage established artists who prefer to respond to limited competitions or to be directly selected for projects, as well as emerging or disadvantaged artists who don't have access to the tools or resources necessary to put together RFQ responses.

Limited Competition / Invitational

In a Limited Competition or Invitational process, several artists are pre-selected and invited to respond to an RFQ. This method may be appropriate when looking for a small group of experienced artists, when there is a limited time frame, or if the project requirements are so specialized that only a limited number of already identified artists would be eligible. However, an invitational process can sometimes overlook artists whose work would be a good match for the project.

The list of pre-selected artists could come from a pre-established roster or from a curatorial process. This process should be led by a public art professional, such as the City's Public Art Administrator or a consulting curator. Special care should be taken to consult with artists, arts administrators and curators familiar with artists whose work may not have been recognized through conventional public art channels, and/or may be from groups who have been historically under-represented in public art processes.

Direct Selection

On occasion, an artist might be selected for a project without a competitive process. Direct selection can be useful on projects where there is an urgent timeline, a low budget, or unusually specific project requirements. It is possible that this artist would be selected from a pre-qualified list or roster.

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

A Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is a call to artists that asks for the submission of an artist’s credentials, which is the basis of selecting an artist.

An RFQ document outlines the background on the project, the specific role for the artist, the criteria for evaluating artists, and a proposed schedule and budget or artist fee. The requested credentials could include examples of past work, contact information for people who can speak to an artist’s abilities, and a letter of introduction. An artist interview is often part of this process.

Additional Resources

Public Art Network Artist Selection Process
Resource Guide (2013)

PAN Call for Artists
Resource Guide (2004)

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

A Request for Proposals (RFP) is a call to artists that asks for the submission of both an artist’s credentials and a conceptual proposal for an artwork, both of which become the basis for selecting an artist. RFPs are commonly issued as a second phase of an artist selection process, after a short list of artists has been developed through an RFQ.

An RFP document outlines the background on the project, the specific role for the artist, the criteria for evaluating artists, and a proposed schedule and budget or artist fee. Project background can include information about the site and the community where it is located, and reference materials such as photos, maps or preliminary plan drawings to help the artist understand the project. The requested credentials could include examples of past work, contact information for people who can speak to an artist’s abilities, and a letter of introduction. An artist site visit and interview are often part of this process.

Artists are generally compensated for preparing a concept, because the artistic concept is an important component of the services and artist provides and should not be provided for free.

ROSTER

A roster is a pre-qualified pool of artists from which artists can be selected to participate in a Limited Competition/ Invitational process or be selected directly.

A roster is based on a review of qualifications from artists who respond to an open RFQ. The roster could be focused on a specific set of opportunities, or be used broadly for a range of commissions. If the roster is meant to be used for several years, it should be updated periodically to allow new artists to be considered, and to allow roster artists to update their materials.

To create a roster, a public art program would issue a call to artists, inviting them to submit their qualifications for being added to the roster. The call to artists should outline the qualifications artists must have and criteria against which they will be evaluated, anticipating the types of opportunities that the public art program anticipates in the coming year or two. The call should also provide instructions for submitting and include background and reference information.

A selection panel should be organized to review the call and make recommendations as to which artists should be added to the roster. Once

selected, artists should be kept on the eligibility list for several years before they need to re-apply.

A roster requires upfront work and ongoing management, but it allows for artist selection for specific projects to proceed much more quickly. This would be a viable strategy if the public art program were anticipating a large number of commissions over a short period of time, and were adequately staffed to create a roster.

For Concord, a roster could be useful for the parks projects it could potentially undertake. This is because the types of opportunities are likely to be similar across the numerous parks construction projects, and because it is possible that decisions about artist selection may have to occur relatively quickly.

Also, Concord should consider creating a roster of muralists for businesses to consider for mural projects. This could assist businesses in finding artists, particularly ones they may not be familiar with, and provide artists with more opportunities. This roster could be managed collaboratively by the City and the Cabarrus Arts Council, because it would be of value elsewhere in the county.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PUBLIC EDUCATION

Community engagement is an important component of public art projects, setting public art practice apart from artistic practice that is focused on galleries, museums or private clients. This is important as a matter of equity, to ensure that people have the ability to influence decisions that impact the places they experience and value. A permanent public art project will have a very public presence for a very long time; it will play an outsized role in creating an image for the community where it is located, as well as an impression of that community in the public's mind.

It is important to ensure that public art is welcomed and seen as a positive addition to a community. Therefore, anybody leading a public art project should give careful thought to the community in which it will be located and set clear goals for the role they would like community stakeholders to play in the development of the project. With those goals in mind, the project leaders can then determine the best approach to involving the community at various phases, such as planning, designing, creating and celebrating the artwork.

Basic Principles of Community Engagement

Community engagement processes should be organized with the following principles in mind:

- ◆ The best approach depends on the nature of the project and the artist; there is no single approach that is right for every circumstance.
- ◆ The artist will play a key role in how community engagement is organized. The artist should help direct the strategy and the process, which should build on practices that the artist is comfortable with.
- ◆ It is important to manage expectations. Make it clear from the outset what the community's role in the project will be, as well as what the boundaries are.

Integrating Public Engagement into the Development of a Public Art Project

Community engagement can occur throughout a project, from the early stages of setting the goals and identifying an artist, to working with the artist as they develop a concept, to the celebration of a project once it is complete. The following sections outline a step-by-step process that should be considered for each project in Concord.

Developing a Strategy

Every public art project should begin with a specific public engagement plan. This plan should:

- ◆ Identify goals for community engagement,
- ◆ Identify key stakeholders, what would encourage and prevent them from participating, what their role would be (including potential Selection Panel members), and what they would gain from participating,
- ◆ Identify key milestones for community engagement,
- ◆ Identify target audiences and appropriate vehicles for community engagement, and
- ◆ Set expectations for the artist's approach to community engagement.
- ◆ Include a component for assessing the success of the community engagement process.

Articulating Goals

Community engagement goals should take stock of the goals for the project and the impact the artwork will have on the community. These are some common community engagement goals:

- ◆ Support the artist in creating an artwork that conveys the community's vision and voice
- ◆ Support the artist in creating an artwork that fits into the context of its surroundings
- ◆ Inform the content and/or themes of the artwork
- ◆ Empower people in the community through their participation in an art project
- ◆ Strengthen community social networks
- ◆ Provide a platform for community voice
- ◆ Connect people with community resources
- ◆ Obtain buy-in for the larger project that includes the artwork

Identifying Stakeholders

The strategy for each project should consider key stakeholders — people who will have an interest in or who will be affected by the project. Stakeholders can include:

- ◆ Nearby property owners, residents and business owners
- ◆ Other people who customarily use the place where the artwork will be located
- ◆ Organizations that serve the area where the artwork will be located or the groups of people who frequent the location
- ◆ Elected, appointed and volunteer leaders
- ◆ Staff of public agencies with responsibility for the place where the artwork will be located

In identifying stakeholders, it is important to consider whose voice is being overlooked in any particular situation and to make sure people have a path to involvement that is accessible and comfortable to them.

Community Partnerships

Communities often develop public art projects through partnerships with non- profit community groups, such as arts, social service, economic development or religious organizations. These groups can bring outreach capacity and are likely to have experience with the specific community in which the project is being developed.

As in any partnership, it is important to establish the role, responsibilities and deliverables compensation for the community partner, as well as any compensation they will be provided with to support their efforts on the project. In particular, community partners should be resourced equitably for their involvement.

Planning Phase

The early stages of planning an artwork can be undertaken in collaboration with the community where it is located. Consider consulting the community in:

- ◆ Finding a location for the artwork
- ◆ Learning what the community's needs and interests are, such as the role they hope an artwork can play, and the impact they would like it to have in their community
- ◆ Identifying potential stakeholders and participants

Artist Selection Phase

There are a number of factors that must be considered in selecting an artist, including the artist's experience, technical proficiency and availability for the budget at hand. The artist's sensitivity to and connection with the community can be one of them.

The community can play a role in selecting the artist, depending on the artist selection process that is being followed. Community stakeholders should be included in Selection Panels. In addition:

- ◆ If the artist selection is based on qualifications and an interview, consider:
 - ◇ Asking community stakeholders for recommendations about local artists to consider, and
 - ◇ Inviting community members to meet with the short-listed artists.
- ◆ If the artist selection is based on proposals, consider:
 - ◇ Inviting community members to meet with the artists while they are developing their proposals.
 - ◇ Inviting community members to review the proposals and provide comments to the reviewers.
- ◆ If the artist selection involves an artist site visit, consider:
 - ◇ Arranging an opportunity for the artist to meet stakeholders in formal and informal types of situations.

Community members can provide reactions to the potential artists through surveys, comment cards or open-ended conversations. It is not advisable to allow community members to vote on artists or proposals because that empowers only people who are able to vote, and because the final selection will need to be based on a deliberative process with a Selection Panel (which should include community representatives).

Research and Design Phase

The process of researching and designing an artwork, once an artist is hired, can be a collaborative activity that involves people in the community where the artwork is located, or people in organizations related to the topic of the artwork.

- ◆ Begin the engagement and design phase before any concepts are finalized, potentially even before an artist is selected. Include all stakeholders and concerned individuals. Consider holding one or more community meetings, especially if a large number of people are involved, and make sure to include people who will be impacted by the artworks. The meeting can introduce people to the project and collect preliminary needs about the community’s ideas about the goals and potential subject matter.
- ◆ Conduct additional research as necessary. Community members and community organizations, such as historical societies can often provide material that will contribute to the ideas the artist includes in the artwork.
- ◆ Sometimes, artworks are created with community participation in the design. In these situations, the artist’s role is to facilitate a collaborative process in which people can contribute ideas that are incorporated into the artwork. There are many different approaches to this, depending on the type of artwork and the artist’s working process.

Involving the Community in Creating the Artwork

Depending on the type of artwork, there may be opportunities for involving the community in the creation of the artwork. This is most common with murals, which lend themselves on to hand-on participation. For We Are Concord, an artwork developed by Concord Artist Francene Greene in conjunction with this master plan, community members provided drawings and fabric swatches that were incorporated into an artwork that was exhibited inside City Hall. Interactive artworks can allow for ongoing community input into the operation of the artwork.

Celebration Phase

When the artwork is complete, it is a good idea to plan a celebration for the community. There can be a short ceremony to dedicate the artwork, at which people who played a key role in project can speak. There should also be a celebration with food, music, dancing and other creative activities — whatever seems right!



Martin Luther King, Jr., Memorial.
Courtesy L.J. Weslowski/City of Concord.

DONATIONS, COMMEMORATIVE ARTWORKS & MEMORIALS

It is likely that from time to time there will be individuals or groups that would like to donate public art to Concord, either to help beautify the city or to bring attention to people, events and causes that they think deserve recognition. To manage these opportunities so that the public interest is considered, the City should create standard review processes for accepting or declining donated works of art, commemorative artworks and memorial projects.

Create Applicable Definitions

The City should create definitions for what constitutes a Donation, a Commemorative Artwork and a Memorial. Proposed definitions are included elsewhere in this plan

Create an Approval Process

The City should create a process for reviewing Donations, Commemorative Artworks and Memorials, and certifying that they meet its guidelines for public art. Some of the factors to consider are:

- ◆ Applicants should submit an application to City staff, providing information about the proposed project and the site.
- ◆ City staff, including the department responsible for the site for which the proposal is being made, should review the application to ensure that the application meets all technical requirements, such as how it is integrated into its site.
- ◆ The Public Art Commission should review the application to ensure that it meets the City’s definition and criteria for a Donations, Commemorative Artworks or Memorials.
- ◆ Staff and Commission recommendations should be forwarded to City Council.

Create Guidelines

The City should create guidelines necessary for determining what constitutes a Donation, Commemorative Artwork or Memorial. These guidelines should consider:

- ◆ Listing of the types of entities that are eligible to make a Donation to the City and to sponsor a Commemorative Artwork or a Memorial
- ◆ Information that should be required in an application for a Donation, Commemorative Artwork or Memorial
- ◆ Conditions related to siting, maintenance and identification signage
- ◆ Conditions related to the artistic components of a Donation or a Commemorative Artwork (for example, must follow the definition of Public Art)
- ◆ Additional features that can be considered as part of a Memorial (such as landscaping, interpretive information and water features)
- ◆ Conditions related to the subject matter of a Commemorative Artwork or Memorial

The City should also create guidelines necessary for evaluating the artistic integrity of a Donation or a Commemorative Artwork. Some of the key factors to consider are:

- ◆ The creator of a Donation or a Commemorative Artwork should be an Artist, as defined elsewhere in this plan.
- ◆ A Donation or a Commemorative Artwork should have an artistic intent, as determined by the artist.
- ◆ A Donation or a Commemorative Artwork should reflect the same standards of quality that would be applied to an Artwork that the City is commissioning.
- ◆ A Donation, Commemorative Artwork or Memorial should not include logos, text, names or colors reflective of or proprietary to any entity that commissions, funds or provides a location for the project.
- ◆ Donors should be required to provide resources to support the future maintenance of a Donation, Commemorative Artwork or Memorial.

RELOCATING OR REMOVING ARTWORKS

The owner of a work of public art retains the right to relocate that artwork or remove it altogether. However, the relocation or removal of an artwork before the end of its anticipated lifespan should be a rare and unusual measure, and such actions must be undertaken in accordance with the Visual Artists Rights Act (VARA).

If the artwork is owned by the City, then a formal process should be followed. The process should include a careful evaluation of the proposal to relocate or remove the artwork, using pre-established criteria, and a recommendation to an authority responsible for making a decision. A typical process is described below.

Conditions for Relocation

- An artwork should be recommended for relocation from its site only if reasonable cause has been established by one or more of the following conditions:
- ◆ The artwork’s present condition poses a safety hazard to the public.
 - ◆ The physical context or site (building, wall, plaza, landscape) is being modified to the extent that the artwork is no longer viable.
 - ◆ The use of this particular location may have changed, and/or the artwork may have lost its contextual meaning.
 - ◆ The condition or security of the artwork cannot be reasonably guaranteed in its present location.
 - ◆ The artist has requested that the artwork be relocated.
 - ◆ In addition, an artwork should be relocated only if a suitable new location has been found.

Additional Conditions for Removal (De-accessioning)

An artwork should be recommended for removal (de-accessioning) only if reasonable cause has been established by one or more of the conditions for relocation, above, or one or more of the conditions listed below:

- ◆ The artwork has been damaged or has deteriorated to the point that it can no longer be represented to be the original artwork;
- ◆ The restoration of the artwork’s structural or aesthetic integrity is technically not feasible, or the expense of restoring it exceeds 50 percent of the original cost of the artwork;
- ◆ The physical context or site (building, wall, plaza, landscape) is being modified to the extent that the artwork is no longer viable,
- ◆ The artwork no longer meets the City’s vision for public art; or
- ◆ The artwork is proved to be inauthentic or in violation of existing copyright laws.

Procedures for Relocating or De-accessioning an Artwork

Initiating the Process

Any request for relocating or de-accessioning an artwork shall be submitted to the City staff liaison to the Public Art Commission. The process should be coordinated by the City staff liaison or a public art consultant.

Informing Stakeholders

- The person coordinating the process should ensure that all necessary stakeholders are aware of the process to relocate or de-accession an artwork by:
- ◆ consulting with the artist about the artist’s intentions for the work and, in the case
 - ◆ of a de-accessioning, the artist’s interest in reclaiming the work,

- ◆ consulting with affected public agencies,
- ◆ consulting the donor of the artwork, if it was a gift, and
- ◆ providing appropriate notification to project stakeholders and the public at large.
- ◆ Feedback from the artist, the donor, stakeholders and the public at large should be collected and documented in a report.

Report and Recommendation

The coordinator of the process will prepare a report that includes:

- ◆ background on the artwork, the artist and how the artwork was obtained by the City;
- ◆ review of any restrictions that may apply to the disposition of the artwork,
- ◆ based on contract review or the condition of the artwork;
- ◆ appraised value of the artwork, if obtainable;
- ◆ feedback from the artist, the donor, stakeholders and the public at large;
- ◆ in the case of the relocation of an artwork, a recommendation for the new location for the artwork or for storing the artwork; and
- ◆ in the case of de-accessioning an artwork, a recommendation for the disposition of the artwork, considering (in order of preference): transfer to the artist; sale or trade; loan or donation to an arts nonprofit; or destruction.

Approval

The coordinator of the process will send the report and recommendations to the Public Art Commission for a recommendation. In the case of a relocation the recommendation would be final. In the case of a de-accession, the recommendation would be made to Council.

Planning for Relocation or Removal

It is common now in the commissioning of new artworks to consider issues of relocation or removal at the outset and recording them in the agreement with the artist and the owner of the artwork.

Artist agreements now commonly specify a time limit for the useful life of an artwork, which might range from several years for a new media work to twenty years for a mural to a much longer time frame for a traditional sculpture. For integrated artwork, a time-limit might relate to the useful life of the infrastructure or the site where the artwork is located.

These conditions are spelled out to the extent possible in order to lessen the surprise of a relocation or removal process, when it occurs, and to make the intentions of the project sponsor and the artist clear from the outset.

Temporary Artworks

Temporary artworks are by definition time-limited, and therefore would not be subjected to a relocation or removal process.

Visual Artists Rights Act (VARA)

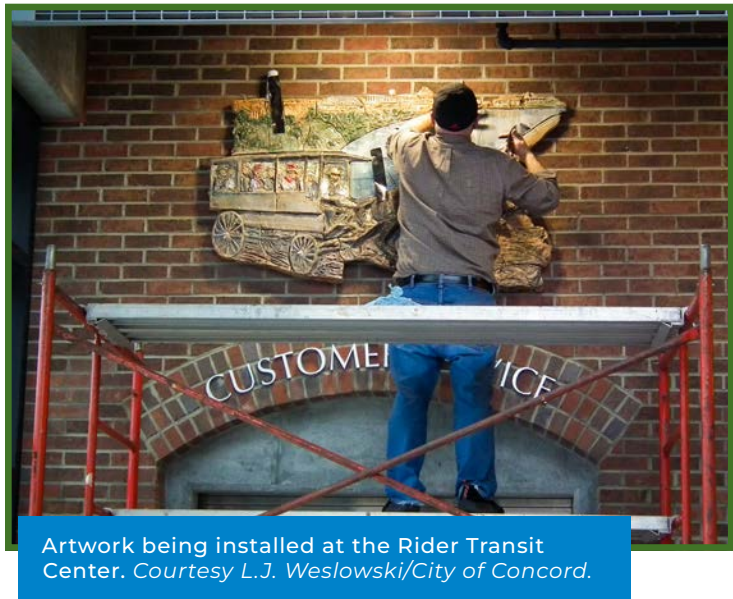
All relocations and de-accessions must be undertaken in conformance with the Visual Artists Rights Act (VARA), which offers the artist a protection of his or her right of integrity and right of attribution.

MAINTENANCE AND CONSERVATION

Concord should consider the following conservation and maintenance protocols, to ensure proper care of public art in the community.

- ◆ Identify conservation needs prior to the fabrication and installation of new works. Require, when necessary, that artists consult with a conservator during the design development phase of the project to identify the conservation needs of the project. Alternately, submit design documents for review by a conservator prior to executing or authorizing the fabrication and installation portion of a contract.
- ◆ Artists should be required, as a condition of their contract, to provide a maintenance guide for their artwork. The maintenance guide should include protocols for routine cleaning of the artwork, including the recommended frequency, cleaning agents and methods. The guide should also include an inventory of, specifications for and sources of materials used in the fabrication of the artwork.
- ◆ Artists should be required to guarantee the artwork against any failures of workmanship for one year, and to assign manufacturers’ or fabricators’ warranties to the owner of the artwork.
- ◆ Artworks should be cleaned regularly and/ or otherwise maintained by the department responsible for the facility, building or site in which the work of art resides. The department should report any damage or conservation needs to Concord’s public art manager, and should not perform any non-routine maintenance unless requested.
- ◆ Concord’s public art manager should ensure that there is a periodic conservation assessment of the works in the City’s collection and ensure that necessary repairs are completed. The assessment should include budget estimates and prioritization for conservation work. These recommendations should be incorporated into the proposed Annual Work Plan and budget.

- ◆ All maintenance and conservation should be undertaken in a manner appropriate to the medium and characteristics of the artwork, following the protocols established by the artist, and in accordance with VARA.
- ◆ At least three percent of total budget for new commissions should be set aside in a Conservation Endowment.



EVALUATION

Evaluative processes are increasingly common in public art administration, though the models are diverse and not well-tested. Broadly, one type of evaluation focuses on the processes of developing projects, and another type of evaluation focuses on the impacts of public art on audiences, places and economic development.

Goals for Evaluation

At the broadest level, Concord should ask itself whether the public art projects and programs that it is implementing are helping to achieve the City’s vision and goals for public art and whether the City is working in a way that reflects its values for public art, as expressed in the Public Art Plan.

Concord can also focus more specifically on the mechanics of project implementation. This could include consideration of artist scopes of work and contracts, as well as a deeper understanding of how collaborative processes between artists and designers, or artists and communities, can be successful.

Process for Evaluating Concord’s Public Art Program

- Following are evaluative procedures that Concord can reasonably undertake:
- ◆ Collect evaluative data during the implementation of projects. For example, this can include information about participants in community engagement aspects of the project, such as basic demographic information as well as qualitative information about people’s experiences.
 - ◆ Conduct evaluations routinely as post-project interviews with people who were involved in a project or a program. Interviews can be informal or through focused research, such as questionnaires.
 - ◆ Encourage reflection on its work through critical dialogue, such as interpretive projects and public programming, which can offer diverse perspectives that quantitative methods alone cannot.

- ◆ Finally, Concord should consider an informal evaluation of its program within three to five years. This would include a broader assessment of the policies and procedures put in place with the adoption of this plan, as well as of whether the public art outcomes are meeting the community’s and the City’s expectations.

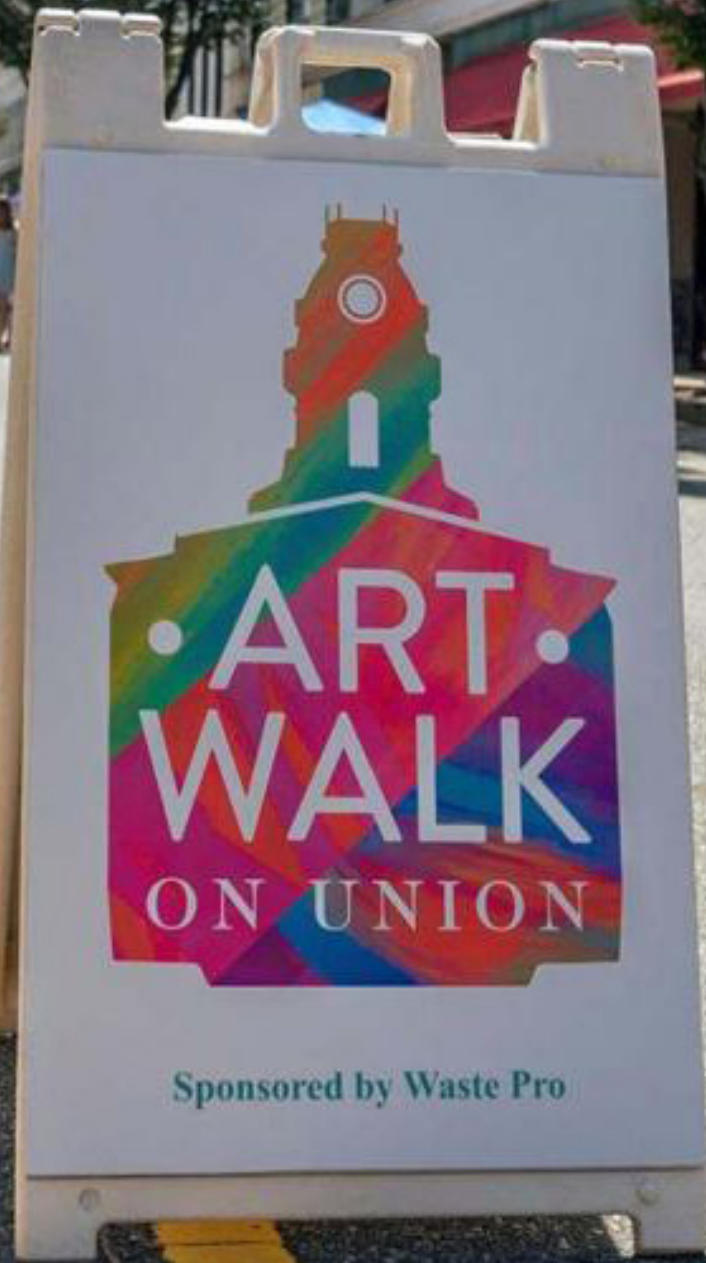
Considerations for Evaluation

Even though there has been an increasing reliance on the collection of evaluative data in all walks of life, such as consumer preferences, it is important to recognize the limitations of the type, quantity and context of data that can be collected about public art, and therefore the questions that can be answered with any degree of authority and predictive value. To date, evaluation processes have been most useful when they are organized informally and incrementally, focused on operational questions and result in iterative changes to ongoing practices.

Evaluation processes work best when they are considered at the outset of a project, as when the Individual Project Plan is being created. This is especially important in terms of identifying data that might be collected during the process of the project, as opposed to after the project is completed.

Finally, evaluation processes take time for everyone involved, especially the Public Art Administrator. As with planning, time for evaluation should be incorporated into the administrator’s workplan and into the scopes of work for artists.

Appendices



Union Street, Downtown Concord.
Courtesy L.J. Weslowski/City of Concord.

APPENDIX: DEFINITIONS

Annual Public Art Work Plan

The Annual Public Art Work Plan is prepared each year and recommends which new projects the City will initiate, indicating where the projects are located and what the proposed budgets will be. The Work Plan also outlines what conservation and maintenance needs are priorities for funding, and which projects are being carried over from previous years. The Work Plan is prepared by City staff, in collaboration with the Public Art Commission, and submitted to City Council for approval as part of the budget process.

Artist

An individual, or a team of people, who meets one or more of the following criteria:

- ◆ Realizes income through the sale, performance, publication or commission of original works of art;
- ◆ Has previously exhibited, presented, performed or published original works of art in museums, galleries or other recognized art venues and publications;
- ◆ Has formal training or education in a field of art; or
- ◆ Has received awards or other forms of recognition from arts juries, arts grant panels, and similar entities for his/her/their artistic abilities or accomplishments.

Environmental design professionals, such as architects or landscape architects, can be considered artists if they otherwise meet the criteria in this definition.

Artwork

A work that is created under the direction of an artist or artists to be beautiful or express an important idea or feeling, produced in any form or media, of permanent or temporary duration, and existing in a single copy or limited edition.

Commemorative Artwork

An Artwork whose purpose is to commemorate an individual, organization, event or topic.

Concord Development Ordinance (CDO)

The section of Concord's city code that regulates subdivision and land development, including zoning and urban design requirements.

Conservation Endowment

A permanent, dedicated fund that holds money that has been allocated for future conservation of public artworks owned by the City.

De-accession

The formal process used to remove an Artwork that has been commissioned by, acquired by, donated to or is otherwise in possession of the City.

Donation

An Artwork that is given to the City as a gift and accepted through the City's formal donations procedure.

Memorial

A design element other than a Commemorative Artwork whose purpose is to commemorate an individual, organization, event or topic. Examples of memorials include, but are not limited to, plaques, monuments, plazas, gardens, fountains or other civic features.

Mural

A two-dimensional Artwork attached to an interior or exterior wall and created in a variety of permanent or semi-permanent media, such as paint, tile, mosaic or applied vinyl. A Mural reflects the artistic intent of the artist who creates it; any design that includes imagery, text, colors, logos or other features specifically related to any entity that commissions, funds or provides a location for the design shall be considered a sign and not a Mural.

Project Plan

A document that guides the planning and execution of a specific public art project. It sets out the basic framework of the project, such as goals and location; budget and funding; timeline; the artist selection process and community engagement process; a marketing plan; a list of internal and external stakeholders; and protocols for collaboration with other entities.

Public Art

An original site-specific Artwork in any media, existing in a single copy or in a limited edition, produced by an artist or by a team of artists, and conceived and executed with the intention of being staged in the physical public domain, usually outside and accessible to all.

Public Art Commission

A volunteer commission appointed by City Council to provide oversight on the implementation of public art in Concord, with specific roles and responsibilities as outlined in the Public Art Master Plan and subsequent Council resolutions.

Public Art Master Plan

A Council-approved document that sets out the basic foundation for Concord's public art program, including a vision, mission and overall goals; identifies types public art projects and programs that City will consider undertaking; and outlines policies, procedures and guidelines for implementing the public art projects and programs.

Request for Proposals (RFP)

A call to artists that asks for the submission of both an artist's credentials and a conceptual proposal for an artwork, both of which become the basis for selecting an artist.

Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

A call to artists that asks for the submission of an artist's credentials, which is the basis of selecting an artist.

Roster

A pre-qualified pool of artists from which a Selection Panel or the PAC can choose artists for projects.

Selection Panel or Task Force

An ad hoc committee, appointed by the Public Art Commission for the implementation of public art projects, that recommends artist selection and artist concepts to the PAC. In some cases, the PAC may sit as a Selection Panel.

Temporary Public Art

An original, site-specific artwork that is created to be presented for a fixed period of time, from a one-time event to a period of a few years, which is established at the time of the commission or loan. This can include all forms of artwork, including ephemeral and/performance work.

Visual Artists Rights Act (VARA)

A federal law passed in 1990 that protects an artist's moral rights regarding his or her artwork. "Moral rights" means the right to correct attribution and the right of artistic integrity. These rights are separate from ownership of the work itself and from the copyright to the work, which includes the right to reproduce, broadcast, display and/or perform the work in public.

APPENDIX: OPPORTUNITIES TO CONSIDER IN THE CONCORD DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE (CDO)

POSSIBLE AMENDMENTS TO CDO

Consider the following amendments to the Concord Development Ordinance (CDO), to clarify how public art / artist designs can help developers meet existing code requirements or expectations.

7.8.1 STANDARDS FOR MULTI-FAMILY DEVELOPMENTS, Purpose

Figure 7.8.1: Add a principle about Public Art

7.8.18.D MULTI-FAMILY BUILDING STANDARDS, Materials and Colors

Indicate materials (such as mosaic or tile) that are part of a public art installation

7.8.18.G MULTI-FAMILY BUILDING STANDARDS, Stairways

Indicate public art enhancements as a possible design feature.

7.9.2.A CENTER CITY DESIGN STANDARDS, Pedestrian Spaces, Building Setbacks and Entries

In addition to “art displays,” list public art as an amenity

7.9.2.E CENTER CITY DESIGN STANDARDS, Pedestrian Spaces, Building Setbacks and Entries

Replace term “sculptures” with “public art”

7.9.4.E CENTER CITY DESIGN STANDARDS, General Design Standards

Provide exception for public art features on walls

7.9.4.K CENTER CITY DESIGN STANDARDS, General Design Standards

Provide for public art features on decorative fences

7.9.6.B CENTER CITY DESIGN STANDARDS, Parking Criteria

Provide for public art features on decorative masonry walls

7.9.8.C CENTER CITY DESIGN STANDARDS, Structured Parking Facilities

Provide for public art features as screening for parking garages

7.10.7.C SUPPLEMENTAL DESIGN STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS, Termination of Vistas

Provide for public art as possible view termination features

7.10.8.I SUPPLEMENTAL DESIGN STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS,

Building and Site Design Standards, Façade Wall Treatment

Include provision of public art features as integral materials

7.10.8.J SUPPLEMENTAL DESIGN STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS, Building and Site Design Standards, Façade Wall Treatment

Include provision of public art or specifically murals as a possible design element for walls facing parking garages

9.1.9.F PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT, Design Principles

Add public art to the list of enhanced design elements

9.2.4.C PLANNED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT, Design Standards, Development Entrances

Note use of word “sculpture,” can we use “public art” to provide consistency?

9.3.14.B MIXED-USE DISTRICT, Design Standards and Guidelines, Block Design Guidelines

Guideline 3: Use “public art” or “art displays” to provide consistency

9.3.14.B MIXED-USE DISTRICT, Design Standards and Guidelines, Block Design Guidelines

Guideline 6: Provide for public art to be a feature to terminate vistas

9.3.14.E MIXED-USE DISTRICT, Design Standards and Guidelines, Building and Streetscape Design

Guideline 2: Allow for setbacks from build-to lines for public art

9.3.14.E MIXED-USE DISTRICT, Design Standards and Guidelines, Building and Streetscape Design

Guideline 4B: Allow public art as a feature integrated into texture and relief

9.3.14.E MIXED-USE DISTRICT, Design Standards and Guidelines, Building and Streetscape Design

Guideline 4F Provide for public art to be a feature on the facade

9.3.14.F MIXED-USE DISTRICT, Design Standards and Guidelines, Required Public Amenities

Guideline 1G: Provide process for involving PAC in review or approval of public art provided as an amenity

9.3.14.O MIXED-USE DISTRICT, Design Standards and Guidelines, Parking Structures and Drives

Standard 1: Parking structure design standards should encourage public art as a design feature that provides compliance

9.4.1.A TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT, Purpose and Intent

Guideline 4: Add “civic art” to the list of features that reinforce the identity of a neighborhood.

10.5.13 OPEN SPACE DIAGRAM, Tables

Table 2: Allow public art as a feature in all areas except Tot-Lot Playground

DEFINITIONS TO ADD TO CDO

Definitions for the following terms should be added to the CDO, to clarify the implementation of code design requirements. Where definitions also appear in the Public Art Plan, the definitions should be consistent in both documents.

Art Displays

Civic Art

Mural

Public Art

Sculpture

CREATE A PUBLIC ART GUIDE AS A VISUAL SUPPLEMENT

Concord should develop a visual guide that illustrates how public art / artist designs can be incorporated into the design of features described in the CDO. The guide should cross-reference sections of the CDO where the following features are referenced:

Art displays

Bicycle racks

Decorative fences -

Decorative masonry wall

Development entrances

Façade features

Focal point features

Garage Facades

Greenway connections

Murals

Open spaces

Sidewalk street crossings

Streetscape features

Termination of Vistas

APPENDIX: AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS, PUBLIC ART NETWORK BEST PRACTICES FOR PUBLIC ART PROJECTS

These best practices were published in draft form by the Public Art Network in 2016. They are intended to guide public art administrators and practitioners in developing, drafting and implementing public art projects.

1. Administrators should clearly represent the scope and budget of project in calls for artists and communications.
2. Artists should truthfully represent their role and the nature of past work when presenting portfolios.
3. Artists should design to available budgets and propose what they can realistically deliver within budget, requirements, especially during design competitions.
4. Administrators/consultants should not ask artists to appropriate or use designs proposed by other artists in a competition (e.g. cherry pick from among other competitors). Nor should artists use other artists’ ideas or concepts proposed during a competition.
5. Any organization or entity commissioning artwork should pay artists for design proposals.
6. Administrators should ensure a legal and fair process for developing projects and selecting artists.
7. All organizations and entities commissioning artwork should consider their process for developing projects using principles in Americans for the Arts Statement on Cultural Equity.
8. As reasonably possible and consistent with existing privacy policies and legal requirements, agencies should protect artists’ private information.
9. Arts professionals should be involved in the artist selection process.
10. Administrators/consultants should not receive money from artists being considered or awarded a project.
11. To avoid actual conflict or the appearance of impropriety, real or perceived conflicts of interest should be disclosed, and impacted decision- makers should abstain from involvement in the process.

12. All projects should have a written agreement that includes a clear articulation of: scope of work, budget and schedule.
13. All parties should have time to read and understand agreements prior to signing, and may seek legal and/ or business counsel.
14. Agreements should clearly articulate the process by which project changes are approved and any changes should always be made in writing.
15. If substantial redesign of a contracted artwork or an entirely new proposal is requested, due to no fault of the artist, the artist should be compensated. Nor should artists use other artists’ ideas or concepts proposed during a competition.
16. A realistic life span for an artwork should be mutually agreed by all parties and written into the agreement.
17. Artists should choose appropriate materials for artwork based on the expected life. Care should be taken when integrating components into the artwork that are not warranted for the minimum warranty period required in the agreement. Attention should be paid to integrated components that may void underlying warranties.
18. Artist warranties should not exceed two years.
19. With regard to manufacturer warranties for integrated components, artists should be required to only pass along those warranties provided by the manufacturer.
20. Where reasonable, obtainable insurance is required by law, municipal policy and/ or in an agreement, administrators should work with artists to assess the true cost of this insurance so that artists can budget. As only licensed professionals can obtain professional liability and/or errors and omission progressive insurance, artists who are not licensed professionals should have this requirement waived. However, agreements may require licensed sub- contractors carry professional liability or errors and omissions insurance.

21. Administrators should not ask artists to take on unreasonable or inappropriate liability.
22. Artists should have agreements with their subcontractors, and include all relevant requirements of the prime contract in the sub-contract agreement.
23. The project payment schedule should meet the cash flow needs of the artwork schedule of deliverables.
24. Artists should retain the copyright to their artwork. However, artists should expect to grant license to the contracting agency or ultimate owner for reasonable use of images of the artwork for publicity, educational, and reasonable promotional purposes upon which the parties agree.
25. Artists and commissioning entities and/ or owners should provide reciprocal credit for their respective roles in commissioned artworks.
26. Maintenance and conservation plans should be discussed and mutually agreed upon and artists should prepare a detailed and feasible maintenance and conservation plan.
27. Commissioning entities and/or owners should have collection management policies in place and notify artists of these policies.
28. If an artwork is damaged, administrators should make a good faith effort to consult the artist about repairs. administrators are not obligated to work with artists to make repairs, but should use best conservation practices.
29. If Visual Artist Rights Act (VARA) rights are waived, agreements should nonetheless provide that, in the event of damage, alteration, or destruction of an artwork that is not remedied to the artist’s satisfaction, or relocated without the artist’s approval, if the artist believes the artwork no longer represents his/her work, the artist should have the right to remove his/her name from the artwork.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CONCORD PUBLIC ART ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Members as of December, 2022

Andy Langford, Chair, Concord City Council
Rebecca Collins, Vice Chair, Cabarrus Arts Council
Sarah Gay, ClearWater Art Center & Studios, PAAC Staff Administrator
Tara Bengle, Community Member
Liz Fitzgerald, Cabarrus Arts Council
Paige Grochoske, Concord Downtown Development Corporation
Julia Lawing, Artist
Justin Mueller, Downtown Building Owner
Montana Maurer, Concord Parks and Recreation
Scott Sherrill, Planning and Neighborhood Development
Betty Stocks, Concord City Council

Former Members Who Participated in the Master Plan Process

Johnson Bray, Concord Downtown Development Corporation
Brad Lagano, Concord Downtown Development Corporation
Starla Rogers, Planning and Neighborhood Development
Holly Sloop, Concord Downtown Development Corporation

CONSULTING TEAM

Todd W. Bressi, Public Art • Placemaking • City Design
Amina Cooper, Amewa Fine Arts
Francene Greene, Artist Facilitator
Jo Davis Art and Design, Graphic Design
Tara Bengle, Intercept Surveys
Emma Rose Sommer, Research Intern