

**BRT SOUTHERN CORRIDOR
ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE**

FINAL REPORT

David Wilson

June 27, 2025

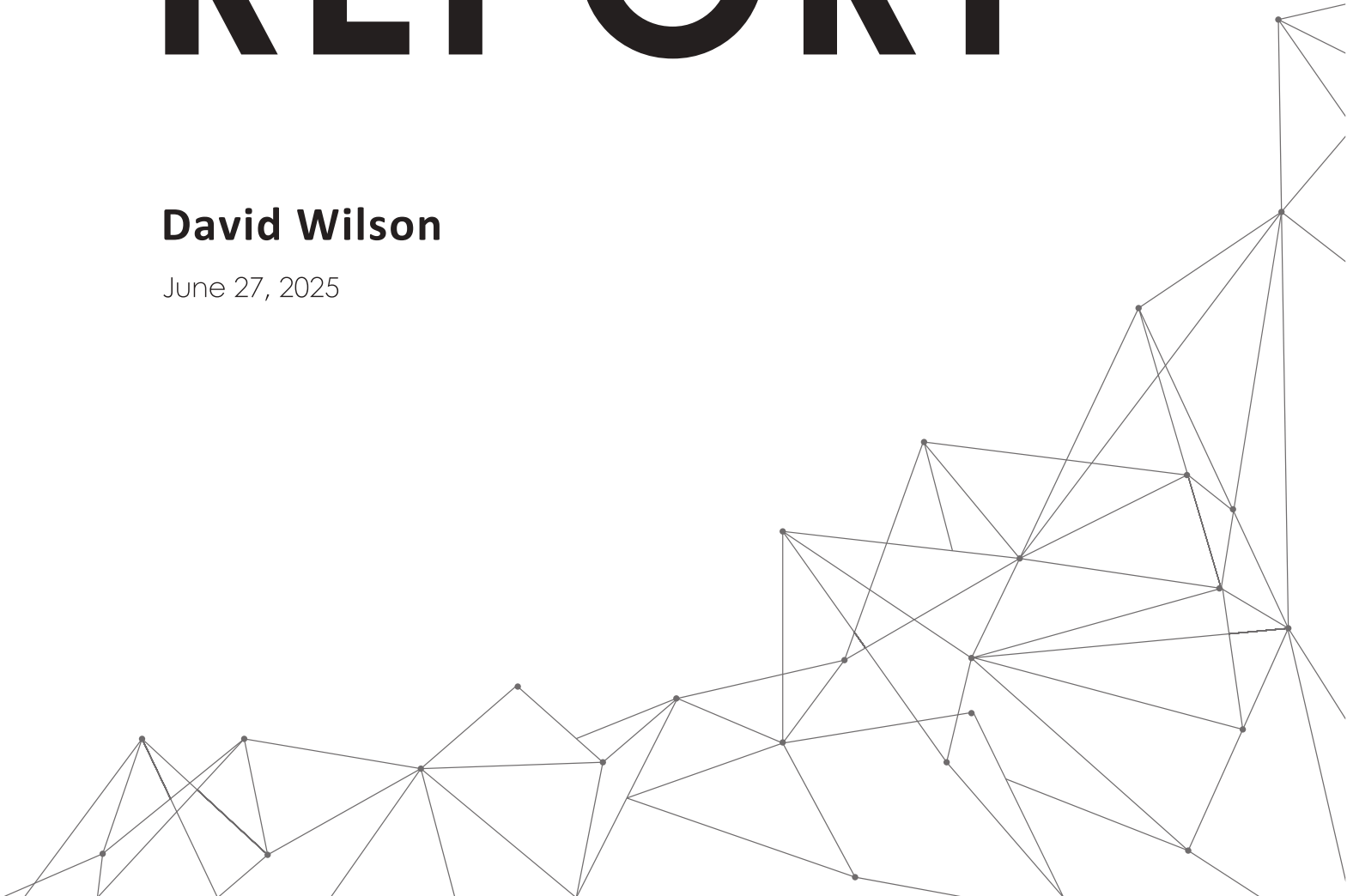


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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This report provides an overview of the research conducted on public art for the Raleigh Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Southern Corridor Expansion. The key purpose of the report is to identify where the needs and opportunities exist for the development and inclusion of artistic enhancements along the Southern Corridor Expansion via public art installations, policies, and practices. This report is commissioned by Raleigh Arts and has been prepared by Artist-in-Residence, David Wilson between August, 2023 and February, 2025.

1.2 Definition ‘Public Art’

Public art is a term open to multiple interpretations. It is commonly used to describe artistic works that have been specifically created for the public realm. This includes permanent works that are intended to endure over generations, to temporary works that may last for only a few hours, days, or weeks. Additionally, public art embodies spatial qualities that include works that are site-specific, mobile, digital, and virtual. Public art can also include memorials, murals, sculptures, landscape design, and performance art.

In the context of its designation of being located in an outdoor environment, public art can connect municipalities with the communities which they serve. It functions in a way to provide access by the citizens of the community to the art without restrictions of private ownership and thus can serve as a mirror or voice of the public. As such, public art can be subject to a wide array of opinions based on viewership in the outdoor setting.

2. Summary

The Artist-in-Residence worked with Raleigh Arts and BRT Planning to develop a strategy for the role of public art in the Southern BRT corridor through gaining a better understanding of the corridor’s public art habitat, as well as how the community’s interests and preferences for public art align with the habitat’s gaps.

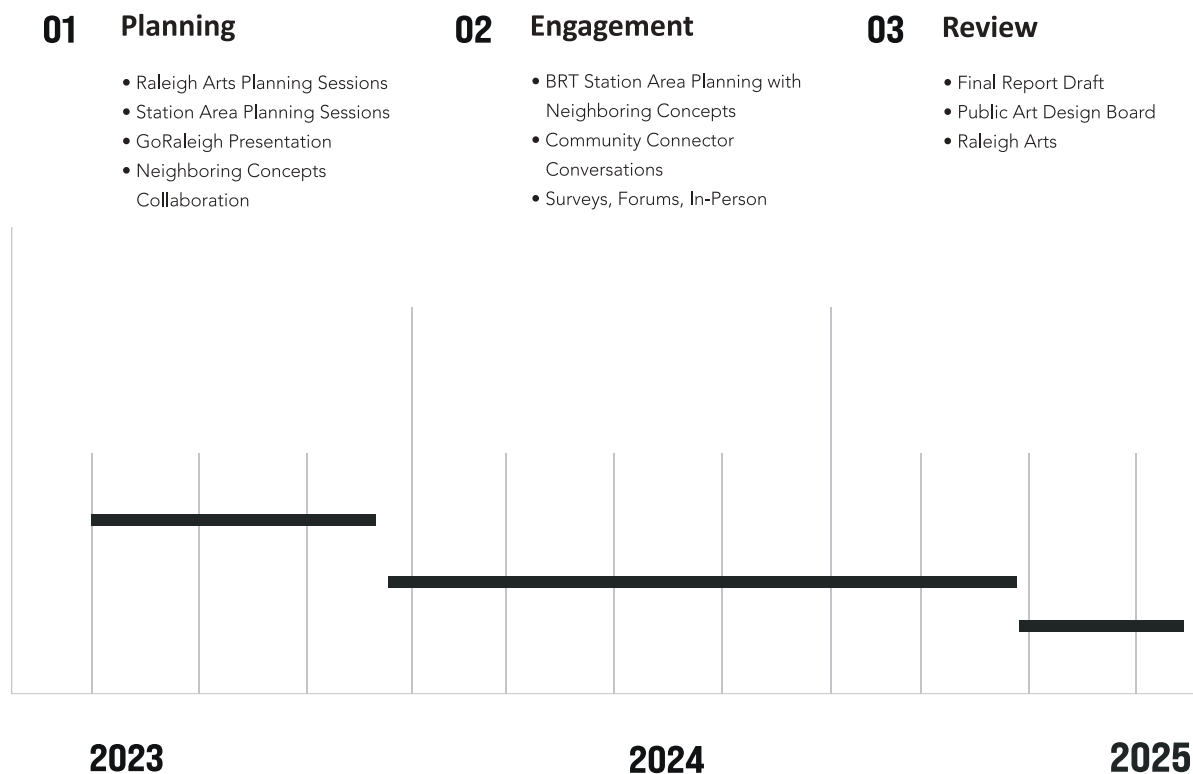
Historically, there has been strong interest in and support for public art throughout Raleigh, with activities, resources and programming being recognized as active and accessible. Presently, the City of Raleigh’s public art habitat has a wealth of public art advocates and enthusiasts which are supported by formal pipelines and structures to channel the interests of advocates and makers that would create a public art-friendly and public art-filled community arts-in-transit corridor.

Building on these findings, the Artist-in-Residence explored how the Southern BRT Corridor expansion can contribute to an increased thriving public art environment. The Residency involved research, surveying, capacity-building and strategy conversations that helped assess the best role for the Southern BRT planning to play in infusing public art throughout the corridor that helps compliment and contrast the existing Downtown habitat via multiple themes and site-specific, as well as corridor-wide opportunities.

3. Project Timeline

The public art residency project timeline involved several phases, from initial planning and community engagement to summary report and documentation, taking approximately 2 years for completion.

Planning and Community Engagement: The artist developed an approach for the residency, considering the project corridor, community context, and project goals. **Community Engagement:** Organized community meetings, forums, and surveys to gather input and feedback on the proposed project. **Project Proposal:** Developed a detailed project report outlining the engagement feedback, timeline, and artist's recommendations. **Review and Approval:** The proposal is reviewed by the public art board or committee and once approved, this report will help guide the selection of artwork, ensure community relevance, and foster a sense of ownership and engagement with public art in Raleigh.



The Southern Corridor residency yielded diverse outcomes, ranging from tangible recommendations for artwork installations to community engagement and increased cultural understanding. These outcomes serve as a platform for artistic exploration and collaboration.

These intended outcomes are directly linked to the support systems and activities provided by the City of Raleigh and provide the basic building blocks of the entire framework for the incorporation of public art into significant capital improvement projects throughout the city.

Station Area Planning Sessions with Neighboring Concepts

Roughly 38,000 people live within a mile of the Southern BRT route. Residents come from a diverse array of racial, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds. The proposed corridors are also home to numerous small businesses and organizations. The initial phase of the project began in late September 2023. The purpose of this phase of engagement was to collect information about existing conditions and understand what communities around the Southern corridor would like to see. These sessions provided an opportunity to educate residents on the benefits of public art and gather their feedback on what kind of public art that they would prefer.

2023

November 29, 2023
December 6, 2023

Peach Road Park Community Center & Open House at Chavis Community Center

Existing and planned station area connectivity for the North Segment Southern BRT Corridor Station Areas and surrounding communities were highlighted. Peach Road Park, Renaissance Park, Twin Lakes, Walnut Creek Wetland Center, NC State Farmers Market, and Chavis Park were featured.

2024

February 15, 2024
February 17, 2024

Biltmore Hills Community Center & Carolina Pines Community Center

The second phase of the project began in February 2024. This phase presented some options for recommendations around transportation connections and land use vision.



Community Connectors helped with public outreach for the Southern BRT Station Area Planning. These trusted leaders in the community partnered to create a direct method to disseminate fliers for the electronic survey.

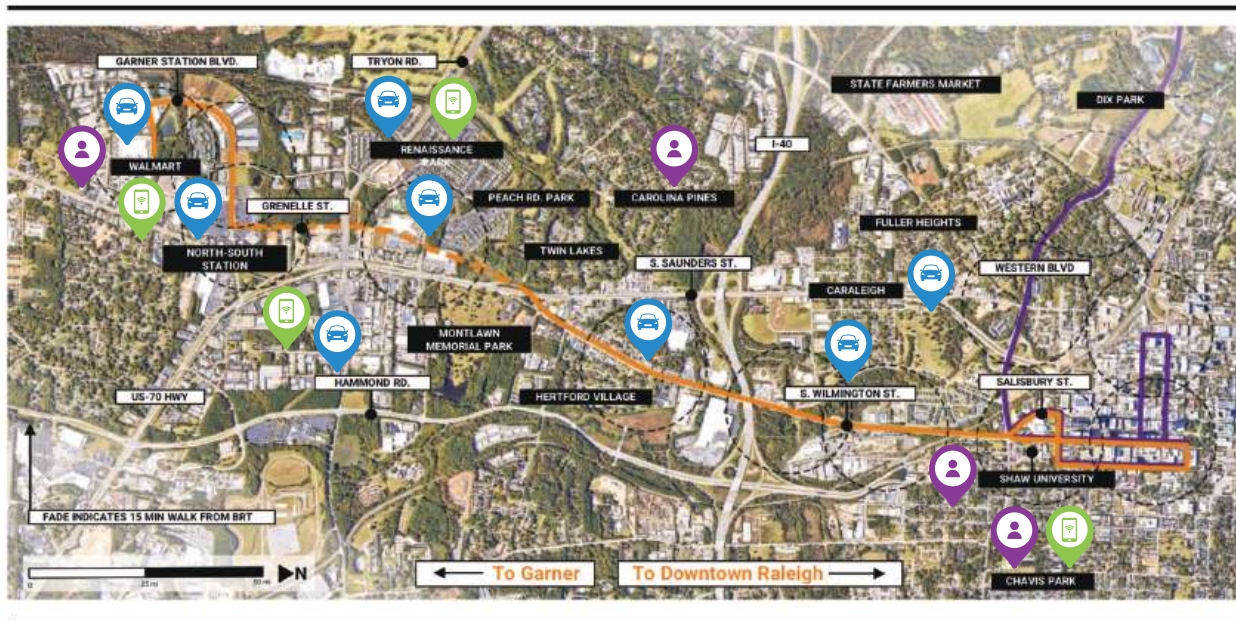
4. Method for Implementation

Public Art Surveys

As part of the outreach process an online questionnaire was conducted. The questions were designed to help the Artist better understand the public's view on public art, how public art could have an impact in the BRT Southern Corridor, and what locations are of most interest for future public art opportunities. The questionnaire was launched in June of 2024 and was utilized in conjunction with other engagement methods through November 2024.

The questionnaire asked questions related to people's familiarity and relationship to public art, as well as their preferences for public art. Approximately 300 people who live within Southern BRT route were surveyed, of which 20% responded. Residents come from a diverse array of racial, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds. The proposed corridors are also home to numerous small businesses and organizations.

Wake Bus Rapid Transit Southern Corridor Bus Rapid Transit Route and Neighborhood Context



Electronic Survey

- Chavis Community Days
- Chavis Juneteenth Artival
- Garner Juneteenth Celebration
- Shaw University



Ride Along Forums

- S. Wilmington
- Caraleigh
- Chapanoke
- Garner Station



In-Person

- Chavis Open House
- Biltmore Hills
- Carolina Pines
- Villa Latina + Garner Station

Ride Alongs

Four ride along discussions with the artist involved driving the Southern Corridor route with an elder community member to discuss how public art in the transit route would support the neighborhood context. The purpose of the ride alongs was to introduce the project and public art planning process to different community stakeholders, to learn about hoped-for impacts of public art in the Wake BRT Southern Corridor, to generate discussions about potential public art outcomes, and to discuss the role of the City of Raleigh's Public Art Program in the greater public art habitat of the City.



In-Person Interviews

A variety of community stakeholders were interviewed. These public art engagement interviews aimed to gather diverse perspectives and insights from community members to inform the development and creation of public art projects along the BRT Southern Corridor, ensuring they are relevant, inclusive, and impactful. The interviews were based on the following five pillars:

Gathering Community Input: Questions to understand community needs, preferences, and values, ensuring the artwork resonates with the local context.

Informing Artistic Decisions: Insights gained help create works that are meaningful and relevant to the community, fostering a sense of ownership and pride.

Promoting Dialogue and Collaboration: Serve as a platform for open dialogue and collaboration, bringing together diverse voices and perspectives.

Ensuring Accessibility and Inclusivity: Questions involve community members in the process, and help ensure that public art projects are accessible and inclusive for all, regardless of background or experience.

Measuring Impact and Success: Used to evaluate the impact of public art, gathering feedback on their effectiveness and contribution to the community.



Survey Questions

The following questions were asked via electronic survey, in-person, or during ride alongs. The questions are related to people's familiarity and relationship to the BRT Southern Corridor Project, as well as their preferences for public art:

- Are you familiar with the Raleigh Bus Rapid Transit Southern Corridor Project?
- What are your favorite types of public art in Raleigh?
- Please rate your choice for your favorite aspect of public art: **ABSTRACT** 1 = I prefer the least 5 = I prefer the most (Respondents were asked to indicate 1 preference from a list of 5 options and were shown an example of a local abstract sculpture)
- Please rate your choice for your favorite aspect of public art: **FIGURATIVE** 1 = I prefer the least 5 = I prefer the most (Respondents were asked to indicate 1 preference from a list of 5 options and were shown an example of glass art from a Winston Salem transit shelter)
- Please rank your choice for your favorite aspect of public art. This could be something you've seen in Raleigh or elsewhere. **SCALE / SIZE** 1 = I prefer the least 5 = I prefer the most (Respondents were asked to indicate 1 preference from a list of 5 options and were shown an example of a sculpture in Boston, MA)
- Please rank your choice for your favorite aspect of public art. This could be something you've seen in Raleigh or elsewhere. **KINETIC OR MOVING** 1 = I prefer the least 5 = I prefer the most (Respondents were asked to indicate 1 preference from a list of 5 options and were shown an example of the Raleigh Shimmer Wall)
- Please rank your choice for your favorite aspect of public art. This could be something you've seen in Raleigh or elsewhere. **CULTURAL / EDUCATIONAL** 1 = I prefer the least 5 = I prefer the most (Respondents were asked to indicate 1 preference from a list of 5 options and were shown an example of the Chavis Reclaimed Art Glass Mural)



- Please rank your choice for your favorite aspect of public art. This could be something you've seen in Raleigh or elsewhere. **IMMERSIVE / INTERACTIVE** 1 = I prefer the least 5 = I prefer the most (Respondents were asked to indicate 1 preference from a list of 5 options and were shown an example of the Fractal Energy, a local light sculpture)

Findings

Several themes emerge from the ride alongs, in-person interviews, and online questionnaire results that cut across multiple questions and help us understand people's preferences related to public art.

Desire for Public Art

We received responses from people who really know Raleigh and love public art. When asked about what kind of public art that they would like to see, the highest overall response was art that celebrates, inspires, and uplifts diverse cultures.

Respondents were also asked to pick what kind of art that they would like to see incorporated into the BRT Southern Corridor from a list of eight options. The overwhelming selection was for murals with 41% of respondents selecting this choice. The rest of the choices were split, with sculptures (18%) and functional elements (benches, seating, etc.) (9%) coming in second and third. People clearly enjoy the diversity of Raleigh and public art for both existing examples of local creativity as well as future opportunities.

The ride along sessions afforded more open-ended questions asking people to share stories and memories of the neighborhood context along the Southern Corridor and public art in general. These sessions generated many heartfelt responses. Many focused on favorite destinations, including memories of Black businesses downtown, walking through natural landscapes, and taking field trips to Chavis Park. Several mentioned family traditions around Chavis Park. Other responses pointed to the importance of public art as a means for preserving those memories, the role the Southern Corridor should play in inspiring creativity and honoring remembrance, the importance of local artists, and how the public art should support a greater understanding of diversity.

"There are some really nice existing murals already in the area. Maybe installing some lively pieces (South Wilmington headed south) along this stretch will draw attention from some of the buildings that aren't being maintained as well." – Ride Along Respondent

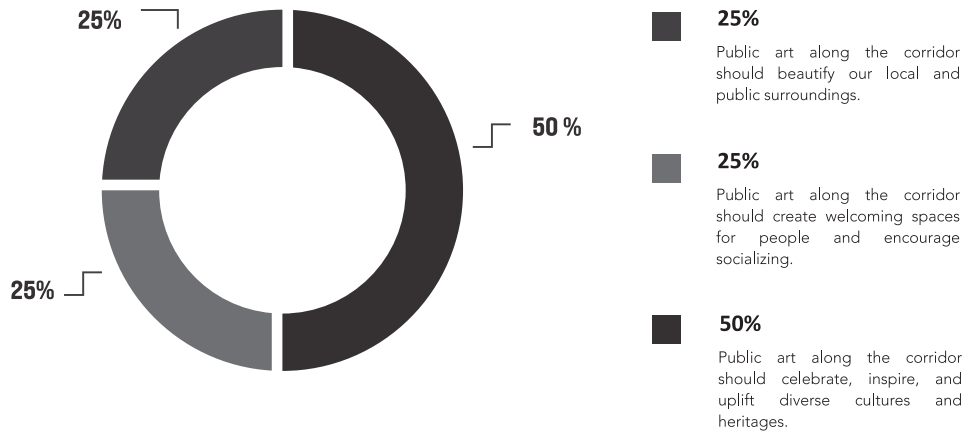
Public Art and Natural Environment

Ride along and in-person survey respondents reacted positively to ideas around the artwork complementing or addressing the natural environment, in particular in regard to the theme of the work. When asked what impact public art should have in the natural environment throughout the Southern Corridor, the top choice was something functional like a bench or seating element that enhances and promotes enjoyment of the natural environment (9.1%).

Recommendations are for public art that reflects natural themes either in subject matter, material or both. When asked why they chose these suggestions, the relationship of the work to natural themes, natural materials, or being able to learn about nature all connected to memories of times in their youth when the landscape was less developed and fun to explore. Sites of ecological significance were not among the top recommendations but inspiration could be drawn from adjacent areas like Peach Road Park and Carolina Pines Park.

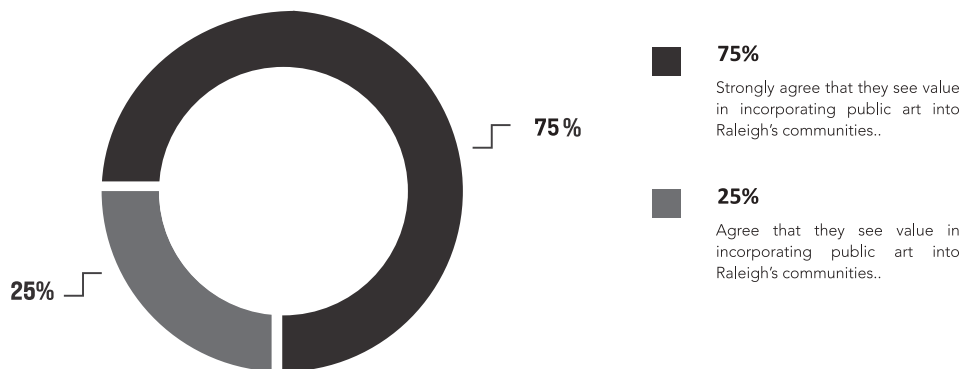
Chavis Community Day

This free, family-friendly event took place on Saturday, September 14th, 2024 from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM. It was hosted by Amanda Salami and Wake County Social and Economic Vitality Community Updates. The event featured food, entertainment, and activities. A vendor's booth table was setup near the Historic Carousel and visitors were engaged in questions regarding the Southern Corridor Project, public art in the City of Raleigh, and other topics from the online survey questionnaire. Fliers with a QR code linking to the online survey were also distributed for those who declined to engage in-person.



Chavis Juneteenth Jubilee - Artival Urban Art Event + Town of Garner Juneteenth Celebration

Chavis Juneteenth Artival Urban Event took place at John Chavis Memorial Park in Raleigh, NC on Tuesday, June 18th, 2024 from 5:30 PM to 8:30 PM, and the Town of Garner Juneteenth Celebration was held on Saturday, 2024 from 11 AM to 12:15 PM. The events featured food, entertainment, and live painting and art activities. During the Chavis event, a vendor's booth table was setup inside the Main Community Room and visitors were engaged in questions regarding the Southern Corridor Project, public art in the City of Raleigh, and other topics from the online survey questionnaire. In-person interviews and fliers with a QR code linking to the online survey were distributed during both events.



5. Public Art Habitats

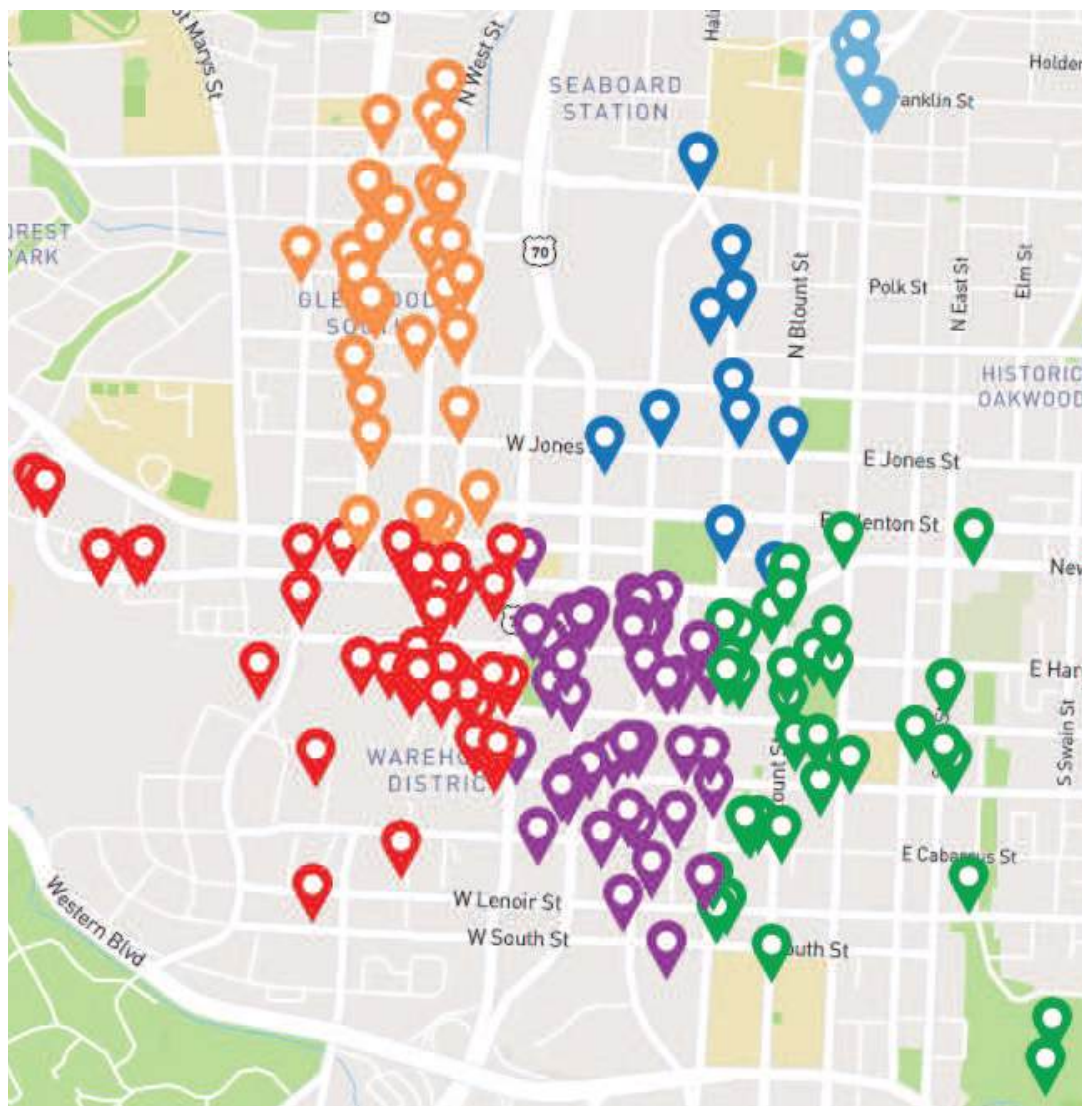
To build a healthy public art habitat, interviewees highlighted the importance of:

- prioritizing collaboration and creating clarity around roles and responsibilities of public art within the habitat.
- creating a balanced mix of local and historical narratives, and a diverse set of cultural makers locally.

A strategic plan of the residency was to be intentionally collaborative and leverage resources. To support this collaborative approach, a public arts habitat analysis, utilizing existing Raleigh public art database to provide a visualization of the habitat, in order to assess recommendations for public art along the BRT Southern corridor.

The Artist evaluated the inventory and geographic concentration of public art in Raleigh and found that Downtown Raleigh has over 167 pieces of public art. This concentration forms the foundation of the habitat visualization, which is designed to illustrate where public art is currently featured in large clusters and how surrounding voids could help connect the habitat. The graphic illustrates the 6 main public art districts: Capital District, Fayetteville Street, Glenwood South, Moore Square, Warehouse District, and Seaboard + Person Street. These districts act as key identifiers in the public art habitat, and include murals, sculptures, utility boxes, and vinyl wrapped bus shelters.

DOWNTOWN RALEIGH PUBLIC ART HABITAT



Many of the public artworks in the Raleigh Downtown Habitat are temporary or privately funded. These types of works can take various forms, from street art and murals to pop-up installations, offering artists opportunities to engage the public in a more flexible and nimble way than permanent installations.

Takeaways

Upon review of the current Downtown Raleigh public art habitat graphic, and incorporating data from surveys and forums, the following key takeaways are:

- There is active support for public art in the City of Raleigh
- The support for public art in the different districts appears to be coordinated
- Different identifiers inhabit multiple roles, such as painted murals/facade treatments on walls or other surfaces
- Many identifiers overlap in their proximity to one another
- Fewer identifiers exist in the districts along the BRT Southern Corridor, highlighting a need for more public art presence south of Martin Luther King Jr Blvd
- There is an opportunity for narrating and celebrating more of Raleigh's diverse community history and heritage via public art along the BRT Southern Corridor that extends beyond Martin Luther King Jr Blvd

6. Public Art Strategies

The Southern Corridor expansion can be integrated in a complementary approach to the work that exist in the Downtown district habitat and set the foundation for future expansion practices that could be developed.

- **Complement and contrast the Downtown Raleigh public art habitat**
- **Foster unity by engaging City stakeholders in collaboration to improve the public realm**
- **Facilitate equitable economic growth by creating attractions, excitement and a sense of unique local identity**
- **Improve understanding of how arts interact with the economic forces of development**
- **Provide a creative interruption to everyday life for members living in neighborhoods and communities along the Southern BRT line**
- **Help further the creative values of the existing City of Raleigh public art habitat of connected, respectful, excellent, accountable, trusted, inclusive, valued and enjoyable communities**
- **Work with neighboring Garner stakeholders in the shared investment to set a collective agenda around common public art concerns like neglected maintenance, inaccessibility, cultural disparities and community divisions for the expanding habitat**

7. Themes + Types of Public Art

We typically think of public art as about adding character, personality, beauty or visual interest to a place. Part of that can be communicating ideas about a place's values, past, hopes for the future, or its community. The residency methodologies worked to establish particular themes and types of public art that could help connect communities and foster a sense of place, identity, and shared experiences along the Southern Corridor.

Social + Murals

43% of respondents expressed a desire for murals that could identify a sense of place and help people understand where they live, work, and visit. Murals sharing these experiences could inspire reflection and dialogue about a community's history, values, and cultural experiences. Neighborhoods adjacent to the BRT Southern Corridor such as Idlewild Neighborhood share history dating back as far as 1891. Idlewild Avenue is the center of Idlewild, an early area of African-American home ownership named after the Battle Family Estate on Cotton Place south of New Bern Avenue. The Raleigh Land and

Improvement Company subdivided Idlewild, and the neighborhood grew in the early twentieth century. Bounded by Swain St. on west, Oakwood Avenue on north, Tarboro Road on east, and Edenton Street on south.



*John Lewis, Jalen Ronin 2020
Power to the Patients, Joseph Giampino & Clark Hipolito 2022
Freedom Now, David Moses 2020
Chavis Reclaimed, David Wilson 2022
(Clockwise)*

Cultural Heritage

85% of local respondents suggested using public art to narrate culture by visually depicting Raleigh's Black community's history, values, and identity through accessible art pieces placed in public spaces along the corridor habitat. Respondents supported the public art as a visual storytelling tool that reflects the unique character of Southeast Raleigh as a place and its people, fostering a sense of belonging and pride among residents while engaging them in dialogue about their community's narrative; essentially, the art would serve as a collective memory that can be experienced by everyone in the area.



Mount Rapmore, Jeks One 2022



Get Well Soon, Lamar Whidbee 2024



Like Father, Like Son, Dare Coulter 2023

Monumental

47% of local respondents suggested incorporation of monumental public art as a large-scale works, such as a sculptures or structures throughout the Southern Corridor habitat. Monumental art could be used to honor people, commemorate events, or express the power of the community. Respondents felt monumental works would serve as an art form that transcends both time and specific cultures. Additionally, monumental sculptures could help enhance the built environment and transform and revitalize mundane spaces along the Southern Corridor between Rocky Branch Trail and Garner Station, making them more aesthetically pleasing and engaging for residents and visitors.



Gyre, Thomas Sayre 1999
Pas de Chat, Thomas Sayre 1999
Attun, DeWitt Godfrey 2024
Beacon of Freedom, Phil Freelon 2024
(Counter Clockwise)

Local + Kinetic + Sculptural

Public art is characterized by site specificity, where the artwork is created in response to the place and community in which it resides and by the relationship between its content and the public. 43% of respondents expressed a desire for public art along the Southern Corridor that is kinetic and could tell stories by incorporating movement and time into the viewing experience. This makes viewers actively engage with the art, which can be a three-dimensional sculpture, painting, or other work. 19% of respondents preferred a sculptural representation as public art.



Rainbow Head, Jerstin Crosby 2021; *Shimmer Wall*, Thomas Sayre 2009; *We Made A Happy Little Tree*, Jane Cheek 2021

Immersive + Interactive

33% of respondents suggested public art that involves the public in the creation or experience of the artwork. Combining traditional art with technology to create dynamic pieces that respond to people as they move throughout the Southern Corridor would provide a unique contrast to the Downtown habitat that feature large scale, interactive temporary and permanent public art installations. Interactive art installations that allowed the observer to walk through, over or around them; or ask the spectator to become part of the artwork in some way were identified.

Large-scale, interactive, and light-based art installations like Illuminate Art Walk in downtown Raleigh could serve as precedents for public art opportunities that transform the Southern Corridor into an exploration of art and light. Opportunities could include both permanent and temporary installations that compliment and contrast the Downtown habitat.



Sonarc, Brian Brush 2020



Talking Heads, Limelight 2023



The Tunnel, Big Art 2025

8. Additional Strategies

In efforts to further develop a strategy and plan of practice for public art along the BRT Southern Corridor expansion, GoRaleigh and Raleigh Arts can build upon its strengths, and work to coordinate with local communities to strengthen the local public art habitat. In order to leverage the advocacy and support for public art already existing in the Downtown habitat, GoRaleigh and Raleigh Arts and its partners have an opportunity to build a more coordinated system, develop the habitat's public art capacities in strategic ways, learn from peer models and align its public art habitat with larger goals for the City of Raleigh. Public art has the power to create a habitat of belonging, unity and a place of equitable economic growth. As the BRT embraces its roles as a public art partner and communicator, other local community partners will be vital in working to help create a thriving and coordinated public art habitat.

Landscape as Sculpture

This echoes respondent feedback for a desire to integrate the artwork directly within the landscape design. A vision for this public art experience is a work that incorporates and is continuous with the actual landscape as part of the sculptural expression and not merely a surface for the artwork to sit upon.



Where the Sky Meets the Earth, Michael Weedman 1987
Painted Planter Box, Nicole Ray 2024
Clothespin, Mehmet Ali Uysal 2010
(Left to Right)

Integrative Experience

The integration of openings and patterns within the work can serve as a powerful metaphor for Raleigh's diverse but connected communities. Openings could also provide opportunities for seating.



The Gates, Christo Vladimirov Javacheff 2005
Discovery Enterprise, Mark Hogenson 2023
Point Counterpoint, Russell Jacques 2024
(Left to Right)

Sequenced Approach

Survey feedback referenced a sequenced approach that would allow the public art to be visible from a distance, creating different visual experiences as viewers approach. Depending on the site location, a strategy for the work could be to imbue it with a beacon-like quality that draws or invites the viewer in while featuring a serene place for personal reflection and interaction on an intimate scale. Respondents also expressed a desire for the public art to ascend or descend into the community as you either approach or depart the station platform. These sequenced approaches would serve as connectors to adjacent neighborhoods.



The Sequence, Arne Quinze 2008
Nested Hive, RE:site 2020
Preponderance, Thomas Sayre 2020
(Left to Right)

Immersive Technologies

Local respondents suggested using public art that integrates immersive technologies including virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), projections, and spatial reality. These technologies could create interactive experiences that blur the lines between the viewer and the artwork. Some characteristics of immersive public art include: Sensory and Emotionally Engaging, Participatory and Memorable, Story-driven, Transformative, Multi-sensory, and Designed Environments.



The Pool, Jen Lewin Studios 2017
ATT Discovery District, Dallas, TX
Meadow, DRIFT 2017
(Left to Right)

Reflection

Feedback received cited reflection in the work as a technique to engage viewers as they see themselves reflected in the work. In this way, the reflective surface as a materiality affords viewers' movements to become part of their experience of the work. In this manner, the technique is imbued with narrative meaning as visitors see themselves and the surrounding adjacencies reflected on the surface potentially etched with words of hope, education, or inspiration. While reflective materiality presents some challenges due to long-term maintenance and DOT regulations, this gesture could create a unity between art and experience, perpetually connecting the message of the art in the context of the viewers' daily life.



Sky Mirror, Anish Kapoor 2006
Reflective Lullaby, Gregor Kregar 2015
Spheres of Reflection, Kaldric Dow 2022
(Left to Right)

9. Recommendations for Art

Site-specific strategies public art strategies are recommended for locations on or adjacent to the Southern Corridor that are rich in history that is integrated with its surroundings. Opportunities exist for permanent and temporary elements that include sculptures, murals, and other art forms.

These opportunities would encourage artists to consider the location during the planning phase of the project and invite community engagement. This consideration could result in art that explores the relationship between the work and the location's narrative topography resulting in the art becoming an integral part of the environment via the materiality, form, and story that it communicates.

Shaw University (Salisbury Street, Chavis Park)

Moore Square has been a place of gathering, reflection, entertainment, and recreation. The four-acre urban park was originally conceived as one of five public green spaces for the City of Raleigh. Today, Moore Square hosts numerous events and programs including music festivals, markets, and movie nights. Engagement "Ride Along" Forum respondents recommended public art that narrated the history of Moore Square's rich Black history. During the 1940s - 1950s the area boasted a significant number of Black-owned businesses such as: Lightner Arcade Hotel, City Farmers Market & Grocery, Saunder's Ford Auto Body & Mechanics, Hamlin Drug & Pharmacy, Peebles Grill & Hotel, Gilly's Club (Currently Lincoln Theatre, and numerous professional and fraternal offices such as Dr. Debman, Charles Haywood dentistry, and the Prince Hall Masonic Temple, which still stands today.



Lightner Arcade



Hamlin Drugs



Prince Hall Masonic Temple

Artist Recommendation:

Medium: Sculpture Artist, (Benches/Seating), Mutidisciplinary Artist (Platform and Railings Treatment), Mosaic Tile (Platform Landing), Mixed Media/Painting/Photography (Windscreen Shelters), Land and Environmental **Artist Call Type:** Individual or Group; Local; Regional; National

Form of Public Art: Permanent; Functional; Memorial

Description of Public Art: Art should narrate conversations centered on economic opportunities, history and equity representation, education, fellowship, faith, development, change, Black cultural recognition and celebration, empowerment and community involvement for Black heritage

South Wilmington at Martin Luther King Blvd (Caraleigh, Walnut Terrace, Fuller Heights)

Washington School, a historically Black school for grades 1-12 and the College Grill near Shaw University's campus were cited for educational and civil rights historical narratives. Black-owned businesses like Goodson's Grocery Store, Ross Fowler's Barbershop, Cottingham's Grocery, and Haywood Funeral Home all held significance as well for public art narrative consideration.



Washington High School



Black Barbershops



Shaw University Student Protests

Artist Recommendation:

Medium: Sculpture Artist, (Benches/Seating), Mutidisciplinary Artist (Platform and Railings Treatment), Mosaic Tile (Platform Landing), Mixed Media/Painting/Photography (Windscreen Shelters), Land and Environmental **Artist Call Type:** Individual or Group; Local; Regional; National

Form of Public Art: Permanent; Functional; Memorial; Monumental

Description of Public Art: Art should narrate conversations centered on education, economic opportunities, history and equity representation, equality, overcoming challenges, inspirational, social change, Black cultural recognition and celebration, empowerment and community involvement for Black heritage.

"Right there at Chapanoke, there weren't any of these buildings. It was all an airport. They moved it up to Durham, but it was something back then, having the airport so close to home, but it wasn't as big as the RDU airport. Now since the area has been built up alot, you would never know it was there unless you knew to look; I think that some artwork that told them about it can show the real history of the area. I think maybe people would be interested to know that it was there." – Ride Along Respondent

South Wilmington at Pecan

Respondents described the history of this area as being mostly undeveloped and featuring trees and natural landscape. The primary neighborhood was Caraleigh and was considered to be more Garner than Raleigh. Respondents also spoke of the walk-ability of the area during that time where simply walking a short distance and crossing the road got you to your destination.



Hwy 401 South 1960s



Raleigh-Garner Development 1960s



Youth Walking South Wilmington 1960s

Artist Recommendation:

Medium: Sculpture Artist, (Benches/Seating), Mutidisciplinary Artist (Platform and Railings Treatment), Mosaic Tile (Platform Landing), Mixed Media/Painting/Photography (Windscreen Shelters), Land and Environmental **Artist Call Type:** Individual or Group; Local; Regional; National

Form of Public Art: Permanent; Functional; Memorial

Description of Public Art: Art should narrate conversations centered on natural landscape, movement, travel, exploration, community, connections between people and nature

South Wilmington at Chapanoke

Local respondents suggested using public art to narrate the more undeveloped history of the area as landmarks, for sightseeing with visitors, and to photograph. Raleigh-Durham Municipal Airport occupied the majority of the landscape and there was little to no residential development.



Raleigh-Durham Municipal Airport



South Wilmington Business & Traffic, 1950s



Early Beltline Construction

Artist Recommendation:

Medium: Sculpture Artist, (Benches/Seating), Mutidisciplinary Artist (Platform and Railings Treatment), Mosaic Tile (Platform Landing), Mixed Media/Painting/Photography (Windscreen Shelters), Land and Environmental **Artist Call Type:** Individual or Group; Local; Regional; National

Form of Public Art: Permanent; Functional; Memorial; Monumental

Description of Public Art: Art should narrate conversations centered on growth, history, travel, community diversity, economics, revitalization.

South Wilmington at Garner Station

Local respondents informed that this area was primarily wooded with abundant natural landscape. When it was finally developed, the first store was called “Charles’s” and then later became “Kings” which was a Walmart type of buy-in-bulk type of store. Later came a K-Mart and Brendle’s, that featured discount prices for working families on staples such as dish ware and other household goods.



Brendle's Department Store



K-Mart Superstore



Charles Department Store

Artist Recommendation: Sculpture Artist, Mosaic Artist, Interactive Artist, Sculptural Artist (Benches/Seating), Mural Artist, Literary/Multidisciplinary Artist

Site Analysis - Transit Island Opportunities

The purpose of public art on or near transit islands is multifaceted, serving to enhance safety, beautify the urban environment, and foster community identity, while also potentially calming traffic and creating a sense of place.

Traffic Calming and Beautification - South Wilmington at Martin Luther King Blvd

Public art in or near this transit hub offers numerous benefits, including traffic calming, enhanced safety, and beautification opportunities. It could also contribute to a stronger sense of place, community identity, and improve the overall quality of life. Glass windscreen art, ground plane art, and murals on transit island walls can serve as a graphic and colorful way to reclaim public space and encourage community engagement.



Isaac Streetscape, Leticia Huerta 2008



Woven Waves, RE:site 2016



Nails, Christian Moeller 2009

Recommendation: Colorful murals or paintings can be applied to the retaining walls and/or windscreen shelters at each transit location, adding vibrancy and visual interest. As permanent or temporary Installations, these art projects can transform a traffic island into a colorful and creative getaway. Further, the murals can enhance safety, beautify the urban environment, and foster community identity, while also potentially calming traffic and creating a sense of place. Additionally, colorful free-standing sculptures that playfully evoke travel and exploration could be considered.

Site Analysis - Connecting Transit Hubs and Community Identity

Public art can reflect the unique character and history of a community, fostering a sense of pride and belonging. Initiatives should provide a way to engage with residents and involve them in the creative process, strengthening community bonds.

Villa Latina Market - Community Canvas Along South Wilmington and Chapanoke

Villa Latina Market, also known as Interfood Plaza Latina, specializes in international foods, particularly Latino and American groceries, and offers a bakery and fresh produce. In-person surveys and fliers were distributed at the shopping center but unfortunately did not garner responses.



Villa Latina Market Main Entrance, *Fresh Fruits and Veggies Mosaic*, Carmen Rangel 2024, *Patria, Será Porque Quisiera Que Vuelas, Que Sigue Siendo Tuyo Mi Vuelo*, Betsy Casanas 2017, Villa Latina Market Businesses (Left to Right clockwise)

Recommendation: The International Foods Market is a welcoming thoroughfare that could be inspiration for a series of mosaic or mural treatments at the corresponding transit location. Mosaic art holds a significant place in Latino heritage, reflecting a rich history of artistic expression, cultural traditions, and the blending of indigenous, European, and African influences. From ancient Olmec civilizations to contemporary artists, mosaic art has been used to create vibrant, symbolic, and often deeply personal works. Mural art also plays a significant role in celebrating and showcasing Latino heritage. In Latino neighborhoods, murals are often seen as a way to express identity, claim space, and create dialogue about cultural heritage and belonging. These murals frequently reflect the work of the community, showcasing their history, traditions, and stories.

Mosaics and murals could be integrated into the platform station near the market via railing, walkway, seating, windscreen shelter, and/or free-standing wall public art treatments.

In-person surveys and fliers were distributed at the shopping center but unfortunately did not garner responses due to language barriers. It is recommended that budget for the artists calls be allocated to hire a Hispanic artist-in-residence or mentee to foster support and strengthen connection to the community and culture.

Site Analysis - Connecting Transit Hubs with Land and Environment

Public art that reflects the past and current history of natural open spaces throughout the BRT Southern Corridor was a high response during the ride along sessions. Green, natural landscape spaces along the corridor, stretching from the I-40 bridge underpass, S Wilmington bridge, and Walnut Creek Trail, were all areas cited that could inspire artistic enhancements at each transit location or receive complementary treatments that connect the transit hubs to their surrounding natural adjacencies.

Walnut Creek Trail - Narrating the Life Cycle of Land Near South Wilmington and Pecan

Rocky Branch begins near Meredith College, flows southeast through the NC State Central Campus and along Western Boulevard and joins with Walnut Creek at near South Wilmington Street and I-40. Their tributaries flow through several city parks with rich histories that could inform public art, including: Dorothea Dix Park, Chavis Park, and Apollo Heights Park.



Land Wave, Gound Architects 2011



Rocky Branch Trail



Birds and Cattails Fence, Chandra Cox 2018

Recommendation: Interview respondents were interested in sculptures, murals, soundscapes, and interactive installations like data-based sculptures that respond to the data like ridership or traffic flow on or near the platform stations. Then the piece itself would be art, but would also make a statement as visualized data. These public art elements would be designed to re-connect the history of the life cycle of the land, raise awareness about water resources and inspire stewardship of the environment.

Beautification and Aesthetics

Public art approaching and in between transit stations can transform potentially mundane spaces into vibrant and engaging areas, improving the overall aesthetic appeal of the urban environment. Art such as freestanding sculptures can also serve as a visual landmark, helping to create a sense of place and making it easier for people to navigate.



Furrow, Thomas Sayre 2007



Fairy Ring, Meredith Connolly 2025



Natural Landscape Traffic Divider Along 401

Recommendation: Create opportunities for free standing sculptures to be installed in sequenced approaches to transit stations, serving as both public art and traffic calming features, often with themes related to the surrounding area or community. These sculptures can provide unexpected, welcoming introductions of form and color into the existing natural palette and texture of the existing landscape. The S Wilmington exit off of 401 provides multiple opportunities where the 4 lanes of traffic are separated by islands of natural landscapes like trees and shrubbery. Public art, integrated into the natural landscaping near or between transit hubs, can transform and illuminate the bus rapid transit stations into vibrant, community-focused spaces, enhancing the overall experience for riders.

I-40 Underpass

Incorporating public art into bridge underpass areas in between the transit hubs could aid in transforming these currently neglected spaces into vibrant, welcoming areas, boosting community engagement, and potentially deterring graffiti and crime by reclaiming the space and drawing attention to it.



I-40 Underpass Along
401 (Top to Bottom)



Over Under, Jim Galluci
and Scott Richardson
2012, *Bridging The Gap*,
Darlene McClinton 2020
(Left to Right)

Recommendation: Underpass public art projects could assist in helping to reclaim and beautifying these spaces. Respondents expressed how this area is often overlooked and can become areas of neglect, but public art could transform them into vibrant and engaging spaces. Additionally, treatments could encourage interaction and a sense of ownership within the community by making the space more welcoming and interesting. By drawing attention to the area and making it more visually appealing, the art could discourage graffiti and potentially deter criminal activity. This project could support Local Artists and provide opportunities to showcase their work and gain exposure. Respondents also mentioned making the space more approachable, welcoming, or memorable, transforming a dark and unpleasant area to create a more welcoming and safer passage for people passing through as goals of a public art intervention.

S Wilmington Bridge and Fence

By infusing public art along the bridge overpass fencing, this uninspiring, neglected space could connect the project goals and community narrative into the existing architecture. Public art for the fencing could include designs inspired by a combination of patterns that are indigenous to the culture and heritage of the community.



South Wilmington Overpass Bridge, *Natural Rhythm*, Dan Mayer 2020 (Left to Right)

Recommendation: Bridge overpass fence public art installations aim to enhance pedestrian and driver experiences by adding visual interest and artistic expression to infrastructure, while also incorporating safety features. Additionally, public art along the S Wilmington bridge could provide aesthetic enhancement for the bridge and overpasses and transform mundane infrastructure into a visually engaging space, enriching the urban landscape. Respondents expressed a connection to the bridge and the former Washington Terrace housing community. The bridge and fence could feature art to promote and foster a sense of community pride and connection by reflecting local culture, history, or natural features.

Site Analysis - Creating Safe Environments & Fostering Community

Thoughtful design and placement of public art throughout the corridor can make public spaces more appealing and safer. Respondents cited murals and other creative placemaking projects that encourage community gathering and interaction as potential public art opportunities on or near a transit hub station like South Wilmington and Pecan.

South Wilmington at Pecan - Narrating Improved Public Spaces and Encouraging Positive Social Interaction

Public art can play a significant role in addressing homelessness by raising awareness, fostering empathy, and even providing economic opportunities for individuals experiencing homelessness. Located near this transit hub is Oak City Cares, a multi-service resource that connects individuals and families experiencing or at risk of homelessness with vital resources and support.

Homeless individuals contribute to a sense of community in various ways, including participating in community events, sharing their skills and experiences, and offering mutual support to others experiencing homelessness. By fostering public art opportunities art that are uplifting, aspirational, or even celebratory, the public space can support homeless individuals, strengthen community bonds and contribute to a more inclusive and resilient community.



Faces of Homelessness, ArtWorks 2017, Oak City Cares, *Community for Creative Nonviolence Mural*, StreetSense 2016 (Top to Bottom)

Recommendation: Interview respondents were interested in murals and projection-based installations that featuring documentary photography that could capture the stories of individuals experiencing homelessness, humanizing the issue and challenging perceptions. Mural projects could use visual storytelling to highlight the issue and prompt dialogue. **Artist Recommendation:** Sculpture Artist, Mosaic Artist, Interactive Artist, Sculptural Artist (Benches/Seating), Mural Artist, Literary/Multidisciplinary Artist

10. Evaluation Criteria

The site opportunities recommended in this report serve as a starting point for discussion and planning. Raleigh Arts should prioritize these ideas and make a recommendation as to the best projects to solicit calls for. The following criteria provides some key questions that Raleigh Arts should consider when evaluating opportunities. Not every opportunity carries the same criteria or apply to every project. These questions also provide a way to evaluate the body of public art projects that are being developed each year and, over time, ensure that there is a diversity of locations, artistic approaches, artists, and audiences that are engaged.

Location

1. Does the site provide an opportunity to reach a broad and diverse audience?
2. Is the site a place where multiple programmatic uses, habitats, or trails intersect?
3. Does the site offer good visibility and/or sight lines?
4. Would artwork at this site complement the site's use?
5. Is there a capital project at the site that could allow for site integration and/or leveraging of resources?
6. Does the site offer an opportunity to bring art to a part of the Raleigh public art habitat where Raleigh Arts has not already had art projects or programming?
7. Does the site create an opportunity to forge a partnership that will strengthen the outcomes of the project?
8. Does the site pose any concerns around environmental impact?
9. Does the site pose any concerns around ADA accessibility?

Content

1. Does the project provide an opportunity to tell a story about that place? To reveal something new? Or bring to light something that is not readily accessible?
2. Does the project provide an opportunity to tell the story of the Wake County community at-large?
3. Does the project provide an opportunity to connect its story to a larger idea, network, system, or place?
4. Does the project provide an opportunity to enhance or promote the enjoyment of the natural environment?
5. Does the content of the work provide an opportunity to forge a partnership that will strengthen the outcomes of the project?
6. Does the project provide an opportunity for a new artist or voice to engage in the public realm?

Experience

1. Could the artwork be experienced intimately? On foot or by bike or scooter?
2. Is there the potential to create a work that could be interactive or experienced from multiple vantage points?
3. Does the artwork contribute to a sense of discovery within the site?
4. Are there opportunities for activation or programming to happen in conjunction with the artwork?

Resources

1. Are there sufficient resources to commission an artwork at the site that would be of an appropriate quality, durability, and scale for the site?
2. Is there sufficient staff time to be able to manage the commissioning process, programming, and other related activities around the project?
3. Are there opportunities to leverage resources through grants, partnerships, volunteers, etc.?
4. Would a significant portion of the project budget be consumed by site work, engineering/utility needs (whether due to siting or complexity of the work)?
5. Is there an opportunity to leverage resources by integrating the work into a capital project or other park improvement project?

11. Conclusion

In efforts to further develop a strategy and plan of practice for public art along the BRT Southern Corridor expansion, GoRaleigh and Raleigh Arts can build upon its strengths, and continue to working coordination with local communities to strengthen the local public art habitat. In order to leverage the advocacy and support for public art already existing in the Downtown habitat, GoRaleigh and Raleigh Arts and its partners have an opportunity to build a more coordinated system, develop the habitat's public art capacities in strategic ways, learn from peer models and align its public art habitat with larger goals for the City of Raleigh.

Public art has the power to create a habitat of belonging, unity and a place of equitable economic growth. As the BRT embraces its roles as a public art partner and communicator, other local community partners will be vital in working to help create a thriving and coordinated public art habitat.

"In the 1960's I grew up in Washington Terrace and went to Washington school; We used to do everything on that side of town. There were so many black owned businesses that we went to often. It is nice seeing the area be rebuilt and nicer as time goes by; it would be nice to see things that show the people who live there in the future about the history of all that." – Ride Along Respondent