



Creative Placemaking in Rail Transit Corridors

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APA Regional and Intergovernmental Planning Division Handbook



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Creating Great Communities for All

“Cities are complex organisms. They are a mix of their “hardware” foundations and the social energy and activities, or “software,” blended into them. Cities are shaped primarily by a culture of engineering since it is chiefly the hardware folks who determine how places look and feel. But their insights are limited. Too often they do not understand how the emotional flow of the city works—something that artists appreciate. We need the combined insights and intellectual artistry of many players to make a city work, from cultural historians, engineers, social activists, planners, businesspeople, and psychologists, to ordinary citizens, philosophers, artists, and many more. When they work well together they create urbanity, one of our greatest achievements.” Charles Landry¹

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Cover Image: Metro Transit Blue Line train in downtown Minneapolis in front of the Bob Dylan mural by Eduardo Kobra. Jeff Syme, photographer.

I. Preface and Acknowledgements

Preface

In 2017, the American Planning Association published *PAS Report 586: Emerging Trends in Regional Planning*. Editing and content for this report was provided by APA's Regional and Intergovernmental Planning Division (RIPD) and reflects that division's ongoing commitment to elevating emerging trends in its field. Two ongoing divisional priorities expressly reflect this commitment: an annual regional futures forum, and the production of a series of policy handbooks exploring new emerging trends. The first such handbook, *Regional Water Planning for Climate Resilience*, was released in 2019. *Creative Placemaking in Rail Transit Corridors* will contribute to this RIPD's policy handbook series.

This new handbook was inspired by several trends that have emerged in the first two decades of the 21st century involving a complex mix of actions and activity by regional and local actors. Supported by federal funding, many new rail transit systems have been created throughout the U.S., and public art has been incorporated into many of these new facilities to help create a regional identity for the transit system and to help strengthen the identity of the nearby neighborhoods.² Transit-oriented development strategies have also prompted neighborhood-scale investments including public art within walking distance of many rail transit stations. These activities in the transit facilities and the surrounding neighborhoods also contribute to broader strategies aimed at elevating the historic identity of each neighborhood or fostering a new sense of place where such historic identity was previously lacking.

We use the term creative placemaking to characterize these place identity activities. Although there is no single definition of this term, two complementary definitions inform this policy handbook. From a transportation perspective, the organization Transportation for America says that "In the transportation context, creative placemaking is an approach

that deeply engages the arts, culture, and creativity, especially from underrepresented communities, in planning and designing projects so that the resulting communities better reflect and celebrate local culture, heritage and values."³ Similarly, the National Endowment for the Arts indicates that "Creative placemaking is when artists, arts organizations, and community development practitioners deliberately integrate arts and culture into community revitalization work – placing arts at the table with land-use, transportation, economic development, education, housing, infrastructure, and public safety strategies."⁴

The challenges of our time make it important to emphasize that this study indeed focuses on emerging trends, not trends that have run their course or become standardized in practice. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic temporarily disrupted transit and transit-oriented development patterns, raising new questions about the long-term impact of such disruptions, especially as it relates to equity. Additional questions have arisen in the wake of the widespread civil unrest following the murder of George Floyd by a police officer. Creative placemaking has been called on to give voice to racial injustice in the wake of the unrest and as a reckoning to address the serious issues of inequity and social injustice exposed by the impacts of the health pandemic. As COVID-19 subsides the issues of racial injustice and inequity will remain, along with larger issues related to climate change, all of which will require sustained and long-term efforts at redress. Larger-scale concerns like climate change and the focused impacts and systemic realities brought to light in 2020 will affect future decisions related to creative placemaking in rail transit corridors, in practice and in outcomes. A premise of this policy handbook, however, is that the precedents and insights shared in these case studies provide a strong foundation upon which regions can develop ever more creative strategies aimed at confronting serious global and local issues.

Our emphasis on *emerging* trends has two implications for terminology in this policy handbook. First, while we use the common term *best practices*, we also sometimes refer to *promising practices* to denote practices that are more experimental and not yet well-established. Second, while this handbook focuses on *creative*

placemaking we also acknowledge that our case studies often do not use this term to describe their work, even as they employ combinations of public art, community engagement, and attention to equity issues in a way that begins to add up to successful creative placemaking.

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Image courtesy of the Boston region.

2. Executive Summary

The *Creative Placemaking in Rail Transit Corridors* policy handbook culminates in a set of ten themes and considerations to inform the work of those who would seek to engage in creative placemaking projects in rail transit corridors or similar contexts (e.g., bus rapid transit, bicycle/pedestrian pathways). These themes and considerations are each illustrated by examples from case study regions. The ten themes and considerations are:

1. Because of their longstanding investment in station art, many regional transit agencies have already set the stage for ongoing creative placemaking efforts in rail transit corridors.
2. Regional planning agencies can provide policy direction, and in limited cases, program funding to support art in rail transit corridors.
3. Municipal governments can provide policy direction, and in limited cases, program funding to support art in rail transit corridors.
4. A common source of funding for art in rail transit corridors is through percent for art programs.
5. Foundations, local philanthropy, and private sector donors can also contribute to the creation of art in rail transit corridors.
6. There is significant variety in the kind of public art and creative placemaking projects deemed appropriate for rail transit corridors.
7. Creative placemaking has the greatest impact when integrated fully into overall transit-oriented development goals.
8. Regions are acknowledging the challenges that accompany rail transit development, such as gentrification and displacement pressures.
9. Successful creative placemaking in rail transit corridors typically involves complex governmental, philanthropic, private sector, and neighborhood partnerships.
10. Creative placemaking in rail transit corridors has established practices which can then be replicated in other areas.

Case studies were drawn from eight different U.S. metropolitan regions where significant 21st century rail transit investment has occurred, offering insights into creative placemaking in rail transit corridors. These case studies for Atlanta, Boston, Dallas, Denver, Miami, Minneapolis-Saint Paul, Phoenix and Seattle⁵ offer a multiplicity of perspectives. Geographically, they represent three eastern, two central and three western metropolitan regions. Historically, although all involve 21st century rail and/or creative placemaking investments, they are represented in one system that was originally developed in the 19th century (Boston), three systems with significant rail investments in the late 20th century (Atlanta, Dallas and Miami) and four systems largely created in the 21st century (Denver, Minneapolis-Saint Paul, Phoenix, and Seattle). The policy handbook contains both a summary of each case study and the detailed case studies themselves. The detailed case studies include specific regional policies, as well as local and community level detail that can be drawn upon as a resource.

The case studies in this handbook reveal a diversity of configurations that we've defined using the following seven prototypes:

- Transit stations – placemaking focused on the public art within the stations with an aim to capture and reflect the character of the walkshed neighborhoods surrounding each station.
- Walkshed - placemaking focused on incorporating the arts within a standard 10-minute walk to and from the transit station to enhance public space and elevate the image of transit-oriented development programming.
- Public art trails – placemaking focused on extending the public art concentration at a transit station beyond the 10-minute walkshed through the development of longer linear or circular public art trails.
- Transit rights-of-way – placemaking focused on seeking opportunities to transform transit right-of-way wasteland areas with arts and cultural assets.
- Popup public art – placemaking focused on employing arts and cultural assets and activities, prior to and during construction of rail transit facilities to help create and sustain communities and economies during the challenging transition period.
- Regional scale transit corridors – placemaking focused explicitly on the promotion of a positive regional identity via a set of common themes woven throughout the transit system's arts and cultural assets and activities.
- Transit agencies – branding focused on the promotion of existing community public art assets, and arts and cultural organizations and activity to market the use of transit lines to access these assets and activities.



Image Courtesy of the Phoenix region.

The case studies also highlight several overarching issues and insights related to:

- Financing and Governance
- Coalitions and Partnerships
- Gentrification, Displacement and Equity
- Role of Regional Agencies

Finally, the handbook extends beyond our case studies to look at the historical context within which the concept and practice of creative placemaking developed. This literature review begins in the nineteenth century with the City Beautiful movement, and extends into the 20th and 21st century with an examination of the contributions of the Works Progress Administration, and the trends that characterized post-World War II urban decline and subsequent urban revitalization efforts.

3. Case Study Summaries

19th Century Rail Transit Systems

Boston is unique among the case studies in that its 21st century creative placemaking work has involved the transformation of a rail corridor originally created in the 19th century. An antiquated and little-used commuter line is being upgraded in the historic right-of-way and will function more like the light rail lines in other parts of the region. The Boston case study examines the Fairmount Indigo Corridor where a broad partnership of regional and local government agencies, community organizations and the philanthropic community, are helping to revitalize the racially and ethnically diverse Upham's Corner station by sparking a "cultural economy" rich with public art.

Late 20th Century Rail Transit Systems

The rail transit system for the Atlanta region dates from 1975 when its first line opened. Public art has always been a component of this system but a new program, Artbound, was created in 2016 to reinvigorate and advance the role of public art in the region's transit infrastructure. This case study highlights new partnerships and creative placemaking plans emerging from the Artbound program, and from processes initiated by the Atlanta Regional Commission to support creative placemaking at transit stations.

The Miami region case study focuses on the southern portion of the region's principal rail transit line, an elevated system running from city's northwestern suburbs through downtown and on to the southwest. Opened in 1984, this line includes a wasteland of underutilized space beneath the elevated rail line. Inspired by the High Line in New York City, a local philanthropist launched a concept known as The Underline, which will turn the space beneath the rail transit line into a linear park, bike/ped trail and public art corridor from downtown to the southwest. The result is a creative public-private partnership with Miami-Dade County and a new organization, Friends of The Underline.

21st Century Rail Transit Systems

The Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) agency has historically taken the lead in establishing the public art program connected with transit in the Dallas region. Launched in 1987, this program has been implemented in all four of the region's existing light rail lines and is also guiding the region's two planned lines. This case study focuses specifically on the Green Line that opened in 2009 and runs from northwest to southeast for nearly 29 miles. The line traverses the lower income and diverse neighborhoods to the southeast, but also downtown Dallas and the city's established arts district.

The Denver region's case study is focused on the 40 West ArtLine in Lakewood, which is served by the region's W Line. The rail line opened in 2013 and runs for 12.1 miles from downtown Denver to the western suburb of Golden. Responding to community-generated ideas, the City of Lakewood, which borders Denver, sought and received a US Environmental Protection Agency grant to create an art and placemaking focused plan for the area surrounding the Lamar Station. The result includes the creation of a four-mile bicycling and art-themed trail anchored by the station and arts district.

The Minneapolis-Saint Paul region case study examines the Green and Blue Line extensions proposed for the region's existing light rail corridors in the MetroTransit system. Both extension efforts are occurring after the adoption of the FAST Act, which prohibits the mixing of federal funding with public art projects in rail transit facilities. Consequently, both efforts are seeking alternative ways to incorporate public art into station walksheds. In contrast, the original Green and Blue lines were developed pre-FAST Act and public art was incorporated into the transit facilities themselves.

The Phoenix region case study examines the Valley Metro system's Artsline, a brand that encompasses the entire 28-mile length of the region's light rail line. Branding provides a low-cost but impactful ongoing public art program directly serving the cities of Phoenix, Mesa and

Tempe. By instituting a program that integrates short term art projects in transit stations, on transit vehicles, and in a large rotating mural the Artsline project aims to showcase existing arts and cultural institutions located near the rail line, as well as Valley Metro's permanent station installations, some of which provide shade to walking paths that connect the stations to the arts and cultural institutions.

The Seattle region case study examines the East Link Extension light rail corridor within the Sound Transit system. This extension will expand the region's rail transit system in a new

direction with the creation of the 2-Line that will serve the cities of Seattle, Mercer Island, Bellevue and Redmond. The corridor, under construction at the time of the study, provides an instructive mix of accomplishments and works in progress. It brings light rail through the new Amazon branch facilities in Bellevue, Google's new campus in the Spring District, and the Microsoft headquarters campus in Redmond. The development of this new line has stimulated the imagination of technologically savvy residents and businesses in the corridor who seek ways to integrate elements of high-tech culture with creative placemaking.



Image courtesy of the Denver region.

4. Overview of Corridor Project Issues and Insights

Introduction: Prototypes

Public art and creative placemaking can contribute in many ways to the development and enjoyment of rail transit corridors. Our eight case studies have revealed seven prototypes, each representing a different kind of contribution: (1) Transit Station Public Art; (2) Public Art in Station Walksheds; (3) Public Art Trails Anchored in Transit Stations; (4) Public Art in a Transit Right-of-Way; (5) Popup Public Art; (6) Regionally-Themed Public Art; and (7) Transit Agency Branding.

The following section discusses each prototype briefly and highlights examples of case study regions that illustrate each prototype. Additional details for each region can be found in Chapter 6.

Prototype – Transit Station Public Art

Previously, federal funding for rail transit required the incorporation of transit enhancements, including public art, into new transit facilities. However, the FAST Act of 2015 prohibited the use of FTA funds for “incremental costs of incorporating art or non-functional landscaping into facilities, including the costs of an artist on the design team.”⁶ Even with this prohibition, however, communities were permitted to incorporate public art into transit facilities provided such work was paid for entirely with local funds. Consequently, our case studies offer examples of public art in transit facilities – both pre-FAST Act and post-FAST Act – and highlights the ongoing fiscal struggle.

The FAST Act expired on September 30, 2020 but was extended for an additional year. Many arts organizations have advocated for restoring public art as an eligible federal transit expense.⁷

Case Study Examples of Transit Station Public Art

Atlanta: The Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) created Artbound, a program designed to ensure that public art and placemaking projects continue to occur as ongoing activities in the agency’s rail transit stations. Through a percent for art allocation, this program supports the development and installation of new artistic assets, including multi-disciplinary cultural offerings and performance art. Artbound is guided by an Arts Council that creates an annual Art Plan, helps to select artists for new projects, and serves as ambassadors for art in the region.

Dallas: In 1990 the Dallas Area Rapid Transit Agency (DART) adopted procedures for the DART Station Art and Design Program. Those procedures have guided the creation of all light rail facilities in the region’s rail transit system and continue to be in effect today.

In 2007, the agency published DART Gallery, a 45-page booklet with photos and interpretive essays to encourage the exploration of the system’s extensive and growing collection of transit station public art.⁸ Since then, DART has released separate booklets for its more recent light rail lines, the 2009 Green Line⁹ and the 2010 Orange Line.¹⁰



Image courtesy of the Dallas Region.

Denver: Public art in the Denver region's rail transit facilities was created and is managed by the Art-n-Transit program of the Regional Transportation District (RTD), a program established in 1994 to encompass public art in

both rail and bus transit facilities.¹¹ A website describes and contains photos of each of 58 public artworks incorporated into RTD's rail transit stations.¹²

Prototype – Public Art in Station Walksheds

Research has determined that few people are inclined to walk more than ten minutes to a rail transit station. Consequently, efforts to engage potential riders focus on ten-minute walksheds around the transit station. In general, such walksheds translate into approximately a half mile radius around each station, although more precise mapping of walksheds account for sidewalk patterns, barriers, and other conditions that either facilitate or impede a ten-minute walk from various directions.

Because transit-oriented development often initiates neighborhood change, especially in proximity to transit stations, the practice of creative placemaking can be an important tool for ensuring that, such change, will result in meaningful and vital neighborhood elements. Good creative placemaking also involves placekeeping, being sensitive to the preservation of neighborhood character. Public art in transit station walksheds can play an important role in cultivating a sense of place that both honors the past and embraces the future of neighborhoods in transition.



As indicated in the discussion of Transit Station Placemaking, regional transit agencies are responsible for public art in transit stations; in contrast, local governments – and sometimes community and arts organizations, take the lead in planning and implementing public art in the walksheds surrounding each transit station. Consequently, intergovernmental and local community cooperation is important to ensure that the placemaking conducted by each entity is mutually reinforcing and welcomed.

Image Courtesy of the Boston region.

Case Study Examples of Walkshed Placemaking

Atlanta: As a complement to MARTA's Artbound program, the Atlanta Regional Commission's Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) provides planning, zoning, and site design funding and staff support for creative placemaking in transit station neighborhoods. Public art projects supported by LCI may be installed at the transit stations themselves, or in plazas adjacent to the stations. In either case, they are crafted to integrate with broader transit-oriented development projects that LCI also supports.

Boston: Our Boston region's Upham's Corner Station in the Fairmount Indigo Corridor lies at the western edge of a commercial node. Walkshed placemaking is occurring here, both to incent community members in the evolving mixed-use development within the commercial node to use transit, and to incent transit riders to explore the neighborhood adjacent to the station.

Upham's Corner is located in a diverse lower-income neighborhood that has been a focus of planning and redevelopment strategies since 2004 when Boston adopted the Upham's Corner Station Area Plan. This plan specifically highlighted the role that public art should play in the neighborhood's revitalization with an

emphasis on street art such as murals and paintings that can be created by neighborhood artists and residents.

Although the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority has not been actively involved with the Upham's Corner project, the region's planning agency (Metropolitan Area Planning Council) has taken an active role in working with Boston and the Dorchester neighborhood by heading up a detailed cultural planning study. Public art created in the neighborhood has been supported by the Boston Foundation, which supports a mobile art lab for designing and fabricating public art. In short, walkshed creative

placemaking in this neighborhood has involved a local/regional public/private partnership approach.

Seattle: The new East Link Extension (soon to be named the 2 Line) in the Seattle region includes a prime example of walkshed creative placemaking in the city of Bellevue. Centered on downtown Bellevue's new light rail station (opening in 2023) the *Grand Connection* pathway will run for total of 12 blocks. Its design proposes a series of public artworks that provide major points of pedestrian interest every 4-5 minutes, and minor points of interest every 15-20 seconds.

Prototype – Public Art Trails Anchored in Transit Stations

Communities increasingly incorporate public art into trails that are designed to promote exercise and exploration.¹³ In a rail transit setting, such trails are longer than walkshed paths. Our case studies include two exemplary public art trails.

Case Study Examples of Public Art Trails Anchored in Transit Stations

Denver: The Denver suburb of Lakewood has created a concentration of public art within walking distance of its Lamar Station, as well as a longer trail extending for a total of four miles. The 40 West ArtLine was launched as a public art infused walking and biking experience in 2018. This trail is marked by a painted green line on the ground and activated with over 70 public art and creative placemaking installations, including works by over 24 professional artists and community-created art installations completed with the assistance of professional artists.

A map of the 40 West ArtLine identifies the locations of six different types of public art projects along the trail, which branches out from Lamar Station to the northeast, and to the northwest. There are interactive sculptures, kaleidoscope crossings, ground/game/wall murals, fence art, story totems, and box wrap art. The neighborhoods along the ArtLine include numerous art galleries, which are also identified on the map. Additional information is available on a multi-page website focused entirely on the ArtLine.



Image courtesy of the Denver region.

Seattle: At the end of the Seattle region's East Link LRT extension is the suburb of Redmond, famous as the headquarters campus of Microsoft. The campus will host its own light rail station but the end of the line will be in downtown Redmond, a place that blends the architectural legacy of its historic small town with the high-tech ethos associated with Microsoft and other technology employers in Seattle's eastern suburbs.

When the downtown light rail station opens in 2024, riders will be treated to the existing concentration of public art within walking

distance of the station and to the five-mile walking and biking public art loop which features 32 public art installations. The walkshed public art is concentrated in two parks located on either side of Cleveland Street, which in 2019 was named by the American Planning Association as a Great Street, for its outstanding urban design and placemaking. A public art map is available online, and as a hard copy brochure for trail users. The map proclaims that “Art links people to their city to each other, to create a truly sustainable, soulful and imaginative community.”¹⁴



Seattle Region. Mark VanderSchaaf, photographer.

Prototype – Public Art in a Transit Right of Way

In addition to public art in transit facilities themselves, it is possible to create public art in other portions of the transit right of way. Our case studies include one exemplary regional effort to create such public art.

Case Study Example of Public Art in a Transit Right of Way

Miami: The Underline originated as an idea by a prominent Miami region philanthropist who was inspired by New York City’s High Line. She envisioned the right of way under the Miami region’s elevated rail transit line as a combination bike/ped trail, linear park, and public art gallery. To advance this vision, the Friends of The Underline non-profit organization was formed to advance fundraising efforts and to cultivate the partnerships needed to implement the vision.

A major milestone in this effort occurred in 2016 when a master plan for The Underline, created by James Corner Field Operations in partnership with Friends of the Underline and Miami-Dade County, was released. As the principal public sector partner for The Underline, Miami-Dade County will fund much of the infrastructure and be responsible for the public art created in The Underline. The initial phase called Brickell Backyard covers a half-mile stretch of the proposed line, running south from the Miami River. It opened in early 2021 and includes both permanent and temporary public artworks. Additional phases of the 10-mile-long project are scheduled to be completed by 2024.

Prototype – Popup Public Art

Some regions are relying on an approach to public art for rail transit that draws on the “lighter/quicker/cheaper” concept articulated by the Project for Public Spaces.¹⁵ As this term suggests, this approach may be especially useful where funds are not immediately available to contemplate six-figure permanent sculptural installations. The approach can also have the benefit of involving many members of the community in the creation of public art connected to rail transit in their neighborhoods.

Case Study Examples of Popup Public Art

Minneapolis-Saint Paul: When the original Green Line light rail project was undertaken in the early 2010s, Metro Transit and the people of Saint Paul faced a big challenge. The new light

rail line was constructed in the middle of a long commercial corridor with many businesses serving lower-income neighborhoods. A strategy was needed to support those businesses during the construction of the project. The City of Saint Paul teamed up with

nonprofit, Springboard for the Arts, and LISC to create Irrigate, a three-year effort to enliven street life during the difficult construction process.¹⁶

Lessons learned from Irrigate have since been applied in the planning for the region's Green and Blue Line extensions. During the early planning stages of the Blue Line extension,



Minneapolis-Saint Paul region. Image Courtesy of Hennepin County.

Hennepin County drew on a grant from the McKnight Foundation and hired Springboard for the Arts to create “Cultivate Bottineau: Culture, Community, and Commerce” to engage with communities along the proposed line through arts and cultural events and

activities.¹⁷ The Green Line light rail extension is now employing popup public art during the construction phase of the line.

Earlier hopes to raise funds for eight substantial sculptural installations in four cities were beset by the recession, leading to a rescoping, at least temporarily, to focus on this popup public art effort. Efforts to ensure that permanent public art is installed in station walkshed areas remain under the guidance of Forecast Public Art, who was employed to assist with early planning for public art in this corridor.¹⁸

Phoenix: Valley Metro, while creating and managing a robust program of transit station public art, also committed early on to the idea that community-based popup public art could be a powerful complement to their program. This commitment was in part inspired by the recognition that the region's 28-mile light rail line serves a total of 55 significant arts and cultural institutions close to transit stations. A regular program of popup public art creation serves to complement the station public art and the arts and cultural institutions along the Artsline, and a Spotlight Artist program commissions artists or artist teams to create works that are featured on Valley Metro vehicles and digital media, along with one large-scale temporary mural at the light rail station in the Phoenix Arts District.¹⁹

Prototype – Regionally-Themed Public Art

Rail transit systems inherently retain a dual identity. On the one hand, each station in the system serves a particular neighborhood. On the other hand, the system serves the entire region, chiefly the parts of the region with the highest concentrations of residents, jobs, and entertainment. Consequently, some regions have taken steps to elevate a sense of regional or corridor-wide identity in their creative placemaking activities.

Case Study Examples of Regionally Themed Public Art

Boston: A development strategy in the Boston region has been crafted for the Fairmount Indigo Corridor, running from the edge of downtown Boston through the southwestern portion of the city. This strategy is framed around the theme of “The Entire World is at

Home Here” which is intended to emphasize the diversity of the communities that the line serves while also emphasizing the connectivity the line provides to the wider region and its transit system.



Miami: The Underline is an ambitious effort to create a linear park, bike/ped trail and public art gallery through the entire southwestern portion of the region's principal rail transit system – and eventually, perhaps, to the north and west of the area. While inspired by New York City's High Line, The Underline endeavors to create

Miami region. Mark VanderSchaaf, photographer.

not just a world-class placemaking project for a small portion of a city, as with NYC's High Line, but for the central spine of the entire region.

Minneapolis-Saint Paul: Despite their distinctive histories and demographics, the cities of the new Green Line extension have established a goal of creating public art in each community that affirms a corridor-wide identity. Among the goals for the planned public art and placemaking activities of the Public Art and Community Engagement Southwest (PLACES) initiative is that its work/activities/art will support wayfinding by creating a distinct identity for the Southwest Corridor. This project builds on the work in the initial Green Line to cultivate a common approach to creative placemaking among the neighborhoods of Saint Paul and Minneapolis.

Prototype – Transit Agency Branding

In a few regions public art and placemaking play such a prominent role in the light rail system that the transit agency has branded itself in reference to this role.

Case Study Examples of Transit Agency Branding

Dallas: Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) showcases its Station Art and Design program through a series of guides to encourage riders to explore the collection of public art along each of its current light rail lines. The guides are introduced with the observation that the system's program yields a regional art gallery that "does not merely create art for public places; it creates the places themselves."²⁰

Phoenix: Valley Metro has branded its light rail system as the Artsline. It explains this brand as follows: the "Valley Metro Artsline is defined as placemaking, people and community that exists in the physical space at stations, on board light rail, art programs and partnerships with community destinations and organizations. Artsline is connecting communities through culture and creativity."²¹

Financing and Governance

The most common way of financing public art projects is via percent for art programs. Such programs specify that a percentage of the costs of capital investments be allocated to public art, with one percent being the standard – although some places establish more and others less than that. Leadership for establishing percent for art programs typically begins at the state level, and six of the eight case studies are in states with such programs. The states of Washington, Colorado, and Florida all have mandatory state-level percent for art programs dating from the 1970s, when the first such programs were created in the U.S. Massachusetts also has a mandatory state program created in 2014. Texas and Minnesota have optional programs dating from the late 1970s and early 1980s, while Arizona and Georgia have no such programs.²² Other ways of financing public art can include philanthropic dollars and private sector investments. As detailed below, all of these methods have contributed to public art in our case study regions.

Governance is closely interwoven with the financing of public art. Decisions must be made regarding the recruitment and selection of artists as well as the ongoing management of public artworks that are created. With public art, governance systems must balance several competing interests – notably the perspective of the public sector that is financing the art, members of the community where the public art is located, and the artist’s freedom of self-expression. Further complexities arise when the public art is expected to contribute to overall creative placemaking efforts, making it important for the artwork to integrate with other elements of transportation and real estate development projects in a way that helps honor or create a meaningful sense of place.

Two examples from our case study regions illustrate inspired financing and governance models to advance creative placemaking in their rail transit corridors:

Seattle: The State of Washington adopted a percent for art program in 1974, the second such program created in the U.S. Since that time, the transit agency, county, and cities in our Seattle region case study all have adopted such programs as well. Due to voter-approved robust funding for transit expansion in the Seattle region, the region’s transit agency, Sound Transit, has a public art budget of over \$54 million for the 1998-2023 period.²³ For public art projects in neighborhoods close to transit stations local public funding is also available, particularly in Seattle and Redmond, both of which have percent for art programs.

The Seattle region has created a unique governance model that shapes much of the public art and placemaking in the region. 4Culture was created in 1965 as a tax-exempt development authority. It grew out of the King County Office of Cultural Affairs, but now enjoys autonomy from the county. Its name reflects its fourfold emphasis on arts, heritage, preservation, and public art. While its primary focus is on county projects, it also contracts to provide services to entities outside of county government.²⁴

Miami: From a financing and governance standpoint, the Miami region case study is unique in several ways. Like the Seattle region, the Miami region has robust percent for art programs at all levels of government. Miami-Dade County and many cities in the region were early adopters of ordinances that exceeded the standard one percent threshold. For example, 1.5 percent for Miami-Dade County public buildings established in 1973²⁵

and 2.0 percent for City-funded construction projects in Miami Beach, established in 2019 as an increase from its previous 1.5 percent²⁶. One of the cities along The Underline, Coral Gables, extends its percent for art program to cover private construction projects with a value in excess of \$1 million. Such projects must either contribute 1.0 percent of their value to the City’s Art in Public Places fund or create City-approved public art with a value greater than or equal to 1.0 percent of the project cost.²⁷ Therefore, The Underline project benefits from Miami-Dade County’s Art in Public Places program as well as the local programs.

Because the idea for The Underline originated with the philanthropic sector, philanthropy represents an additional and significant funding source. The Friends of The Underline is helping to translate vision into a detailed strategy and has pledged to raise funds to supplement the public investment that would be needed to match public investments in the corridor.²⁸

The public-private partnership that has evolved to implement The Underline concept now involves a necessarily creative governance model. Friends of The Underline has its own process for soliciting and commissioning public art suitable for The Underline, however, since that art will be located on public land under Miami-Dade County’s jurisdiction it must be gifted to the county and approved through the established process of the county’s Art in Public Places program. The first public art projects to be created through this blended process are included in the Brickell Backyard segment which opened in early 2021.

Coalitions and Partnerships

Creative placemaking in rail transit corridors begs for coalitions and partnerships. While the rail corridors and their facilities are created and operated by a regionwide public agency, their impacts are highly localized. Efforts to ensure that the interface between transit stations and neighborhoods results in not just transit development, but meaningful and soul-enriching places. This requires that multiple perspectives be at the table to shape fruitful creative placemaking discussions and activities. Such efforts must involve entities that can bring financial resources to bear, but also, current and likely future residents, workers, and visitors to the neighborhoods.



Image courtesy of the Atlanta region.

Our case studies include numerous examples of coalitions and partnerships, with two highlighted here:

Atlanta: The Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) operates a program known as Artbound, which since its inception in 2016, seeks to integrate art throughout the transit system in a way that enhances and extends the original public art investments that date from the 20th century. Artbound allows its projects to be initiated by a local community partner, who approaches MARTA for permission to do public art or creative placemaking at a transit station and requests funding support for its proposals. Our Atlanta case study highlights three such partner-initiated projects: commissions for three Black artists proposed by the Decatur Arts Alliance, an upgrade of the Arts Center Station initiated by the Midtown Alliance that includes public art and performance art, and murals and creative lighting projects initiated by several community partners including a local arts organization, a community economic development organization, and the county.

Dallas: Like Atlanta, Dallas has a rail transit system that was initiated in the late 20th century and possesses legacy public art in its stations. Also like MARTA, the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) agency has in recent years worked with neighborhood-based organizations whose public art and placemaking activities interface with DART's facilities and public artworks. In Deep Ellum, a historically Black neighborhood adjacent to downtown, the Deep Ellum Community Association and the Deep Ellum Foundation persuaded DART to commission and partially fund murals in a highway tunnel that connects the neighborhood to the station. Another opportunity for collaboration and partnership may be emerging in the community of Fair Park, the historic home of the Texas State Fair. Fair Park First, a non-profit organization, has launched a master plan for the area, including connections to transit inspired by creative placemaking.

Gentrification, Displacement, and Equity

The reality of gentrification is common in economically robust regions such as the eight featured in our case studies, as are concerns about displacement and inequitable development. Many economic development trends in the late 20th and early 21st century favored the upper and middle classes and were coupled with a strong back-to-the-city movement. Therefore, revitalization efforts often resulted in the gentrification of many historically lower income and BIPOC neighborhoods.

Because older neighborhoods feature interesting architecture and retail vibrancy, the speculative desire has been to transform these communities into upper-middle class enclaves for the benefit of real estate development and tax revenues, resulting in the displacement of existing residents and businesses. Neighborhoods near new or upgraded transit lines are especially prone to gentrification, displacement, and economic development inequities.

High-quality transit is an amenity that is often explicitly part of a strategy to attract riders that have other transit choices, in addition to serving those who are transit dependent. And rail transit investment is linked to transit-oriented development strategies that seek to create mixed use complexes of mid-rise and high-rise apartments and condominiums near transit stations, inviting new residents and businesses to the community – yet while adding needed housing and improving retail vibrancy, market rate transit-oriented development can contribute to rapid gentrification and inequitable outcomes existing community members.

Two of our case studies highlight ways in which regions are wrestling with these issues:

Boston: In their cultural planning work for the Upham's Corner neighborhood, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council and the City of Boston produced *Arts and Innovation District: Managing Neighborhood Change* in 2018. The 118-page document focuses entirely on strategies to mitigate commercial and residential displacement in light of the neighborhood's proximity to the upgraded Fairmount Indigo Corridor light rail.²⁹ The study includes working definitions for both gentrification and displacement, distinctions between indirect and direct displacement, five strategies for mitigating commercial displacement, four strategies for mitigating residential displacement, and indicators to measure displacement and the success of mitigation efforts.

Denver: The 40 West ArtLine in the Denver suburb of Lakewood is paradoxically a product of displacement, and a potential harbinger of further displacement. The burgeoning arts

district is populated by artists and gallery owners who were priced out of Denver's increasingly expensive neighborhoods. Lakewood's lower property values and available commercial space, along with access to the region's new light rail W Line, combined with the city's eagerness to welcome and cultivate an arts economy, to transform the community into a regional magnet for the arts. In the initial planning for this transformation in 2007, the City created Transit-Oriented Development plans for the neighborhoods near the new light rail stations and welcomed both market-rate and affordable higher-density residential and mixed-use developments. However, a citizen-led backlash called the Lakewood Strategic Growth Initiative resulted in a 2019 ordinance that severely limited the ability of developers to create multi-family projects.³⁰ The outcome of this localized contestation over future development visions highlights the need for both ongoing engagement and thoughtful and flexible planning near rail transit corridors.

Role of Regional Agencies

Regional planning in the U.S. typically involves at least three separate agencies: a Council of Governments or similar entity that addresses broad regional issues, a Metropolitan Planning

Organization (MPO) tasked with creating regional transportation plans, and a transit agency. Historically, none of those agencies has focused attentively on arts and culture as a component of their planning and development mandate. A change began to occur in the early 2010s, however, when Congress established a national Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant Program designed to incent regions to create comprehensive, integrated regional plans that included partnerships with arts and cultural organizations.³¹

Several of our case studies now have a stronger emphasis on regional arts and cultural planning, as seen in these two examples:

Minneapolis-Saint Paul: The region is nationally unique in combining regional planning agencies that are typically separate into a single Metropolitan Council. The regional agency does comprehensive planning – housing the MPO – and it operates Metro Transit, the region’s transit agency. Although the Metropolitan Council does not have a specific arts and culture plan element, its most recent regional plan, *Thrive MSP 2040*, elevates outcomes of equity and livability, and it operates several programs that support public art and placemaking to achieve these outcomes. Most notably, it has managed a Livable Communities grant program since 1995 that funds infrastructure investments as part of mixed-use, walkable projects throughout the region. In recent years, that program has set aside a portion of its funding specifically to transit-oriented development projects and made public art and creative placemaking eligible components of such projects.

Phoenix: The Artsline program of Valley Metro functions to a considerable extent as a regional

plan to elevate arts and culture throughout the region’s three principal cities of Phoenix, Tempe, and Mesa. By highlighting and promoting 55 arts and cultural institutions along the region’s first light rail route, it extends the agency’s vision beyond its transit stations into partnerships with municipalities and nonprofits.³²



Image Courtesy of the Phoenix region.

5. A Review of the Creative Placemaking Literature

By Brenda Kayzar

Introduction

As noted in the preface, this handbook was inspired by arts and cultural trends in rail transit system development. There is a long history intertwining public art and our transit landscapes. In the early decades of US rail system development, works of art and architectural embellishments made transit stations into opulent destinations for riders and non-riders, and place-specific design elements at station stops helped define nearby communities for travelers. The concept of using art to aesthetically improve transit infrastructure has evolved, however, and current arts and cultural trends represent a more complex and dynamic mix of actions and activity by a host of unique regional and local public, private, and philanthropic partners.

The tradition of infusing stations with artworks now stretches to encompass a host of places and is represented by many activities. For example, artworks now populate the walksheds surrounding transit stations and ramble out along community art trails. Specific lines are branded to emphasize access to existing arts and cultural venues and assets within the city. Artists are enrolled to develop transit brands, work with transit agency staff to develop deeper cultural understandings of served or impacted communities, and to present ways to improve community engagement practices around projects. Artist engagement often continues during the rollout and construction phases where pop-up activities are offered to clarify transit agency plans and mitigate business disruption. What follows is a review of the planning, community, and arts-related literatures that offers insight into the history of planning's engagement with the arts. The review establishes a context for the evolution of the transit/arts relationship, from the aesthetics of public art to the complex and integrative applications of creative placemaking.

Public Art and Creative Placemaking: the historical context

The most lasting and visible outcome of today's creative placemaking efforts are the permanent artworks that people see when they engage with transit infrastructure³³. Those visible residuals, the murals, mosaics, and sculptures – the public art – are still a very important part of the new creative placemaking ethos. They may not appear to signal a significant change from earlier practices of infusing transit stations with artworks, but the way today's artworks are added to the built landscape, and where they are added, reflects a more dynamic and interactive conception of art, as well as community engagement. This shift to creative placemaking practices offers new physical and experiential arts and cultural outcomes for our cities and regions, and for rail transit corridors in the future.

Importantly, the evolution from public art programming to creative placemaking practices reveals more about cities than simply changing aesthetic tastes. While the development of the art itself is important, the public context of who, how and when the art was added to the landscape is equally relevant. Physically and visually accessible artworks reflect a complicated reality, the relationship between infrastructure, specific places within the city and region, the city and region itself, and the artists and public art advocates³⁴. Adding public art to the landscape often involves a diversity of stakeholders that can include artists, administrators, government agencies, funders, designers, contractors, and community organizations, and the process to install artworks takes place within the greater context of ever-evolving city and regional planning, economic development, and private property exchange directives and expectations. While not exhaustive, the following exploration of the City Beautiful, WPA, post-war urban decline, and revitalization eras in the US demonstrate this complexity and diversity of stakeholders.

City Beautiful³⁵

Public art is commonly understood today as art that is commissioned, designed, and funded for public spaces to be encountered by a broad spectrum of the population. The motivations for the design and inclusion of art in the built landscape has varied according to stakeholder interests, and the ever-changing economic, social, and physical contexts of regions, cities, and towns. The present-day concept of public art, especially as a municipal act, most notably entered the city building lexicon as part of the City Beautiful movement.

Well into the early twentieth century, city growth was directed by a mix of public and private surveying, real estate claims and exchanges, and building and infrastructure development. This ad hoc form of building, under pressure in many cities from a rapidly growing manufacturing sector and massive immigration of workers, necessitated almost constant demolition and rebuilding. Without longer-term planning, lot-by-lot growth left little room for stay-in-place expansion as technology advanced and manufacturer's operations grew, and it was often necessary to mitigate odd and toxic neighboring land uses. So, investments in aesthetic beauty could and were often lost to the wrecking ball within a short period of time.

The ethos of this ongoing destruction came to define US city development practices, although it is mitigated to some extent today by historic preservation efforts. By the late 1800s, demolition and rebuilding represented a tense amalgamation of business attraction and slum improvement or clearance. Aesthetic improvement and cultural development were enlisted by the middle and upper classes to show off wealth and amenities, and as a form of social reform and control. Civic boosters believed that improving the aesthetic image of the city would draw tourists, expand trade, and revitalize the local economy while improving land values. The reform-minded believed that beauty and cultural education would improve the moral standing and social well-being of the city's working classes and new immigrant populations.

The blending of booster and reform-driven beautification efforts became a coordinated national strategy by 1902, embraced by small towns, medium-sized cities, and larger metropolitan centers. The collaborative interventions urged by municipal arts societies, arts organizations, architects, and village and civic improvement associations focused on small-scale arts projects that added murals, sculpture, and stained glass to the forecourts, facades, and interiors of major buildings. Eventually, momentum from the 1893 World's Columbian Exhibition in Chicago would shift the City Beautiful movement's focus from small-scale interventions to large-scale planning efforts such as the grand, Beaux Arts monumentality proposed by Daniel Burnham's 1909 Plan of Chicago. But incorporated into this shift was Charles Mulford Robinson's highly influential book on planning theory, *The Improvement of Towns and Cities*, which includes chapters on sculpture, arts education, and methods for securing civic art. The arts were thereby embedded in municipal planning and were supported by the middle and upper classes who believed that there was a morally uplifting value in beauty.

It is important to note that the Settlement House movement existed in tandem with the early smaller-scale City Beautiful efforts. Reformist goals aimed to bring rich and poor populations together in the city, physically and socially. Led primarily by middle-class women, the movement created gathering spaces for interaction among the different classes. Arts were prominent elements within the settlement houses. They were a way to foster cultural exchange between the classes and within the diverse immigrant populations. The ideals of the settlement house reformists were shared in the rush to establish art museums, opera houses, and symphonies by newly rich industrialists during this era. The new cultural institutions reflected social rivalries between cities and boosterish displays of wealth, but they were also conducive to social reform and control efforts. Civic boosters and reformists saw the sharing of cultural knowledge, albeit elitist and Eurocentric, as a way to educate, placate, and

assimilate the growing immigrant working classes.

Although there was some convergence between the City Beautiful and Settlement House movements from the late 1800s and into the early 1900s, City Beautiful advocates eventually institutionalized the large-scale planning aspects of their movement while Settlement House advocates shifted their focus toward the professionalization of social work. It would be several decades before planning and community-focused arts and culture would be concomitantly reengaged in creative placemaking practices.

Works Progress Administration³⁶

Disrupted by World War I and the Great Depression, local-level City Beautiful efforts were truncated. Yet a federal effort to rebuild the economy and create jobs did much to carry on a legacy of arts-infused development, but under a different model and mission. Established in 1935, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) defined artists as civic laborers and established programs in theater, photography, mural design, and other visual arts. Through these programs, the federal agency networked artists with struggling post-depression cities, funding projects that engaged with and considered the voices of residents. These semi-collaborative efforts addressed a host of policy issues that the federal government believed would benefit from artistic and cultural expression. While top-down in program structure and funding, civic leaders and arts advocacy organizations were able to enlist and pay for the skills of local artists. More well-known artists and artists that were willing to travel were enrolled to beautify larger-scale federal infrastructure projects and cultural institutions across the country.

The aim of the federally funded WPA arts and cultural projects was to employ the arts as a vehicle for developing social cohesion among a population exhausted by the economic hardships of the war and subsequent devastating economic depression, while providing income opportunities for artisan skilled laborers. In some ways, the artistic outcomes were

reminiscent of early small-scale collaborative City Beautiful interventions. The incorporation of art into large-scale federal infrastructure development mimicked the grand and monumental ideology of City Beautiful planning. The caveat was the limitation of federal funding which came with non-local protocols and accountability. Further, local civic leaders and arts patrons were constrained in the realization of their own long-term planning goals because WPA projects were tied to specific public works infrastructures, such as bridges, water systems, libraries, schools, and parks. While all these infrastructure projects were beneficial to cities and towns across the country, the individual localities had less control over the ordering and realization of each within the context of their own planning goals.

An additional WPA caveat was related to the artistic vision. Defining what kind of art was appropriate became an issue under what amounted to a nationalistic effort to imbue public spaces with a sense of shared citizenship. Local civic leaders, arts advocates, and the artists did not always share the federal government's ideal of what constituted social-cohesion-inspiring art. Certain artists were spurned from the program for being too difficult to work with (e. g. insisting on maintaining their vision of the project) and some works were disallowed or removed for having themes that were considered socialist or anti-government in content. By the early 1940s, WPA funding was diverted from arts programming to a department within the military that employed artists to work on messaging for the war effort. This essentially ended the federal government's engagement with a grand-scale arts and cultural agenda until the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) was established as an independent agency in 1965, and in those intervening years local, and regional arts and cultural efforts paused for a host of reasons.

Ultimately, though, we reflect on the WPA era as a successful period of collaboration between institutions and the purveyors of arts and culture, one that produced a host of treasured

artifacts in the built landscape that cities still consider to be valuable assets. Further, the WPA model for enrolling artists into public works projects has become a common practice for many municipal and regional government agencies throughout the US. Moreover, as we look to the recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021, this federal program is being invoked by the NEA and the national advocacy organization, American for the Arts, as an ideal model for job creation for many currently out-of-work artisan skilled workers.

Post-World War II Urban Decline³⁷

With the exception of a short recovery in the 1920's, city development proceeded slowly between 1914 and 1945 as the impact of two world wars and the Great Depression stalled investment and curtailed the arts and cultural impetus embedded in the City Beautiful influenced plans of many US cities. Moreover, the trajectory of development had been shifting away from city centers. The exodus of manufacturing, which started as early as the 1920s was combined with social perspectives that advocated a nuclear household structure over generational households and encouraged gender roles which tied women to the home and childrearing, and men to the workplace. These shifts shaped US cities through the 1970s and had dramatic impacts on the built landscape.

Urban decline and the explosive growth of the suburbs have come to define the post-World War II era in most literatures. Technological advancements in housing construction, the renewed availability of materials, and the capital for developers, homebuyers, and freeway construction made available through federal subsidy or programming offset pent-up demand for housing and business expansion. Aided by shifting social expectations and the growing automobile-centric culture in planning, residents left city neighborhoods for the suburban periphery, following or joining manufacturers and businesses. Exclusionary deed restrictions and discriminatory lending practices which were standardized in the development of the growing suburbs meant many within the working classes

and especially people of color were unable to emigrate to new housing and participate in wealth-building opportunities. Within the city, older neighborhoods which had also been subject to deed restrictions, were further imperiled by practices such as redlining, which restricted capital for home improvements and home purchases. Demolitions associated with massive federally funded urban renewal and freeway projects also caused disruptions and accelerated decline.

It was against this backdrop of emigration, discrimination, and disruption that new forms of public art practices took shape. High Modernism, percent for art, and planning and policy changes defined the institutional focus in center cities, while in the absence of state interventions and support, an effort to engage in a shared sense of place was taken up by grassroots community groups in beleaguered inner-city neighborhoods. Meanwhile, the suburban areas which continued to drain state and private investor capital from cities became banal standardized landscapes.

Planning and modernist ideals promoted both standardization and demolition. As a profession and an educational focus, planning was still in its infancy in the decades following World War II. It was practiced with a top-down approach. In the new suburbia this resulted in regulation and homogeneity, the antithesis of the preceding decades of ad hoc city development. Land uses and populations were clearly segregated through zoning, and aesthetics became the realm of planners and builders, rather than architects and designers. A homogenized social and economic ideal for living was repeated in new neighborhood after new neighborhood, supported by fiscally beneficial economies of scale made possible through the mass production of materials.

In the city center, unadorned modernist architectural ideals, supported by new building technologies and evolving automobile-centric city plans, joined forces with federal urban renewal and freeway programs to bulldoze and rebuild much of downtown. Encouraged by

federal funding, local civic leaders deemed areas of their cities blighted, whether they were or not according to residents and business owners. The federal support helped the demolition of older homes and commercial buildings, clearing the way for modern commercial office and residential apartment towers and beltways to deliver cars from office towers to suburban homes. Some funding was designated for lower-income residents, but the new public housing towers were devoid of neighborhood services and job opportunities. Wealthy residents, on the other hand, moved into privately owned luxury high-rise buildings which had been subsidized by renewal clearance and infrastructure funding, and were located in the most desirable and resourced areas of downtown.

In 1967, in tandem with the destruction and the modernist construction boom, the NEA introduced the Art in Public Places program. The program promised to bring art outside the museum walls. Huge abstract sculptures such as the Chicago Picasso (1969) were inspired by the high modernism movement in the art world. Installed in the plazas of new modernist public and private buildings, many works were not initially welcomed by the community, but planners, developers, and architects argued the community would grow to like them. Their defense suggests the paternalism of middle- and higher-income groups in the late 19th and early 20th-century. Like honorific statues and museums, the modernist public art pieces shared a curated and specific Eurocentric narrative and was meant to educate, placate, and assimilate, and attract tourists.

Amidst the disruption, there were some practical wins. Many of the modernist public art works have become iconic attractions in cities across the US, and this era of decline produced the percent for art movement which became a model for public and private partnerships in public art practice. The concept of formally setting aside a percentage of a project's budget for art grew out of WPA and federal urban renewal allocation practices. The first percent for art program was adopted by the Philadelphia

city council in 1959. Again, harkening back to late 19th and early 20th-century boosterism, art allocations were proffered to attract people back to downtown, enlivening commerce and trade for nearby businesses. Percent for art programs have not become universal. Many cities are resistant to telling private developers to set aside a percentage of the construction costs for art, fearing push-back and lost investment. Borrowing from the WPA ideology, many cities limit their programs to public works projects. Regardless, the model which guarantees that a percentage of any new or rehabilitation project's budget is dedicated to art remains a useful tool for cities to maintain or adopt. And it is a win for City Beautiful advocates whose beautification mission was sidetracked for several decades by the functional aspects of planning, regulations, and the form and function (i. e unadorned) ethos of the modernist movement in architecture.

Other social and aesthetic wins during this era stemmed from reactions to what are now described as a series of poorly conceived planning and funding efforts and attempts at discriminatory social control. Post-World War II federal urban renewal and freeway development programs which were defectively envisioned, managed, and enacted, resulted in the large-scale demolition of the existing urban fabric and dislocation and further distancing from opportunity for many lower-income people, people of color, and immigrants. Reactions to this federally supported destruction of countless center cities led to an expansion and revisioning of the historic preservation movement, a turn toward advocacy planning, and community social justice activism, all of which remain ongoing and evolving processes.

In his 1976 book, *Place and Placelessness*, Edward Relph expressed the shared lament of many modernist design critics within both the institutional and community realms. Using terms like nostalgia and significance to define the ornate fenestration on older buildings, the organic design of the diverse building types in older communities, and the rich social network

and cultural bond among local populations, he decried the loss of a shared history in place for local communities. Jane Jacobs had previously distilled her dissatisfaction with planned order and the automobile-centric demolition of communities in her 1961 book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, arguing that there was an important social and economic value in disorder and diversity. Prior to the 1950s, however, most cities lacked the legal and financial tools necessary to develop and enforce a public policy framework around preservation efforts. The massive losses of older buildings and neighborhoods between the late 1940s and early 1970s, combined with the country's heightened sense of heritage during the bicentennial in 1976, propelled a host of local preservation ordinances and federal tax law, making it possible and even advantageous to preserve older structures and districts. For example, the preservation support arrived too late to save New York City's Penn Station. Its opulently designed 800-foot long waiting room was demolished in 1966 to make way for a modern glass office tower. By the 1990s, however, New York City had designated over 1,000 structures and 66 districts for preservation. In sum, the new historic preservation policies and tax benefits would ensure design temporality in the built landscape for cities across the US.

Like the preservation movement, the turn toward community social justice activism and advocacy planning was reactive. The movements arose in the community and institutional realms, although not necessarily as collective or collaborative efforts. Unlike the advocacy for preservation, which focused on the built form, these other movements sought representation for the constituents of the city who were clearly not being served by the now formalized profession of municipal planning. These underrepresented constituents were subject to disruption and displacement as outcomes of federal and local planning practices. To them, the profession appeared to serve only the elite interests of landowners and developers. Further, the top-down approach to planning

was discriminatory and perceived as paternalistic.

By the late 1960s, community murals began appearing on and transforming urban landscapes. Murals like the Wall of Respect in an African American community in Chicago and those painted by Chicano artists in Los Angeles acted as a form of communication between disempowered residents and the political establishment. The murals reflected the stress of working poverty, unemployment, and limited resource opportunities. They also enabled communities to control their own narrative and take pride in the community's shared history, culture, and struggle. These grassroots efforts visually pushed back against the top-down and paternalistic approaches to planning under federal urban renewal. They also spoke to the pain of the urban experience due largely to the impacts of discrimination that were being expressed in uprisings in urban centers throughout the country in the late 1960s.

Older professionals in municipal planning, following the example set by the grand planners in the City Beautiful movement, maintained that seeking consensus was an impossibility and argued that their job was to act as rational and trained decision makers on behalf of the city. But by the 1970s younger planners advocated for changes in the way the city engaged with communities in the inner-city, connecting with the Civil Rights movement. Noting the discontent and lack of opportunity they hoped to redress outcomes caused by institutional racism. The scale of community pushback to federal urban renewal necessitated internal reflection and a reckoning with the generational divide in planning, but in practice, the efforts of new planners to cede some project and funding control to community-based organizations was often met with countering efforts to tighten control over projects, funding decisions, and outcomes by established planners as well as politicians. Each generation contended they were representing broader constituency goals.

While only partially successful, the efforts toward advocacy planning did enter the lexicon

of the profession and did shape participation practices. And at stake at the time were the arts and cultural outcomes from a new federally funded program, Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). Introduced in 1974, CDBGs refocused federal funding to the community level after urban renewal programming ended. The grants enabled cities to work on very localized issues and develop small-scale community development projects within specific neighborhoods. Community based arts, embedded in activities like building rehabilitation and after-school and community center programming, played a role in CDBG funded efforts. Additionally, the federal War on Poverty's Comprehensive Employment Training Act of 1973 made artists eligible for public service jobs focused on artmaking. Although this activity was not on a scale comparable with early City Beautiful and WPA efforts, both programs encouraged municipalities to engage local artists in beautification and community development efforts. Further, advocacy planning efforts fostered city and community partnerships in support of community development work.

The federal CDBG program remains active albeit with a smaller budget. The transition to a stronger municipal advocacy planning model, in most cities, remains a work in progress. Many departments still maintain a practice of more limited engagement, focused on knowledge sharing as opposed to a deeper collaborative sharing of power. Yet planning is more predicated on compromise. For example, artists and community members have continued to practice grassroots community social justice activism through community-based art to initiate and sustain empowering conversations with their neighbors, municipal planners, and civic leaders. By the 1970s, municipal planners and civic leaders had noted the clear link between grassroots art, local pride, and improvements in community safety and well-being. They translated the beneficial and transformative power through a popular community development theory, 'broken windows', which in its simplest iteration suggests property improvements foster pride in

place and deter crime. Within this context, cities directed culturally specific public art projects to problem areas. In practice, compromise offers communities their own narrative and sense of pride in place while offering planners beneficial beautification efforts that will potentially reduce the strain on municipal services such as policing and maintenance.

Urban Revitalization³⁸

While percent for art and advocacy planning were important outcomes of the era of decline, the acceptance and institutionalization of community-based art practices, based on their transformative power, would eventually have the most dramatic impact on urban landscapes, and especially older, lower-income and moribund industrial communities. By the 1980s, transformative had come to mean regenerative. A host of understandings about arts and culture inspired, led and were co-opted in collaborative practices and in the transformations of buildings, districts, and neighborhoods, prompting an extended era of urban revitalization replete with a flurry of arts district formations and industrial artist building conversions, as well as the development of concepts such as the creative class and the creative economy.

Over the last four decades, arts and cultural outcomes in cities across the US have been applauded or vilified, depending on the public's perception of goals and methods of execution. As local artists continue to plant the seeds for community empowerment, they have also become the subject of marketing campaigns by landlords and real estate speculators. So, on the one hand, artists have become unwitting harbingers of gentrification in many older lower-income communities. On the other hand, although arts and culture have long been credited with enhancing landscapes, enriching lives, and improving the economies of other industries, the sector was also finally recognized as a producing economy all its own. Ultimately, arts and culture have become an economic asset and a planning tool that cities rely on to spur economic activity and growth, attract

employers, expand the workforce, and invigorate and engage older and lower-income communities.

By the 1980s the fortunes of US cities appeared more directly tied to global economic trends and competition. Following a decades long-decline in local manufacturing civic boosters shifted their focus from attracting industry to enticing headquarters. The common practice of offering incentives to entice firms to a metropolitan region, however, were no longer considered sufficient. The new knowledge economy workforce and the companies interested in hiring them were said to be footloose and able to technologically operate from any city anywhere in the world. As accelerating international business relationship trends made the reality of global competition even more relevant, economic development planners and boosters sought to cultivate institutional structures supportive of a region's key industry clusters and highlight their city's amenities, in addition to making offers of tax and infrastructure incentives.

As demonstrated by the burst of cultural institution development in the early 20th century, US cities have long looked to arts and culture for an amenity impact in their downtowns. By the 1980s, cities were enrolling major cultural institutions in private-public partnerships as anchors to newly built, refurbished, expanded, and designated arts districts divined to both attract visitors and create experiential spaces for an educated and culturally savvy downtown workforce. As larger cities rebuilt or refreshed museums and large performance centers, they encouraged smaller arts organizations and ancillary businesses to fill in vacant commercial spaces, creating a cultural milieu near offices, convention centers and hotels. Efforts were also focused on older urban regions with a mix of commercial and residential uses. These smaller scale districts offered already existing cultural activity often centered on old movie houses or theaters, arts and cultural nonprofits, and locally owned restaurants. Cities granted official designations and provided small infrastructure improvements

hoping to increase audiences for all. In smaller cities the district trend resulted in renovated main street buildings and the development of arts centers to attract additional tenants and tourists to walkable downtowns. The arts district trend was clearly driven by economic development goals focused on employer and workforce attraction and improved tax revenues, but clustering in districts did provide artists and arts organizations with spaces to practice, and opportunities to share production costs, staff, audiences, and institutional knowledge.

More organic arts transformations had already been underway for several decades in the most moribund areas of the city, due to the advent of vacant commercial and industrial space. Much of this arts occupation in cities like New York and Los Angeles, and even San Diego, proceeded quietly, guided by matching need for space with low costs and limited regulatory requirements. Various tactics were practiced by small-scale arts organizations and artists, from squatting to getting temporary conditional use permits, but most artists and organizations simply signed leases on spaces that were no longer in demand by other business sectors. Landlords gained tenants that were accepting of poorer and neglected building conditions in exchange for affordable rents and accommodating flexible and permissive production spaces.

In the SoHo area of New York City, the growing concentration of arts activity in the 1970s, which attracted the attention of high-end audiences, came under the purview of city ordinances. Regulating the use of the former industrial loft spaces, however, created a pathway for speculative development. Eventually, re-occupation of many of the lofts by higher-income non-artist tenants displaced the lower-income artists and the informal creative production and activity that had organically reshaped and populated the vacant manufacturing district. In many cities, wholly new neighborhoods grew out of these former industrial landscapes, often spearheaded by artisan-led activity.

Many cities have artist studios in minimally refurbished older commercial and industrial buildings. Open studio events add to the vibrancy of the area, and these arts audiences support nearby businesses. The production and live-work spaces also support a growing demand in the maker and local creative economy. Yet in many cities, popularity and regulatory standardization have eventually minimized the arts and cultural presence. Real estate speculation continues to follow arts driven transformations, whether enacted through city planning directives or organically driven by artists. As the districts become cultural hubs, attracting tourists and middle- and higher-income visitors to open studio, gallery, and performance events, demand from the creative sector, as well as residents and non-creative businesses that want to live or work within the creative milieu attracts real estate speculation.

From the 1980s through the present, many cities perceive of this arts-to-higher-income-tenant transformation as a desired progression. Encouraged by the increased property and sales tax revenues, economic development planners have sought strategies to foster industrial district transformations and gentrification in inner-city communities. Therefore, the visible interior and exterior transformations created by artistic purveyors has become synonymous with displacement, and the arts have been taken to task for catalyzing change even though the artists and arts organizations themselves are usually also displaced.

Gentrification is part of a much larger issue in the provisioning of housing and workspace. It represents decades of a mismatch between demand and supply in development that is the root cause of speculative behavior and gentrification. Despite this reality, the arts remain a harbinger in many people's minds of the increased rents to come, and this association is supported by a confusing narrative about the creative classes. In a 2002 book *The Rise of the Creative Class: and how it's transforming work, leisure, community and everyday life*, Richard Florida builds on the theory of city competition and the need to remake and rebrand cities in

order to appeal to a specific class of resident and worker. Following the amenity-rich prescription, cities did attract headquarters and middle- and higher-income residents and reap tax revenue benefits. But the exclusionary focus by Florida, and many city planners, on the coveted upwardly mobile and educated workforce – the so-called creative class – led to the loss of spaces for many of the types of activities and experiences that the creative class was initially attracted to, as well as the types of neighborhoods in which the purveyors of those activities and experiences could afford to live.

And as noted, the gentrifying effects of speculation by high-income developers and high-end galleries, retailers, and restaurants has been considered an economic development success, but many cities have begun to reflect on the impacts of increasingly low levels of housing and workspace affordability. A rise in homelessness, and impacts associated with high levels of college loan debt and the rise in non-permanent/non-benefit gig work – which has impacted middle income careers and housing ability as well – have fermented more recent changes in revitalization development policies and practices. The heightened awareness of racial and class disparities during the 2020 health pandemic have hopefully added to the imperative to end systemic racism and classism with meaningful policy change.

Today, most cities understand that a vibrant arts and cultural sector needs to advance both economic development and community livability. Cities are rethinking their approach, advocating efforts rooted in community-based cultures and identities, building on existing asset-based strategies, and empowering local leadership to seek ways to achieve livability for existing community members, while also prompting tourism, adding to local business growth, and attracting a non-speculative level of outside investment. This change in focus regarding revitalization practices, initially aimed at preventing gentrification and maintaining artistic vibrancy and cultural and class diversity, has also been propelled by a new understanding of, and appreciation for the creative sector's economic impact. The link between arts and

culture and increased revenues for neighboring businesses, through audience and organization spending, is now strengthened by better comprehension of the full scope and breadth of the growing creative sector's economic contributions.

Comprised of entrepreneurs, businesses, and nonprofit organizations, this sector within the knowledge economy is a significant generator of sales, and new businesses and workforce opportunities. Most economic transactions today include a cultural dimension. For example, we recognize that design, media, performance, and the literary and visual arts are all integral to today's digitally rich information and marketing landscape. The creative economy is at the center of international discussions on global trade and is recognized as a producer of both intellectual property and goods. According to the US Bureau of Economic Analysis, arts and culture's GDP contribution has been greater than that of construction and agriculture in recent years, and the sector also represents an international trade surplus.

In the US the sector is populated by a growing artistically educated and skilled workforce, buoyed by demand within the realms of social media, product innovation and design, artisan and maker markets, and entertainment. Many within the creative sector form incomes from freelance, part-time, and artistic practice work/production and seek nontraditional workspaces and opportunities that are flexible and can accommodate this reality. As freelance and contract work continues to grow in all sectors of the US economy and workspace expectations continue to shift (especially post-pandemic), cities will be forced to reconsider traditional commercial real estate and workforce development models, and they will have to reassess the role of arts and cultural production.

As the sector's trends suggest, the composition of future professionals and entrepreneurs will be more tied to arts and culture in the growing creative economy, as will expectations of artists and art in our lived and built landscape experiences. In sum, the rise in cultural and

creative industries has helped shift the planning and development discourse around arts and culture, from the periphery – as something used to enhance the image and moral culture of the city and other businesses, to the center – as an economic driver and economy all its own.

Conclusion: An evolution in arts and cultural practices³⁹

To establish the context for the evolution of arts practices in rail transit system development, this literature review examines how arts and culture have been perceived and practiced in city development and planning during the City Beautiful, WPA, and urban decline and revitalization eras. In general, this historical review demonstrates that practices from each era have been carried forward, adapted, and built on. Yet there remains limited regularity and evenness in the execution of arts projects and outcomes in cities and regions across the US. In part, this relates to funding. As indicated by the shifts between local and national resources, and the stalling impacts of national and international events, arts and culture have historically been viewed as value-added rather than integral infrastructure or an established economic sector. More importantly, irregularity and unevenness reflect conceptual struggles within local and national planning and development practices, but progress toward more equitable and inclusionary practices in planning and development appear to parallel the evolution in the arts and cultural realm of cities. In general, however, although arts and cultural outcomes in the built landscape and in planning practice lack consistency their presence in the envisioning of the city has been a constant.

Even in the ad hoc chaos of early US city building, culturally-influenced building designs lent to the local vernacular, and space was found for public art. Arts and culture were at the center of the City Beautiful movement's ideology, from the localized smaller scale efforts at the movement's start in the late 1800s to the city plans of the early 1900s that imprinted ornate monumental buildings and grand boulevards into the landscapes of many cities. Adherents shared a belief, along with the

Settlement House movement, that arts and culture offered unique and necessary opportunities for expression and cultural exchange, a concept central to the 1935 federal depression era effort to foster a cohesive national narrative through art.

Further, the WPA recognized artists as a skilled workforce and embedded them in major infrastructure projects so they could articulate that shared narrative on the walls of public works projects. This practice would later influence urban regenerative planning efforts, needed after several decades of grand scale demolition and rebuilding in US downtowns and urban neighborhoods under federal renewal and freeway building efforts. The historic preservation movement was empowered with new tools after those losses in the 1950s, 60s, and 70s, as communities organized to save the remaining urban palimpsest, and percent for art and NEA funded programs, mirroring both WPA and federal urban renewal allocation practices, were enacted to ensure there were new additions to the remaining culturally significant buildings and spaces in US cities. By the 1980s, arts and cultural amenities and activities were reevaluated and enrolled to lead urban revitalization efforts, while economic development planners gained appreciation for artist's production, and business and workforce generation capabilities as an economic sector.

Creative Placemaking

“Creative placemaking is an emergent form of cultural policy and planning practice that has recently come to dominate the agenda of many arts funders.”⁴⁰

Practically speaking, arts and cultural is often perceived as unwieldy and very local. The practice of planning, on the other hand, evolved to manage and regulate at a grand scale. So, arts and culture, which seeks to flexibly negotiate at the community scale can be at odds with policies and regulatory control – though this is slowly changing.

The influence of colonial ideology and practiced paternalism has meant that past arts and culture practices in city development often muted the diversity of urban voices. This is evident in historic efforts to illuminate a Eurocentric doctrine, especially in museums and early public art works. Today, however, the influence of grassroots community-based arts movements has shifted practices toward reengagement with those muted voices, and all communities. The template for that reengagement is broadening as arts and culture are reimaged both institutionally and within communities.

For many advocates, creative placemaking offers the opportunity to create systems change that is driven by the needs of community members. The practice of creative placemaking, under various names, has its roots in decades of community development work that strategically engaged the arts as translator, cultural ambassador, negotiator, and trust builder. Community-based organizations, understanding the value of a holistic approach to economic improvement have worked to build durable relationships with community members, businesses, and other neighborhood organizations. Historic precedents like the pushback to the placelessness and destruction of the modern era drove community-based organizations to expand their relationships with municipal planners, who were in turn, shaped by the movement toward advocacy planning. A growing number of planners and communities are engaging in deeper discussions about the vernacular of the built landscape, and the cultural practices of local populations.

Yet politicians, municipal planners and community-based organizations don't always speak the same language, figuratively, because they are approaching the repair of issues and concerns with different tools. So, while goals like reducing crime or retail vacancies may be shared, the application of a standard planning solution may prove to be culturally insensitive, and therefore, ineffective. Locally based artists often understand the culture, needs, and capacities of their communities, are skilled in collaborative processes, and can use their art to

facilitate discussions and broker understanding. From the community's perspective, artists build authentic narratives representing the lived experience of people and place. From the planner's perspective, the artist's intervention provides deeper insight into the issues and concerns, and a better cultural understanding so tools can be modified to form better solutions.

For arts and culture, the move from being an integral part of community-based practices to forming the basis for institutional funding, policy and planning decisions is closely tied to the NEA's 2010 initiative that produced the Our Town grant program and the ArtPlace America's funders collaborative. The Obama administration, post-2008 recession, advocated localized place-based federal relief programs due to the unevenness of the downturn's impacts. Creative Placemaking was proffered as a federal agency solution. A white paper⁴¹ commissioned by the NEA, drawing on ideas from the Urban Institute and the Social Impact of the Arts Project research group at the University of Pennsylvania, established a general concept and purpose for creative placemaking efforts and projects. Over \$21 million was invested in creative placemaking projects in communities throughout the US within the first five years and as a result, the term and the basic concept of strategically enrolling the arts in economic development priorities⁴² became part of the lexicon of most municipal planning departments.

The NEA's effort to move the arts out of the studio and into neighborhoods is reflective of previous federal efforts, but creative placemaking, conceptually, is less top-down in approach because it invites community artists and arts organizations to be lead partners with funders and municipalities. The narratives in a recent *Next City*⁴³ series suggest a level of success in this approach, noting how "creative placemaking can expand opportunities for low-income people living in disinvested communities" by giving voice to narratives that highlight a community's "talent, imagination and solutions" rather than inflating suggestions of "violence and deprivation". Many of the projects

in this series as well as those described in other literatures demonstrate how the planning focus has shifted toward enacting local traditions and skills to envision community development outcomes that include public art, cultural facilities, creative entrepreneurships, and artist live/work spaces. Further, planners and communities collaboratively assess the conundrum of investment, ultimately agreeing that it's okay to want to rid communities of vacancies while insisting on keeping the existing population and building vernacular, in place and intact. Further, it's okay and even necessary to seek outside investment, but to be selective to ensure the investors share the community's goals.

ArtPlace America considers four basic strategies as foundational to creative placemaking activities: planning, fixing, activating, and anchoring. Planning refers to engaging the arts in outreach to community stakeholders to gain their input and suggestions, and this overlaps with fixing, which in general engages artists and designers to facilitate a community re-imagining of vacant and blighted spaces in the neighborhood. Activating enrolls the arts to enliven public spaces in a way that makes them feel safe and more aesthetically pleasing. The most common activations involve performance or festivals, but pop-up arts experiences in vacant spaces have also become a popular activation strategy. Anchoring enlists key arts and cultural organizations and institutions to draw more people to the community and nearby businesses, and to act as the community 'brand', providing place-identity for visitors.

None of these concepts are wholly new. For example, City Beautiful era industrialists and arts advocates, and 1980s and 90s planners, all hoped their arts and cultural institutions would elevate their city's place-identity and draw tourists. In today's practice, however, anchor institutions may be small or culturally specific to an underrepresented population, and grander redevelopment plans are more cognizant of potential speculative impacts in surrounding neighborhoods. What is new in these reformulations is the level of collaboration that,

conceptually, cedes a higher level of power to community. And, for the time being, the level and duration of federal funding available through the NEA's Our Town program.

Ultimately, creative placemaking is practiced within a private-property marketplace amidst growth driven economic development policies and planning tools, all of which are subject to the cycles and shifts within a global economy and society. In the mind of some stakeholders, arts and culture is still transitioning from value-added to integral (and necessary) infrastructure. Amenity impacts have grown in significance

however, and arts and culture, along with the creative economy, are present and active in discussions at more economic development tables today. And because creative placemaking is undertaken with partners from multiple sectors, arts and culture are no longer the purview of an elite class of decision makers. Further, the cataclysmic events of the past year (i. e. the health pandemic and uprisings) have dramatically shifted the discourse of economic and workforce development, offering many opportunities for a deeper engagement with arts and culture in the recovery process.

6. Case Studies

Introduction

As noted previously the eight regional case studies, completed in January of 2021, are grouped by the predominant age of rail transit systems in the region:

- 19th Century: Boston
- Late 20th Century: Atlanta, Dallas, Miami
- Early 21st Century: Denver, Minneapolis-Saint Paul, Phoenix, Seattle

To facilitate comparability, all case studies address a common set of questions:

1. Description of the metropolitan region and its current and planned rail transit system.
2. Description of the rail transit corridor that is the focus of this case study.
3. How do regional agencies in the metropolitan region address issues of creative placemaking?
4. How do the comprehensive plans for the cities of the rail transit corridor address issues of creative placemaking?
5. What kinds of public art are being created in the stations of the rail transit corridor? How are they funded? How are they selected?
6. What kinds of neighborhood plans and/or development strategies are there for areas within a ten-minute walkshed of each transit station? How do those plans/strategies address issues of creative placemaking?
7. What kinds of public art are being created in the neighborhoods within a ten-minute walkshed of the stations of the rail transit corridor? How are they funded? How are they selected?
8. Is there a strategic plan for creative placemaking encompassing the rail transit corridor and its station area, articulating a collaborative public art and placemaking vision for the corridor and identifying budgets, timelines, roles and responsibilities to ensure implementation?
9. To what extent do the intended creative placemaking projects in the rail transit corridor and its station areas reflect distinctive natural and cultural features of the region and communities where they occur?
10. What are the most important lessons learned from the creative placemaking plans, strategies and activities in the rail transit corridor? What has worked well? What challenges remain?

Nineteenth Century System

Boston Region – Fairmount Indigo Corridor

By Annis Sengupta and Mark VanderSchaaf

I. Description of the Boston-Cambridge-Newton Metropolitan Statistical Area and its current and planned rail transit system.

Boston is the center of both a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) and a larger Combined Statistical Area. For our purposes the MSA is most relevant since it corresponds more closely to the service region for both the region's Metropolitan Area Planning Council, and the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority. The Boston-Cambridge-Newton MSA consists of seven counties – five in Massachusetts (Norfolk, Plymouth, Suffolk, Essex, and Middlesex) and two in New Hampshire (Rockingham and Stafford). Its 2019 population was 4.8 million in a land region of 3,486.5 square miles.⁴⁴

The Boston region has one of the oldest rail transit systems in the United States, and indeed boasts the country's first subway line, built in 1897.⁴⁵ Assembled from a tangle of railways built for inter-city travel by steam locomotive and for intra-city streetcar service, today's regional rail system represents the consolidation of over twenty privately-run rail lines.⁴⁶ Early efforts to coordinate service to the region came in 1885 with the West End Railway assuming control of all streetcar lines serving Boston. Rapid transit via elevated rail service expanded in 1894 with the public charter for the Boston Elevated Railway (BERy), which served Boston and thirteen surrounding communities with rapid transit on subway, elevated rail, streetcars, and buses. BERy's merger with the West End Railway in 1922 precipitated a steady conversion from streetcar to bus service. By 1962, most of the region's street car system had been absorbed into the elevated rail and subway networks or converted to local bus service.⁴⁷ A milestone in the evolution of the region's transit system occurred in 1967 when the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority was created as a Massachusetts state agency to be the first

combined regional transit system in the U.S.⁴⁸ It currently serves nearly 200 cities and towns and over a million daily riders on subway, bus, ferry, light rail and commuter rail.⁴⁹

While this legacy system struggles to maintain its long-established service levels, it also has current and planned construction projects. The largest of these projects have come to fruition in response to decades of community activism and attempt to reverse the regional inequities in access to rapid transit that accompanied the replacement of streetcar service with local bus lines. Most notable of these projects is the Green Line Extension Project, a \$2.3 billion investment adding light rail service to the northern inner ring suburbs of Somerville and Medford.⁵⁰ At the same time, MBTA has plans to upgrade and improve service selectively to segments of its existing system. For the purpose of this study, it is important to highlight recently approved significant planned improvements in facilities and trip frequency along the Fairmount Line.⁵¹

Somerville, Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan were among the earliest neighborhoods to lose streetcar rail service in the 1940s and 1950s and did not enjoy an expansion of rapid transit to provide equivalent transit access. By 1962, Roxbury, Dorchester and Mattapan – an area comprising more than a quarter of Boston's land and 30% of its population⁵² – were served by the Washington Street Elevated Rail (which became the first route of the Orange Line), the Red Line tracing the eastern edge of the neighborhoods, and local bus service. The construction of a new Orange Line along the Southwest Corridor shifted the line to the western edge of the neighborhoods, eliminated rapid transit service through Roxbury and further decreased transit service levels for residents of all three neighborhoods.⁵³

The improvements to the Fairmount Line, in combination with the launch of bus rapid transit to Roxbury along the Silver Line, have been framed both by community activists and by the MBTA as important for improving equitable access to rapid transit across the regional transit system.⁵⁴

2. Description of the Fairmount Indigo Corridor that is the focus of this case study.

The Fairmount Indigo Corridor represents a convergence joining neighborhood revitalization efforts with commuter rail transit improvements within a 9.2 mile stretch through lower-income residential neighborhoods home to diverse communities of color and new immigrants, beginning at South Station on the edge of downtown, and ending at Readville, at the southwestern corner of the city.⁵⁵ The initial focus for a pilot public art and placemaking project within this corridor is at Upham's Corner, in Boston's historic Dorchester neighborhood. Dorchester is not only Boston's largest neighborhood, it is also its oldest – founded as a Puritan town in 1630 and predating even Boston itself.⁵⁶ And today, Dorchester is Boston's most diverse neighborhood, with a population reported in 2017 by the Boston Planning and Development Agency as 22 percent White, 44 percent black/African American, 16 percent Hispanic, 11 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, and 7 percent Other.⁵⁷ Accompanying this racial and ethnic diversity are incomes and educational attainment lower than the city's average.⁵⁸

Passenger rail service along the Fairmount Line began in 1855 and was abandoned in 1944 as redlining spurred neighborhood disinvestment and Boston's streetcar system was converted to bus service.⁵⁹ The line reopened as a temporary measure between 1979 and 1987 during construction of the Southwest Corridor and the Orange Line's relocation, which led to increasing calls among Dorchester residents for replacement service.⁶⁰ In response to grassroots advocacy, service remained active along the Fairmount Line. Starting in the early 2000s, the lightly-used commuter line gradually

transitioned to function more like light-rail through upgrades to existing stations, the addition of four new stations, and service improvements.⁶¹ In the past decade, an important focus of neighborhood revitalization in Dorchester has been Upham's Corner, concentrated at the intersection of Columbia Road and Dudley Street/Stoughton Street. At the western edge of this commercial node is the Upham's Corner Commuter Rail Station. Consequently, transit improvements are being integrated with an ambitious mixed-use development strategy for the neighborhood. Details of this strategy will be described in Question 6. below.

3. How do Boston's regional agencies address issues of creative placemaking?

The regional planning agency for the Boston region is the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC). MAPC was created by State law in 1963 to be governed by a Board with representatives of each city and town in the region, along with gubernatorial appointees and designees of major public agencies.⁶² The service region of MAPC is generally bounded by the I-495 beltline, and includes 22 cities and 79 towns.⁶³ MAPC's mission is to promote smart growth and regional collaboration, and it advances this mission by providing planning technical assistance, building local capacity through trainings, workshops, and other initiatives, and providing data services to its member municipalities to support decision-making.

The current MAPC regional plan is known as MetroFuture, a 30-year plan adopted in 2008.⁶⁴ Included in this document is Goal 43: "More people will take advantage of the region's artistic and cultural resources," a goal intended to support "cultural and ethnic diversity" throughout the region, not just in the Inner Core.⁶⁵ To advance this goal, MAPC has created an Arts and Culture Department, tasked to "help cities and towns with policies, programs, and staffing that help arts and cultural assets grow and thrive by providing technical assistance with the full range of arts and culture

planning issues – community development, economic development, public health, and the built and natural environment.”⁶⁶ An early project of this department was its work on an Uphams Corner cultural plan, which will be described in the writeup to Question 6. below.

Now MAPC is engaged in updating the region’s plan with MetroCommon 2050.⁶⁷ The preliminary draft of the new regional plan signals an even stronger emphasis on arts and culture as a regional priority via “Goal J: Greater Boston is full of unique places and experiences that bring joy and foster diversity and social cohesion.” Six objectives are proposed to fulfill this goal: “(1) People of all ages and backgrounds are able to participate in arts, cultural and social activities, building community and social cohesion. (2) Public art and programming contribute to our understanding of our region’s people, places, and history. (3) Affordable spaces exist for artists to live and work in communities throughout the region, including live/work, maker spaces, light-industrial fabrication facilities, and innovation incubators. (4) Historic buildings, properties, and landscapes are adapted to meet contemporary challenges, including climate, housing, accessibility, and recreational needs. (5) Historic preservation efforts document and preserve the full range of cultural heritage in our region. (6) Urban design, public art, and new development contribute to a human-centered, safe, and delightful public realm.”⁶⁸

4. How does the comprehensive plan for Boston, the city hosting the Fairmount Indigo Corridor, address issues of creative placemaking?

In 2017, for the first time since 1965, Boston approved an update of its city plan. *Imagine Boston 2030* articulated a vision with a time horizon coinciding with Boston’s 400th birthday.⁶⁹ The Fairmount Indigo Corridor is a branch of a regional commuter rail system located entirely within Boston city limits. Its existence was the product of decades of committed and effective grassroots advocacy.

Planning for its improvements and associated creative placemaking has likewise straddled neighborhood, municipal and regional entities. Community-based planning efforts are foundational, and findings and recommendations from plans completed between 2002 and 2014 inform and are echoed in *Imagine Boston 2030*.

As articulated by Mayor Martin J. Walsh in his letter introducing the adopted plan, new directions for Boston include strengthening the city’s role “as a safe harbor for immigrants and a national leader in preparing for climate change.” This same letter also highlights “bold actions” including “improving connections, frequency, and experience of the Fairmount/Indigo Line.”⁷⁰

Imagine Boston 2030 includes an “Arts and Culture” section, which presents this vision: “Our city is alive with creativity, as evidenced by vibrant arts and creative sectors, a growing innovation economy, and neighborhoods where diverse cultural traditions thrive.”⁷¹ Particularly notable are the plan’s commitments to creating a percent-for-art program for all city construction projects, to developing three Arts Innovations Districts, and to having Upham’s Corner in the Dorchester neighborhood be the first of such districts.⁷²

The discussion of arts and culture in the city’s 2030 comprehensive plan in effect summarizes work completed a year earlier in 2016 when the city completed its first-ever plan focusing specifically on the arts and culture, *Boston Creates*.⁷³ Public art is discussed in this plan particularly in Strategy 2: “Harness the power of arts and culture to engage Bostonians in civic discourse, planning, and creative problem-solving,” and the accompanying Tactic 4.22: “Promote the development of public art and performance opportunities in neighborhood settings, and explore sustainable options for public and private financing of public art, through partnerships with Boston Main Streets, community development corporations, and other community organizations and City departments.”

5. What kinds of public art are being created in the station(s) of the Fairmount Indigo Corridor? Who is responsible for these artworks? How are they funded? How are they selected?

Stations along the Fairmount Line consist of open-air platforms that provide access to local sidewalks via stairs and ramp systems. Permanent public art installations are not integrated into the MBTA's planning or design of stations along the line. Public art, in the form of community-created murals, is displayed across the walls that mark the entrances to Upham's Corner Station and extend below the train trestle over Dudley Street. This station, or one nearby, has been a part of what is now the Fairmount Line since service began on the line in 1855. Upgrades on the line have focused on basic infrastructure, including the creation of full-length, high-level platforms which allow for accessible train boarding.

Murals at the station were created by youth mural crews coordinated by local organizations such as the Cape Verdean Community Unido and the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, which acquire external funding to support the work. The mural projects were part of larger youth development programs and executed within summer jobs or violence prevention programs. The murals reflect the cultural identities and lived experiences of local youth.⁷⁴ In the past, low levels of ridership have been exacerbated by safety issues at stations. The Upham's Corner station is located at the boundary of two different gang areas and has had a reputation for drug use.⁷⁵ The Upham's Corner Peace Mural, which spans the northern wall beneath the train trestle, was created by youth from two different gang territories collaborating to communicate a message of peace and unity.⁷⁶ Mural themes are developed by the youth themselves working in partnership with artist mentors. There is no dedicated funding or infrastructure for ongoing maintenance of the murals.

6. What kinds of neighborhood plans and/or development strategies are there for areas within a ten-minute walkshed of the Upham's

Corner Station? How do those plans/strategies address issues of creative placemaking?

Initiated by the Greater Four Corners Action Coalition as a transit equity campaign to improve the Fairmount Rail Line, the work expanded through a coalition of four CDCs (Dorchester Bay EDC, Codman Square NDC in Dorchester and Southwest Boston CDC in Hyde Park) that formed the Fairmount-Indigo CDC Collaborative. This Collaborative integrated neighborhood planning and development strategies into their transit equity platform to transform vacant and distressed properties, within half a mile of the stations, into new housing, commercial uses, jobs and open space while preventing speculation, gentrification and displacement. In addition to purchasing vacant properties and initiating sustainable, affordable development, the Collaborative has led planning efforts to guide corridor-wide and station-area development. These plans include The Fairmount Greenway Concept Plan of 2012 that envisioned a bicycle and pedestrian path aligned with the rail corridor. This plan noted community interest in public art integrated into the corridor.

A milestone in the emerging revitalization of the Upham's Corner neighborhood occurred in 2012, when The Boston Foundation and ArtPlace American funded the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI) and eight other partners for an Upham's Corner pilot of the Fairmount Cultural Corridor creative placemaking initiative.⁷⁷

The 2015 Creative Placemaking Recommendations Implementation Plan by the Design Studio for Social Intervention provides specific creative placemaking and public art for the Upham's Corner and Four Corners/Geneva station area.

Another milestone in the emerging revitalization of the Upham's Corner neighborhood occurred in 2014, with the completion of the Upham's Corner Station Area Plan by the Boston Redevelopment Authority.⁷⁸ Completed as part of the larger

City-led Fairmount Indigo Planning Initiative, this plan includes a strong emphasis on the role of public art and placemaking as fundamental to any neighborhood revitalization: “Upham’s Corner is a unique neighborhood center with arts and culture embedded in its history. The Strand Theatre is a unique arts and culture catalyst that should be the focus of more partnerships and collaboration between the arts community and Upham’s Corner. This should be an effort to capitalize on the unique district opportunity to showcase public art, artists, and performance. Additionally, Upham’s Corner has a unique history of street art, murals and paintings. This type of expression should be expanded and highlighted as a tradition in the Station Area. New art should be a distinguishing feature of the district and be a part of district gateways and special entry treatments.”⁷⁹

The Strand Theatre, referenced in the previous quote, deserves special emphasis as an institution that should be approached through what is sometimes called “placekeeping.” As described by Roberto Bedoya, placekeeping is about “keeping the cultural memories associated with a locale alive,” and counteracting the impetus toward development and displacement that can result from creative placemaking in service of redevelopment.⁸⁰ Opened in 1918 as a vaudeville theater, the Strand became one of America’s most magnificent movie palaces in the 1930s.⁸¹ After closing in 1969, it revived in 1979 as a performing arts center – the M. Harriett McCormack Center for the Arts – and once again became a vaunted cultural institution through the early 2000s. The McCormack Center attracted major musical acts including the Count Basie Orchestra and New Kids on the Block while also building strong connections with the surrounding communities. In the 1990s, it established a model program for youth development through the theatre arts with its Strand Teen Players program.⁸² Its long and varied history creates both great opportunities and great challenges for placekeeping and placemaking. After a major renovation effort during the 2010s, the Strand transitioned to

become the anchor of the neighborhood’s broader revitalization.⁸³

The region’s Metropolitan Area Planning Council became involved in the Upham’s Corner project by leading a two-phase cultural-district planning study for the Mayor’s Office of Arts and Culture, operator of the Strand Theatre, and the Boston Planning and Development Agency, which leads the Upham’s Corner Implementation Initiative. MAPC’s planning effort resulted in the Upham’s Corner Arts and Innovation Background and Strategy Report, an internal document for the Mayor’s Office of Arts and Culture completed in 2017, and the public-facing Upham’s Corner Arts and Innovation District: Managing Neighborhood Change Report, completed in 2018.⁸⁴ The Phase 2 study was tasked to “assess commercial and residential vulnerability to displacement, identify strategies and best practices for mitigating displacement, and engage in outreach to establish opportunities to leverage the neighborhood’s existing assets – particularly the Strand Theatre – to support neighborhood-based workforce development initiatives.”⁸⁵ The strategies recommended in this study are framed within the premise that a formal “Arts and Innovation District” could be established in Upham’s Corner, allowing for a zoning overlay to support the recommended strategies for cultivating land uses such as live music entertainment, light manufacturing, artist studios and legacy businesses.⁸⁶

The purpose of the study was to identify policies, programs, and models for expanding creative opportunities targeted to and supportive of the existing businesses in Upham’s Corner and building on the existing creative and artistic resources of the neighborhood and commercial district. The network map of the Creative Economy in Upham’s Corner highlighted the important role of the partners in the Fairmount Cultural Corridor Creative Placemaking initiative as key partners driving local creative economic activity. The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, Design Studio for Social Intervention, and the Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation all helped

anchor the Arts and Innovation District strategy.

7. What kinds of public art are being created in the neighborhoods within a ten-minute walkshed of the Upham's Corner Station? How are they funded? How are they selected?

Public art in the neighborhoods within a ten-minute walkshed of Upham's Corner station build on the tradition of community mural making. Important community murals include one honoring the Negro National Baseball League at the corner of Stoughton Street and Columbia Road.

In 2014, the Fairmount Indigo Corridor achieved a public art milestone with the Upham's Corner ArtPlace Initiative, which modeled artist-community partnerships to engage residents in imagining the future of public art in the Fairmount-Indigo corridor. Partners in the Upham's Corner ArtPlace initiative (UCAP) included the Boston Foundation, the Boston Redevelopment Authority, the City of Boston Department of Neighborhood Development and the Mayor's Office of Arts, Tourism and Special Events, which manages the Strand, the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI), the Fairmount/Indigo Line CDC Collaborative,

Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation, and Upham's Corner Main Street. Programming partners were Berklee College of Music, the Jose Mateo Ballet Theatre, ARTmorpheus, and the Design Studio for Social Intervention. UCAP partners focused on activities that help ensure that the corridor's revitalized economy expresses and strengthens the cultural identity of its neighborhoods and residents.

With funding from The Boston Foundation, ArtPlace America and the Kresge Foundation, UCAP funded a variety of arts-infused creative engagement activities in Upham's Corner. Public art projects included the refurbishing of the mural honoring the Negro National Baseball League, the creation of street art and temporary installations in Upham's Corner

alleys through the STREET LAB: UPHAM'S project, and temporary art displays in storefront windows. The project brought new partners and performing arts programming to the Strand Theatre through partnerships with Berklee School of Music and the Jose Mateo Ballet Theatre. Other creative engagement projects combined elements of theatre with strategies of tactical urbanism – demonstrating new ways that indoor and outdoor spaces in Upham's Corner could be programmed to strengthen social cohesion. As explained in DS4SI's case study on the project:

“Many of Upham's Corner ArtPlace's social interventions were about helping local residents imagine new possibilities for their neighborhood and their connections to others in it.”⁸⁷

The Public Kitchen, “a pop-up food community center” created in the Upham's Corner Main Street offices by DS4SI, the STREET LAB: UPHAM'S project that transformed alleyways into centers of arts and community, and smaller interventions like a pop-up beach installed on a street corner during the Upham's Corner Street Fair, all use aspects of theater – staging, props, etc. – to create spaces of play and imagination. These activities, while temporary, allowed people to envision and experience how the local community could participate in and see themselves reflected in the neighborhood as a center of arts and culture. Other initiatives like UPMarket increased the visibility of local artists and artisans of color while providing them with opportunities to sell their products to the local community.

In addition, UCAP assembled an Upham's Corner Public Art Commission tasked with selecting five finalists to create a \$500,000 signature public artwork in the Upham's Corner neighborhood. The process for selecting the finalists was community-led, with review of 29 applications by a 16-person panel comprised of local artists and arts, civic and community leaders.⁸⁸

Local artist Cedric Douglas was ultimately selected by the Upham's Corner Public Art Commission as the winning entry.⁸⁹ Douglas was chosen for his demonstrated ability to

connect with the residents of Upham's Corner through creative placemaking work. Key to Douglas' approach was his creation of The Up Truck, a mobile art lab designed to engage the Upham's Corner community through art and creativity. The Up Truck initially had a focus on designing and fabricating public art in the Upham's Corner neighborhood.⁹⁰ Over the summer of 2014, the Up Truck team traveled throughout Upham's Corner, engaging residents "to help create canvases, screen-printed T-shirts and robots," and "gathered information about the type of art residents want in their neighborhood."⁹¹

Residents' interests in public art fell into three categories: a desire for creative space (especially space to engage local youth in creative activities); a desire for more murals and street art; and a desire for sculptural public art. Douglas proposed three alternatives for a final public art project that responded to these desires. First, he could maintain the Up Truck as a mobile community creativity center to connect neighborhood youth with creative activities and opportunities; second, he could organize an annual street art festival to make Upham's Corner a public art destination; or he could work with sculptors to create a sculptural work of art. Ultimately, none of his proposals were funded. While his work elevated community voices in ways that guided planning in the neighborhood over the following five years, his own public art concepts did not come to fruition.

During the period of Douglas's engagement efforts, ten artists received public art fellowships and four artists entered residencies in Fairmount Corridor neighborhoods. Ensuing projects in Upham's Corner included the 2015 Lighting the Line project, "a public art project led by DS4SI in partnership with the Boston Foundation (TBF), the MBTA and many community partners."⁹² The project was intended "to celebrate the culturally rich Boston neighborhoods that are joined by the recently renovated Fairmount-Indigo Commuter Line," and included community parties and bridge lightings in the Roxbury,

Dorchester, Mattapan and Hyde Park neighborhoods connected by the line." The initiative grew out of a temporary lighting installation, Lighting the Bridge, that brought an illuminated red carpet to the Dudley Street railroad underpass at the Upham's Corner station.

In 2019, Now+There, a Boston-based public art organization, commissioned the work *Augment* by internationally acclaimed artist Nick Cave. The installation includes a custom-designed building wrap for a vacant bank building in Upham's Corner and a large-scale inflatable sculpture that was on view inside the building from August 2019 through April 2020. The building wrap mural was created by Cave in partnership with local artists and the Design Studio for Social Intervention. These local partners facilitated input through collages assembled at libraries, schools, churches, and community programs.⁹³ This large-scale public art by an international artist is notable for its adherence to the principles of community-connection, playfulness, and justice established through the Upham's Corner ArtPlace initiative of 2014.

8. Is there a strategic plan for creative placemaking encompassing the Fairmount Indigo Corridor, articulating a collaborative public art and placemaking vision for the corridor and identifying budgets, timelines, roles and responsibilities to ensure implementation?

In 2014, the City of Boston and the Boston Redevelopment Authority released the Fairmount Indigo Planning Initiative Corridor Plan.⁹⁴ This plan contains a strategic vision for the corridor, with strategies organized according to seven topical areas: Prosperity, Home, Place, Getting Around, Parks and Public Space, and Quality of Life. From a public art and placemaking perspective, the most important strategy is within the Place topical area and includes a commitment to "create catalytic projects and placemaking at Station Areas to reorient the neighborhoods to existing and new stations."⁹⁵ This strategy is further articulated with the corridor-wide objective to "Reinforce Culture, Art and History – The physical

environment of the Corridor should become a vehicle to express the rich narratives of history, culture and public art of the neighborhoods and places. Each Station Area has embedded in its history and place multiple layers and stories that are currently hidden or known only by select groups. These narratives should be leveraged to reinforce a sense of place through art, sculpture and urban details that add meaning to place.”⁹⁶

Implementation steps are then outlined in this plan. Within the Place topic area there are five groups of implementation steps: (1) Reinforce Active Storefronts; (2) Reinforce Art and History; (3) Focus on the Main Street Districts; (4) Reorient to the Stations; and (5) Build Places Around Food.⁹⁷

9. To what extent do the intended creative placemaking projects in the Fairmount Indigo Corridor and its station areas reflect distinctive natural and cultural features of the region and communities where they occur?

The Fairmount Indigo Corridor Plan includes a detailed brand strategy that “provides a common framework for bringing together diverse and varied actions that reinforce and contribute to the Corridor Vision, enhance the perception and pride of place for the Station Areas and provide a purposeful strategy to direct the evolution of communities and places.”⁹⁸

This brand emphasizes cultural features at both the regional and the neighborhood level, by articulating a “brand promise” that is “what the Fairmount Indigo Corridor has to offer that distinguishes it from other communities and what participants in this brand can expect to receive.” It also includes brand principles, and a branding strategy. Together, these three elements address the why, what and how of the corridor brand.⁹⁹

For the corridor as a whole, the “brand promise” is stated succinctly as “The Entire World is at Home Here.”¹⁰⁰ This promise has two complementary dimensions. First, it implies broad accessibility by portraying the

upgraded transit line as a full partner in the larger regional transit system, rather than an underused and underinvested appendage to the real system: “The origin of the Corridor is the rail line ... All activity in this regard should reinforce the message that this is a rapid transit line that is completely incorporated into the MBTA subway system.”¹⁰¹

The second dimension of the brand promise elevates the unusual level of diversity of communities along the line, and thus points toward ways in which individual station area neighborhoods manifest different aspects of such diversity. To advance the positive evolution of neighborhood-specific identity, the branding effort proposes for the Corridor should have “Go Places,” each of which is defined as a gateway that “provides a beacon for the brand of the Corridor, an opportunity to physically demarcate components of the Corridor identity.”¹⁰² The corridor plan acknowledges that rail stations in the corridor typically are separated from commercial nodes within each station area neighborhood, so “Go Places” are intended in part to be designed to provide improved connections between each station and those nodes. As they develop, these places are intended to include open spaces and public realm investments that create “the setting for a diverse collection of events and community gatherings that bring ethnic and cultural diversity into public view.”¹⁰³

Placemaking projects led by Artists-in-Resident within the Fairmount Cultural Corridor modeled how artists can both elevate and invest in local culture to amplify local voices and assets within a planning context. Claudia Paraschiv, Artist-in-Residence for the Four Corners-Geneva station area on the Fairmount Indigo Corridor created a platform for public imagination through art and design with her Public Art Salons. Through these salons, Paraschiv funded three artists with direct ties to the Four Corners-Geneva neighborhood to lead the salons: Azia Gittens-Carle, Cadieja Joseph, and Mechelle Merritt, and partner organizations for their time and expertise in supporting the implementation of projects. In addition,

Paraschiv compensated active community artists and participants to support their growth as local leaders. The salons generated two different types of projects – collective and personal. In Paraschiv’s words, “Collective Projects stimulate the plural imagination through a novel response to a functional need in public space. Collective Projects are large-scale, physical improvements in the neighborhood and are achieved through a set of collaborative steps coordinated by the Salon Leaders.”¹⁰⁴ Through this format, Paraschiv’s work ensured that community residents, organizations, and artist had a platform within which to celebrate the cultural identities and assets of the place.

10. What are the most important lessons learned from the creative placemaking plans, strategies and activities in the Fairmount Indigo Corridor? What has worked well? What challenges remain?

The focus on partnership-building, community engagement, funding local artists, and cross-sector collaboration in the UCAP initiative established a creative infrastructure that has fueled and informed ongoing planning and implementation efforts. In addition, the long-standing commitment of community leaders enabled the City of Boston to convene Corridor Advisory Groups and Working Advisory Groups to ensure the planning processes were guided by and accountable local communities. Interviews with members of the Working Advisory Group informed the Uphams’ Corner Arts and Innovation District planning effort.

In addition to local leaders guiding planning and decision making, the creative placemaking work grew the corridor’s artistic and creative infrastructure, nurturing local artists and artists of color. The recent installation of large-scale public art by internationally recognized artist, Nick Cave, became an opportunity for supporting local artists and demonstrating how public art can reflect community identity through a purposeful engagement effort. By maintaining a focus on the communities living and working in the walksheds of Fairmount Indigo Line stations, the large-scale public art in

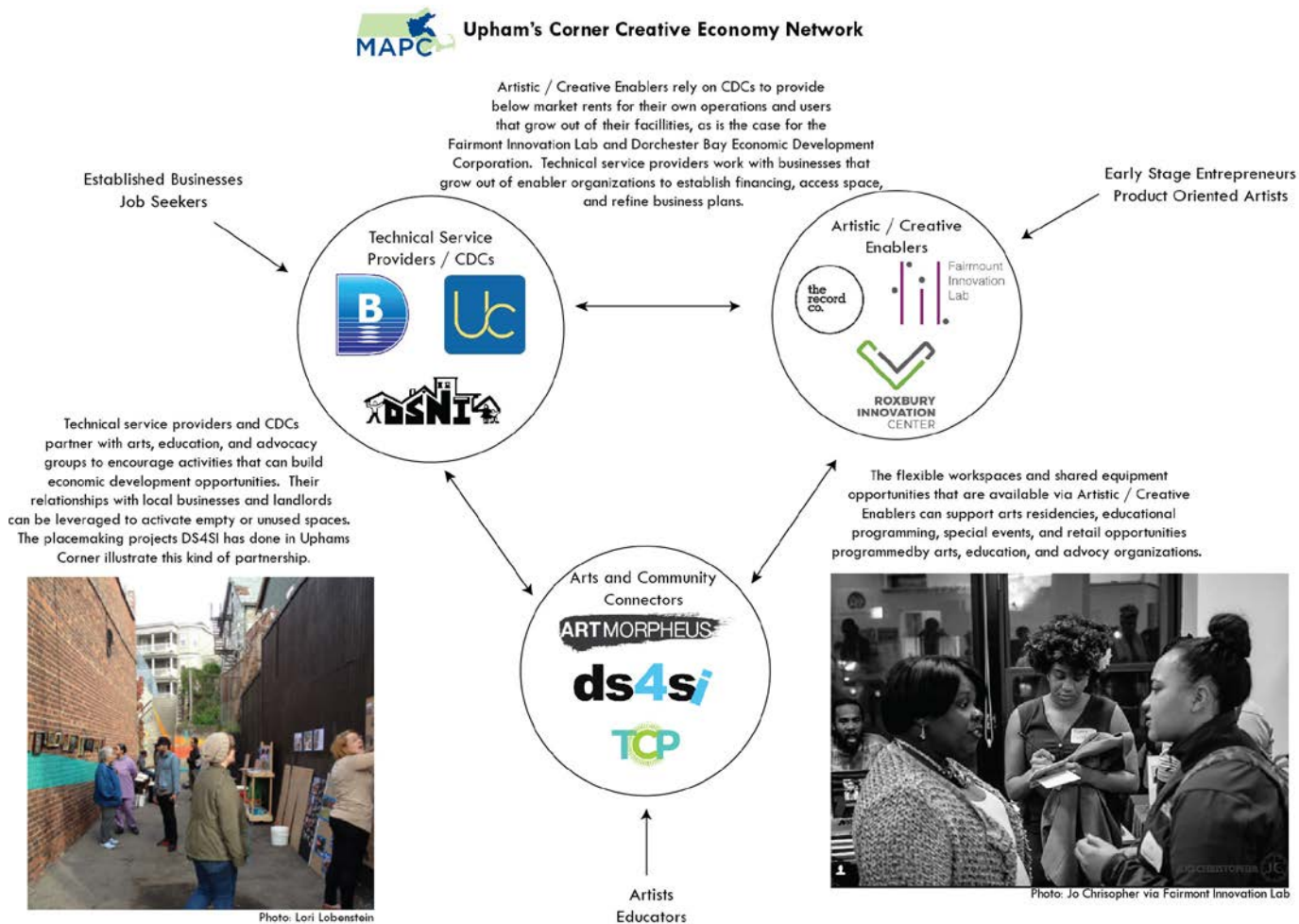
those walksheds emerged through processes that both engaged residents and expanded the capacity of local artists to create public art. The local artists who were paid to lead creative placemaking along the Fairmount Cultural Corridor, have grown their artistic practices across the region.

In addition, the creative placemaking initiatives organized by the Fairmount Cultural Corridor elevated arts and the cultural identities embedded within the walkshed neighborhoods as part of ongoing planning and implementation efforts. The City of Boston worked with the Design Studio for Social Intervention to design and facilitate the outreach and engagement efforts that informed the Upham’s Corner Arts and Innovation District planning effort. The creative partnerships and efforts that emerged out of the creative placemaking for the corridor such as the Fairmount Innovation Lab and the Up Market demonstrated the power of investing in local creativity. These examples served as a template for how the arts can be a vehicle for local workforce development rather than for gentrification and displacement.

Challenges that remain relate to the grassroots nature of the creative placemaking effort on the Fairmount Indigo Corridor and the costs of ongoing coordination across the multiple neighborhoods linked by the line. The work of the Fairmount Cultural Corridor created fertile ground for MAPC as a regional planning agency to develop an approach to cultural district planning that emphasized racial equity and mitigating displacement; however regional transit planning has not integrated the community-led processes nor the community-led advocacy modeled in the corridor into its long-range planning. The work of ensuring equitable transit access and station area arts and culture that is responsive and accountable to local communities continues to require local advocacy efforts. With the completion of the creative placemaking work, funding to support ongoing coordination of arts and culture efforts along the corridor is lacking.

Finally, the arrival of a global pandemic at the point when service improvements were scheduled for implementation is also a major challenge. The impact of Covid-19 on transit ridership and the MBTA budget is likely to stall further implementation of the service improvements along the corridor. The crisis

also is unlikely to prompt interest in direct investment in public arts by the MBTA for the foreseeable future, leaving the community to continue to lead advocacy for transit justice and spatial justice in public art and creative placemaking in the transit corridor.



Twentieth Century Systems

Atlanta Region – Three Partnerships Supported by the MARTA Artbound Program By Amy Goodwin, Lizzy Sandlin and Mark VanderSchaaf

I. Description of the Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Alpharetta Metropolitan Area and its current and planned rail transit system.

The Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Alpharetta Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) consists of

29 counties, with a 2019 population of 6.0 million distributed over a land region of 8,685 square miles.¹⁰⁵ Rail transit in the region began in the 1970s when the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) was created. Absorbing the region's principal bus system,

MARTA began operation of its first rail transit line in 1979. Its rail system was expanded in the subsequent 20 years and now extends for 48 miles.¹⁰⁶ The original MARTA legislation included the option for the Atlanta region's 5 core counties (Fulton, DeKalb, Cobb, Gwinnett and Clayton) to join MARTA. Initially only Fulton and DeKalb joined MARTA by passing a sales tax, and later joined by Clayton County. MARTA's bus and rail system currently serves three core counties (Fulton, Dekalb and Clayton), with rail transit serving just Fulton and DeKalb counties. Three other counties in the Atlanta region also operate their own fixed route bus transit systems – Douglas, Cobb and Gwinnett. Additionally, the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) operates express buses to multiple other counties throughout the 20-county Atlanta Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) region. In 2018, Gwinnett County defeated a referendum to join MARTA, and again in November 2020, voters in Gwinnett County defeated the referendum to for a penny sales tax to expand its transit system.

Transit planning in the Atlanta region is coordinated between two agencies – the MPO which is the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), covering 20 counties, and the newly formed Atlanta Transit Link Authority (or ATL Authority) covering 13 counties. The two agencies work together to develop the long-range transit plans that meet both federal requirements (ARC's charge) and state transit plan requirements (ATL's charge).

2. Description of the rail transit corridors that are the focus of this case study.

This case study examines three partnerships supported by Artbound, a new MARTA program. Two of the partnerships are in segments of longer rail corridors. One segment is in the City of Decatur, east of Atlanta, consisting of three adjacent station areas along MARTA's Blue Line. A second segment is within Atlanta north of downtown, also involving three adjacent station areas along MARTA's Red and Gold Lines (which run along the same tracks in

those areas). The third partnership is not defined by corridor segments, but rather currently involves two projects in separated portions of the Blue and Green Lines (which also run along the same tracks in those areas).

3. How do Atlanta region regional agencies address issues of creative placemaking?

Regional planning in the Atlanta region is conducted by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), an organization serving ten of the region's counties for regional planning purposes, and twenty counties as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The region's most recent plan, adopted in 2020, is a 30-year plan that "aims to 'Win the Future' by providing world-class infrastructure, building a competitive economy and ensuring the region is comprised of healthy, livable communities."¹⁰⁷

Aligned with its regional plan, ARC in 2019 created an extensive internal strategic plan for the arts, culture, and creative placemaking.¹⁰⁸ This 92-page plan emphasizes that it is not a community-based cultural plan for the region, but rather a roadmap for ARC leadership and staff to better engage around arts and cultural themes, and exercise future leadership for the region in these realms. Specifically, it contains several key recommendations relevant to our case study, notably:

- Developing "How-to" kits for local municipalities around arts, culture and creative placemaking,
- Continuing a role for ARC to be a cultural convener, and
- Sharing and demonstrating best practices for integrating arts, culture, and creative placemaking into planning, design, business, and other areas.¹⁰⁹

ARC operates two programs that assist local governments with a range of planning efforts, including creative placemaking. The Community Development Assistance Program (CDAP) provides technical assistance for communities to develop plans related to one or more of the program's eight focus regions, one of which is creative placemaking. Several recent projects

have incorporated creative placemaking into studies related to topics such as housing, historic preservation, and pedestrian safety and mobility. The Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) is a grant program that offers funding for historic downtown or transit station areas to help improve walkability and access to jobs and services in those communities. In 2021, a focus of the program will be on projects that involve creative placemaking efforts at bus stops across the region.

ARC also hosts the TransFormation Alliance, which is a partnership of public, private, and nonprofit groups committed to creating equitable, mixed-income communities anchored by transit. The TransFormation Alliance places a strong emphasis on creative placemaking and launched the En Route program discussed in Section 5.

4. How do the comprehensive plans for the cities of the Artbound Program address issues of creative placemaking?

Atlanta

Since 1994 Atlanta has had a Public Art Master Plan to guide the investments of its percent for art program (which allocates 1.5 percent of municipal capital projects to public art). The most recent update of this master plan, in 2001, included two goals¹¹⁰ that are supportive of creative placemaking:

- Increase community awareness, involvement, and ownership of public art projects.
- Develop processes for site, artist, gift, and art selection that reflect community demographics, values, and identity.

The City of Atlanta's Comprehensive Development Plan (2016) contains no references to placemaking but highlights the importance of public art through numerous references. Notable policy statements include:

- New public spaces and the redesign of existing underutilized spaces provide opportunities for usable community gathering spaces that serve as the backdrop for unique

public art in the form of murals, sculpture, lighting, water features, landscaping, etc.¹¹¹

- Encourage the installation of public art in corridors, parks and plazas throughout the City.¹¹²
- Encourage the creation of visual focal points along corridors, parks and plazas and emphasize gateways with the use of architecture, landscaping and or public art.¹¹³

Also, in 2017 the Atlanta Department of City Planning released a remarkable document entitled *The Atlanta City Design: Aspiring to the Beloved Community*.¹¹⁴ As its title suggests, this document is not a traditional city plan, but rather blends urban design considerations with the dream articulated by Martin Luther King to create a diverse and equitable "beloved" community. While it does not contain specific public art and placemaking policies, it presents a number of visionary statements that suggest the importance of creative placemaking in the city's future, such as: "We're going to design significantly more an improved public space to support the life of our growing city... A public life plan for [every corridor] will help us understand and support its unique communities, identify its assets and opportunities, design public spaces for the people who live there, and develop funding and other strategies required for its implementation."¹¹⁵

Decatur

The City of Decatur's most recent comprehensive plan is known as *Decatur 360*, a plan most recently updated in 2016. This plan is relatively brief at 52 pages and contains no direct references to public art or placemaking. However, it acknowledges previous extensive work on such issues by the City in its 2010 *Cultural Arts Master Plan*, a two-volume work totaling 153 pages.¹¹⁶

Decatur's *Cultural Arts Master Plan*, while not specifically addressing the topic of placemaking, contains an extensive discussion of public art, primarily in a section summarizing conclusions drawn from an environmental scan and cultural inventory.¹¹⁷ Its five conclusions are:

- Reinforce hubs through public art (i.e., installing several pieces in close proximity at key locations),
- Commission new works by local artists,
- Weave Decatur history through a series of public art installations,
- Involve the public in public art decision making, and
- Transform street furniture into public art.

5. What kinds of public art are being created by the Artbound Program? How are they funded? How are they selected?

Overview

In 2016, MARTA created the Artbound program and hired a new Arts Administrator. The goal of Artbound is to enhance the rider experience by integrating art throughout the transit system. MARTA has implemented a comprehensive arts program that seeks to:

- engage the community, MARTA patrons, and artists,
- provide a distinctive sense of place,
- enhance the surrounding region, and
- reflect the vibrancy of the communities served by MARTA.

Artbound focuses on restoring and maintaining existing art investments, developing and installing new artistic assets, identifying funding for diverse, multi-disciplinary cultural offerings and performance art, dedicating in-house program management resources, and galvanizing greater public/private support for the Art in Transit program.

The Artbound program also created an Arts Council comprised of members who reside in MARTA's jurisdictional service region and who are public art or design professionals, employees of MARTA, and other members of public who have a connection to the arts. The Council provides guidance on the commissioning or decommissioning of art, participating in the development of the annual Art Plan, serving on selection panels for artist solicitations, and generally act as ambassadors for art in the region.

How does Artbound work?

The Artbound program is funded through a MARTA Board-adopted policy that allocates up to 1% of MARTA's annual capital budget to art expenditures. Eligible art expenditures include art-related programs, art-focused community activities, system-wide restoration projects, and design, fabrication, and installation of art. The program also activates the stations with music and performing arts and supports other MARTA customer-facing initiatives as appropriate. This may include soliciting artist participation in Customer Appreciation Day and booking musicians for PARK-ing day, for example. MARTA also seeks funding through partnerships and grants.

Artbound is not a grant program. Artbound has its own goals for implementing public art in the stations that is aligned with the Station Upgrades schedule. When Artbound funds its own projects, an Artist Call is developed based on the specific site. Artist Calls are released based on the scheduling of projects, which is tied back to the annual budget.

Partnerships

One way in which art and creative placemaking projects are implemented in MARTA station areas is when they are initiated by a local community partner, such as a Community Improvement District (CID), nonprofit, or local government. In this model, the local entity would approach MARTA to obtain permission to install art or implement a creative placemaking initiative at a station. Typically, the local entity and MARTA will share the cost of the installation, but sometimes the partner may fund a project in whole. MARTA requires that the implementing partner use Artbound's Artist Call as a template, advertise an open call, and have MARTA's Arts Administrator sit on the Selection Committee, and ultimately have final say on the artist chosen.

Another partner in the process is the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC). ARC serves as both a "council of governments" and the region's Metropolitan Planning Organization. Through its Livable Centers Initiative program,

ARC provides planning, zoning, and site design funding and staff planning support for creative placemaking at transit stations and along transit corridors. Creative placemaking plans developed through LCI become the blueprint for arts and placemaking project implementation for the station.

The case studies below highlight a number of key types of partnerships that have been instrumental in implementing arts initiatives.

Local Government Partnership: City of Decatur

In July 2020, a local nonprofit, the Decatur Arts Alliance, approached Artbound to contribute to a project that would commission three Black artists to create work for the three MARTA Stations in Decatur: East Lake, Decatur, and Avondale Stations. The City of Decatur allocated \$10,000 and Artbound allocated \$15,000 to be used for materials and artist commissions. The murals are intended to represent the communities they are in. For instance, the mural at East Lake Station features prominently former local resident Hosea Williams who was a Civil Rights era icon, but also features his later works in feeding the hungry in Atlanta.

CID & ARC Partnership: Midtown Alliance

In 2013, ARC funded creative placemaking plans for three stations – North Avenue, Midtown, and Arts Center. These plans identified needs and opportunities for art and creative placemaking initiatives at the stations, as well as accessibility improvements, and provided cost estimates and an implementation schedule. The planning process allowed for the direct involvement of community members, partner organizations, and MARTA staff. Armed with an action plan, Midtown Alliance began partnering with Artbound to bring these visions to reality.

Midtown’s Transit Stations Creative Placemaking Plans:

- [Arts Center Station](#)
- [Midtown Station](#)
- [North Avenue Station](#)

Midtown Alliance completed a major upgrade at the Arts Center Station. This involved creating seating, adding landscaping and lighting, a new mural and a custom painted piano by an artist which can be used by the public. In addition, at the Midtown Station, new murals and greenery were installed, and live music programmed, turning the plaza into a new little park.

For these partnership projects, Artbound and the partner (Midtown Alliance in this case) work together to curate the space. The murals are intended to be temporary and will rotate every 9 – 12 months. Budgets for temporary murals are generally under \$20,000. The partner organization provides the funding for the landscaping, hardscaping, and often contributes to the cost of performance art and other programming.

Nonprofit Partnership: En Route

Beginning in 2015, MARTA partnered with En Route, a community-based public art project that creates meaningful, aesthetically imaginative, text-based murals, exploring issues of access, mobility, and public transportation. The program was launched with a partnership of a local arts organization (WonderRoot), MARTA Artbound, Fulton County Arts & Culture Department, and the Transformation Alliance, which is a collaboration of community advocates, policy experts, non-profit and for-profit developers, transit providers, and government agencies, staffed and housed by the Atlanta Regional Commission. Murals were created by lead artist Fahamu Pecou at four MARTA stations, which were chosen because of the planned transit-oriented development at each of the stations. Each of the finished murals aims to enhance the lives of the community residents and transit users.

The first mural installed as part of the En Route program is located at the King Memorial Station and features the text “Rise Above.” Also at that station, MARTA worked with Dashboard, the artist Adam Bostic, to install a creative lighting project, titled *Reflection Tunnel*, at the Grant Street tunnel adjacent to the station. This design was particularly tricky as the tunnel was

under an active freight rail line. One of the primary goals of the design was to improve lighting, but it had to be accomplished without hanging or attaching anything to the roof beams of the tunnel (which was the floor of the railroad, and owned by the railroad company). Bostic's solution was to use multi-colored highway reflectors on the walls of the tunnel which lights up the dark space while creating a mesmerizing art piece. A local historian has also been engaged to collect oral history about the area. At the Ashby Station, Pecou created a mural titled *The People Could Fly*, which is based on a traditional folktale about hope. For each project, input on the mural content and design was sought through a series of community meetings and establishment of an Advisory Board.

6. What kinds of neighborhood plans and/or development strategies are there for areas within a ten-minute walkshed of each transit station? How do those plans/strategies address issues of creative placemaking?

In 2011, MARTA issued development guidelines for transit-oriented development at its stations.¹¹⁸ The handbook provides guidelines on density, mix of uses, public realm improvements, a new approach to parking, and model zoning ordinances. The chapter on the public realm includes promoting public art in the station design and creating/enhancing a "walking district" within a half-mile of the station. Subsequent station area plans and Development Requests for Proposals (RFPs) have been shaped by these guidelines. Additionally, through its Livable Centers Initiative (LCI),¹¹⁹ ARC partners with MARTA and the local government and community organizations to develop and implement small area or neighborhood plans that aim to increase walking, biking and transit ridership, as well as expand affordable housing, density and a mix of land uses within a walkshed. Creative placemaking is also addressed (to varying degrees) in these plans. More information about the specific plans for the case study stations are below.

Atlanta

In 2015, City of Atlanta developed a supplement to its Connect Atlanta plan called *TRANSIT ORIENTED ATLANTA: A Strategy for Advancing Transit-Oriented Development*. The Strategy outlined steps and guidelines for developing station area site plans and categorized the station areas into seven typologies: urban core, town center, commuter town center, transit community, neighborhood, or special regional destination.¹²⁰ This strategy does not address public art specifically, but provides frameworks where other public art plans and policies can flourish.

Midtown Alliance developed its first master plan, entitled Blueprint Midtown in 1997 and has had two subsequent updates since.¹²¹ The Blueprint has guided development and transportation planning for more than two decades now, and has a focus on walkability and promoting transit trips, walking and biking. ARC has partnered with Midtown Alliance to help implement this vision through funding and providing technical assistance for transportation planning, the sustainability plan Greenprint Midtown, as well as sidewalk and complete street capital projects.

Decatur

As with Atlanta, the ARC has partnered with the City of Decatur to develop LCI plans for the entire Decatur community which includes three MARTA stations, as well as supplemental studies for each specific MARTA station. ARC has also funded capital projects at the stations which included biking and walking infrastructure as well as public realm improvements like pedestrian plazas, seating, landscaping, etc.

Funded through LCI, the downtown Decatur Station went under a massive overhaul in 2005, which includes the expansion of the public plaza, incorporation of artistic lighting, a spray sculpture/fountain and other creative placemaking elements (before we were calling it creative placemaking). More recently, beginning in 2015, ARC and MARTA again partnered with the City of Decatur to develop a TOD project which incorporates workforce, market rate and

senior housing with retail and redesign public spaces, as well as improved access to the MARTA station. Construction began in 2018, with many phases of the project currently open and occupied.¹²²

As described in Section 5 above, the East Lake station area is becoming a premiere location for public art and creative placemaking supported by the Artbound program. This work is buttressed by a 2017 Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) plan, *Make East Lake MARTA Yours*.¹²³ The Plan was developed as a multi-agency partnership with ARC's LCI program, MARTA's TOD office, the City of Atlanta, the City of Decatur and DeKalb County (the station and surrounding areas resides in three jurisdictions, however primarily in the two cities).¹²⁴ This strategy elevates the role of public art by establishing as a goal to "Make East Lake MARTA the Front Porch by opening the station for community events, new housing options, community open spaces, public art, retail destinations, thoughtful parking solutions, and stormwater infrastructure."¹²⁵ Community engagement for this plan also identified public art (performances, murals) as one of five top-rated short-term items to make East Lake MARTA the front porch, along with a farmer's market, retail options, landscaping improvements, and tables with chairs.¹²⁶ One of the short-term recommendations to activate the space included partnering with Soccer in the Streets to build a (possibly temporary) soccer field on one of the underutilized parking lots. Conversations are still ongoing to implement Station Soccer at East Lake Station, but Soccer in the Streets has built a handful of pitches on MARTA station property for provide free access to soccer fields for kids throughout Atlanta.¹²⁷

7. What kinds of public art are being created in the neighborhoods within a ten-minute walkshed of the stations of the Artbound projects? How are they funded? How are they selected?

Artbound focuses its installations and programming on MARTA property or adjacent

to, but the City of Atlanta has a creative placemaking program open to non-profits and neighborhood groups throughout the City,¹²⁸ and the Decatur Arts Alliance works to install art and arts programming in the City of Decatur.¹²⁹ They support buskers, host an annual arts festival, and help curate and fund art around the city.

In addition, there are numerous arts organizations and collectives around the Atlanta region that work with cities, local communities and business owners to install murals and other forms of public art. Some of these organizations have already been mentioned and they often work with MARTA, e.g. Wonderroot (now disbanded), En Route, Living Walls.

8. Is there a strategic plan for creative placemaking encompassing the MARTA rail transit system and its station areas, articulating a collaborative public art and placemaking vision for the corridor and identifying budgets, timelines, roles and responsibilities to ensure implementation?

MARTA's Art in Transit policy enacted in 2016, establishes a policy, an Art Administrator position, a MARTA Council for the Arts, and a funding stream for implementing art at its transit facilities (including stations, bridges, aerial structures, and other real property infrastructure or facilities). One of the tasks that the policy requires is the creation of an Art Plan.

The Artbound Director leads the development of the Art Plan with input from the MARTA Council for the Arts. The plan is generally updated annually, and includes the planned projects based on the estimated funds available for that year. This is primarily a working blueprint for MARTA, not a comprehensive public arts plan developed with the public, municipalities and partner agencies.

9. To what extent do the intended creative placemaking projects in the MARTA rail transit corridors and their station areas reflect

distinctive natural and cultural features of the area and communities where they occur? Artbound curates art that is specifically reflective of the community in which it is located. MARTA regularly works with local organizations to facilitate community conversations about what they would like to see. In particular, MARTA's work with En Route has resulted in artwork that showcases community identity. The mural at the King Memorial MARTA station, for example, resulted from community discussions and highlights the influence of Martin Luther King Jr., who lived in the neighborhood and for whom the station is named, through a quote rather than his image, allowing the community to be reflected through his ideas. On some projects, local historians have been hired to research the station and neighborhood to better understand the history of the area so that it can be reflected in the art piece(s).

10. What are the most important lessons learned from the creative placemaking plans, strategies and activities supported by the Artbound Program? What has worked well? What challenges remain?

Now in its fourth year, Artbound has established art and creative placemaking as integral components of the transit system's strategy for enhancing customer service for its existing patrons, attracting "choice riders" as well as facility maintenance and security. The program has been able to accelerate its delivery of art installations and programming in such a short time due to the many enthusiastic community, government, and non-profit partners throughout the region. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, genuine community engagement around the subject of the art pieces and programming, and how they are delivered, has been critical to the success of Artbound.

Dallas Region - Station Art and Design Program – Green Line

By Mary Kay Bailey

I. Description of the Dallas Metropolitan Area and its current and planned rail transit system

The 13-county Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington Metropolitan Statistical Area is the fourth largest metro region in the nation; with Dallas and Tarrant (Ft. Worth) counties ranking 8th and 5th in population growth between 2010 and 2019.¹³⁰

The Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) agency serves these growing North Texas counties and boasts the longest light rail system in the United States at over 93 miles with 64 LRT stations, serving 13 area cities. DART's LRT operations began in 1996 with the opening of the Red and Blue Lines and in 2009 and 2010 when the Green and Orange Lines joined the starter system. Currently, the design and construction of the Silver Line commuter rail is underway with service expected in March of 2023 while the D2 "subway," a second alignment in Dallas' central business district, is in the 20% design

phase with revenue operations expected in 2024.

DART is funded through a 1-cent sales tax collected from 13 participating cities (in FY19 sales tax revenue totaled \$624.4 million), federal resources, investment income, financing, and farebox collections.¹³¹

Current and Planned DART LRT Corridors

Red Line	Opened in 1996, completed in current state in 2002, 27.7 miles; 25 stations
Blue Line	Opened in 1996, completed in current state in 2016, 26.8 miles, 23 stations
Green Line	Opened in 2009, completed in current state in 2010, 28.6 miles, 24 stations
Orange Line	Opened in 2010, completed in current state in 2014, 37 miles, 29 stations
Silver Line	Expected to open in 2023, 26 miles, 10 stations

D2 Subway	Expected to open in 2024, 2 miles, 5 stations (3 subway, 2 at grade)
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2. Description of the Green Line rail transit corridor that is the focus of this case study.

The Green Line, which opened in 2009 and was completed in its current state in 2010, is 28.6 miles long with 24 stations, 10 of which are shared with other LRT lines. The corridor runs in a Northwest/Southeast alignment travelling through downtown Dallas while serving regional destinations that include Baylor University Medical Center, the Dallas Market Center, Love Field Airport and entertainment destinations including Deep Ellum, Fair Park and the American Airlines Center. The Green Line serves comparatively lower income and more diverse neighborhoods southeast of downtown and the suburbs of Farmers Branch and Carrollton to the northeast. The Green Line's shared downtown stations serve the heart of Dallas' central business district and the city's established arts district.

3. How do Dallas's regional agencies address issues of creative placemaking?

The North Central Texas Council of Governments serves 16 counties in the region. NCTCOG is "a voluntary association of, by and for local governments, established to assist in regional planning...[with a purpose] to strengthen both the individual and collective power of local governments and to help them recognize regional opportunities, eliminate unnecessary duplication, and make joint decisions."¹³² The Transportation Department at NCTCOG serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for 12-counties in the region and in that capacity produces a long-range plan to guide transportation investments as federally required. The current plan, Mobility 2045 was adopted in 2018 and while it includes sections on land use, development, public transit and access to destinations, the plan does not address public art and placemaking.¹³³

While DART is not a regional planning agency, its activities, plans and programs are regional in scope and include public art and placemaking

components, particularly through its Station Art and Design Program.

In 1987 (just four years after DART's creation), inspired by efforts abroad and in US cities like Boston and Seattle, the DART board approved a resolution to create the DART Station Art and Design Program.¹³⁴ In 1990, the board adopted a set of program procedures that still guide the work today.¹³⁵ The program sets out to:

- "enrich the rail transit system for both residents and visitors by creating a unique visual identity for each station through design and works of art that reflect a sense of community identity and pride.
- incorporate art as a part of the initial station designs thus integrating it into the architecture and or sites maximizing the effectiveness of the budget and of the sense of context of each location.
- foster public involvement in the design process of each station identity and art project.
- recognize the multicultural nature of the Dallas metroplex by promoting diversity and pluralism in the art projects thus reflecting as wide a range of expression as possible.
- express commitment to artists residing in Texas by focusing the program toward Texas artists thus encouraging the business of art as it in turn helps develop the local economy."¹³⁶

Since 1996, this program has been implemented at every station along each of DART's four light rail alignments. Ultimately each station is meant to serve as a gateway to the surrounding neighborhood.

Program Implementation

The Station Art and Design Program "requires that artists, architects and engineers collaborate at the beginning of the design process."¹³⁷ This happens through DART's contracts for the design and construction of a rail line, where the successful team must bring on artists to implement the station area artwork.

DART and its contractors work with the cultural affairs offices in the cities where

stations are located to develop a roster of artists that have connection to and represent the face of the community. In many cases, DART seeks artists that live within the same zip code as the station. DART program staff make a primary and two alternate artist selections and submit those to city staff for a final recommendation.

While the station artist is being selected, DART's Community Engagement office works with the host city to establish a site-specific advisory committee. This committee is comprised of residents, business owners and representatives from educational, arts or other institutions who participate in a series of five structured workshops over 12-14 weeks.

During these workshops, the committee gives input to the station artist, architects, landscape designers and engineers. Each workshop builds on the next to help the committee reach consensus on community values and how to capture those values through art and design—all while remaining within the project's budget. The station artist advises committee members “to help refine their ideas, which can consist of a mixture of enhanced station finishes and site-specific commissioned art. Platform surfaces, column cladding finishes, site elements and landscaping can all be customized.”¹³⁸

Workshop 1	Design team gives program overview, describes elements of the station that can vary and asks committee to share what is important in their community
Workshop 2	Site visit of station area and community assets
Workshop 3	Based on Workshops 1 & 2, artist delivers “artistic values statement” that highlights what the community thinks is important and that will be touchstone for project
Workshop 4	Artist brings 3 station art and design options to committee for review
Workshop 5	Artist brings final design, looking for concurrence. Team prioritizes elements if over budget. ¹³⁹

Program Budget

Funding for the program comes from DART's capital budget. When established, the program had a \$50,000/station maximum budget for public art, with an expectation that the amount would be adjusted for inflation (for example the 2020 Silver Line public art budget is \$144,000/station.) In addition, each station also has a \$350,000-\$400,000 budget for finishings (e.g. paving, column cladding, landscaping, etc.) which can be customized to incorporate artistic elements.¹⁴⁰

Destination Marketing Via Transit

To showcase its Station Art and Design program, DART has created guides to encourage riders to explore the collection of public art along each of its four LRT lines.¹⁴¹ In addition, DART has created the DARTable website¹⁴² that helps residents and visitors explore how they can use transit to access a variety of destinations, including many entries for arts, culture and history venues. The DART “Rider Insider” webpage hosts a calendar with art (and other) events at DART-accessible venues throughout the city.¹⁴³ The Dallas Art District, where many of the city's major arts institutions are located, promotes DART as the easiest way to access the area as all four lines make stops at two nearby stations.¹⁴⁴

4. How do the comprehensive plans for the cities of the Green Line rail transit corridor address issues of creative placemaking?

According to DART's AVP of Capital Program Delivery, David Ehrlicher, the agency “is operating in their own swim lane” and he does not recall a case where a city program influenced or informed the Station Art and Design program. He noted that while a city might have design guidelines that influence the station area (e.g. around landscape and intersection materials and the treatment of parking facility edges), they do not impact the station art.

ForwardDallas, the city's last comprehensive plan, was adopted in 2006. In 2020, the city will reevaluate land use policies to address the

current challenges of climate change, COVID 19 and racial injustice. Promoting placemaking is one of eight themes currently guiding the plan's revision.¹⁴⁵

5. What kinds of public art have been created in the stations of the Green Line rail transit corridor? How are they funded? How are they selected?

DART's Station Art and Design Program funding and selection processes are discussed in Question 3 above. The station area art along the Green Line differs at each station based on the recommendations coming from the specific-site committees and the station artist. The artwork includes interpretations of neighborhood history, connections to nearby industry, and visions for the future. Some station artwork is simple, using repeating geometric patterns, while others layer storytelling into the walkways, windscreens, and retaining walls. Travelling from South to North, several stations stand out for their unique approaches to their surroundings:

Hatcher Station

Located four miles southeast of Downtown Dallas, in the Frazier neighborhood, Hatcher Station is situated on the southside Scyene Road, a major, six-lane arterial. The surrounding neighborhood is comprised of aging single-family homes, medium-density multifamily housing, neighborhood-serving retail, warehouses, and numerous vacant and abandoned properties. According to community development organization, Frazier Revitalization, the neighborhood has been marginalized for decades and half of its residents live below the poverty line and are unemployed.¹⁴⁶

Vicki Meek, the artist selected for Hatcher Station, is nationally recognized for her works examining conditions faced by African Americans. At the station, she used the vision of a quilt to weave stories of the neighborhood's past with visions for its future. Landscaping and paving were designed to mimic stitching and Meek embedded images and text from businesses that once made the

neighborhood home. The defining piece is a wall comprised of tiles featuring the artwork of young students arranged to resemble a quilt. According to DART, "For the first part, the students interviewed an elder to find out what the neighborhood was like when the elder was a kid. They then used this information to draw a representation of the historical neighborhood. The second part asked the students to think back to their earliest memories and similarly draw representations of what the neighborhood was like when they were kids."¹⁴⁷ Meek used all of the students' submissions to create two community quilts at both ends of the station.

With the opening of the LRT station, Frazier Revitalization has worked with residents, business leaders, and lenders to build on the neighborhood's vision for the future. In 2015, Hatcher Station Village—a new development spearheaded by Frazier Revitalization—brought a much needed and beautifully designed affordable health care clinic to the station. Redevelopment efforts continue at the site and Frazier Revitalization has supported a market for residents to sell their own goods, a community legal center staffed by attorney-supervised law students from the University of North Texas-Dallas and out of school time programming for area children.¹⁴⁸ In 2019, to address the neighborhood's food desert, Frazier partnered with Restorative Farms to launch the Hatcher Station Training and Community Farm – where community members can receive fresh produce and learn how to grow food.¹⁴⁹

MLK Jr. Station

Located three miles from downtown Dallas, just to the west of Fair Park (home of the Texas State Fair), the MLK Jr station is imbued with stylistic details from different African tribal traditions.¹⁵⁰ Situated in a predominantly African American neighborhood, artist Emmanuel Gillespie sought to use patterns and symbols from African textile arts that illustrate concepts of unity, respect and wisdom. These patterns are found in the red and tan pavers and in the black and white column cladding. Gillespie notes that the station goes from a "more symbolic aspect to a more visual aspect with the

photos”¹⁵¹ that appear on the windscreens. The images are from renown Dallas photographer R.C. Hickman who captured the lives of Black Dallasites during the civil rights era.

DART’s AVP of Capital Program Delivery, David Ehrlicher noted that the site committee at MLK Jr. station was the only one on the Green Line to endorse a piece of commissioned art at the station. Designed by sculptor Steve Teeters, the two African “talking drums” are constructed from weathered steel and stand 17 feet tall. The rust color of the drums blends with the color of pavers below. Teeters noted “Like the talking drums, which were used for passing messages, Martin Luther King’s whole life was words – this message he got across to America, to me, that symbolizes his legacy.”¹⁵²

The J.B. Jackson Jr. Transit Center (named after a former DART board member and neighborhood leader), which was built before the LRT station, informed the station’s design. Its “Walk of Respect” includes the different patterns from African textiles on the pavers and columns and the wrought-iron fence incorporates symbols of strengths and virtues. Community leader Carolyn Davis describes the facility as an “Afrocentric Transit Center” where riders will “do more than catch a bus connection. They’ll be connecting to the history of the area and to the rich heritage of Africa.”¹⁵³

Fittingly, the station and transit center are located near the South Dallas Cultural Center an arts and cultural institution that celebrates “the creativity, vibrancy, and diversity of the African Diasporian culture by offering a range of programs across creative disciplines.”¹⁵⁴

Fair Park Station

Located at the entrance of Fair Park, the DART station with the same name, welcomes riders to this 277-acre national historic landmark that is home to multiple museums, art deco architecture, the famed Cotton Bowl stadium, and the Texas State Fair. In 1936, Texas leaders hosted a world’s fair on the grounds to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Texas republic and today Fair Park is the only

“intact and unaltered pre-1950s world fair site in the United States.”¹⁵⁵

The historic nature of the site meant that artists Brad and Diana Goldberg wanted to “emulate but not replicate” features found throughout the campus.¹⁵⁶ The artists photographed building features, reviewed books about the grounds, and incorporated many of those features into the station area design. In particular, the station’s roofs are flat (not barrel vaulted like the rest of the system), the columns fluted, and the seating curvilinear. The lighting and signage also reflect the surrounding Art Deco style of Fair Park’s buildings.

Deep Ellum Station

Founded as a “freedmen’s town” by African Americans after Emancipation, Deep Ellum is a storied Dallas neighborhood separated from downtown by the Central Freeway/I-345. Originally known as a hub for African American commerce, entertainment, and jazz and blues music, the removal of the railroad, rising crime, and the construction of the freeway through the commercial heart of the community devastated businesses and accelerated disinvestment.¹⁵⁷ The multi-cultural neighborhood continued to go through periods of resurgence and decline during the 1980s-90s while remaining a home for unconventional arts and music. By the 2000s the area was becoming home to more restaurants, art galleries, and boutiques.

The construction of the Green Line station in Deep Ellum required the demolition of the Good-Latimer Tunnel – a roadway that served as the neighborhood gateway and was lined with much-loved murals. To mitigate this loss, DART supported the \$1.5 million Deep Ellum Gateway project “in the absence of the tunnel...[to define] a next step in the physical, creative “atmosphere” of the district.”¹⁵⁸ In addition to preserving some sections of the murals for the new gateway, DART, working with community partners, received 60 submissions¹⁵⁹ which led to the selection of “The Traveling Man” series by

Dallas sculptor Brad Oldham and Brandon Oldenburg of Reel FX Animation Studios.

The sculpture is located on three sites that are positioned to “draw transit users from the light rail station toward the multiple venues of Deep Ellum and back again.”¹⁶⁰ Each site depicts the Traveling Man – a robot with a guitar shaped head– in various states of animation: being awakened from the ground; waiting on the train; and walking tall. The sculptures are constructed from stainless steel and are meant to evoke the neighborhood’s historic connection to the railroad, its longstanding connection to music, and its future as an ever-evolving creative destination.¹⁶¹ The Walking Tall sculpture stands at 38 feet and with its two peers has become a fixture in the neighborhood. Shortly after the station’s opening, the Deep Ellum Community Association and the Deep Ellum Foundation commissioned dozens of new murals painted on slabs underneath the interstate.

At the station area itself, artist Julie Cohn created translucent windscreen panels with images of historic artifacts, archival photos, and text to capture the changing nature of Deep Ellum. Cohn points out that the neighborhood is like “a tablet that has been written on and erased and written on again.”¹⁶²

Royal Lane Station

The Asian Trade District, located about 12 miles north of downtown Dallas, is a retail mecca for goods, services, and food from across Asia. The Royal Lane Station brings travelers to the 21 shopping centers and 300+ shops that make up the area.

The station artwork, designed by Seoul-born, Dallas-based artists Hyun-Ju Chu and Chong Keun Chu serves as a gateway to highlight the contributions of Asian immigrants from the East revitalizing a neighborhood in the West through commerce.

The station’s features include Asian motifs in the concourse colors and symbols, such as the concrete-molded lotus blossom adorning each column and symbolizing regeneration and the

overcoming of obstacles. The columns, in alternating red and yellow, are etched with decorative borders. In the walkway, a colorful terrazzo medallion symbolizes the growth of life. The windscreens showcase the colorful artwork that the station artists are known for.¹⁶³

6. What kinds of neighborhood plans and/or development strategies are there for areas within a ten-minute walkshed of each transit station? How do those plans/strategies address issues of creative placemaking?

South of Downtown Neighborhoods

Dallas received a HUD Community Challenge Grant and used funds to support 7 Transit Oriented Development Station Area plans, two of which, Hatcher and MLK, are located on the Green Line. While the plans do not specifically deal with public art and placemaking, they call for redevelopment that will engender more vitality near the station areas.

In 2019, Fair Park First, a non-profit charged with the overseeing the management and stewardship of the 277-acre Fair Park, embarked on master plan “to improve this world-class park, entertainment and cultural campus, and the community’s access to it.”¹⁶⁴ The plan calls for the creation of 52 acres of additional green space, including a new 11-acre community park that is accessible to residents year-round. Fair Park’s relationship with surrounding neighborhoods has been fraught – in the 1960s the city used eminent domain to acquire homes from African American residents that were paved and fenced as parking lots. With little year-round use, Fair Park was a drain on nearby communities.¹⁶⁵ Fair Park First is working to strengthen community inclusion and local programming; support existing onsite cultural institutions and protect Fair Park’s Art Deco architecture and works of art.

Deep Ellum

The Deep Ellum Foundation (DEF) manages public and private funds to support neighborhood interests, including administering the area’s Public Improvement District (PID.)

The 2019-2025 PID Strategic Plan reinforces the importance of maintaining the neighborhood's authenticity and honoring arts, culture, and history. Murals remain a public art focal point and they are valued as an economic and placemaking asset.¹⁶⁶

Downtown

The Downtown Dallas 360 Plan, updated in 2017, leads with three strategies: Advance Urban Mobility, Build Complete Neighborhoods, and Promote Great Placemaking. In order to achieve these goals, the plan envisions activated public spaces, temporary and permanent public art, and urban design that prioritizes the pedestrian experience.¹⁶⁷

As a companion to the plan, the Dallas City Council adopted Urban Transit Design Guidelines to provide "policy level design guidance for the development of at-grade and below-grade DART operated transit corridors and stations in and around Downtown Dallas."¹⁶⁸ These guidelines reinforce the value of public art at station areas to create distinct identities.

7. What kinds of public art are being created in the neighborhoods within a ten-minute walkshed of the stations of the Green Line rail transit corridor? How are they funded? How are they selected?

The City of Dallas has a robust and longstanding public art program (detailed below) that includes more than 300 pieces located throughout the city.¹⁶⁹

In Deep Ellum, developer 42 Real Estate sponsored and curated 42 murals to be painted on exterior walls in the Deep Ellum area. With support from the community association, the 42 Murals project completed two rounds in 2015 and 2017, creating 84 murals painted by 75 artists.¹⁷⁰

8. Is there a strategic plan for creative placemaking encompassing the Green Line rail transit corridor and its station areas, articulating

a collaborative public art and placemaking vision for the corridor and identifying budgets, timelines, roles and responsibilities to ensure implementation?

Although distinct from DART's work, the City of Dallas passed adopted a Cultural Plan in 2018¹⁷¹ that goes beyond public art and placemaking with a goal of integrating culture into every sector, citywide.

Historically, while DART was developing its program in the late 1980s, the City of Dallas adopted the Percent for Art Ordinance in September 1988.¹⁷² Under this ordinance, any capital improvement project funded through a bond program must reserve 1.5 percent of the budget for public art. The program is administered by the Office of Cultural Affairs' public art division, which works with the city department responsible for the capital improvement (e.g. parks, public works, etc.) to engage the community and determine the location for the art.

9. To what extent do the intended creative placemaking projects in the Green Line rail transit corridor and its station areas reflect distinctive natural and cultural features of the region and communities where they occur?

See responses to Question 4.

10. What are the most important lessons learned from DART's Station Art and Design Program? What has worked well? What challenges remain?

David Ehrlicher noted that "once everything is built, the maintenance department is the curator of a living museum." As a result, it is critical to use materials that can withstand weather, aging, and active use. He pointed out that kinetic sculpture is particularly tough to maintain.

Another lesson emerging from decades of implementing the program is that members of the site-specific advisory committees want more information about the budget and the

impact of their decisions early in the process. Ehrlicher says that committee members want this information so that they can discern priorities from more discretionary elements.

Lastly, Ehrlicher acknowledged that suburban cities like Rowlett and Richardson are looking to raise additional resources to augment DART's station art budget to strengthen placemaking at their stations.

Miami Region – The Underline

By Patricia Romeu, Amanda Sanfilippo Long, and Mark VanderSchaaf

1. Description of the Miami Metropolitan Area and its current and planned rail transit system.

Miami anchors the Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Pompano Beach Metropolitan Statistical Area consisting of three counties (Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach), with a 2019 population of 6.2 million distributed over a land area of 5,067 square miles.¹⁷³ The core of the rail transit system in the region is Metrorail, a 25-mile dual track system operated by Miami-Dade County running together southwest of downtown and to separate destinations to the northwest – either to the Miami International Airport or to northwestern suburbs. Metrorail also connects to other less-traveled rail transit lines, notably Tri-Rail and Brightline, both of which are commuter rail lines terminating in West Palm Beach.¹⁷⁴ Metrorail is an elevated transit line, commencing operation in 1984.¹⁷⁵

2. Description of The Underline rail transit corridor that is the focus of this case study.

This case study focuses on “The Underline,” a project that will create a linear park, bicycle-pedestrian trail and public art gallery underneath a 10 mile stretch of Metrorail, the segment running southwest of downtown through three separate Cities (Miami, Coral Gables and South Miami), and an unincorporated area (Kendall). This stretch of The Underline will be developed in eight phases, with Phase I already under construction (0.5 miles known as the Brickell Backyard, to be

The success of DART's program is evidenced by its longstanding tenure. The program's guiding principles have held fast after 30 years and 64 stations. As new Silver Line stations come online in 2022, they too will benefit from the foresight of DART's early policy that recognized the role art plays to create a sense of community identify and pride.

opened in early 2021), and three additional phases fully funded but with the target construction end date of the end of 2025.¹⁷⁶

The geographic scope of this case study also includes walksheds of the Metrorail stations along The Underline, and other areas adjacent to the rail corridor. These areas often host outdoor artworks accessible to the public, potentially enhancing transit-oriented development and complementing the public art that is being included in The Underline proper.

3. How do Miami's regional agencies address issues of creative placemaking?

Florida has a long tradition of robust support for public art at all levels of governance – state, regional, municipal, and neighborhood. Projects and policies at each level are not necessarily integrated with one another but illustrate the context in which The Underline is developing.

Regional planning occurs at several levels in the Miami region. The entire state of Florida is divided into ten regional councils that especially promote economic prosperity within their jurisdictions.¹⁷⁷ The Miami region is served by the South Florida Regional Council, comprising Broward, Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties (population 4.7 million in 2019). In the early 2010s the South Florida Regional Council partnered with its neighbor to the north, the Treasure Coast Regional Council (Indian River, Martin, Palm Beach and St. Lucie Counties) to create *Seven50: SE Florida Prosperity Plan*, a 50-

year mega-regional strategy for the seven-county region through the year 2060. This strategy places a high emphasis on the importance of the arts and culture to the region's prosperity, especially in its "Celebrating Arts & Culture" section in the chapter on "The Region in 2060."¹⁷⁸

Relative to public art in transitways, the *Seven50* strategy includes several relevant directions. "Every regional project that stems from *Seven50* should promote the involvement of greater designers and architects, along with outstanding artists. That would include transportation facilities. That will also produce those gathering places that promote social interaction and connections to each other and the community."¹⁷⁹ It further recommends that communities adopt policies to require that artists and public art be a part of all new regional public capital construction or reconstruction, including areas around transit stations.¹⁸⁰ While this direction is supportive of public art in the Miami region, the Art in Public Places program of Miami-Dade County (described below) has evolved independently of this multi-county regional plan.

Miami-Dade County also functions as a regional governance body for the 2.7 million urban and suburban communities in the core of South Florida. The County adopts a Comprehensive Development Master Plan with guidance for twelve policy areas.¹⁸¹ Although the current version of this plan does not explicitly address transitway public art issues, it lays the foundation for such priorities, particularly in a policy that states: "In the planning and design of rapid transit sites and stations and transit centers, high priority shall be given to providing a safe, attractive and comfortable environment for pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users; such amenities shall include weather protection, ample paved walkways, sidewalks, lighting, and landscaping, and ancillary uses that provide conveniences to transit patrons such as cafes, newsstands and other retail sales."¹⁸²

The above endorsements of public art in Miami-Dade County receive powerful implementation

support by the County's Art in Public Places Program, established by ordinance in 1973 and now one of the most long-standing such programs in the United States. This ordinance requires that 1.5 percent of the construction costs of new county buildings be spent to acquire or commission public artworks, and directs the County Board of Commissioners to appoint a Citizens' Trust, guided by a Professional Advisory Committee, to select these artworks.¹⁸³ The ordinance has been updated several times and is supplemented by detailed formal procedures, the most recent dating from January 2018.¹⁸⁴

Because the Miami-Dade Art in Public Places program is county-wide, it has a large portfolio of projects, of which those in The Underline corridor are a small but vital portion.¹⁸⁵ An important provision of the ordinance is that "The Trustees shall adopt and publish a master art plan and written uniform guidelines to govern the manner and method of the submission of proposed works of art to the Professional Advisory Committee, the process by which the Professional Advisory Committee shall make recommendations to the Trustees and the process by which the Trustees shall approve acquisition."¹⁸⁶ This provision is particularly relevant to The Underline project in that the Metrorail right-of-way is under county jurisdiction.

In partnership with Miami-Dade County is The Miami-Dade Transportation Planning Organization (TPO), formerly called the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Miami Urbanized Area. The TPO guides the transportation planning process in Miami-Dade County. It was created on March 2, 1977 as required under Section 163.01, Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, and established by Interlocal Agreement between Miami-Dade County and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT).¹⁸⁷

As is the case throughout the U.S., this organization creates a regional transportation plan and recommends funding of high-priority projects. However, the TPO is remarkable for

its high level of emphasis on aesthetic criteria for transportation projects, manifested particularly in its 2011 *Aesthetic Guidance and Action Plan for Transportation Projects* policy document created for its Transportation Aesthetics Review Committee (TARC).¹⁸⁸ The mission statement for TARC summarizes the perspective reflected in this document as follows: “A collaborative process which involves the thinking of artists, landscape architects, historians, urban designers as well as engineers and architects in a team-approach can enlarge, enhance and enlighten the design process. Artists should push the standard parameters of materials and site becoming a catalyst for creativity and innovative problem-solving; landscape architects should interpret their task as an opportunity to treat vegetation in the sub-tropics not as accessory but as an intrinsic part of the overall design recognizing the environmental and climatic uniqueness of South Florida; historians should interpret the built and cultural heritage in a sympathetic and genuine design response which does not simply mimic existing structures but which instead carries its own design integrity.”¹⁸⁹

While intended specifically for unincorporated regions of Miami-Dade County, this area’s *Urban Design Manual* also contributes to a solid foundation for a regional approach to arts and culture in the Miami region.¹⁹⁰ Advocating for “civic design” and “civic art,” this manual states that: “Successful civic design tailored to the regional context produces diverse and distinctive neighborhoods, replete with civic buildings, monuments and open spaces that constitute civic art. Civic art involves a creative approach to developing the built environment, combines function with meaning and beauty, promotes a sense of belonging and can serve as an important element in helping communities develop identity.”¹⁹¹

4. How do the comprehensive plans for the cities of The Underline rail transit corridor address issues of creative placemaking?

As indicated previously, Miami-Dade County and Friends of The Underline collaborate for

public art in the Underline proper, with the County having the final decision-making authority for such art. However, City plans and programs are relevant because of their potential role in commissioning and managing public art in Metrorail station walksheds. Additionally, municipalities may contribute art to The Underline, subject to review by Friends of The Underline and The County. Like Miami-Dade County, several cities in the Miami region have “Art in Public Places” programs – notably, for the purpose of The Underline project, Miami and Coral Gables.

In 2017, the City of Miami revived a dormant program initially created in 1967, by passing ordinances creating an Art in Public Places Program to guide the expenditure of 1.5 percent of eligible public capital improvement project funds for the commission, purchase and installation of artworks in a variety of public settings.¹⁹² Ordinance 13656 provides program definitions and applicability¹⁹³ while Ordinance 13657 creates an Art in Public Places Board, establishes criteria for the public art selection process, and creates a Public Art Fund.¹⁹⁴ This action involved the City withdrawing from the Miami-Dade Art in Public Places Program which previously served the entire one-county core of the region.

Miami’s city plan, known as the “Neighborhood Comprehensive Plan,”¹⁹⁵ was most recently amended effective in early 2018, articulates a policy that supports and contextualizes Miami’s Art in Public Places Program. Policy PR-6.2.3 states that “The City will continue to work towards enhancement of public spaces (entrances, plazas, lobbies, courtyards and atriums) and gateways through artwork. The City will use, whenever appropriate, the ‘Art in Public Places’ allocation in public facility construction budgets as well as the assistance of the County Arts Council staff,¹⁹⁶ and encourage private organizations to construct civic monuments at gateway locations.”

Coral Gables’ municipal public art program dates from a 2007 ordinance that went into effect in 2010.¹⁹⁷ It focuses on preserving

existing public art and on commissioning and funding new artworks. Upon going into effect, the program adopted a master plan¹⁹⁸ and guidelines for implementation.¹⁹⁹

Like Miami, Coral Gables also provides policy support to public art in its Comprehensive Plan (2010)²⁰⁰. In its Mobility section, the plan establishes Policy MOB-1.1.5. “Improve amenities within public spaces, streets, alleys and parks to include the following improvements: seating; art; architectural elements (at street level); lighting; bicycle parking; street trees; improved pedestrian crossing with bulbouts, small curb radii, on-street parking along sidewalks, pedestrian paths and bicycle paths to encourage walking and cycling with the intent of enhancing the feeling of safety.” And in its Historical Resources section, the plan states Goal HIS-1. “Preserve and promote the recognition of structures, sites, manmade or natural landscape elements, works of art or integrated combinations thereof, which serve as visible reminders of the history and cultural heritage of the City.”

5. What kinds of public art are being created in the stations of The Underline rail transit corridor? How are they funded? How are they selected?

Rights-of-way for the Metrorail system feature public art for each station, commissioned in 1984 when the rail line first opened. In addition, new commissions along the Metrorail corridor are being issued and implemented. Over the course of The Underline project area, with nine transit stations, the following public art can currently be found (note that most, but not all, are projects commissioned by the Miami-Dade Art in Public Places program):

Government Center Station: None within the station but in an adjacent plaza to the Stephen P. Clark Government Center features the 1984 sculpture “Dropped Bowl with Scattered Slices and Peels” by the celebrated artist Claes Oldenburg,²⁰¹ and Reflect, a more recent technology-based work completed in 2011 by Ivan Toth Depena for the lobby of the

Government Center building; both works commissioned by the Miami-Dade Art in Public Places Trust

Brickell Station: Athena Tacha’s “Leaning Arches” recently refurbished and relocated to this station area from Douglas Road Metrorail Station. Cara Despain’s “Water Tables” is to be installed in a promenade adjacent to the station.

Vizcaya: Fountain and sculptures at entry to station, a Miami-Dade Art in Public Places work created by recasting sculptures from the nearby Vizcaya mansion’s “Delights and Terrors of the Sea.”²⁰²

Coconut Grove Station: This station is the future home of a major public-private partnership for new retail and housing development known as Grove Central. The County’s public art program is actively engaged in the process of commissioning new works for the new public areas including the intersection of The Underline path across this new development. Sun Stations, a solar sculpture by Dale Eldred also commissioned in 1984 by the County’s public art program, is currently under consideration for relocation and or deaccessioning from the County’s collection.

Douglas Road Station: This station is currently under renovation as part of a major public-private partnership for land development that combines new housing and multi-use facilities. The Miami-Dade Art in Public Places Trust commissioned Miami-based artist Felice Grodin to fabricate and install an artist-designed fence extending 580 linear feet and enclosing the entire station perimeter. Once completed, the artwork will be directly adjacent to the path of The Underline as it passes through the station grounds.

University Station: Domino images on pillars installed for free in 2019 by the artist Droga, who did receive a \$2,500 award for the work.²⁰³ The creation of this work was supported by Miami-Dade County Department of Transportation and Public Works, although not by the Miami-Dade County Art in Public

Places Trust. Issues raised by the process of approving this art led to constructive solutions incorporated into The Underline Art Procedures Guide. It is uncertain whether these will remain in the future.

South Miami Station: “Paciencia” sculpture by John Henry is to be relocated to a different location within the station grounds to make way for the first phase of a public-private mixed-use and student housing development. The County’s public art program completed the artists selection process for a commission by Miami-based artist Amanda Keeley for this first phase of development

Dadeland North: None in station, but Romeo Britto “Welcome” sculpture, a privately commissioned work in adjacent plaza. Britto is a Brazilian-born Pop artist with many sculptural works in South Florida.²⁰⁴

Dadeland South: “Sixteen Smokes” by George Greenamyre.

As The Underline project proceeds, new works of public art will be created in the corridor, complementing the bicycle/pedestrian/greenway elements of the project. Significant fundraising for this public art will be conducted by the non-profit organization, Friends of The Underline. To coordinate this work with the responsibilities of the Miami-Dade Art in Public Places Program, a set of procedures entitled “Public Art and The Underline” has been created, which will guide the decisions and activities of all relevant parties. Friends of The Underline has assembled a high-level group of advisors to help drive the commissions, installations and calls to artists for future works. Furthermore, this nonprofit is creating a Public Art and Cultural Master Plan to establish themes, connection points and proposed regions for gateway art along the 10-mile linear park. This plan will highlight the value of community engagement and the enrichment of civic life. It is being prepared under the guidance of The Underline Art Advisory Council, composed of art professionals, distinguished academics, and relevant local government staff.

6. What kinds of neighborhood plans and/or development strategies are there for areas within a ten-minute walkshed of each transit station? How do those plans/strategies address issues of creative placemaking?

As noted previously, transit station walkshed public art projects are typically the responsibility of City governments, not Miami-Dade County (except in unincorporated Kendall/Dadeland).

There are no plans in the City of Miami specifically focused on transit-oriented development within a ten-minute walkshed of the Metrorail stations in the city. However, there is a plan for Miami’s downtown, including the Brickell neighborhood.²⁰⁵ This plan was created by the Miami Downtown Development Authority, an independent agency of the City of Miami. Its Downtown Miami Master Plan extends through 2025 and was initially created in 2009, with an update in 2016. This plan does state as a goal to “promote public art and landmarks along Biscayne Boulevard and Brickell Avenue.”²⁰⁶ This plan also enjoins that the City should “Develop a Downtown Miami Signature Art and Iconic Landmarks Plan to promote the planning, design, purchase, installation and maintenance of pieces throughout Downtown with a strong emphasis on Biscayne Blvd and Brickell Ave.”²⁰⁷

As noted previously, the City of Coral Gables provides general policy support to public art and placemaking in its comprehensive plan. In relationship to transit, it also articulates the following objectives and policies: “Objective DES-1.4. Coordinate with extra-jurisdictional entities to encourage design that is compatible with the character of surrounding communities in the City... Policy DES-1.4.2. Coordinate with governmental agencies to ensure that the design of public projects in or near the City of Coral Gables, including roadways, transit stops/stations, school facilities, and other facilities and infrastructure, is compatible with the character of surrounding communities within the City.”

South Miami's comprehensive plan specifically outlines policies to promote transit-oriented development in proximity to its Metrorail station, for example: "FLU Policy I.1.7 Discourage urban commercial sprawl by promoting growth in the core area surrounding the Metrorail Transit Station by creating a district for new growth which is contained and transit-oriented, thereby relieving the pressure for commercial rezoning outside of this core area."²⁰⁸ While South Miami's transit-oriented development policies do not specifically incorporate public art considerations, the comprehensive plan does endorse public art as a City priority: "FLU Objective 1.9 Encourage a Sense of Community - The City shall encourage a sense of community among the residents through community events, public art, and public spaces."²⁰⁹

7. What kinds of public art are being created in the neighborhoods within a ten-minute walkshed of the stations of The Underline rail transit corridor? How are they funded? How are they selected?

Coral Gables' Art in Public Places Program is buttressed by a percent-for-art requirement applying not just to government projects, but to non-profit and for-profit building projects costing more than \$1 million.²¹⁰ The requirement can be met either by including public art in the projects themselves, or by contributing to the City's public art acquisition fund.²¹¹ With several new developments under construction in close proximity to The Underline, public art is being created at those sites. Two especially notable projects that will include public art are the \$225 million mixed-use project Paseo de la Riviera²¹² and the \$330 million Gables Station.²¹³ Gables Station will be especially closely integrated with The Underline in that it will fund a half mile of The Underline and integrate a new 2.9 acre park with the linear park emerging in The Underline.²¹⁴

8. Is there a strategic plan for creative placemaking encompassing The Underline rail transit corridor and its station areas, articulating a collaborative public art and placemaking vision

for the corridor and identifying budgets, timelines, roles and responsibilities to ensure implementation?

A set of public art procedures ("Public Art and The Underline") was prepared prior to the opening of the Brickell Backyard, the first phase of The Underline. This master plan establishes that public art created in the Metrorail right-of-way must be selected via existing processes of the Miami-Dade Art in Public Places Trust, even if money for the art is raised privately.²¹⁵ It addresses five types of public art that could be included as components of The Underline: artwork commissioned by the Miami-Dade Art in Public Places program, private donations of existing public art to the County for The Underline, artwork commissioned by Friends of The Underline, artwork commissioned by municipalities, and temporary art.

9. To what extent do the intended creative placemaking projects in The Underline rail transit corridor and its station areas reflect distinctive natural and cultural features of the region and communities where they occur?

Projects funded by the Miami-Dade Art in Public Places Trust do not necessarily seek to reflect distinctive natural and cultural features of the region and communities where they occur. The objectives of this program focus on creating outstanding works of art, with a variety of subjects considered to meet this focus.²¹⁶ However, criteria for The Underline project include guidelines provided by James Corner Field Operations (responsible for the overall project plan), and the above-referenced Underline Public Art Master Plan.

10. What are the most important lessons learned from the creative placemaking plans, strategies and activities in the Miami Underline rail transit corridor? What has worked well? What challenges remain?

There are few places in Miami where people are encouraged to enjoy public art for free and there is no place in the region where one can bike, jog or walk for 10 miles and enjoy art.

Upon completion, The Underline strives to be the most accessible public space in all of Miami. Art will be a huge component of this goal. Already, we are seeing the demand for people to donate and commission art along this right of

way. For these reasons, the Art Master Plan is essential to ensure the art tells a story along the 10-miles and that the community is part of creating the narrative.

Twenty-First Century Systems

Denver Region – Lakewood W Line Corridor and 40 West ArtLine

By Alexis Moore

1. Description of the Denver-Lakewood-Aurora Metropolitan Statistical Area and its current and planned rail transit system.

Lakewood is an inner ring suburb that shares its eastern border with Denver and has a population of 157,000. It is located within the Denver-Lakewood-Aurora Metropolitan Statistical Area that encompasses a total population of 2.9 million in 8,344 square miles.²¹⁷ The Denver metro region Regional Transportation District (RTD) was created in 1969 and serves the region with a bus, bus rapid transit, light rail, and commuter rail system. RTD opened the first light rail line, the Central Corridor, in 1994 serving those living downtown Denver.²¹⁸ In 2000, RTD opened the first light rail line to the suburbs, the Southwest Corridor, running from downtown Denver to Littleton and in 2006 opened the Southeast Corridor to Lone Tree.²¹⁹ In 2004, voters in the metro region approved FasTracks, a multibillion-dollar RTD transit expansion project, funded by a 0.4 percent sales tax. FasTracks encompasses the Denver-Lakewood-Aurora region, in addition to connecting with Boulder to the west, Thornton to the north, and Lone Tree to the south. The expansion plan is in the process of being implemented, and when completed will include five new rapid transit corridors, three extensions of existing corridors, and the redevelopment of Union Station.²²⁰ The completed transit expansion system will bring a total of 122 miles of commuter rail, light rail transit, and bus rapid transit to the Denver Metropolitan Area.²²¹

2. Description of the Lakewood W Line rail transit corridor and 40 West ArtLine that is the focus of this case study.

Background

The W Line rail transit corridor was the first rail line completed under the FasTracks expansion and opened in April 2013. The W Line is 12.1 miles long and runs through Denver and Jefferson counties and connects Union Station in downtown Denver to the western suburbs of Lakewood and Golden. There are 11 stations on the W Line, including six with parking lots or structures and five neighborhood walk-up stations without parking. Seven stations are located in Lakewood. Lamar Station, a neighborhood walk-up station on the eastern edge of the city, is a focal point of the 40 West Arts District and ArtLine project area. The station is surrounded by a mix of arts-supportive land uses, including the Rocky Mountain College of Art + Design, which is listed in the National Historic Register.²²²

W Line Unique Context

The W Line corridor is unique compared to other transit lines nationally. It follows a historic rail corridor that operated steam locomotives from 1893 to 1904 and was later acquired by Denver Intermountain Railway for an interurban trolley that ran until 1950. RTD purchased the corridor in 1988 for future transit use.²²³ The W Line runs through Lakewood's oldest, most established neighborhoods. These neighborhoods were historically lower income and higher minority, but the demographics are in transition because of proximity to Denver and areas of rapid population growth. Metro West Housing Solutions, Lakewood's affordable

housing provider, operates several award-winning, permanently affordable housing developments in 40 West along the ArtLine, including Lamar Station Crossing and Residences at Creekside and Creekside West.²²⁴ As the W Line extends to the west, it runs through historically agricultural, industrial and moderate-income mid-century residential neighborhoods.

Planning in the Region

The addition of light rail in established single-family neighborhoods presented development challenges and opportunities. During the light rail planning process that started in 2007, Lakewood worked with hundreds of community members and stakeholders to develop Transit Oriented Development (TOD) station area plans for six of its seven stations. The plans helped implement mixed-use, TOD zoning for these station areas in 2007. The plan recommendations were rolled into the updated Lakewood Comprehensive Plan in 2015, and the station area plans were subsequently archived.²²⁵ Due to the 2008 recession, mixed-use and higher-density development interest was delayed until more recently. Recent development interest and perceived excessive growth has caused community backlash and resulted in the community passing a Residential Growth Limitations Ordinance in 2019. This ordinance significantly restricts new high-density, multi-family residential development projects in Lakewood and threatens the positive momentum of the envisioned development along the W Line and in the 40 West Arts District.²²⁶

The 40 West Arts District

Transit adjacent neighborhoods are in a period of transition and change due to the W Line, recent development near stations, economic considerations and the rapid growth in the Denver metro region. The shift has also created an arts movement along the W Line, particularly in the eastern portion near the Lamar Station area and the Denver border. Due to unfavorable economic conditions for artists in other areas of the Denver metro region and support and investment from the city and Lakewood-West Colfax Business Improvement

District (LWCBID), artists and creative industries have been relocating to neighborhoods in the vicinity of the W Line and West Colfax Avenue/US Highway 40, a historic transportation corridor located two blocks north of the W Line and the inspiration for the name of the 40 West Arts District.

To further a community idea for creating an arts district near Lamar Station, Lakewood used a \$110,000 Brownfields Region-Wide Planning Grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 2011 to create an arts and placemaking focused plan for the area. This effort resulted in the adoption of the 40 West Arts District Urban Design and Mobility Concepts Plan in 2012.²²⁷ That same year, the momentum also sparked a grassroots movement to create the 40 West Arts District, now a nonprofit that works in close partnership with LWCBID.²²⁸ In 2014, 40 West Arts was designated as a state-certified Creative District by the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade.²²⁹ This highly respected designation brings opportunities for grants, marketing and training to promote the area as a destination and to use the arts and placemaking as an economic and tourism driver.

The 40 West ArtLine

The 40 West Arts District Urban Design and Mobility Concepts Plan also recommended the creation of an art and placemaking trail in this area, which is a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) target area that lacks parks and open spaces compared to newer areas of the city. The trail was envisioned to use existing sidewalks, bike and park paths, and low-volume streets to connect underutilized parks, historic neighborhoods, affordable housing, local businesses and more to the W Line transit corridor and historic West Colfax Avenue. The plan envisioned creative wayfinding signage and a green painted line on the ground to delineate the route, similar to the red line of the Boston Freedom Trail. This vision was realized with the creation of the 40 West ArtLine, a four-mile walking and biking arts experience adjacent to the W Line in the heart of the Creative District.²³⁰ The ArtLine was funded in part by a

major, \$100,000 Our Town Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) in 2016, with additional funding support from the City of Lakewood, LWCBID, 40 West Arts, Jeffco Public Health, Metro West Housing Solutions and others. The total project budget was approximately \$315,000.

After years of planning and involvement from hundreds of community members, the ArtLine launched in 2018, marked by a painted green line on the ground and activated with over 70 public art and creative placemaking installations that include works by over 24 professional artists and community-created art installations completed with the assistance of professional artists. Marketing ideas focused on the importance of the ArtLine's direct connection and relationship to transit and included attracting out-of-town visitors by encouraging them to "Take the A Line (the train connecting Denver International Airport to downtown Denver), to the W Line to the ArtLine." The investment of over \$700 million in federal and local funds to build the W Line catalyzed the creation of the state-certified Creative District and 40 West ArtLine and brought new life, opportunities, and energy to an area that had been in economic decline for several decades.

3. How do Denver's regional agencies address issues of creative placemaking?

Denver and Lakewood are located within the Denver Regional Council of Governments' (DRCOG) nine-county region, which is guided by the Metro Vision, the region's aspirational plan for the future.²³¹ The unanimously adopted Metro Vision Plan identifies shared regionwide aspirations, areas where continuous improvement is needed to achieve aspirations, and key activities that partners, including DRCOG, local governments and other stakeholders, can pursue.

The importance of public art and placemaking is integrated in several elements of the regional plan. For instance, the adopted plan notes that "vibrant and thriving communities, accessible and protected natural resources, and diverse cultural amenities are economic assets and

make our region a highly desirable place to live, work and raise a family."²³² Supportive strategic initiatives include "connect residents and visitors to local cultural, educational and natural amenities" and "target local funds to create community design features that meet the needs of people of all ages, incomes and abilities."²³³

The W Line corridor is within the boundaries of Denver, Lakewood and Golden, and specific public art and placemaking elements are addressed within the plans of those municipalities, as described in Q.4 and Q.6. There is neither a W Line-specific regional plan nor a regional public art or placemaking plan. However, the efforts along the W Line corridor have been featured in numerous forums hosted by DRCOG to recognize local innovation and contributions to regional outcomes and objectives, including the Planning with Vision – Gold Award in 2013.

4. How do the comprehensive plans for the cities of the W Line transit corridor address issues of creative placemaking?

The three cities on the W Line incorporate art and placemaking to varying degrees in their comprehensive plans, as described below.

Lakewood Comprehensive Plan

The primary focus area for this case study is the Lakewood portion of the W Line transit corridor. The Lakewood Comprehensive Plan, *Lakewood 2025: Moving forward Together*, was adopted in 2015.²³⁴ This plan addresses public art and placemaking in Chapter 4: Lakewood Lives and has an entire section devoted to arts and culture, stating, "The City of Lakewood believes that arts and culture enriches the lives of its citizens. Arts and culture are essential to making Lakewood an interesting and attractive place to live, work, recreate, and visit. Arts and culture help to define a sense of identity, a sense of place, and serve as a vehicle for engaging a diverse community. A healthy and stable arts and culture sector is necessary for the city's economic and social vitality."²³⁵ The guiding principal of this chapter is that "Lakewood will be a safe, healthy, diverse and

vibrant community with strong and unique neighborhoods.”²³⁶ Specific goals and action steps are identified in the arts and culture section and include “encourage and sustain places and spaces for art and cultural activity throughout Lakewood” with supporting action steps to “utilize art to define the city’s image by increasing public art in parks, on public lands, at gateways, and adjacent to streets and sidewalks for community enjoyment”; “establish cultural and arts districts in areas of economic potential and promote art as a key element of economic development”; and, “integrate cultural activities in businesses by encouraging development of spaces for exhibits, performances, and sponsorships through programs such as temporary exhibits, live music, and by developing partnerships with local artists.”²³⁷ Another goal supports the arts by recommending the city “celebrate and promote heritage, culture, and the arts” and do so with the following action steps: “develop programs and activities to celebrate and promote the city’s history and diverse cultures”; and “collaborate with civic, business, and community leaders to expand, celebrate, and promote the city’s historic and cultural legacy.”²³⁸

Other City-Wide Lakewood Plans

In 2013 the city worked with a public art consultant and stakeholders to create and adopt the Lakewood Public Art Master Plan that establishes the vision and guiding principles for the city’s public art program.²³⁹ This plan helped launch the Lakewood Public Art Committee that works with staff to oversee the city’s program. Lakewood also adopted a sustainability plan in 2015 that includes several goals, policies, and action steps related to public art and placemaking.²⁴⁰ The plan recognizes that art is integral to the sustainability of the city and includes an indicator of success based on the number of annual public art installations in the city.²⁴¹ While these plans and the comprehensive plan are all guiding city policy documents, they’re implemented through different departments and divisions, which can at times make coordinated implementation of these robust public art and placemaking recommendations challenging.

Adjacent City’s Comprehensive Plans

Both communities on the W Line adjacent to Lakewood have plans that address public art. Denver’s comprehensive plan 2040 was adopted in 2019 and contains many references to the importance of public art and creative placemaking.²⁴² Denver also has a well-established and successful public art ordinance that was enacted in 1991. The ordinance requires that 1% of the project budget be set aside for site specific public art for any capital project with accessible public space and a design and construction budget over \$1 million. Since Denver’s public art program began in 1988, more than \$40 million has been invested in public art in the city.²⁴³

The City of Golden’s comprehensive plan was adopted in 2017 and contains some language about the value the community places on public art.²⁴⁴ Golden has a robust Art in Public Places Program and Public Art Commission that is responsible for overseeing the program.²⁴⁵

5. What kinds of public art are being created in the stations of the Lakewood W Line transit corridor? How are they funded? How are they selected?

Station area Public Art

Public art has been created at all 11 stations along the W Line through funding from RTD. Brenda Tierney, RTD’s Art-n-Transit program manager at the time of the W Line construction, indicated that “...the public expressed a clear and collective determination to include art in Denver’s transit system since its beginnings.”²⁴⁶ All station platforms are owned and operated by RTD, and a description of RTD’s Art-n-Transit program and information about the public art at each station is available online. According to RTD, “There are two distinct types of public art at the stations, art enhancements and site-specific pieces. Art enhancements are elements incorporated into the design of the transit station. These include windscreens, benches, canopies, railings, and other basic architectural features that provide functional and artistic benefits and make stations and terminals easily

identifiable. Site-specific commissioned art includes murals, mosaics, sculptures, and other imaginative installations created by artists to produce unique pieces that reflect the surrounding community and add an identifying element to the neighborhood.”²⁴⁷

Station area Public Art Funding and Selection

Because of legal and logistical considerations when placing public art on RTD property, all art at the stations has been funded, installed and maintained by RTD. The process for selecting art along the W line was facilitated by RTD and advertised through CaFÉ.²⁴⁸ The art was selected by committees consisting of local municipality representatives from various departments, community stakeholders, elected officials, and neighborhood representatives. While incorporating art is fundamental for each station area, RTD does not have a dedicated budget. According to RTD Community Engagement Manager Christina Zazueta, RTD funds public art with the funds remaining in a contingency budget after the transit construction costs are expended.

6. What kinds of neighborhood plans and/or development strategies are there for areas within a ten-minute walkshed of each transit station? How do those plans/strategies address issues of creative placemaking?

Neighborhood Plans

As previously mentioned, Lakewood engaged the community early in the planning process and adopted station area plans for six of the seven transit stations along the W Line in Lakewood. These plans helped implement new zoning and development strategies to encourage more high-density, multifamily and mixed-use development near the transit stations. The Lamar Station area Plan, adopted in 2010 and archived in 2015 when the new Lakewood comprehensive plan was adopted, specifically recommended art and gallery uses near the station.²⁴⁹ More recent planning efforts with the 40 West Art District and other partners along the West Colfax corridor, located within a 10-minute walk from W Line stations, have helped generate positive momentum in developing

plans that address public art and urban design placemaking.

The *40 West Arts Urban Design and Mobility Concepts Plan* focuses on the Lamar station area and recommends art and creative placemaking strategies to activate and promote economic development in the area. Following the adoption of this plan, the *40 West Placemaking Implementation Plan* was created in 2015 with stakeholder input to help define the vision for the area. The plan recommended placemaking and streetscape elements that incorporate the 40W logo, such as benches, trash bins, banners, and enhanced pedestrian lighting. Both plans recommended the creation of an arts loop (the ArtLine) to connect the three parks in the area with the W Line transit stations and local businesses in the arts district.²⁵⁰

The *West Colfax Vision 2040 Action Plan* was adopted in 2015 and addresses public art and placemaking throughout the plan, including a dedicated placemaking chapter.²⁵¹ Supporting action steps include the following: “Implement the 40W Placemaking recommendations in the arts district,” “Reinforce nodes of pedestrian activity through wayfinding and placemaking,” “Infuse color and vibrancy into all design projects,” and “Develop the 40W Arts Loop (now called the ArtLine).”²⁵²

Urban Renewal and CDBG Strategies

In addition to these specific area plans, Lakewood has used urban renewal strategies to support placemaking near each station. As a result of value engineering of the W Line by RTD, many pedestrian, bike and rail user amenities were reduced by 50 percent at each of the seven stations in Lakewood during construction. The City of Lakewood recognized the importance of restoring these placemaking elements and invested \$2.8 million in amenities and enhancements for light rail users from urban renewal and capital improvement funds. Elements included bike racks, trash receptacles, benches, shelters and windscreens. New missing link sidewalks connecting neighborhoods to stations were installed by the city within a year of the W Line opening in 2013.

The Lakewood Urban Renewal Authority also helped fund 40 West-specific placemaking elements such as benches, trash bins, lighting, banners and more in conjunction with the redevelopment of an older shopping center located in the arts district just two blocks from the Lamar Station. Lakewood has also utilized federal Community Development Block Grant dollars to enhance streetscape projects in the arts district and near the W Line with the same 40W placemaking elements. These streetscape and placemaking elements were recommended in the aforementioned 40 West Placemaking Implementation Plan.

7. What kinds of public art are being created in the neighborhoods within a ten-minute walkshed of the stations of the Lakewood W Line transit corridor? How are they funded? How are they selected?

40 West Area Public Art

Greater flexibility exists in public art and creative placemaking within a 10-minute walkshed of the stations than on the station platforms. In Lakewood, these efforts have focused geographically on the stations within the 40 West Arts District, including the Sheridan (shared with Denver), Lamar and Lakewood-Wadsworth stations. Because of the proximity of the W Line to West Colfax Avenue, public art and placemaking initiatives led by the Denver and Lakewood-West Colfax Business Improvement District greatly contributes to the number of public art installations in public and private spaces within the walkshed of the W Line stations.

ArtLine Public Art Types, Funding and Selection

The 40 West ArtLine is the focus area for public art near the W Line in Lakewood and was primarily funded by a 2016 NEA Our Town grant, with supporting partner funds from the City of Lakewood and others that resulted in a budget of \$315,000. More than 70 public art installations have been funded in a variety of ways, including through local, state and federal grants and to a small extent, private foundation grants. A mural project funded through a Community First Foundation grant in 2019 and

advertised through CaFÉ attracted nearly 200 responses from artists around the world. Many applicants said they were interested in the project because it was part of an arts trail experience with a goal of encouraging people to explore art outside as they recreate. DAAS, an internationally renowned muralist based in Florida, was selected for the project and painted “Take Time” on a large, blighted retaining wall along the ArtLine. It was his first mural project in Colorado. In 2020, an AARP Community Challenge grant funded a temporary community fence art mural project and performance art by 40 West arts group, Handsome Little Devil’s, that brought a socially distanced *Project Joy Bomb* to isolated low-income seniors and families at two different Metro West Housing Solutions affordable housing communities on the ArtLine.²⁵³

Public art along the ArtLine includes painted ground murals – both creative/interactive game murals and “art for art’s sake” murals – fence art installations, interactive sculptures, land art, functional art and ArtLine story totems that serve a dual purpose of a rotating art opportunity and solar illuminated route wayfinding.²⁵⁴

Other public art includes a mural program supported by 40 West Arts, West Colfax Community Association and the LWCBID. This program is funded through BID funds and private investment and has contributed significantly to murals in the area, especially during the annual Colfax ArtFest event.²⁵⁵ Private funding is also key to implementing the ArtLine vision, and partners hope to see more private investment in the future. During the summer of 2020, the largest mural project on the 40 West ArtLine was created with a \$100,000 investment by Riverpoint Partners and CentrePoint Properties. The private investment partners hired artist Katy Casper to lead a team of artists to paint *Wild Urban Medicine*, a series of 11 large-scale wall murals on an aging but recently revitalized apartment complex located one block from the Lamar Station on the ArtLine.²⁵⁶ The murals celebrate the medicinal

properties and beauty of plants that are often considered weeds.

Art opportunities are promoted through a variety of means, depending on the project budget, and include invitational calls, calls shared through local and regional networks, or in the case of larger budget or higher profile art, through CaFÉ. The art submissions are reviewed by and art is selected through an ArtLine specific art selection committee that changes annually. The committee consists of local community members and stakeholders, staff from the City of Lakewood Planning and Heritage, Culture & the Arts divisions, and staff from 40 West Arts and the LWCBID. The art selection is approved by the Lakewood Public Art Committee.

8. Is there a strategic plan for creative placemaking encompassing the W Line transit corridor and its station areas, articulating a collaborative public art and placemaking vision for the corridor and identifying budgets, timelines, roles and responsibilities to ensure implementation?

W Line Strategic Plan

There is not a strategic plan for the corridor as described. Most public art on the W Line, and all art at the stations, was funded and implemented by RTD during the initial construction project. RTD has moved on to building out the other sections of the FasTracks system and is experiencing significant budget challenges because of lower than projected sales tax revenues during the recession and the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as reduced ridership. According to Christina Zazueta, RTD has historically handled public art along the system build out on a case-by-case basis and has used contingency funds for art at the end of the project. There is no formal plan, and no new art, or art budgets, are planned by RTD for existing stations. A broader plan would be desirable and has been requested by groups or individual artists requesting to add art to the system, but the plan has not yet been created.

ArtLine Strategic Planning

Lakewood Planning staff led an effort to create an ArtLine Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between the city, LWCBID and 40 West Arts in early 2020. The IGA outlines maintenance needs, roles and responsibilities and is to be reviewed and updated annually to adjust to shifting needs and budgets.

The ArtLine Project Team (APT), an inter-departmental group of City of Lakewood staff from Planning, Economic Development, Parks, Transportation Engineering and Heritage, Culture & the Arts divisions, as well as representatives from 40 West Arts and the LWCBID, meet monthly to manage and coordinate ArtLine project efforts. The APT aspires to create a 40 West ArtLine Strategic Plan to document the project vision and help guide future planning, timelines, budgeting, programming, maintenance and other needs. This plan is still in early discussions and has not moved forward due to staffing and budget limitations, which have been exacerbated by COVID-19.

9. To what extent do the intended creative placemaking projects in the W Line transit corridor, its station areas and the 40 West ArtLine reflect distinctive natural and cultural features of the region and communities where they occur?

Art at W Line stations and along the ArtLine varies. In many cases the art and placemaking reflects the local features and community; however, in other cases it was selected for its own unique character.

RTD-Funded Public Art and Local Context

There are 37 vinyl-art wrapped RTD relay house utility boxes along the W Line. The box wrap designs are context specific to reflect the natural or cultural features where each box is located. Themes range from red rock designs near the foothills to local history and neighborhood branding in older neighborhoods along the line. The boxes were the first placemaking elements on the W Line, installed

in 2014, and have been very well-received by the community.

The station art funded by RTD includes “Lakewood Legacy Trees” at the Lamar Station, created by local artist Lonnie Hanzon, with themes and quotes directly reflecting Lakewood people and history. Windscreens located at each station incorporate historic maps and photographs that are site-specific and reflect the local history. From east to west, the station windscreens incorporate the following: West Colfax Avenue transportation history, including historic neon signs and 1950s automobiles; industrial history, highlighting the 100-year-old Lakewood Brick plant at Lamar Station; agriculture development, historic to current; railroad and interurban streetcar; Remington Arms, Denver Ordnance Plant, highlighting the defense industry’s contribution to Lakewood’s transition from an agrarian economy to suburban expansion for workers’ housing; and the Red Rocks Community College educational history.

ArtLine Public Art and Local Context

The 40 West ArtLine is rooted in the community, and the art elements and themes along the route were developed with significant community input to reflect local features and culture. The ArtLine logo itself reflects the area’s transportation history with a wheel symbol and conceptual neighborhood street grid incorporated into it. An ArtLine history guide was developed by the Lakewood Historic Preservation Commission to highlight historic buildings and sites along the ArtLine route.²⁵⁷ The ArtLine also has 15 public art installations that incorporate dinosaur themes, particularly the Stegosaurus because the first fossils were found in the area, and it is Colorado’s State Fossil. Most of these dinosaur sculptures are located within the ArtLine parks.

Elsewhere along the ArtLine, murals located at Mountair Park Community Farm reflect historic and current agricultural themes. Murals on bike paths and retaining walls along the ArtLine incorporate interactive ground games to encourage play for the many young people and

families who live in the neighborhood. In August 2020, local muralist Jwlç Mendoza, inspired by monarch butterflies and his Mexican roots, painted Zarape shawl blanket murals on the ArtLine that incorporate the monarch life cycle. Many residents of the neighborhoods around the ArtLine are of Mexican ancestry, and these beautiful, vibrant murals celebrate those residents and their culture.

10. What are the most important lessons learned from the creative placemaking plans, strategies and activities in the Lakewood W Line transit corridor? What has worked well? What challenges remain?

Lessons Learned and What Worked Well Partnerships. One of the most important lessons learned is that this work isn’t possible without diverse agency and community partnerships and collaboration among all levels of government. The 40 West ArtLine project and public art on the W Line are the result of both financial and in-kind staff resource investments from the City of Lakewood, RTD, EPA, NEA, Colorado Department of Transportation and Jefferson County Public Health, as well as the private organizations of 40 West Arts, LWCBID, West Colfax Community Association, Metro West Housing Solutions, neighborhood organizations, AARP, Community First Foundation, Xcel Energy Foundation and others. These investments in art and placemaking were only possible because of the initial major funding from the Federal Transit Administration and local dollars to build the W Line. Additionally, private investment in the commercial and residential uses in the area were propelled by the arts district. Momentum Development, who built the first market-rate development in the arts district area in a generation and helped implement plan visions, shared that the primary reason the company secured financing for the project was because of the 40 West Arts District and the public art planning and vision for the area. Additionally, the timing of the construction of the W Line coincided with the creation of the LWCBID. The BID executive director championed the partnership and creation of the 40 West Arts District and has

helped fund and support many public art and placemaking initiatives in the area.

Community engagement and support From the beginning of planning discussions about the W Line rail corridor, there was a genuine interest in art from residents from the adjacent neighborhoods and from the local business community. During the Lamar Station and 40 West Arts District planning efforts, artists in the community emerged that local officials and stakeholders did not previously know about. These individuals helped give even more legitimacy to the conversation and helped launch 40 West Arts. Other project champions and supporters became engaged in the process as the arts district gained momentum and community members saw progress, and they remain committed to the district and ArtLine. Without the planning and community engagement that happened early in the transit planning and development process, the idea for and ultimate realization of what is now a well-respected, state-certified Creative District likely would not have happened.

RTD Art-n-Transit RTD served as the catalyst for the conversation to enhance each of the W Line stations with public art. This was significant as it provided a funding mechanism and process from which to build upon for local art and placemaking initiatives adjacent to the W Line in 40 West Arts.

Placemaking, identity and timing The timing and emergence of the arts district just as the W Line opened in 2013 has created a new identity for both the adjacent community and this segment of the new light rail line. This new identity is centered around the arts and the creative community. The painted green line of the ArtLine, signature art installations, key placemaking elements and 40 West Arts galleries and events have created a unique and authentic identity for the area. A certain level of branding and marketing has occurred. However, the identity has emerged very much organically and is reflected in the recent investments in the area.

Remining Challenges

The primary challenge for the ArtLine is continuing to sustain and grow the amenity and to keep the community champions involved in a meaningful way. Hundreds of stakeholders and ArtLine “Champions” (volunteers) helped create the vision for and implement the ArtLine during the period of the NEA grant funding. However, the longer-term sustainability of the project is an ongoing challenge. While it has been and continues to be well-received by all project partners and the community, and has won numerous local, state and national awards, there is no established decision on who officially “owns” and operates it.²⁵⁸ Maintenance and programming has been a collaborative effort between the city and 40 West Arts, but to truly realize the project vision and ensure the ArtLine is a viable, thriving community and visitor amenity for years to come, project partners feel an ArtLine Strategic Plan should be created, and a more sustainable funding, maintenance and management structure is needed.

Affordable housing for artists To support the artist community and the ArtLine over the long term, there is a significant need to develop and sustain affordable housing for artists and the creative community. Artspace, the leading national non-profit developer of permanently affordable housing for artists, has been engaged to develop an affordable artist housing and studio space project along the ArtLine, but the project has not yet come to fruition.

Representation Project partners have traditionally found it challenging to reach communities and artists of color in the neighborhood but continue to work to form relationships with and expand outreach to underrepresented communities. It’s not sufficient to recognize the diversity of people and history in the community through representational art; artists of color and artists from other underrepresented communities must be involved in creating the art and that means continuously reaching out to form new and expanded partnerships and build trust with groups who may be hard to reach and not

traditionally involved. The Black Lives Matter movement has helped draw attention to the importance of this work and the 40 West Arts Board of Directors is developing a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion council in 2021 that will help ensure broader representation.

Partnering with Denver metropolitan public agencies This is an ongoing challenge due to agencies' changing priorities and resources. For example, RTD was a strong partner during and shortly after construction of the W Line. RTD

funded and implemented major public art installations at each of Lakewood's stations and the art selection process included significant public and city involvement. The agency also implemented W Line design changes supporting this process, including incorporating a large public plaza at the Lakewood-Wadsworth Station. However, after construction of the W Line was completed, RTD's priorities and resources were necessarily dedicated elsewhere in its transit system, and this important partnership became much more limited.

Minneapolis-Saint Paul Region – Green Line and Blue Line Extensions

By Mark VanderSchaaf and Brenda Kayzar

1. Description of the Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington Metropolitan Statistical Area and its current and planned rail transit system.

Minneapolis and Saint Paul anchor the Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) consisting of sixteen counties: 14 in Minnesota and two in neighboring Wisconsin.²⁵⁹ The MSA had a 2019 population of 3.6 million distributed over a land region of 7,636 square miles.²⁶⁰ The seven-county core of the MSA, located entirely in Minnesota, has a unified transit system. MetroTransit is a service of the Metropolitan Council. Metro Transit's existing transitways include two light rail lines, a commuter rail line, and a growing set of bus rapid transit lines. It also has an extensive system of both high-frequency and local buses. By the year 2040, the region intends to extend both light rail lines, add additional bus rapid transit lines and increase the number of high-frequency bus routes.

2. Description of the Green Line and Blue Line light rail extension corridors that are the focus of this case study. (Green Line extension is under construction; Blue Line extension is planned.)

The existing Green Line began service in 2014, running for 11 miles from downtown Minneapolis to downtown Saint Paul, primarily

in the central lane of University Avenue.²⁶¹ This major commercial corridor was the principal automobile connection between the two cities until a freeway bypass route was completed in the 1960s. In addition to serving the two downtowns, the existing Green Line connects with the main campus of the University of Minnesota, the Minnesota state capitol complex, nine major sports venues, and a wide variety of businesses servicing the highly diverse neighborhoods abutting University Avenue. Many of these neighborhoods are struggling economically, particularly in the aftermath of the civil unrest following the murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police in May of 2020. The economic struggles have deep roots seeded in systemic injustices that include the decimation of Rondo, a vibrant Black community in Saint Paul that was severely damaged to make way for Interstate 94.²⁶²

The Green Line extension is currently under construction and scheduled to begin service sometime after 2023²⁶³. It will run from downtown Minneapolis for nearly 15 miles through four job-rich suburbs in the southwestern portion of the region.²⁶⁴ Historically, connectivity with jobs in this southwestern corridor has been difficult to achieve without access to a car, especially for the working-class residents in the communities along University Avenue in Minneapolis and Saint Paul. The extension promises to improve

connectivity substantially, to the benefit of both employers and employees.

The original Blue Line was the region's first light rail line and began service in 2004. It runs for 12 miles from downtown Minneapolis, south through the terminals of Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport and terminating at the Mall of America in the suburban city of Bloomington.²⁶⁵ Set within an existing freight rail corridor, much of the line parallels the light industrial Hiawatha Avenue automobile strip and gently abuts older nearby residential neighborhoods. The line's introduction prompted development of several higher density transit oriented residential and mixed-use complexes targeted to young professionals, reshaping the corridor's industrial character.

The Blue Line extension, also known as Bottineau LRT, is slated to run north from downtown Minneapolis for approximately 13 miles.²⁶⁶ The line will pass through the historic center of African American and Jewish life in Minneapolis' North neighborhoods. These communities remain racially diverse and have historically experienced inconsistent development investment. Once outside Minneapolis, the line traverses the northern suburban cities of Golden Valley, Robbinsdale, and Crystal which are viewed as working-class communities. The line terminates with five stops in the sprawling racially and ethnically diverse working-class suburban city of Brooklyn Park. Although this extension has been in its engineering phase since 2017, Metro Transit recently embarked on an adjustment of its alignment after negotiations broke down over the joint use of an 8-mile section set within a freight corridor.

The locations of the Green and Blue Line extensions reflect both the legacy of class and racial segregation and the growing complexity of diversity in 21st century neighborhoods and suburbs.²⁶⁷ Although demographically majority white,²⁶⁸ the suburban cities along the Green Line extension show some diversity with people of color (POC) making up 37 percent of the population in the first-ring community of

Hopkins. However, the POC population near the beginning Green Line extension and at the end of the line is low: 14 percent in the Southwest Minneapolis neighborhoods, and 23 percent in Eden Prairie. The 2014-2018 median household income for the Southwest neighborhoods is \$155,114, and in Eden Prairie it is \$106,555.

The population in cities along the Blue Line extension is more racially and ethnically diverse. POC make up 66 percent of the population in North Minneapolis's neighborhoods and 52 percent in the northern suburban city of Brooklyn Park. This representation is lower in Robbinsdale, Crystal, and Golden Valley, at 24, 23, and 14 percent respectively, but along the proposed line 2014-2018 median household incomes range from \$47,413 in the North Minneapolis Neighborhoods to \$70,448 in the terminus city of Brooklyn Park.²⁶⁹

This demographic detail demonstrates a clear geographic disparity in wealth and opportunity between the populations that will be served by the northern Blue and southern Green Line extensions. So, while the larger goal for Metro Transit's extension development is to foster economic growth within the region, the Metropolitan Council will also achieve their stated goal: a redress of systemic inequities, especially for transit-dependent households and communities of color. The Green and Blue Line extensions have the potential to undo some of the legacy of geographic segregation within the region by improving access to opportunities.

3. How do Minneapolis-Saint Paul regional agencies address issues of creative placemaking?

Regional planning the seven-county core of the Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington MSA is the responsibility of the Metropolitan Council, an agency created in 1967 by Minnesota state statute.²⁷⁰ The Metropolitan Council is nationally unique in that it combines planning and substantial operations for four regional systems; transportation (owning and operating the regional transit system), aviation (working with the Metropolitan Airports Commission,

the Minnesota Department of Transportation and key stakeholders to maintain the regional aviation plan), wastewater (owning and operating the treatment system) and regional parks and open spaces (which it funds while local agencies are responsible for operations). Additional planning and policy making at the Council address issues of water supply and housing, although they are not statutory systems. Metropolitan Council policies for the four regional statutory systems take precedence over local plans, which must be updated every ten years and must conform to regional system plans.

To provide a foundation for its system plans and other policies, the Metropolitan Council is required to update a development framework early in each decade. The current regional plan, *Thrive MSP 2040*²⁷¹, was adopted in 2014. It sets a vision guided by five outcomes (stewardship, prosperity, equity, livability and sustainability) and three principles (integration, collaboration and accountability). While this document acknowledges the region's vibrant arts community, particularly in connection with the livability outcome, it does not contain any references pertaining specifically to public art or creative placemaking.

In the Metropolitan Council's more detailed *Transportation Policy Plan*, public art is addressed within a section on land use issues relating to transit stations: "Integrate public art and civic spaces and facilities that reflect community history and culture into station areas and include community gathering spaces use."²⁷²

And to improve the pedestrian experience near transit, the plan states: "Good pedestrian design includes quality architecture and varied facades (for example, number of doors and windows, architectural elements), buildings that face the street and line the sidewalk with minimal setbacks, parking located to the back or side, connections to public art and civic and open space."²⁷³

Although Metropolitan Council policy documents say very little about public art and creative placemaking the agency does have two programs that provide significant support to

public art. The Metropolitan Council's Metro Transit Division, as the operating agency for the region's light rail system, owns and maintains the collection of public art created in the stations of its current light rail lines. In 2016 this division hired its first-ever public art administrator and created a "Public Art in Transit" program to encourage additional public art in connection with its transit facilities.²⁷⁴ Within the Metropolitan Council's Community Development Division, support for public art and placemaking is a feature of its Livable Communities grant program. This program provides funding for Cities that are creating infrastructure to support walkable, mixed use neighborhoods, with a portion of program funds devoted specifically to transit-oriented development projects. Eligible funding uses include "Public art features which contribute to the identity, or sense of place, of the development project and/or surrounding neighborhood. To be considered public art, the design of the feature must be led by, and fabricated by a professional artist and/or art organization."²⁷⁵

4. How do the comprehensive plans for the cities and county of the Green Line and Blue Line extension rail transit corridors address issues of creative placemaking?

Minnesota's Metropolitan Land Planning Act requires that all municipalities in the seven-county core of the Minneapolis-Saint Paul region update their local 30-year comprehensive plans at least once during each decade.²⁷⁶ The plans currently in place were just recently approved, having been under preparation for the last several years.

Green Line Extension Cities

Minneapolis' 2040 Comprehensive Plan contains extensive references to public art, listing Arts and Culture as a main topic that is woven into nine of the 100 policies in the plan.²⁷⁷ The most detailed guidance is provided in Policy 32: Arts and Culture in Community Development: Build healthy and resilient communities through arts and culture. This policy includes ten action

steps²⁷⁸ that articulate the City's approach to public art:

- a. Focus arts and culture programs on supporting and engaging communities of color, low income communities, and indigenous communities and celebrate the rich, diverse character and identities of the city's neighborhoods and corridors.
- b. Create welcoming environments for connecting and building trust between City government and communities of color through arts and cultural strategies.
- c. Encourage community groups and organizations to develop public artworks that enhance the city's public realm by building their capacity and simplifying approval processes.
- d. Establish a sense of belonging by reflecting the identities of local ethnic, racial, and cultural communities in the design of public art.
- e. Engage artists and community members in guiding the long-term vision and direction of the City's public art program.
- f. Encourage government partners to develop and maintain public art projects that support artists and engage the community.
- g. Encourage creative expression and placemaking on commercial and cultural corridors and in neighborhoods, parks, and public plazas.
- h. Build on the leadership of cultural organizations within the city that celebrate and promote the traditions and values of various racial and ethnic groups.
- i. Encourage non-traditional, hands-on, grassroots, and life-long arts opportunities to participate in creating art.
- j. Engage artists of color, indigenous artists, and arts and cultural organizations in leading these opportunities.

St. Louis Park's 2040 Comprehensive Plan includes "public art, heritage and culture" as one of the City's ten livability principles²⁷⁹ and specifies a strategy to "create well-defined community gateways at appropriate points where major streets cross the city's municipal boundary, using location appropriate signage, public art, public plazas, and architecturally significant buildings."²⁸⁰ The plan also includes a section specifically focused on public art, where it notes that the nonprofit organization St. Louis Park Friends of the Arts is partnering with the City to develop a strategic roadmap for arts and culture in the community.²⁸¹

Hopkins' comprehensive plan was created through a process known as Cultivate Hopkins.²⁸² It contains only one reference to public art, saying that in the downtown Mainstreet area: "Efforts should be made to enhance the Mainstreet experience. Design features such as white lights, public art and plantings should be encouraged."²⁸³ Although public art is not emphasized in the City's comprehensive plan, it is notable that Hopkins was honored by the American Planning Association for its "Artery" project, designated as one of the "Great Places in America" in 2019 for its imaginative use of public art integrated with good urban design.²⁸⁴ Artery was created in part to anticipate the advent of light rail, ensuring a strong connection that would attract light rail passengers to explore the community's nearby downtown area. It features a wide designated bicycle track, pedestrian and community spaces for residents and visitors to enjoy, and various art installations from both local and national artists.²⁸⁵

Minnetonka's 2040 comprehensive plan update addresses public art as a strategy within its Parks element: "Consider public art incorporation into appropriate park and open spaces."²⁸⁶

Eden Prairie's comprehensive plan, "Aspire Eden Prairie 2040", explicitly ties public art and placemaking to its transit-oriented development strategies, stating: "Eden Prairie should capitalize on TOD zoning by... Creating public

spaces with amenities, such as public art, benches, bollards, trees, lighting, and landscaped streetscapes... [and] Ensuring each TOD area provides a unique sense of place through branding and gateway signage, streetscape design, architectural design, and integration of public art”²⁸⁷ This plan also enjoins the City’s Art Center, managed by the Parks and Recreation department, to contribute to the enhancement of public spaces through the use of public art.²⁸⁸ Specific citywide locations for proposed public art are also identified in a map resulting from community engagement activities undertaken to prepare the comprehensive plan.²⁸⁹

Blue Line Extension Cities

Minneapolis’ comprehensive plan public art policies are described above in the section on Green Line Extension Cities.

Golden Valley addresses public art in its Transportation plan element as part of Goal 6: Integrate Community Values and Character into the Transportation System. This goal states “Employ a context sensitive design approach to integrate transportation infrastructure with natural resources, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, public art, community resilience and sustainability, public realm improvements, and other features that represent community values, character, and identity.”²⁹⁰ As an implementation action for this goal, the plan states: “Identify locations appropriate for public art, such as in gateway locations or community spaces.”²⁹¹ Golden Valley also addresses public art in its Parks and Recreation plan element stating: “Support, promote, and incorporate public art throughout the park system and within educational and recreational opportunities.”²⁹² Finally, it encourages collaborations beyond the public sector, suggesting the city “Work with the Golden Valley private and non-profit sector to include public art as a core value when considering improvements.”²⁹³

The 2040 comprehensive plans from Robbinsdale and Crystal contain no references to public art or placemaking.

In Brooklyn Park, the 2040 Comprehensive Plan specifies “Beautiful Places” as one of six key goals for the city to achieve by 2025.²⁹⁴ This goal states that “Beautiful spaces and quality infrastructure make Brooklyn Park a unique destination.” The goal is further articulated to include specific references that entail public art and placemaking:

- Quality recreation and park amenities inspire activity for all ages and interests.
- Our rich diversity is showcased through our vibrant music, art, food, entertainment, and cultural scene.
- Attractive key corridors, corners, and city centers create destinations that meet community needs.

Hennepin County

The Green Line and Blue Line extensions are both located within Hennepin County, Minnesota’s largest county with a population of approximately 1.7 million people. The 2040 Comprehensive Plan for Hennepin County contains no references to public art or placemaking, although it does acknowledge that the county should strive to be “a place that enjoys high-quality art, recreation, entertainment, and cultural connections” according to local thought leaders.²⁹⁵ Also, it is notable that the County did adopt a percent for art ordinance for its library system of 41 branches in 2001.²⁹⁶ However, the maintenance of County-financed public art is the responsibility of the Cities where the public art is located.

5. What kinds of public art are being created in the stations of the Green Line and Blue Line extension rail transit corridors? Who is responsible for these artworks? How are they funded? How are they selected?

Because the Federal Highway Administration’s 2015 FAST Act²⁹⁷ prohibits the blending of federal and local funding for public art in transit facilities, no public art is planned for the Green Line extension that is currently under construction, nor is it included in the plans for the Blue Line extension. While the FAST Act

prohibits federal funding for public art, a Federal Transit Administration web page spells out some guidelines through a series of FAQs²⁹⁸ which state that functional elements in transit facilities can be beautified, within limits. Stations under construction in the Green Line extension are adhering to this guideline.

6. What kinds of neighborhood plans and/or development strategies are there for areas within a ten-minute walkshed of each transit station? How do those plans/strategies address issues of creative placemaking?

Supported by a federal Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant in 2013, Hennepin County and the Cities of the Green Line extension completed a set of Transitional Station Area Action Plans to serve as an infrastructure and land use investment framework for the neighborhoods in the new LRT corridor.²⁹⁹ This framework identifies at least one public art opportunity site in each station area and the framework guided the Cities along the rail corridor as they completed their 2040 long-range comprehensive plan updates.

Although the Blue Line extension plans remain in their infancy, an outreach initiative at Hennepin County called “Cultivate Bottineau” used creative placemaking techniques to begin dialogs within the station communities about how to “activate spaces, build connections, celebrate diversity, and promote opportunity through local artist-led creative placemaking projects”³⁰⁰ The grant funded outreach effort partnered the county with Springboard for the Arts, engaging over 200 artists in 50 pop-up events throughout the Blue Line extension corridor in 2018 and 2019³⁰¹. Over 4800 community members attended, participated in, or encountered a local artist-led project or activity and tangible outcomes included walkshed located murals in Crystal and Robbinsdale, temporary park elements for a pop-up community plaza in Brooklyn Park, and 3 mobile community engagement tools that were built for Minneapolis and Golden Valley.

7. What kinds of public art are being created in the neighborhoods within a ten-minute walkshed of the stations of the Green Line and Blue Line extension rail transit corridors? How are they funded? How are they selected?

Development of the original Blue Line in 2004 featured artist-architect teams, highly customized station designs, and a paid project manager.³⁰² Public art projects were implemented within each station along the original Green Line in 2014³⁰³ but the projects are relatively low key and standardized in contrast to the customized, high-end public art that was woven into the original Blue Line. During the construction phase of the Green Line, funding from ArtPlace allowed for an innovative creative placemaking program called “Irrigate.” The project, created by the nonprofit organization Springboard for the Arts, used popup arts initiatives to garner community support for the numerous small businesses within the corridor, many of them POC owned.³⁰⁴ Construction activity obliterated normal traffic flows along University Avenue, as well as front door access to these establishments. Through performance and visual arts, artists worked with business owners to draw attention and customers to the struggling storefronts.

After the Green Line opened for service, popup arts initiatives continued and are an important dimension of the neighborhoods in the corridor. In 2017, Northern Spark transformed the Green Line neighborhoods into a series of popup art venues accessed by light rail during their annual all-night festival³⁰⁵. Neighborhood focused organizations like Little Mekong³⁰⁶, Frogtown³⁰⁷, Rondo³⁰⁸, and Little Africa³⁰⁹ maintain smaller budget public art projects and activities as part of their ongoing programming and community engagement processes. The Creative Enterprise Zone, a neighborhood economic development organization, recently launched an annual festival called ChromaZone³¹⁰ in which artists from across the US and internationally are selected to paint large-scale murals on buildings throughout the

community, with a closing event coinciding with Little Mekong's Night Market.

Both the Green Line and Blue Line extensions have been used for popup public art experiences as a means to generate support for the projects within the surrounding communities and as a way to build anticipation and support for more permanent placemaking projects in neighborhoods adjoining the proposed light rail stations.

The Green Line extension suffered budget cuts during the design and engineering phase when neighborhood mitigation efforts expanded construction costs. A more-than \$4 million set-aside for public art was lost. Soon after, the federal FAST Act erected another barrier to public art in the stations. Consequently, Hennepin County and Cities along the corridor decided to seek alternative resources and focus on creating a series of signature public art projects in the station walkshed areas, as well as temporary construction-phase pop-up arts activities. In 2015, Hennepin County partnered with Metro Transit and the cities to launch "PLACES" (Public Art and Community Engagement Southwest). With modest funding from the partners and two private organizations (the McKnight and Minneapolis Foundations) and consulting and technical assistance from the nonprofit Forecast Public Art, the PLACES collaborative developed an organizational charter, identified locations for signature public artworks, and laid the foundation for a strategic plan that would be used to raise funds and ensure both a strong extension corridor-wide identity while elevating community building activities in the neighborhoods along the corridor.

With the light rail extension under construction and scheduled for service in 2023, PLACES was poised to launch its publicly visible work in 2020, until the challenges of COVID-19 and civil unrest derailed fundraising prospects for the permanent public art projects, at least in the short run. The PLACES partners have agreed to focus on popup, community-engaging public art projects for the foreseeable future and have enrolled a Research Fellow to engage with the

communities and develop a foundational identity for the collaborative popup and permanent public art effort.³¹¹ The Fellow is employing a community engaged creative process that combines research, graphic design, visual narrative development and public art development designed to:

- Raise awareness, generate interest and enthusiasm amongst civic leaders, philanthropy, businesses and landowners along the SWRLT corridor, and create opportunities to build identity and a sense of belonging among community members.
- Engage artists, stakeholders and community members, even during the current health crisis and shelter in place mandate.
- Create a unifying image for the corridor while emphasizing the unique nature of each city.
- Strengthen the opportunity for local artists to participate in PLACES. Raise community awareness of the role artists can play—artists from diverse backgrounds, disciplines and ethnicities.
- Amplify the rich cultural heritage of communities along the corridor.
- Support the SWLRT Project Office communications team's effort to generate positive media attention around community-minded art as part of SWLRT in outside-the-box ways.

As noted in the response to question 6, Hennepin County partnered with the Cities along the Blue Line extension for a grant-funded series of popup arts activity and projects aimed at engaging nearby communities, pre-construction. Having developed the original Green Line's Irrigate Project, described in the first paragraph for this question, Springboard for the Arts was enrolled to direct the Blue Line extension's Cultivate Bottineau Project. Further details about both Irrigate and Cultivate Bottineau can be found on Springboard's website, along with toolkits the organization created to help others develop their own pre-planning and construction phase engagement models.³¹²

8. Is there a strategic plan for creative placemaking encompassing the Green Line and Blue Line extension rail transit corridors and their station areas, articulating a collaborative public art and placemaking vision for the corridor and identifying budgets, timelines, roles and responsibilities to ensure implementation?

As noted in the response to Question 7 above, the collaborative PLACES project for the Green Line extension set a plan to raise funds for the development of a strategic plan. The committee had reached the point of refining a mission, vision and purpose in preparation for that plan. The crises of 2020 have made it necessary to revisit how that plan should proceed in an environment where alternative resources are more stressed. Likewise, there will be new considerations placed on placemaking designs and the development of social gathering spaces. The PLACES collaborative project will be competing with other priorities for philanthropic and donor supports. Under this new reality, the committee is participating in member-facilitated workshops to build a structure for a strategic plan. With the Blue Line extension's alignment under reconsideration there is no immediate prospect for a long-term strategic plan for public art within this corridor. Additionally, the unknown future status of the FAST Act adds complexity to the issue. A few of the cities along the proposed line, however, have already commissioned or collaborated with private businesses to create works in the expected walkshed areas, encouraged by the success of the Cultivate Bottineau activities, and based on the relationships established with local artists through that initiative.

9. To what extent do the intended creative placemaking projects in the Green Line and Blue Line extension rail transit corridors and their station areas reflect distinctive natural and cultural features of the region and communities where they occur?

In setting the stage for a strategic plan the PLACES project committee, working in tandem with the construction of the Green Line

extension, has articulated a goal for artworks that emphasize distinctive natural features portraying the character of the corridor as a whole while also accentuating distinctive place specific cultural features that enhance community identity in transit station neighborhoods. As part of the initial strategic planning work the PLACES committee identified several goals for the work:

- PLACES will use an iterative, reflective approach beginning with a focus on interim arts activities that will inform longer term, more permanent art forms, while being explicit about race, equity and inclusion efforts and impacts.
- PLACES activities/programming/work will reflect and connect current communities, changing communities and visiting transit users
- PLACES activities will balance corridor-wide consistency and individual stations' identities/splash/iconicness
- Equitable and inclusive art and placemaking that builds positive anticipation for SWLRT throughout the project
- PLACES work/activities/art will support wayfinding by creating a distinct identity for the Southwest Corridor

Again, because the Blue Line extension has reverted to the planning and engineering phase with no estimated date for plan approval, construction timeline, or project completion. Prior to this setback, however, Metro Transit had partnered with Hennepin County and the Blue Line cities to find a firm that would help brand the line, giving emphasis to the distinct cultural characteristics of each station neighborhood. Further, an outcome of the Cultivate Bottineau engagement project was the establishment of relationships between civic leaders and local artists. So, while no formal arts strategy exists, discussions emphasizing the importance of placemaking have been initiated.

10. What are the most important lessons learned from the creative placemaking plans, strategies and activities in the Green Line and Blue Line extension rail transit corridors? What has worked well? What challenges remain?

Aspects of the processes that have worked well in the Minneapolis-Saint Paul region to incorporate public art into the region's emerging light rail extensions include:

- Being able to tap into a strong arts and culture heritage in the region that is especially manifest in a strong philanthropic and nonprofit ecosystem, including the McKnight Foundation and several renowned community-focused arts organizations like Forecast Public Art and Springboard for the Arts, and prominent art museums such as Minneapolis Institute of Art and Walker Art Center, and strong, longstanding public art programs within the cities of Minneapolis (through its Arts Commission) and Saint Paul (through a partnership with Public Art Saint Paul). Most of these entities have engaged significantly with public art planning efforts for the Green Line and Blue Line light rail extension projects.
- Regional and local government bodies that collaborate readily and value public art in principle. For both the Green Line and Blue Line extension, this has involved elected or appointed officials and staff of Metropolitan Council (including Metro Transit's new public art administrator), Hennepin County and most of the municipalities in the corridors providing ongoing leadership in crafting public art strategies for their emerging light rail corridors.
- The promising examples of creative placemaking that involve public art near coming rail transit stations such as the Artery in Hopkins, the redesign of access to the Walker Art Center's sculpture garden, and a new park in Brooklyn Park.
- The success of substantial popup events such as Irrigate and the Northern Spark 2018 festival which occurred in the station areas of the existing Green Line and is inspiring similar activities in the Green Line and Blue Line extensions.
- The ability of relevant public, private and nonprofit partners with commitments to racial equity and genuine community engagement to ally to ensure that the public art in the new rail transit corridors reflects the values of increasingly diverse communities. This alignment preceded the 2020 COVID-19

pandemic and recent racial justice protests and has been enhanced in their aftermath.

- The capacity of the collaborators, partners and participants to recognize that the scale of public art in new rail transit corridors may need to be adjusted in a "lighter/quicker/cheaper"³¹³ direction, at least temporarily, with an emphasis on interactive popup projects rather than more costly sculptural projects, in a post-COVID-19 and Post-racial injustice protest era of economic and municipal budget recovery.

Problems and challenges relating to public art in the region's new rail transit corridors include:

- A mixed track record of public art accomplishments in rail transit related projects. The original Blue Line (2004) hosts an impressive array of station designs, each significantly different and each imagined as a unique complex of public art. The public art components, however, presented significant project management and maintenance difficulties and until 2016, there were no staff or budget dollars specifically devoted to ensuring appropriate care of the artwork. In contrast, the original Green Line (2014) stations are standardized with minimal and low-key public art uniformly embedded in the walls of each station. Both approaches and outcomes have been viewed critically by some stakeholders and constituents.
- There are great disparities between the types, methodologies and amount of funding for public art among the cities involved in the Green and Blue Lines. Hennepin County's funding for public art has been restricted to its libraries, and the Metropolitan Council has, until recently, limited experience with public art, nor does it offer cities in its region guidance or support regarding public art.
- There is a mismatch among corridor cities with different public art visions, priorities, and resource availability. Some cities have public art programs, others do not. Minneapolis is the only city with a full-time staff person dedicated to public art.
- The decision to remove public art from the \$2 billion+ Green Line extension project as

a budget-trimming measure was a great disappointment to public art advocates and community members and was interpreted by some to signal a lack of serious public sector commitment to public art in new light rail projects. The federal FAST Act makes it more difficult to include public art in transitway facilities, however there are several ways in which locally-generated public funding could be used to supplement blended transit project funding in support of public art, either in the facilities themselves or in proximity to the facilities.

Phoenix Region - Artsline

By Brittany Hoffman and Mark VanderSchaaf

1. Description of the Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale Metropolitan Statistical Area and its current and planned rail transit system.

Phoenix anchors the Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale Metropolitan Statistical Area consisting of two counties (Maricopa and Pinal), with a 2018 population of 4.9 million distributed over a land region of 14,565 square miles.³¹⁴ A regional transit agency, Valley Metro, serves the region with a bus and rail transit system, as well as ADA paratransit and commuter alternatives. Valley Metro Rail, a separate entity from Valley Metro Regional Public Transportation Authority (RPTA) was created in 2002 for the purpose of creating a 66-mile high capacity transit system including both light rail and bus rapid transit.³¹⁵ The agency's initial – and current – light rail line began service in 2008 and is currently 28 miles long, extending from a northwestern corner of Phoenix, south through downtown Phoenix where it heads east toward Sky Harbor International Airport in Phoenix, and east to the cities of Tempe and Mesa.³¹⁶ Although plans to expand the service encountered some opposition and controversy, city of Phoenix residents voted in 2019 to continue funding light rail expansion, with 63 percent of voters supporting such expansion.³¹⁷ Those expansions will especially extend to the west, northwest and northeast of the current line.

Thus far, given the budgetary challenges triggered by the pandemic, cities are less able to invest in station area art in the near future. The Green Line extension's PLACES initiative will require a powerful and compelling campaign to compete in an increasingly competitive market for philanthropic support; its ability to succeed will greatly influence the subsequent Blue Line extension's efforts. With philanthropic funding increasingly focused on issues relating to recovery and racial and economic equity, efforts to fund public art and creative placemaking projects will be challenged to seek alignments and demonstrate community benefits and thoughtful community representation.

2. Description of the Artsline light rail corridor that is the focus of this case study.

The Valley Metro "Artsline" encompasses the agency's entire light rail corridor. It includes public art in the stations themselves as well as arts and cultural destinations in station area neighborhoods. Valley Metro has documented 55 such destinations and has created a brochure to guide light rail riders to explore them.³¹⁸ A series of companion art books celebrate the public art incorporated into the light rail stations.³¹⁹ Also, Valley Metro has created an interactive map to help highlight the arts and culture destinations along the Artsline.³²⁰

3. How do Phoenix's regional agencies address issues of creative placemaking?

Regional plans for the Phoenix region include the regional transportation plan³²¹, the comprehensive plan for Maricopa County (which encompasses the majority of the Phoenix MSA)³²², and a strategic plan for Valley Metro³²³. None of these documents explicitly address issues of creative placemaking.

However, a recent Valley Metro report, "Building Communities + Enhancing Lives: A Quality of Life Report"³²⁴ does include a public art and placemaking discussion. This report

documents 40 art pieces installed at rail stations at a cost of more than \$9 million³²⁵ and summarizes the Valley Metro approach to additional public art as follows: “Valley Metro light rail supports arts and culture by connecting to over 55 arts and culture destinations by rail, including cultural resources, theaters, museums and entertainment districts, and has created the Artsline, a rotating transit art series, created to increase visibility of arts and cultural destinations along the light rail and associate the Valley Metro brand with this community. This includes First Friday, a major arts event that occurs along the light rail each month where thousands of residents and tourists converge for the Art Walk and events at museums and galleries.”³²⁶

4. How do the comprehensive plans for the cities of the Artsline rail transit corridor address issues of creative placemaking?

Phoenix: *Plan Phoenix: 2015 General Plan* contains a policy goal that explicitly supports public art in the city: “Ensure Phoenix becomes an Arts & Culture destination by encouraging new public art projects, maintenance of existing public art, and support for arts and cultural activities throughout our communities.”³²⁷ This goal is buttressed by a companion land use principle “Create and retrofit additional public spaces to allow for public art projects and arts and cultural activities” and a measure of success: “Expand the number of public art installations throughout Phoenix.”³²⁸ The plan especially highlights downtown Phoenix as an area where public art is to be encouraged. In 2008, the city articulated a “big idea” known as the “Connected Oasis,” which envisioned a network of connected shaded corridors in the downtown area. *Plan Phoenix* specifies: “Require the incorporation of public art throughout the Connected Oasis to enrich the experience of walking along the major pedestrian corridors, and to enhance downtown’s presence as one of the region’s essential destinations.”³²⁹ “Placemaking” is also specifically enjoined in the General Plan: “Make downtown a nationally recognized placemaking leader by providing the necessary area,

amenities and shaded pedestrian walkways for the enjoyment of all residents and visitors of downtown Phoenix.”³³⁰ The Phoenix Office of Arts and Culture enlarges upon these General Plan directions with an annual Public Art Plan.³³¹

Tempe: The 2015 General Plan for Tempe highlights public art as a key feature to support one of the city’s three general themes to make Tempe a leader in urban living: “Build upon Tempe amenities essential to quality of life such as public art and art centers, museums, library, light rail, bus transit, walking and biking network, walkable authentic downtown, multi-generational centers, parks and recreational facilities, and ensure these remain available as the community grows.”³³² As such, public art merits its own plan element, the “Public Art and Cultural Amenities” element, within the larger General Plan. This element includes a Public Art and Cultural Amenities Goal, “enhance and promote Tempe as a diverse, stimulating cultural, library and arts community where cultural amenities inspire and enrich people’s lives and experiences,” and a strategy to “promote and continue to build a diverse public art collection that challenges, engages and delights the public.”³³³ Other strategies within this element include “continue to create public art that enhances the city’s infrastructure including streets, paths and facilities work with local artists, students, and community groups to create public art projects continue to commission public art projects that are suitable for the local climate and responsive to maintenance capabilities of the city involve neighborhoods, schools, businesses and other stakeholders in public art projects build a public art collection that ranges in scale from intimate to monumental.”³³⁴

Mesa: Like Tempe, Mesa’s comprehensive plan has three major emphases, one of which relies significantly on public art, “Providing rich, high-quality public spaces and cultural resources.”³³⁵ In support of this emphasis the plan specifies that “public art and landscape themes should be part of creating unique public spaces.”³³⁶ It also states that “key elements of streetscape include paving, hardscapes, public art, landscaping,

lighting, benches, and bike racks.”³³⁷ This plan also specifies the centrality of placemaking, stating that “economic strategies for the city are centered around ‘placemaking’ as the engine of change”³³⁸ and “placemaking capitalizes on local community assets, inspiration, and potential, ultimately creating high-quality public spaces that promote people’s health and well-being.”³³⁹

5. What kinds of public art are being created in the stations of the Artsline rail transit corridor? Who is responsible for these artworks? How are they funded? How are they selected?

Valley Metro created a publication entitled METROART2008 showcasing the public art created in the first 28 stations of the region’s light rail line – eighteen in Phoenix, nine in Tempe, and one in Mesa.³⁴⁰ While the publication emphasizes that the public art in each station was created in close collaboration with each station area neighborhood, several themes are evident in the overall collection.

Although the greatest number of artist teams were from the Arizona communities of Phoenix (7), Tempe (1) and Tucson (2), there were also several teams from the Pacific Northwest – the Seattle region (5) and the Portland region (3). The lead artist for the entire METRO Art Program was Tad Savinar, a Portland artist whose work at the Veterans Way/College Ave station expressed a theme of blending inhabitants, landscapes and landmarks. This perspective is reflected in the process that yielded the corridor-wide collection of public art created in the light rail stations. In the words of Rick Simonetta, then CEO of METRO Light Rail (the predecessor to Valley Metro Rail), “The public art that resulted from this process is a celebration of place and community. Each station boasts its own unique character with artwork that strives to add substance, style and even a touch of whimsy to the transit experience. As a whole, the METRO art program is a major example of how art can transform the landscape and enhance the public dialogue.”³⁴¹

The public art in the stations is funded with one percent of the light rail line’s total construction budget, resulting in projects costing between \$200,000 and \$260,000 apiece.³⁴²

The starter line was unique in that five design team artists joined with five architectural teams competing to design the now iconic station kit of parts that would be used along the entire alignment. Those design team artists were selected by our oversight group, the Regional Rail Arts Committee. The subsequent station artists were each selected by different Stakeholder Arts Review Committees made up of community members from around every station.

Artwork is now found on each of the station platforms and at the traction power substations, signal buildings and park-and-ride facilities. Artists must follow strict design criteria regarding safety, security, maintenance and operations. Beyond that, they are encouraged to explore opportunities for their art to be functional (e.g. providing shade), as well as meaningful, to both rail passengers as well as the surrounding community.

Artwork can be stand-alone sculptural pieces, as well as integrated into the station elements, paving, railing, screens, etc. All artists that have work through any facet of Valley Metro Rail are known as Artsline Artists.

The Artsline Spotlight Artist is another example of public art being shown throughout the corridor. The Spotlight Artist is an artist or team that is highlighted for a short period of time on Valley Metro transit vehicles, one large-scale mural at a station and a variety of other exposure through digital media. Artists are selected by a committee comprised of representation from the three rail cities (Phoenix, Tempe and Mesa), as well as at least three members of the art community. The artist funding comes from the marketing budget to increase exposure and enhance the Artsline program. The artist is responsible for creating at least one work of art that is presented on a large-scale mural at the station in the Arts

District. That work can either be repurposed for additional artwork on light rail vehicles inside and outside the train, in addition to inside the buses. The artwork flowing through the streets of Phoenix, Tempe and Mesa bring vibrancy to the region.

6. What kinds of neighborhood plans and/or development strategies are there for areas within a ten-minute walkshed of each transit station? How do those plans/strategies address issues of creative placemaking?

Of the three cities in the Artsline corridor, only Phoenix has adopted detailed transit-oriented development (TOD) plans for its station areas. The initial such plan was adopted in 2004 and covered the downtown area. Subsequently, five additional district plans were crafted, covering all station areas along the Phoenix portion of the Valley Metro initial light rail corridor. Adopted in 2015, these plans were created with the support of a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Economic Development and a variety of local partners, including Arizona State University. The entire collection of Phoenix TOD district plans has been bundled into a unified planning approach now known as REINVENTPHX and further systematized into the city's 2018 *Transit Oriented Development Strategic Policy Framework*.³⁴³

Public art is addressed in these plans as follows (presented in order from north to south and east):

- Solano: Includes a policy to “support creative place-making projects such as street festivals and public art.”³⁴⁴
- Uptown: Repeats the general policy to “support creative place-making projects such as street festivals and public art,”³⁴⁵ and also refers to the district’s Grand Canal, observing: “The canal has shaded paths that provide a pleasant strolling environment and public art that communicates Phoenix’s rich history.”³⁴⁶ Guidance for public art near the Grand Canal is provided in several plan sections, including “pursue funding for Grand Canal trail enhancements, including pedestrian and bicycle

paths, lighting, shade, public art, and drinking fountains.”³⁴⁷

- Midtown: Also contains the general policy to “Support creative place-making projects such as street festivals and public art.”³⁴⁸
- Downtown: Provides several directions for the city to emphasize public art in its downtown area, including: “continue to incorporate public art into downtown efforts. Public art can create community landmarks, provide functional amenities (such as shade structures, signage and seating), and create a unique visual identity for downtown Phoenix.”³⁴⁹ This plan also enjoins the creation of “a detailed downtown urban design plan that incorporates all the ideas and steps being discussed regarding connectors, oases, open space, gateways, civic plazas, shade, signage, lighting, landscaping, public art and historic markers.”³⁵⁰ This task was accomplished with the completion of the Downtown Phoenix Urban Design Project, adopted by the Phoenix City Council in 2008.³⁵¹ The project substantially elevates the role of public art in the downtown area, using the term 42 times in the 200-page project document. An especially powerful statement of principle in this project document is: “public art should be incorporated in all the public spaces of downtown. Public art creates a unique character and offers the opportunity to experience beauty, creativity, and inspiration in our daily lives.”³⁵²
- Eastlake-Garfield: References an existing arts and culture zoning overlay district and says: “the existing Arts and Culture District is further enhanced by the improved neighborhood nodes, which can function as centers for the arts community, offering additional gallery space and settings for public art.”³⁵³
- Gateway: As was the case with the Uptown plan, the Gateway strategy also emphasizes public art opportunities connected with the Grand Canal: “the proposed detailed plan of the Grand Canal as it traverses the Gateway area takes inspiration from the concepts presented in ‘Canalscape,’ published in 2009. The initiative includes activating the canal edges by fronting buildings on the canal,

improving access to canals and celebrating important activity nodes with public art.”³⁵⁴

7. What kinds of public art are being created in the neighborhoods within a ten-minute walkshed of the stations of the Artsline rail transit corridor? How are they funded? How are they selected?

Two types of public art are present in the neighborhoods along the Artsline. One consists of projects that have been conceived specifically as public art. Most notable among these is the Janet Echelman work, “Her Secret is Patience,” a 145-foot-tall aerial sculpture installed in 2009 in the city’s new Civic Space Park.³⁵⁵ Also in the downtown area are two works of public art that provide shade to pedestrians as part of the evolving Connected Oasis project – Shadow Play,³⁵⁶ and Bloomcanopy.³⁵⁷

A second type of public art consists of notable displays of outdoor sculptures connected with major arts and cultural institutions close to the light rail line – notably at the Heard Museum (native American sculptures)³⁵⁸, at the Japanese Friendship Garden³⁵⁹, at the nonprofit organization Release the Fear³⁶⁰, and at the Mesa Arts Center.³⁶¹

8. Is there a strategic plan for creative placemaking encompassing the Artsline rail transit corridor and its station areas, articulating a collaborative public art and placemaking vision for the corridor and identifying budgets, timelines, roles and responsibilities to ensure implementation?

There is no strategic plan such as described in this question. The closest to such a plan is the Arts, Culture and Creative Economy Strategic Plan for the city of Phoenix.³⁶² This strategic plan, created in 2012, provides a framework for subsequent master plans indicating specific arts and cultural projects to be funded throughout the city. However, this plan does not specifically address public art and placemaking in the region’s light rail corridor.

9. To what extent do the intended creative placemaking projects in the Artsline rail transit corridor and its station areas reflect distinctive natural and cultural features of the region and communities where they occur?

The Phoenix region is remarkable for its distinctive natural environment (Sonoran Desert) and its unique cultural heritage as a locale that hosted an ancient pre-Columbian civilization and now is home to a variety of cultures. The public art and placemaking in the Artsline reflect this distinctiveness in both ways.

Many of the artworks at the Valley Metro light rail stations honor both the region’s natural environment and the indigenous heritage of the region. These themes often converge in imagery of canals and oases. Examples include:

- Desert stones drawing on the Hopi belief of life as a circle, and a reminder of the region’s original canals and water system (Central Ave./Camelback Station)
- The story of water on the landscape with stones and benches evoking an oasis (Thomas/Central Ave. Station)
- Pre-Columbian motifs (Encanto/Central Ave. Station, across from the Heard Museum)
- Irrigated fields preceding industrial and post-industrial development (24th St./Washington/Jefferson Stations)
- Pueblo Grande (38th and 44th St. Stations between Washington and Jefferson)
- Dried and cracked Salt River Mud (Tempe Town Lake Bridge)
- Organic forms and native cultures in dialogue with a nearby technology institute (Sycamore/Main St.)

10. What are the most important lessons learned from the creative placemaking plans, strategies and activities in the Artsline rail transit corridor? What has worked well? What challenges remain?

Valley Metro Perspective

Short and long-term maintenance is always one of the greatest challenges to public art. Creating a work that is beautiful and which can withstand the harsh climate (particularly the desert), as

well as over-attentive, and even destructive patrons, is a constant issue. Artists must be willing to put aside some fabulous designs or be able to creatively modify them to be successful. The choice of material is always key to longevity.

Technology has brought amazing advances in what artists can do, but yesterday's exciting new beta video installation cannot always be easily replaced when the technology is out of date.

However, the role of the public remains the most rewarding and the most challenging aspect of public art. Valley Metro brings community members in to select the artists and to guide them from the start. This provides 'buy-in,' transparency and helps ensure that the artwork is reflective of the neighborhood it serves. The difficulty for the artist is distilling down all the equally strong and diverse voices into one cohesive work that remains true to the artist's voice. It is up to the art administrator and their team to educate the community that it is the artist's job to listen to everyone and then distill the information into a story that they can ultimately tell.

As the Spotlight Artist has emerged as a more highlighted role in the Artsline program the selection process has been refined a few times. In the beginning, the process was more informal and has gradually progressed to a formal committee selection. The selection committee has transformed over time as well to include all rail cities and more voices from the art community outside of Valley Metro. All Artsline artists are put through a screening process which has evolved throughout the years. A challenge as of late is an artist being publicly accused of wrongdoing and how that impacts our reputation and public perception.

Tempe Perspective

Tempe sees a placemaking value in public art, in general, in that it adds to the quality of life, aesthetics and economic health of our city. The City feels it is important to have public art as a way to tell the story of its communities and neighborhoods, and the public involvement that happens in order to develop the public art helps

to create a sense of ownership and instill pride into the community/region. The arts are part of the brand and identity of Tempe (all types of art from performance, visual, gallery, public etc..) and it is part of their economic sustainability strategies. Tempe has a goal of having public art integrated with all of its transportation projects including streets, bridges, pathways, and the regional rail system. Not only does the addition of art to transportation support placemaking by giving it a unique identity and instilling that sense of community, it is a job opportunity for artists and the process compels all stakeholders and residents to think and converse about ideas.

The regional rail art is a diverse, engaging collection that makes the entire system not just more visually attractive, but it engenders support for public transportation. The mix of national caliber artists, both Arizona based and elsewhere in the nation, combined with emerging artists has helped make the overall collection that much more enriched. The well-known artists have been able to inspire and educate the lesser-known artists. Additionally, by funding the program and placing art at each station, the cities and Valley Metro have placed a value on the importance of art and artists in advancing our region. The process for selecting artists is fair and strong, and includes a broad mix of residents, arts professionals, design professionals and other influencers.

What challenges remain?

- Funding for future light rail projects/extensions including public art
- Long term maintenance and repair budgets

Mesa Perspective

Mesa's seven light rail station areas are a perfect mix of art in the eyes of several Mesa residents. In some cases, the art seamlessly bends into the station; in other cases, the art is the station and then there are stations with tall signature pieces.

The art on the light rail alignment has made significant contributions to the surrounding neighborhood aesthetic.

In Mesa's downtown, the art at the stations add another layer to the art. Mesa has 30+ sculptures in downtown along with the Mesa Art Center, i.d.e.a museum, the Arizona Museum of Natural History with the dinosaur breaking and the out of the building and the various arts events create an eclectic energy in downtown Mesa.

As the alignment was extended farther east, there were some challenges with the art. The two mile of light rail traveling east of downtown (also known as the Gilbert Road Extension) is the first real section of light rail in Mesa that truly impacts its neighborhoods.

These neighborhoods are a real mix of long time Mesa residents who have lived in the neighborhood for decades and younger residents, some of which are just starting families. Needless to say, the wants and expectations for the art varied greatly. There was a lot of differing opinions of the art proposed for the Stapley station. As a result, Valley Metro and the city hosted two public meetings to discuss the proposed art, their concerns and to try and find some common ground. This was the first time Valley Metro experienced this degree of public and political pushback to the art. In the end, so as not to compromise the art in any way, it was agreed that the city would just simply move the art to another station. Since the art was installed, the city has not received any negative comments. In fact, the city has received a few unsolicited positive comments about the art in this section.

The art program also allowed the city to leverage the art program for our own benefit. On the Gilbert Road Extension, the city wanted to start creating a sense of place. To help take a first step, the city had one of the station artists expand their art to the streetlight poles lining Main Street.

Mesa is fortunate to have two very tall identifying pieces of art. The art at the Center and Main Station stands out in downtown. The profiles are a definite conversation element and when it is lit at night it is a spectacular landmark

in downtown. Also, the 40' M at the corner of Main Street and Gilbert Road is a shining example of a statement piece.

During the Central Mesa Extension project, City of Mesa staff member Jodi Sorrell had an interaction with random member of our community that speaks to the impact the station art can have on a community. The installation at the Alma School station had just finished. She was standing on the sidewalk across the street admiring the station. A guy on a bicycle rode by, turned to her and said, "that is the coolest thing." There really isn't more to say beyond that.

What has worked well?

- The process for selecting the artists works very well.
- Valley Metro's public art administrator MB Finnerty and her team do a very good job walking that fine line between the artists and the maintenance staff.
- Getting a diversity of art incorporated into the alignment. Some of the art are simple enhancements to the stations, some are the station, some are very tall statement pieces.
- It works well when artists involve the communities. At the Main Street and Mesa Drive station, the artist talked to community members to get the stories of growing up in Mesa. The artist then took those stories and made them into a book for people who participated. What a great way to say, 'thank you.'

What challenges remain?

- Managing art expectations with maintenance budgets
- Some alignments (or communities) have an easy time getting people to participate in arts projects and others struggle. This will be a continual challenge to get participation.
- Managing expectations of the role the art plays in light rail projects. I think since the art must be funded locally and not through the FTA grant, there is a risk in tight financial times, that art may be reduced in projects.

Seattle Region - East Link Extension

By Ben Bakkenta and Mark VanderSchaaf

I. Description of the Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue Metropolitan Statistical Area and its current and planned rail transit system.

Seattle anchors the Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue and Bremerton-Silverdale-Port Orchard Metropolitan Statistical Areas, consisting of four counties (King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish), with a 2020 population of 4.3 million distributed over a land region of 6,267 square miles.³⁶³ In recent years the region has invested significantly in a high-quality transit system including commuter rail, light rail and bus rapid transit, operated by an agency known as Sound Transit and, to a lesser extent by King County's Metro Transit agency. Voters in the region have approved three phases of transit construction and expansion: in 1996 (Sound Move, 1996-2006 program), 2008 (Sound Transit 2, 2008-2023 program), and 2016 (Sound Transit 3, 2016-2041 program). When complete, the system will include of 116 miles of light rail connecting 16 cities, bus rapid transit and express routes connecting 30 cities, and commuter rail connecting 12 cities.³⁶⁴ Justifiably, the region now claims to be undertaking the most ambitious transit system expansion in the U.S.

2. Description of the East Link Extension³⁶⁵ light rail corridor that is the focus of this case study.

In the past, the light rail system in the Seattle region has grown along a north-south spine, currently running from Angle Lake, just south of the SeaTac airport, through downtown Seattle and on to the University of Washington.³⁶⁶ Although the north-south spine will continue to expand, the Sound Transit 2 and 3 programs will also create a second line, East Link, extending light rail service into the region's eastern employment and residential centers of Bellevue and Redmond, as well as the smaller community of Mercer Island in Lake Washington.³⁶⁷ This corridor has been selected for the Seattle region case study due to its

multijurisdictional scope, as well as the strong interest in public art evident in the cities along the route. Twelve new light rail stations are being created in this corridor, with the majority in Bellevue (six stations) and Redmond (four stations).

3. How do Seattle's regional agencies address issues of creative placemaking?

Regional planning affecting transit in the Seattle region occurs within the jurisdictions of three different agencies: the Puget Sound Regional Council, King County, and Sound Transit.

Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC): "PSRC develops policies and coordinates decisions about regional growth, transportation and economic development planning within King, Pierce, Snohomish and Kitsap counties. PSRC is composed of over 80 jurisdictions, including all four counties, cities and towns, ports, state and local transportation agencies and tribal governments within the region."³⁶⁸ It leads in the creation of a long-range regional growth strategy, currently known as VISION 2050, adopted in October 2020.³⁶⁹ VISION 2050 repeatedly stresses the value of the arts and culture, particularly within the region's existing and emerging population and economic centers. It includes a set of regional design goals and policies, including: "Support urban design, historic preservation, and arts to enhance quality of life, support local culture, improve the natural and human-made environments, promote health and well-being, contribute to a prosperous economy, and increase the region's resiliency in adapting to changes or adverse events."³⁷⁰

Between 2011 and 2013, PSRC led in the creation of "Growing Transit Communities," (GTC) a robust transit-oriented development strategy for the region, supported by a federal Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant.³⁷¹ Although not specifically addressing public art and placemaking, this planning

document firmly enjoins the kinds of development near transit that call for public art: “Make great urban places that are attractive to households and businesses.” The region can achieve the goal of attracting transit supportive development to station areas with a focus on building neighborhoods that offer safe, high quality urban living, including a critical mass of residential and commercial activity, easy access to local and regional jobs and opportunities, and a rich public realm. Tools to make this happen include not only traditional land use approaches and environmentally sustainable building practices, but also heightened integration of land use with transportation and targeted investments in a range of public assets that meet the needs of current and future residents and businesses.”³⁷² The multi-year planning effort brought together a wide variety of public, private, and community stakeholders to think about the unique needs of the different rail corridors and consider the potential for dramatic transformation and placemaking in station areas and urban centers. Since GTC’s adoption, visions and strategies for creating great urban places have helped to galvanize local planning and build momentum for implementation as the transit infrastructure is being built.

PSRC also supports the Central Puget Sound Economic Development District, which is responsible for developing and maintaining the region’s 5-year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy – “Amazing Place³⁷³.” A data driven strategy, Amazing Place identifies the key sectors of the regional economy that drive the region’s job growth, and has three big, mutually supportive goals: 1) Open economic opportunities for everyone, 2) Complete globally, and 3) Sustain a high quality of life. Within that third goal, the region has adopted a specific strategy to “Grow access to arts, culture, entertainment, and sports,” recognizing that these assets are a core component of the region’s livability and quality of life and are placemaking tools that build and strengthen communities³⁷⁴.

Within the Seattle region, King County hosts approximately 2/3 of the region’s population in a land area of 2,300 square miles. Because of the county’s scale, its comprehensive plan in effect functions as a regional plan. The current King County Comprehensive Plan was originally adopted under Washington State’s Growth Management Act in 1994, and updated most recently in October of 2018.³⁷⁵ Public art is identified as a county priority in this plan: “In addition to protecting ... natural resources, the county promotes a high quality of life by supporting cultural opportunities such as music, theater, ethnic heritage museums, literary activities, public art collections, urban historic districts, and rural landmarks.”³⁷⁶ In the plan’s section on Arts, Heritage and Public Art, the following explicit commitment to county-funded public art is articulated: “King County shall incorporate public art in its construction and mitigation projects, as well as its undertakings involving public-private partnerships, and development authorities that include public funds or resources or have publicly accessible components.”³⁷⁷

King County’s work in the realms of arts and culture is empowered by a unique agency, 4Culture. Using lodging tax and 1% for Art funds, this agency serves program areas of arts, heritage, historic preservation and public art.³⁷⁸ Although 4Culture is the funding agency for King County arts and cultural programs, it has its own board and advisory committee structure, ensuring it a measure of independence and focus that could be lost if it was governed simply by the County government.³⁷⁹

Sound Transit is an implementing agency, not a planning agency per se. Nevertheless, it has created a system plan for its transitways that contains policies integrating with the work of the Puget Sound Regional Council. The most recent system plan, “Sound Transit 3,” commits to creating a transit-oriented development strategy and specifies that “Sound Transit will use such plans as the 2013 Growing Transit Communities Strategy to inform the content and implementation of its TOD strategy.”³⁸⁰

Moreover, Sound Transit’s well-funded mandate to create public art in its facilities makes it an influential shaper of regional identity. Due to its one percent-for-art program, Sound Transit anticipates a \$54 million budget for public art to be created between 1998 and 2023 for capital projects that are part of the “ST2” expansion program, of which East Link is a part.³⁸¹ The agency emphasizes that its public art provides unique station elements, creates a sense of place, and involves communities in its artwork development.³⁸² While it has no specific policy framework to guide the content of its entire collection of public artworks, it does at times work with 4Culture to advance a public art vision that is supported by a regional consensus.³⁸³ Also, it crafts strategic guidance for specific transit corridors, including the East Link Extension that is the focus of this case study.³⁸⁴

While Sound Transit is responsible for rail transit and some high-capacity bus lines in the region, King County also operates Metro, a transit system including local buses and its own set of high-capacity bus lines. Metro and Sound Transit are integrated in the sense that a single fare card – One Regional Card for All (ORCA) – functions for both systems. Relying on 4Culture, Metro is launching a robust public art program for its high capacity “RapidRide” bus rapid transit lines.³⁸⁵

4. How do the comprehensive plans for the cities of the East Link Extension rail transit corridor address issues of creative placemaking?

All four cities included in the East Link Extension have robust public art and placemaking components in their comprehensive plans.

Seattle: The current comprehensive plan for Seattle is “Seattle 2035,” adopted in 2018. It includes an Arts and Culture plan element consisting of four goals/policies relating to Public Art [6 policies], Creative Economy [7 policies], Youth Development and Arts Education [5 policies], and Cultural Space and Placemaking [13 policies].³⁸⁶ The public art

policies create a framework for spending the City’s percent for art funds that emphasizes inclusion of artists early in the design of capital improvements, prioritizing locations where most desired by the community, and enhancing the diversity and community participation in the selection process and art expression.³⁸⁷

Mercer Island: The Mercer Island comprehensive plan is subtitled “Planning for Generations: 2015-2035.”³⁸⁸ This plan includes a 19-page “Comprehensive Arts and Culture Plan” as an appendix.³⁸⁹ Within this plan are six policies in support of the goal of nurturing public art on Mercer Island. For our purposes policies of special importance call for incorporating public art into and surrounding transportation projects, and welcoming and supporting community involvement in public art processes.³⁹⁰

Bellevue: As the anchor city in the East Link area, Bellevue’s comprehensive plan is suitably expansive and detailed. Planning for arts and culture in Bellevue has been occurring for more than 15 years, beginning with the 2004 “Bellevue Cultural Compass: A Strategic Vision for Arts and Culture.”³⁹¹ In this foundational document, the City acknowledged that “Bellevue’s Public Art Program has not yet attained high visibility among Bellevue residents” and directed that “Public art projects should be located primarily in geographic areas identified as zones of cultural activity where they can reinforce the density of cultural engagement.”³⁹² Sustained attention to these issues resulted in the city’s 2015 comprehensive plan including a 24-page “Urban Design and the Arts” plan element.³⁹³ Within this plan element, the City explicitly enjoins heightened attention to urban design and public art in conjunction with the East Link rail transit extension: “East Link light rail line will provide quick and easy transit access throughout Bellevue and connect to Seattle and Redmond. Designing nearby buildings, sites and public areas with attractive and accessible connections to light rail stations and other transit options is an opportunity to create a more connected and multi-modal city. These connections can be highlighted with

engaging public art, quality site design, and interesting architectural and landscape features.”³⁹⁴ Especially noteworthy in Bellevue is its goal of creating the “Grand Connection,” centered in its downtown, and rich in the arts and culture³⁹⁵: “The Grand Connection is one of the most ambitious, comprehensive efforts to date that aims to establish downtown Bellevue as a place to encounter cultural exchange, innovative immersive art experiences, music, and performance. It serves as a physical connector as well as destination: a creative spine in the core of the city that draws a public audience—both casual passersby and visitors seeking a community-driven experience. At the core of this vision is the belief that Bellevue’s public art should be an integral part of the city that excites and promotes dialogue across cultural and generational lines.”³⁹⁶ And Bellevue’s 2018 creative economy strategy³⁹⁷ suggests that the city will especially pioneer in the use of digital technologies in its public art: “Digital and interactive technologies are transforming how live arts and culture programming is experienced through the incorporation of media within performances or exhibitions as well as the use of media to support pre-performance or pre-exhibition audience engagement. The use of digital and interactive media in public art installations could be one defining element of public spaces in Bellevue.”³⁹⁸ (p. 10)

Redmond: As the headquarters of Microsoft, Redmond hosts the last but certainly not the least stop on the East Link Extension. Its Redmond 2030 Plan³⁹⁹ envisions “a true multidimensional urban center with several new and expanded public amenities, including the City Hall campus, Downtown Central Park and the Redmond Central Connector, that are gathering places for the community; an arts and community cultural center; a pedestrian connection to Marymoor Park; a vibrant Saturday market and a variety of quality arts and cultural programs and performances.”⁴⁰⁰ The East Link Extension, opening in 2023, will have an interim terminus at the Redmond Technology Center Station at the Microsoft Campus. However, two additional stations will

open in Redmond in 2024, with a final terminus in Redmond’s historic downtown.

The Washington State Growth Management Act requires local jurisdictions to update their local comprehensive plans every eight years⁴⁰¹. With the next update cycle due in 2024, local jurisdictions will be expected to reflect regional goals and policy guidance in their local plan updates.

5. What kinds of public art are being created in the stations of the East Link Extension rail transit corridor? Who is responsible for these artworks? How are they funded? How are they selected?

East Link has 10 stations – two additional stations at the end of the line are technically part of the Downtown Redmond Link Extension. Sound Transit has commissioned work for nine of the 10 stations and, has 13 artists under contract for those stations. Of those, nine are from the Seattle region.⁴⁰² Project management for this collection is provided by Sound Transit public art program managers. Funding for these projects is provided by the agency’s percent-for-art program and will include funding for ongoing maintenance.

6. What kinds of neighborhood plans and/or development strategies are there for areas within a ten-minute walkshed of each transit station? How do those plans/strategies address issues of creative placemaking?

Explicit reference to public art and placemaking can sometimes be found in neighborhood plans that are included in the comprehensive plans for the cities on the East Link Extension. Examples include:

Seattle: Policies for neighborhood development within the Central Area of which Jenkins Park is a part include “Seek opportunities for community-based public improvements that would create a sense of identity, establish pride of place, and enhance the overall image of the Central Area” and “Create opportunities for public spaces, public art, and gateways that

engage and express the Central Area's unique heritage and identity."⁴⁰³

Mercer Island: "Incorporate public art into and surrounding transportation projects."⁴⁰⁴

Bellevue: "No one ever just waits for a bus or the train; they engage. Bellevue Corporate Plaza, City Hall, Meydenbauer Center, and the Transit Station work together as the city's primary cultural hub, providing a place for civic engagement of all forms and opportunities to experience arts and cultural events year-round."⁴⁰⁵

Redmond: The Southeast Redmond Neighborhood Plan specifies: "Plan for and provide opportunities for art throughout the neighborhood. For example, ensure opportunities in the planning process for including art as part of the future light rail station and park and ride facility, consider placing art at city and neighborhood entryways, promote the installation of art at private entryways such as for businesses and commercial uses, and consider opportunities for display of rotating and local art."⁴⁰⁶

7. What kinds of public art are being created in the neighborhoods within a ten-minute walkshed of the stations of the East Link Extension rail transit corridor? How are they funded? How are they selected?

Bellevue and Redmond both are launching powerful programs to create public art in the vicinity of new light rail stations. In both cases, funding is largely from each City's percent-for-art programs, with selection guided by their arts commissions. Two examples are discussed here.

Bellevue Grand Connection: Three of Bellevue's six light rail stations will be within close proximity of the city's new "Grand Connection," a cultural corridor that will stretch for twelve city blocks from a recreational bicycle/pedestrian trail on the eastern edge of downtown, through the heart of downtown westward to the shores of Lake Washington. The plan for the Grand

Connection envisions major points of interest for a pedestrian every 4-5 minutes, and minor points of interest every 15-20 seconds, including seven major art opportunity sites, ten sites for integrated artwork, and eight cultural plinths.⁴⁰⁷ As described by Bellevue City staff Matthews Jackson and Joshua Heim, the City hopes to have public art and placemaking activities that address some of the more difficult issues of the community's history, to better engage with the increasingly diverse population of Bellevue, often using temporary public artworks with a performance dimension. For example, the city's main art festival, known as Bellwether, this year will be held at the two ends of the planned Grand Connection, will be a "petri dish" of the city's new diversity, and will especially address the issue of Japanese internment during World War II – in camps located in that city.⁴⁰⁸

Redmond Central Connector: At the point where the East Link Extension will end, the City of Redmond has already established a robust corridor of imaginative public artworks and performance spaces. Within a regional trail and linear park connecting Redmond's historic core with its downtown, the City has commissioned three artworks by the artist John Fleming – Signals (inspired by the community's railroad past), Sky Painting (inspired by nature), and Redmond's Erratic (an abstract geological form). Signals and Sky Painting both function as occasional performance spaces as well as permanent forms.⁴⁰⁹ This corridor is also being integrated with a new City park that will be downtown's central gathering place, a block to the north of the corridor. The new City park features an imaginative structure known as Buoyant, which the City describes as follows: "The park's most iconic art feature is also a pavilion with a water wall for commissioned light shows. It can be used as a stage for performances and on a daily basis for shelter from the sun or rain."⁴¹⁰ As explained by City staff Carolyn Hope and Chris Weber, traditional sculptural public art is no longer a satisfying option in the community; instead, there's a need for venues to showcase performance and multidisciplinary public art.⁴¹¹

8. Is there a strategic plan for creative placemaking encompassing the East Link Extension rail transit corridor and its station areas, articulating a collaborative public art and placemaking vision for the corridor and identifying budgets, timelines, roles and responsibilities to ensure implementation?

Kurt Kiefer, Sound Transit's Art Project Manager for the East Link Extension, identified that while the corridor doesn't have a formal master plan for public art in this corridor, the overall Sound Transit art program – "STart," – provides principles and a framework for identifying kinds of opportunities and appropriate artworks that could ideally be created⁴¹². STart provides guidance for creating unique station elements, creating a sense of place, and involving communities in development of the artwork.⁴¹³

9. To what extent do the intended creative placemaking projects in the East Link Extension rail transit corridor and its station areas reflect distinctive natural and cultural features of the region and communities where they occur?

Except for the Judkins Park theme of neighborhood history (highlighting Native Son Jimi Hendrix) and East Main Station's theme of mid-century modern art, the public art at these stations celebrates in various ways the landscape and weather of the Pacific Northwest. In several cases, the art seeks ways to transform the sometimes-gloomy rains of Seattle region winters into occasions of engagement and beauty (e.g., glass raindrops at Bellevue Downtown, reflections of light and shadow at Bel-Red, and organically shaped features enhanced by rain at Overlake Village). In contrast, as suggested in Question 7 above, public art in the neighborhoods near the transit stations more often focus on the cultural history and aspirations of the community.

10. What are the most important lessons learned from the creative placemaking plans, strategies and activities in the East Link Extension rail transit corridor? What has worked well? What challenges remain?

In many ways, the Seattle region sets a national standard for transit expansion accompanied by a powerful set of agencies devoted to public art and placemaking in its transit corridors. Key informant interviews conducted during August 5-8, 2019 yielded the following instances of elements that have worked well in the region and the East Link Extension that is the focus of this case study.

- The commitment to public art and placemaking is widespread and community driven. Consequently, the region has combined high levels of local funding for transit expansion with widespread percent-for-art programs, resulting in ample financial and organizational resources available to support public art and placemaking. Related to this phenomenon is the fact that the region's government agencies have made substantial progress in mastering the technical challenges that accompany the creation and management of public art projects.
- The region's natural beauty supports artistic visions that portray and celebrate nature; and the region's growing cultural diversity supports complementary visions that portray the history and aspirations of cities and neighborhoods, often in a way that engages around controversial topics.
- The region has a strong heritage of emphasizing community engagement and equity, and these emphases are reflected in regional and local approaches to public art and placemaking. The region expresses genuine concern about the phenomena of housing unaffordability, gentrification and displacement, and seeks ways in which public art and placemaking can help address these difficult problems.
- There is also a heritage of integrating public art with infrastructure projects rather than simply having the art and the infrastructure emerge separately.
- ⁴Culture is a unique and effective agency that can support high-quality public art projects throughout the majority of the region, governed by a Board that is separate from County government, even while pursuing the County's art and culture vision.

- Several major art and culture corridors are already emerging in the cities of the East Link Extension in a way that links strongly to light rail transit stations in those cities.
- Within City governments there are good examples of interdepartmental cooperation to advance public art and placemaking. This results in better integration of public art with other aspects of the community – such as housing, economic development, parks and trails.
- The cities of the East Link Extension are at the forefront of a trend in the public art world to evolve toward more temporary, multidisciplinary public art projects.

At the same time, there are aspects of the region that key informants have highlighted as challenges that remain and/or arenas where the region could benefit from improvement.

- Artists are less involved early on in projects, and less engaged in an integrated approach to project design and implementation than they once were.
- With so much public art and placemaking work occurring, advanced by so many different actors, there is often not the level of communication and coordination that is optimal.

- There may be inherent tensions between the public art and placemaking priorities of regional agencies such as Sound Transit that seek to establish a sense of corridor-wide identity, and local communities that want to address their own unique concerns, sometimes in a way that can generate controversy.
- Public art and placemaking activities are challenged to contribute to solutions to the region's difficult problems of advancing equity in an environment where income disparities are generating problems of gentrification and displacement; and there is concern that some of the policy tools (e.g., requirements for affordable housing near transit stations) may yield less than optimal outcomes.
- But for some key informants, there are also concerns that the region lacks strong enough tools to guide land use in a way that results in improved integration of land use with transportation.
- Moreover, there are cases where even a strong commitment to equity and community engagement may still face tensions within communities that can seem intractable using only the contributions of public art and placemaking.



Image courtesy of the Seattle region.

7. Themes and Considerations

What follows are observations gleaned from our eight case studies. We offer ten themes that trended through these projects, demonstrating growth in a shared vision for how creative placemaking is perceived and can be implemented in the current era of rail transit development. Some trends were widespread and we could have featured all eight case studies in our theme examples, but we chose to winnow down these highlights so you, as readers and enactors can appreciate the key take-aways these examples offer for consideration.

1. **Because of their longstanding investment in station art, many regional transit agencies have already set the stage for ongoing creative placemaking efforts in rail transit corridors.**

All the transit agencies in our case studies host at least some public art in their stations, a legacy of the intertwining of arts and urban development. Many agencies, however, have gone beyond new station development and one-off artwork installation efforts to ensure ongoing public art enhancements and expanded creative placemaking programming. Some agencies have hired permanent staff and created arts and cultural departments to facilitate this work. In addition to uninterrupted implementation and maintenance practices, dedicated staffing and department structures ensure that a diversity of arts-related programming can potentially be administered at transit station areas beyond the initial installation phase to encompass performance, pop-ups, and community engagement. Dedicated staffing also ensures ongoing support of the goals set forth in regional and local municipal arts, culture, and creative placemaking plans. In addition, ongoing program often support local talent, allow for a wide range of artistic expressions that are responsive to changing demographics and community interests, attract new ridership and enhance the transit experience.

The *Dallas region's* commitment to creative placemaking is exemplified by its DART Station Art and Design Program which dates to 1987. The more traditional aspect of the program requires artists, architects, and engineers to collaborate at the beginning of the transit station design phase. This was updated in 1990 to guarantee that DART and its contractors

work with municipal cultural affairs offices and engage artists from within the planned station community to develop station art that will reflect the neighborhood. Program staff facilitate artist-driven community workshops and administer the selection and implementation process.



Image courtesy of the Dallas region.

The *Atlanta region's* regional transit agency, MARTA, hired an arts administrator to run its Artbound program, which aims to enhance the rider experience by integrating arts and culture throughout the system. It also has an arts council which provides guidance on its annual arts plan, the commissioning and maintaining of the artwork, and the artist selection process. In general, MARTA's staffed arts and culture program administers the agency's percent for arts funding for community activities, music and performance station activations, arts restoration projects, and the design, fabrication, and installation of public art.

The *Seattle region's* Sound Transit boasts a "well-funded mandate to create public-art in its facilities" and public art program managers oversee commissioned projects which are

funded by the transit agency's percent for art program, and they manage and maintain the its existing collections.

2. Regional planning agencies can provide policy direction and, in limited cases, program funding to support art in rail transit corridors.

In most of our case studies the regional planning agencies, metropolitan planning organizations, and county governments are separate from the regional transit agencies, but they can complement, support, and even learn from each other in their creative placemaking efforts.

The Boston region provides an example of the interplay between regional planning and transit agencies. A pilot public art and placemaking project at Upham's Corner in the Fairmount Line corridor "has fueled and informed ongoing planning and implementation efforts." The project was a cross-sector collaboration focusing on partnership-building, community engagement, and the funding of local artists. Guided by the regional planning agency's (MAPC) Arts and Cultural Department, local artists (with specific outreach to local artists of color) were paid to lead a series of creative placemaking efforts engaging the local community in discussions about station area development, fostered by concerns about gentrification.



Image courtesy of the Boston region.

Their work informed equitable planning strategies around how to transform vacant and distressed properties within a half mile of the stations while preventing gentrification. This

MAPC-directed work now serves as a template for how the arts can be a vehicle for local workforce development (artist jobs) and non-speculative station area development.

In the Seattle region, King County's unique 4Culture agency acts as the programming and funding agency for arts, heritage, historic preservation, and public art under the direction of its own board and advisory committee. Drawing on a percent for art lodging tax, 4Culture has been effective in supporting and implementing complementary public art projects throughout the region, collaborating with cities, communities, and transit agencies such as Sound Transit and Metro, which provides bus service in the county.

3. Municipal governments can provide policy direction, and in limited cases, program funding to support art in rail transit corridors.

Our case studies reveal numerous examples of cities that require or promote public art as part of land use and transportation plans, sometimes supported by sustainable funding sources to ensure that such plans are implemented. City planning and related community development efforts can complement, support, and inform regional planning and the work of transit agencies and county initiatives. Of note is the large percentage of cities with strong arts and cultural planning agendas. While smaller cities may not have separate arts and culture plans, language expressing a desire and need for public art and creative placemaking is present and expanding.

In the Denver region, the suburban city of Lakewood demonstrates a strong commitment to creative placemaking with dedicated staffing, an Arts and Culture section in its comprehensive plan, and a Public Art Master Plan. The city also developed a small area plan to guide development in the 40 West Arts District.

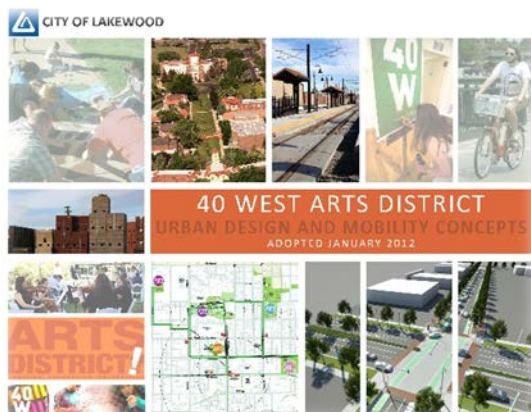


Image Courtesy of the Denver region.

Likewise, in the *Minneapolis-Saint Paul region*, the City of Minneapolis's comprehensive plan includes an extensive section dedicated to Art and Culture. Public art is supported by a 1.5 percent for art program tied to capital improvement projects. These efforts are supplemented by the city's more focused directives stated in its Creative City Roadmap and administered by the office of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy.

In the *Miami region*, the City of Miami's plan includes policy language supporting its Art in Public Places Program which is sustained by a 1.5 percent for art fund related to capital improvement projects. The smaller cities of Coral Gables and South Miami also reference arts and cultural goals in their comprehensive and small area plans suggesting, like many cities in our case studies, demonstrated planning support for The Underline work at the county level and by the Friends of The Underline organization.

In the City of Phoenix's General Plan advocates for making the city an arts and cultural destination in the *Phoenix region* by encouraging public art and supporting arts and cultural activities. The city's office of Arts and Culture directs this activity through an annual Public Arts Plan. Arts and culture are also explicitly addressed in the Transit Oriented Development plans the city has adopted for each of its station areas.

4. A common source of funding for art in rail transit corridors is through percent for art programs.

Although not uniformly adopted throughout the US, percent for art programs exist in various forms in state, regional, county and city jurisdictions. A common practice is to dedicate one percent (and sometimes more) of a public improvement project's construction budget to public art. The resulting art may be included within the project itself or sited elsewhere in the jurisdiction. Many jurisdictions focus their programs solely on capital improvement projects, although a small but growing number of cities require public art dedications in all commercial development. Because many public art ordinances are tied to capital budgets the outcomes are limited to permanent artworks, however a growing number of cities are retooling their ordinances to allow for temporary and event-based programming. For transit-oriented development projects the existence of a dedicated percent for art funding resource can mean the difference between inclusion or exclusion of public art and arts programming. The economics of large-scale infrastructure projects change – often dramatically – as they traverse decades in the move from vision to fruition. The ever-changing budgets and impacts of value engineering leave the status of public art and creative placemaking efforts in fiscally tenuous territory. This is especially true if there is a lack of dedicated arts and cultural operational support.

The *Seattle region* offers an impressive number of jurisdictions with percent for art programs that support public art in and around their light rail stations. In the case study East Link expansion, agencies managing percent for art programs range from the implementing transit agency to the local city. As of the end of 2020, Sound Transit had already commissioned or has artists under contract for 9 of its 10 planned stations, with all proposed projects and ongoing planned maintenance being funded by Sound Transit's percent for art program. This heavy lifting for station art by Sound Transit enables the cities of Bellevue and Redmond to launch

their own “powerful programs to create public art in the vicinity of the new light rail stations.”



Image courtesy of the Seattle region.

Likewise, the Atlanta region's transit agency, MARTA, offers a percent for art program that designates 1 percent of its annual capital budget to art expenditures. This is supplemented by the City of Atlanta's capital projects percent for art program that allocates 1.5 percent to public art and can be directed to station area walksheds.

The Boston region also offers a unique arts funding guarantee. Currently, the transit agency's (MBTA) capital budget guarantees up to \$144,000 per station to fund art under the Station Art and Design Program. This is in addition to an allocation of between \$350,000-\$400,000 for finishings such as paving, column cladding, and landscaping which can be designed to incorporate artistic elements.

The Denver region's RTD underwrites all public art for its transit-oriented infrastructure through funds remaining in the project contingency fund, after all transit construction costs are expended. RTD has included public art in all its stations since inception under its Art-n-Transit program, but it is conceivable that contingency funds could be insufficient to include the desired elements in the station structure or site-specific pieces of art. As the case study shows, value engineering did lead to the loss of proposed amenities along the W line, prompting the City of Lakewood to step in to fund those elements.

Also, the declining levels of fiscal support for public art is evident in the Minneapolis-Saint Paul region, from the initial rail line's artist-architect teams and highly customized station designs, to the current coalition-driven fundraising efforts for the Green Line extension arts and cultural programming. This is demonstrative of the impacts of shifting economies, policies and budget cuts on creative placemaking efforts when there is no dedicated funding source in place. It also reflects the lack of consensus around the value of public art and creative placemaking, due in part to the lack of awareness and understanding of these emergent fields and the benefits they offer.

5. Foundations, local philanthropy, and private sector donors can also contribute to the creation of art in rail transit corridors.

As noted in the Minneapolis example in the preceding theme, the need for such funding can arise when public sector funding is insufficient, or when civic leaders or community members have artistic visions that go beyond what is supported by public sector resources. Our case studies also show that that creative placemaking directed toward or resulting from community engagement, especially around issues of transit and neighborhood equity, is well supported by this type of funding.

The Boston region's efforts, directed by MBTA, to upgrade and expand the Fairmount Line do not include funding for permanent public art installations in the existing or new stations. A philanthropically funded initiative ensured a future for creative placemaking, nonetheless. The Fairmount Line corridor bisects several historically underserved and diverse communities. A host of CDCs and neighborhood and cultural organizations, seeking transit equity, advocated for improvements in the corridor. And it was also a coalition of partners that were responsible for the development of a pilot creative placemaking program that engaged all aspects of arts and culture such as theater, staging, props, and visual arts to create “spaces of play and imagination” at the Upham's Corner Station.

The project was funded by the Boston Foundation and ArtPlace America. An outcome of this pilot put arts at the center of outreach efforts aimed at strategically planning to “transform vacant and distressed properties within half a mile of the stations into new housing, commercial uses, jobs and open space while preventing speculation, gentrification and displacement.”

The Underline case study in the *Miami region* is also notable. This linear bicycle/pedestrian trail, park, and public art gallery – in progress beneath the elevated Metrorail line – was initiated and continues to be guided by philanthropically oriented civic leaders in an ongoing public-private partnership. Miami-Dade County’s role has been to develop the infrastructure for the ground level intermodal mobility corridor that will connect eight of Metrorail’s stations to neighboring communities and the 10-mile trail itself. While The Underline is envisioned as “the most accessible public space in all of Miami” and the nonprofit Friends of The Underline endeavors to make that vision an even bigger arts and cultural asset. Miami-Dade County had previously funded some public art in relation to the station areas but the continuing creative placemaking effort in conjunction with the trail’s development will be donor funded.



Miami region. Mark VanderSchaaf, photographer.

6. There is significant variety in the kind of public art and creative placemaking projects deemed appropriate for rail transit corridors.

There is an inherent creative tension in all public art projects, especially those contributing to the newer concepts within creative placemaking. To ensure success, the perspectives of artists, funders, and stakeholders (regional, city and neighborhood) must be addressed in a collaborative way. Questions arise, for example, concerning issues such as whether nationally-prominent artists or less familiar neighborhood artists should create the art, and whether the purpose of the art should be to strengthen neighborhood or community identity or create attractions that will engage visitors from beyond the neighborhood and enhance a city or region-wide identity. With this tension in mind we found that a diversity of projects was still able to emerge, some in very place-specific ways, demonstrating a host of concepts and ideas around beautification and the role arts and culture play in communities.

As noted in theme 1, the *Dallas region* has an expansive approach to creative placemaking through its DART Station Art and Design Program that seeks to collaborate with artists from within or with connections to the communities where transit oriented development is taking place. The artists offer a non-traditional level of engagement, acting as translators and trusted allies within the communities to produce station art that is truly reflective of – and meaningful to – the surrounding neighborhood. For example, stories of the Frazier neighborhood’s past and visions for the future are woven into a wall ‘quilt’ tile mosaic at the Hatcher station while stylistic details of African tribal traditions comprise the artwork at the MLK Jr. Station, in these predominantly African American neighborhood the art shares their narratives and their experiences.

The station art within the *Phoenix region’s* 28 stations along the Artsline was created through collaboration with each station area neighborhood. Although perhaps more notable than this ambitious public art effort, which was funded through Valley Metro’s percent for art program, is how the line is marketed and used

in support of the artists and arts organizations in the cities of Phoenix, Tempe, and Mesa. Valley Metro has identified 55 arts and cultural destinations along the rail line and produced a brochure highlighting each of them. Further, they sponsor an ongoing showcasing of local talent during a monthly First Friday transit-oriented art crawl. Finally, Valley Metro taps its marketing budget to fund a Spotlight Artist program, whereby a visual artist or artist team is selected to create an artwork that will be featured throughout the transit system, including station murals and vehicle wraps creating a wealth of exposure for the featured artist.

The artwork of The Underline in the *Miami region* does not necessarily seek to reflect the natural or cultural features of the region or nearby communities. With an aim to be more of an outdoor museum, the stated objective of the funding agency was to “focus on creating outstanding works of art, with a variety of subjects considered to meet this focus.” The Miami-Dade Art in Public Places Trust is responsible for the existing projects developed in relation to new station construction. New work along the trail that is developing beneath the Metrorail will complement bike, pedestrian, and greenway elements and will come about through fundraising conducted by the nonprofit Friends of The Underline. But the selection process will still be coordinated through the Miami-Dade Art in Public Places program under the same abiding principles.

7. Creative placemaking has the greatest impact when integrated fully into overall transit-oriented development goals.

Overall transit-oriented development goals can vary widely within the region, county and city, from converting car culture-oriented residents into public transit riders to fostering economic development support for local businesses and neighborhoods while mitigating gentrifying impacts. Therefore, successful creative placemaking efforts must be highly contextual, taking into account opportunities, concerns, desires and impacts on surrounding

communities and future transit riders. Arts, culture and creative placemaking will not solve planning and equity issues, but they can offer opportunities to recognize and authentically represent communities. They can engage diverse community stakeholders in dialogues around issues and generate civic pride and station area stewardship through community-scaled interventions and community-building opportunities.

The Lamar Station area along the *Denver region's* W Line demonstrates collaborative efforts to combine smaller-scale community interventions aimed at uplifting the local business district, offering affordable space for artists and residents, and adding a community amenity in the form of an art trail. The intertwining of efforts by the City of Lakewood, the Lakewood-West Colfax Business Improvement District, the nonprofits Metro West Housing Solutions and 40 West Arts, and RID produced two complementary plans; the Transit Oriented Development station area plan and 40 West Arts District Urban Design and Mobility Concepts Plan. The plans have guided the development of permanently affordable housing, a state-certified Creative District designation from the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade, and a new art and placemaking trail called the Artline. The 40 West Arts District and transit related public art planning and vision helped propel funding opportunities including a brownfield and CBDG grant, and more recently, financing for a developer of a market rate residential project. A high level of integration between a diverse collection of agencies and community partners, shared planning objectives, and financial and staff resources is evident in the outcomes in the region. Concerns about affordability and representation are ongoing and will require more effort on the part of every partner but it is hoped that this level of integration has mitigated some of the more speculative transit-oriented development impacts.



Image courtesy of the Phoenix region.

An example of design integration from the Phoenix region involves creating a series of arts-infused oases to encourage transit ridership during the hot summer months. Because Valley Metro's branding intent is to get arts patrons out of their cars and onto public transit when attending arts and cultural events, they are initiating – and encouraging station area partners to assist with – creative placemaking efforts that will produce shaded walkways between rail stations and arts venues. This reflects the City of Phoenix's 'Connected Oasis' idea which requires the incorporation of public art in networked and shaded corridors downtown.

The Atlanta region demonstrates a high level of top-down planning and bottom-up community initiative integration in the envisioning and implementation of creative placemaking. The regional planning agency (ARC) leads with a 92-page internal strategic plan for arts, culture, and creative placemaking which asks regional planning leaders to “better engage around arts and cultural themes, and exercise future leadership for the region in these realms.” ARC's role is to act as a cultural convener, demonstrating best practices and offering ‘how-to’ advice to municipalities throughout the region. ARC's efforts encourage and engage MARTA's Artbound program which aims to enhance rider experiences through creative placemaking. Rather than focus solely on new transit-oriented infrastructure, Artbound invites projects initiated at the community level by Community Improvement Districts, nonprofit organizations or local governments, thereby

deepening the potential for engagement with Atlanta's Public Art Master Plan and Decatur's Cultural Arts Master Plan, among other plans, while supporting the goals of the ARC initiative.

8. Regions are acknowledging the challenges that accompany rail transit development, such as gentrification and displacement pressures.

As noted in the previous theme there is considerable awareness in our case study regions that new development near transit stations can be both a benefit and a threat to existing neighborhoods. The combination of improved transit, new amenity-rich public spaces, and the addition of new market-rate real estate projects too often leads to rent and land value increases, which threatens to displace the lower-income residents who are most transit-reliant, as well as small area businesses. Again, while not a solution to the larger issue of housing and workspace unaffordability, creative placemaking is being employed as an engagement tool aimed at bringing about a more holistic discussion about neighborhood change and the impacts of rail transit development.



Minneapolis-Saint Paul region. Mark VanderSchaff, photographer.

For example, during the construction phase of the Green Line in the Minneapolis-Saint Paul region, popup arts activities were used to draw customers to the numerous small businesses within the corridor, many of them BIPOC-owned. Construction activity cut off front door access and parking for these establishments so performance and visual artists, working with

business owners, sought to draw attention to the struggling businesses helping them to survive the disruption and remain open to serve the community once construction ended and the new transit line was in place.

The regional planning commission's (MAPC) efforts in the Fairmount Line corridor in the Boston region have been highly attentive to gentrification concerns. Rail improvements in this formerly redlined area of the city were initiated based on community activism. Nonetheless, the lower-income and diverse communities of color in the corridor neighborhoods understood the risks associated with transit and revitalization efforts. Therefore, a collaborative of four local CDCs proffered a transit equity platform and in alignment with the Boston Redevelopment Authority's support are now working with the MAPC on the facilitation of specific strategies aimed at ensuring that placemaking is balanced by placekeeping. Central to this effort have been creative placemaking engagement practices with the local communities around a cultural district planning study. The Upham's Corner project sets forth a plan to manage change through the mitigation of displacement and the leveraging of neighborhood assets toward neighborhood-based workforce development.

9. Successful creative placemaking in rail transit corridors typically involves complex governmental, philanthropic, private sector, and neighborhood partnerships.

While evident in many of the case study examples that have been shared under other themes, the value and necessity of collaborations and partnerships bears added emphasis. For example, national decisions like the directive under the FAST Act prohibiting the use of federal funding for public art in rail transit stations can upset budgets and impact regional and local efforts. Such a directive can also make the need for non-governmental partners even more acute, as is the case with the Minneapolis-Saint Paul region where the nonprofit Forecast Public Art has been enrolled to work with local stakeholders and

municipalities to develop a design and fundraising plan in order to ensure that public art is an element within the walksheds of the new stations along the proposed Green Line extension.

Even when ample public sector resources are available for public art and creative placemaking, our case studies demonstrate how implementers still sought to enroll additional private sector support in decision-making processes in order to ensure that all stakeholders had a place at the table. Moreover, finding the support of a variety of funders and resource providers was often essential to achieving broader and more holistic planning goals, especially in relation to expanded walkshed and neighborhood areas and issues. The author of the Denver region case study indicates the most important lesson learned in relation to the W Line project was the value of partnerships, noting that:

“The 40 West ArtLine project and public art on the W Line are the result of both financial and in-kind staff resource investments from the City of Lakewood, RTD, EPA, NEA, Colorado Department of Transportation and Jefferson County Public Health, as well as the private organizations of 40 West Arts, LWCBID, West Colfax Community Association, Metro West Housing Solutions, neighborhood organizations, AARP, Community First Foundation, Xcel Energy Foundation and others.”

And while partnerships are inherently necessary in the development and implementation of any regional project, the value in these collaborations has taken on new meaning as more focus is directed at equity issues and long-term impacts to underrepresented communities, and as the demand, expectation and appreciation for the inclusion of public art and creative placemaking grows in communities across the US.

10. Creative placemaking in rail transit corridors has established practices which can be replicated in other areas.

Creative placemaking can and should be practiced in its many forms - anywhere. Our case study regions variously embody this perspective by managing a host of programs and intertwining a wealth of practices and partners that, while privileging sites in rail transit corridors, extend beyond these transit locations into expanded walksheds and neighborhoods. Public art and creative placemaking is also engaged at different times throughout the transit-oriented development timeline, and for different goals and purposes. There are a vast number of take-aways in each of the eight case studies examined in this handbook that are specific to the needs and contingencies of each region's history and experience. And these many take-aways offer planners and community developers the possibility of replication. To close this summary of themes and considerations we highlight a few replicable practices, especially as they relate to the more broad approaches encompassed in creative placemaking, and encourage readers to more deeply explore each case study to find the approaches most relevant to their transit-oriented development circumstance.

The Atlanta Regional Commission's (ARC) path to engagement in public art and creative placemaking in the Atlanta region is embodied in their educational and resource practices that include provisioning local municipalities with "how-to" creative placemaking toolkits and gathering planners and implementers together for regional convenings to discuss and promote

best and promising practices for public art and placemaking.



Image courtesy of the Atlanta region.

Likewise, the local nonprofit Springboard for the Arts in the Minneapolis-Saint Paul region has developed toolkits for regional and local planners providing best practices approaches for enrolling creative placemakers in outreach efforts related to major infrastructure development projects. One particular toolkit is based on the nonprofit's 'Irrigate' collaboration with Metro Transit during the construction of the Green Line. The practice has already been replicated by Springboard in the 'Cultivate' collaboration with Hennepin County as they worked with the cities along the planned Blue Line extension.

Finally, both the Boston and Denver regional case studies offer insights into how the arts and creative placemaking can lead in efforts to more deeply engage with and build trust in receiving communities, advancing ways to plan for the types of outcomes that will not advantage displacement of existing businesses and residents while still offering the economic development benefits that rail transit development can foster.



Image courtesy of the Denver region.

Endnotes

- ¹ Landry, C. 2012 The City as a Living Work of Art: Artistic imagination and the revival of "civic urbanity". In *Public Art Review*, 19-20. Minneapolis, MN: Forecast Public Art.
- ² Prior to the 2015 FAST Act, federal funding for public art in transit facilities was allowed, even encouraged. The 2015 act prohibited the funding of public art. Expiring in October of 2020, the FAST Act was extended for an additional year. A future act may restore such funding. As its name suggests, a proposed STAR Act (Saving Transit Art Resources) will likely be debated by Congress and the Biden Administration. In any event, the uncertainty created by the FAST Act has added challenges to communities that are committed to encouraging creative placemaking in rail transit corridors.
- ³ <https://creativeplacemaking.t4america.org/what-is-creative-placemaking/>
- ⁴ <https://www.arts.gov/impact/creative-placemaking>
- ⁵ These eight metropolitan regions were selected on the basis of a call for participants issued by APA's Regional and Intergovernmental Planning Division in 2019. The case studies reflect the status of creative placemaking activities in each metropolitan area as of January 2021.
- ⁶ https://www.transit.dot.gov/funding/grants/grant-programs/art-and-non-functional-landscaping-federally-funded-public-transit#Has_law_changed
- ⁷ See, for example: <https://artsu.americansforthearts.org/products/federal-funding-for-arts-in-transit-transportation-update>
- ⁸ <https://www.dart.org/about/publicart/publicartdartgallery.asp>
- ⁹ <https://www.dart.org/about/publicart/publicartgreenline.asp>
- ¹⁰ <https://www.dart.org/about/publicart/publicartorangeline.asp>
- ¹¹ <https://www.rtd-denver.com/art-n-transit>
- ¹² <https://www.rtd-denver.com/art-n-transit/rail-stations>
- ¹³ For a discussion of principles for creating public art trails, see: <https://www.railstotrails.org/build-trails/trail-building-toolbox/design/public-art/> Examples of notable public art trails can be found at: <https://www.americantrails.org/resources/art-along-trails>
- ¹⁴ <https://www.redmond.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1409/Redmond-Public-Art-Walking-Map-PDF?bidId=>
- ¹⁵ <https://www.pps.org/article/lqc-faq>
- ¹⁶ <https://springboardforthearts.org/programs/irrigate/>
- ¹⁷ <https://springboardforthearts.org/cultivate/>
- ¹⁸ <https://forecastpublicart.org/artist-call-places-research-design-fellowship/>
- ¹⁹ <https://www.valleymetro.org/artsline>
- ²⁰ <https://www.dart.org/about/publicart/publicartdartgallery.asp>
- ²¹ <https://www.valleymetro.org/artsline>
- ²² <https://nasaa-arts.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/NASAAPercentforArtPolicyBrief.pdf>
- ²³ <https://www.soundtransit.org/sites/default/files/COP%2520-%2520Start%2520Program%2520Overview%2520180215.pdf>
- ²⁴ Interview with Kelly Pajek, 4Culture Public Art Program Manager, August 6, 2019
- ²⁵ <https://miamidadearts.org/artists/art-public-places#:~:text=One%20of%20the%20first%20public,purchase%20or%20commission%20of%20artworks.>
- ²⁶ <https://patch.com/florida/miamibeach/miami-beach-increases-funding-arts-public-places-program>
- ²⁷ City of Coral Gables Zoning Code, Article 3, Section 3-2103
- ²⁸ <https://www.theunderline.org/2015/09/16/new-tropic-get-on-the-underline-with-meg-daly/>
- ²⁹ http://www.mapc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/UphamsCornerMNC_FinalReport_August2018.pdf
- ³⁰ <https://www.5280.com/2019/07/why-lakewood-residents-voted-to-limit-new-housing/>
- ³¹ https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/economic_development/sustainable_communities_regional_planning_grants
- ³² https://www.valleymetro.org/sites/default/files/spring_2020_artsline_brochure.pdf
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- ²⁶³ At the start of construction, 2023 had been the goal for the extension to begin service, but that has since been pushed back due to unanticipated issues that arose during the construction of a tunnel. See: <https://metro council.org/transportation/projects/Light-Rail-Projects/Southwest-LRT.aspx>
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- 280 *Ibid.*, p. 5-137
- 281 *Ibid.*, p. 5-193
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- 283 Hopkins Comprehensive Plan, p. 2-2
- 284 <https://www.planning.org/greatplaces/streets/2019/arteryhopkins/>
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- 288 *Ibid.*, p. 165
- 289 *Ibid.*, p. 19
- 290 City of Golden Valley 2040 Comprehensive Plan, p. 4-42.
- 291 *Ibid.*, p. 4-47
- 292 *Ibid.*, p. 6-22
- 293 *Ibid.*, p. 6-28
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- 298 <https://www.transit.dot.gov/art-public-transit-projects/faq>
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- 336 *Ibid.*, p. 6-5
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- 340 https://www.valleymetro.org/sites/default/files/uploads/event-resources/station_art_from_the_initial_20_miles.pdf
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- 384 Interview with Sound Transit staff Kurt Kiefer (responsibility for the Sound Transit’s East Link Extension public art), August 9, 2019.
- 385 See, for example, <https://www.4culture.org/grants/rapidride-expansion-masterplan/>
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- 387 *Seattle 2035, Policies AC1.1 – AC1.6*, p. 147
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³⁹⁰ Mercer Island Comprehensive Arts and Culture Plan, p. 16

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³⁹² Bellevue Cultural Compass, pp. x, xi

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³⁹⁸ Creative Edge: Bellevue Creative Economy Strategy, p. 10

³⁹⁹ <https://www.redmond.gov/DocumentCenter/View/273/Comprehensive-Plan---Redmond-2030-Complete-PDF?bidId=>

⁴⁰⁰ Redmond 2030, p. 2-2

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⁴⁰² Descriptions of the planned artworks for each station can be found at: <https://www.soundtransit.org/system-expansion/east-link-extension>

⁴⁰³ Seattle 2035, Policies CA-P3 and CA-P4, p. 226

⁴⁰⁴ Mercer Island Comprehensive Arts and Culture Plan, p. 16

⁴⁰⁵ City of Bellevue Grand Connection, p. 32

⁴⁰⁶ Redmond 2030, p. 13-87

⁴⁰⁷ City of Redmond Grand Connection, pp. 23-24.

⁴⁰⁸ Interview with Matthews Jackson and Joshua Heim, August 6, 2019

⁴⁰⁹ Responding to Site: Artwork by John Fleming in the Redmond Central Connector (pamphlet)

⁴¹⁰ <https://www.redmond.gov/DocumentCenter/View/9096/Downtown-Park-One-Page-Overview>

⁴¹¹ Interview with Carolyn Hope and Chris Weber, August 8, 2019; Interview with Kurt Kiefer, September 14, 2020

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⁴¹³ Interview with Kurt Kiefer, August 9, 2019



Image courtesy of the Dallas region.