

# CITY OF MCKINNEY PUBLIC ART MASTER PLAN

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- I. Executive Summary
- II. Introduction
- III. Vision, Goals
- IV. Public Art Opportunities
- V. Private Developer Commissioned Art
- VI. Public Outreach and Documentation

## Appendices

- A. Planning Process and Acknowledgements
- B. Table of Projects
- C. Map

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: PUBLIC ART FOR MCKINNEY

*Create innovative artistic experiences that strengthen gathering places for McKinney residents, reinforce the high quality and uniqueness of the City's built and natural environment, and set McKinney apart as a place to visit, live and do business.*

– Vision for McKinney Public Art Program

McKinney's vision for public art is part of the City's broader vision: a place whose dynamic future lives comfortably with its unique history, traditions and natural landscape. Over the next five years, this vision will inspire a new generation of public artworks throughout the City:

- Imagine a walk around Towne Lake Park that includes a stroll along a sculpture trail.
- Imagine the alleys in downtown McKinney turned into welcoming and interesting artscapes.
- Imagine artworks that create community gathering places in McKinney's parks.
- And imagine an artwork that serves as a grand new gateway into the City.

This vision was set in motion on December 6, 2011, when City Council established the framework for McKinney's Public Art Program. The vision is being carried forward by the McKinney Arts Commission, working in partnership with the City's elected leadership, the City Manager's Office and other City departments, and civic organizations and businesses.

The Commission will be guided by this master plan, which outlines broad goals for the next five years, identifies a range of short-term and long-term projects, and sets out criteria for evaluating new opportunities for public art that emerge while this plan is being implemented. An accompanying document, Public Art Program Administrative Guidelines, outlines how the Program will be funded, how projects will be organized and how the Public Art Collection will be managed.

As the Arts Commission mobilizes McKinney's Public Art Program, it will work towards the following overarching goals for the next five years.

- Commission two or more new artworks, in a variety of artistic approaches and a range of contexts throughout the City.
- Raise enough funding to support the commissioning and maintenance of these projects.
- Develop supportive relationships with City departments around strategic thinking, planning and implementation related to future public art projects.
- Establish baseline community outreach and communications protocols about the McKinney Public Art Collection.
- Create informational materials and build collaborative relationships with the Planning Department that encourage and support public art in private development.

The Public Art Master Plan recommends seventeen projects for the Arts Commission to consider, divided into categories depending on their likely timing, the amount of funding that will be necessary and the breadth of partnerships that they will require. The Plan also sets out criteria for evaluating new opportunities for public art that might emerge while this plan is being implemented.

- *Near-term projects.* These are high priority opportunities for which the McKinney Arts Commission will raise funds and on which it will begin working immediately. Projects: *Alleyscapes, Towne Lake Park Sculpture Trail.*
- *Mid-term projects.* These are also considered high priority opportunities, but will require a further City commitment in order to be realized. Projects: *Highway 5 Gateway, Gabe Nesbitt Gathering Place, Bonnie Wenk Gathering Place.*
- *Long-term projects.* These are opportunities that the McKinney Arts Commission will keep in mind for the next five-year work plan. Projects: *Mitchell Park, Virginia/Louisiana Gateway, Finch Park, Old Settler's Park and Recreation Center.*
- *Watch list projects.* These are City capital projects that may be strong candidates for public art, but are still in the planning phases and their timing is uncertain. When these projects move into design stages, they would become "mid-term" projects, and opportunities for public art should be *discussed.* Projects: *New City Hall, Collin County Regional Airport Terminal, Aquatic and Recreation Center(s), Erwin Park.*
- *Collaborations.* These are projects that may be led by others – developers, nonprofit cultural organizations, civic associations – who will look to the McKinney Arts Commission for guidance and support. Projects: *Downtown Temporary Exhibitions, Towne Lake Temporary Exhibitions, U.S. 75 Gateway, Downtown Infill.*

The plan also includes specific criteria for evaluating future opportunities:

- **Site:** Is the site available for the placement of art? Are there technical constraints that would prevent this from being a good site?
- **Process:** Are there any changes happening at the site in the near term (such as public improvements or private development) that would provide an opportunity to commission or place work there?
- **Impact:** Does the site lend itself well to commissioning or placing a work of art? Could a project at the site have a strong visual impact? Does the site get sufficient traffic that would result in the artwork being viewed by a large number of people?

The first few projects that the Arts Commission will tackle have been chosen carefully in regard to their accessibility to the public, the positive impact they can have, their feasibility and their potential ability to attract funding support from the broader community.

As McKinney's Public Art Program moves forward, public art will become as important a part of the City's cultural landscape as the McKinney Performing Arts Center has become. It will be part of the texture of community life, accessible to a wide range of residents and visitors. It will be found in and enrich the places that people value most. It will help McKinney achieve its highest aspirations to be a place whose natural landscape and built environment make it one of the most desirable communities in the Metroplex and beyond.

## INTRODUCTION

McKinney, Texas is unique by nature.

The City, located 30 miles north of Dallas, was incorporated in 1849 and for most of its history was an agricultural crossroads and the seat of Collin County. More recently, development from the Dallas Metroplex has reached McKinney, making it one of the fastest-growing cities in the U.S., with a current population of more than 137,000 and an expected build-out that could nearly triple that population.

McKinney is distinct from its neighbors because of its landscape – rolling hills, lush trees and stream corridors – its historic downtown square and its unique neighborhoods and developments. The City was recently ranked as the “#2 Best Place to Live” in the U.S. by *Money* magazine.

McKinney’s City Council approved a Public Art Program on December 6, 2011, making the acquisition, commissioning and strategic placement of public art a priority for the City. Council assigned the responsibility for advising on and implementing the program to the McKinney Arts Commission, a seven-member citizen panel appointed by Council. The Commission secured funding from the McKinney Community Development Corporation to create this master plan, which outlines priority projects and operational guidelines for the new public art program. The Arts Commission selected the consulting team of Via Partnership and Todd W. Bressi to lead the process.

There are already a significant number of public artworks in McKinney. The City owns an inventory of artworks that have largely been obtained through donations and are the responsibility of various departments. The developers of projects such as Adriatica and Craig Ranch have commissioned art that supports their architectural, landscape and urban design visions. Most recently, the Baylor Medical Center at McKinney commissioned and acquired a large number of artworks that are an amenity for visitors, employees and users of the facility.

Communities around McKinney have been moving forward with their own public art strategies for several years, as well. Dallas, Fort Worth, the DART system and Dallas-Fort Worth airport have some of the nation’s most established and dynamic programs. Numerous suburban cities, including neighbors Allen and Frisco, have taken steps to include public art in their civic, park and transportation projects.

The process for developing McKinney’s Public Art Master Plan involved a significant amount of consultation with City elected leaders and staff; arts, business and civic leaders; and the community at large. The basic steps involved talking with a range of people about the overall aspirations for public art in McKinney, conducting a visual inventory of existing artworks and potential sites for new artworks, developing principles and criteria for selecting project sites, and honing a list of priority projects, complete with goals, budgets and strategies for moving forward.

The process involved several levels of public outreach. The consulting team conducted numerous direct interviews and roundtable discussions with stakeholders. They led a tour of art programs in Allen and Frisco, to provide context about how other cities are approaching public art. They organized a public workshop, *Imagine Art Here!*, at which about 40 residents explored possibilities for projects throughout the City. These conversations surfaced

ideas about what the big-picture vision for public art might be, as well as specific suggestions about possible locations for artworks.

McKinney's Arts Commission will focus on three key strategies for these early years of the City's Public Art Program. First, it will focus on several key projects that it can support through fundraising. Second, it will develop supportive relationships with City departments around strategic thinking, planning and implementation related to future public art projects. Third, it will encourage developers and institutions to consider public art as a component of their projects. In addition, the Commission will establish baseline practices for public outreach and documentation of projects. This Public Art Master Plan, through its recommendations for key projects and for managing the program effectively, provides a foundation for moving forward on all of these tracks.

## VISION, GOALS

### A Vision for McKinney's Public Art Program

McKinney's Public Art Program starts with this big-picture view of the City's aspirations for itself and its expectations for public art:

*The McKinney Public Art Program will create innovative artistic experiences that strengthen gathering places for McKinney residents, reinforce the high quality and uniqueness of the City's built and natural environment, and set McKinney apart as a place to visit, live and do business.*

This vision for public art rests on three central principles that are important to the community and were voiced repeatedly during the planning process: "community place making," "civic design" and "tourism and economic development." Each principle reveals different opportunities and suggests different emphases and priorities for the public art program.

**Community Place Making:** Public art should help create gathering places for McKinney residents, connect people with the place and with each other, and provide engaging, educative experiences.

**Civic Design:** Public art should reinforce the high quality of the City's built environment and reflect the uniqueness of its natural landscape; mark important civic features such as streams, civic facilities and infrastructure; enhance the City's appeal, image and identity in the eyes of residents and businesses; and encourage excellence in private development.

**Tourism and Economic Development:** Public art should create innovative artistic experiences that attract visitors from outside the City, enhance the desirability of McKinney as a place to live and do business, make the creative energy of the City palpable to anyone who visits and elevate the image of McKinney as a cultural destination with unique offerings.

### Five-Year Goals

As the Arts Commission mobilizes McKinney's Public Art Program, it will keep in mind the following overarching goals for the next five years.

- Commission two or more new artworks, in a variety of artistic approaches and a range of contexts throughout the City.
- Raise enough funding to support the commissioning and maintenance of these projects.
- Develop supportive relationships with City departments around strategic thinking and planning related to future public art projects.
- Establish baseline community outreach and communications protocols about the McKinney public art collection
- Create informational materials and build collaborative relationships with the Planning Department that encourage and support public art in private development.

## PUBLIC ART OPPORTUNITIES

Over the next five years, much of the Arts Commission's focus will be on planning, raising money for and commissioning a new generation of public artworks for McKinney. The projects that have been recommended and the approach that is taken to planning and commissioning them are important because they will set the tone for McKinney's Public Art Program for years to come.

### Project Criteria

The following specific criteria provided a framework for evaluating each public art opportunity more closely. They can also be used to evaluate new opportunities that arise after the Public Art Master Plan is completed.

- **Site:** Is the site available for the placement of art? Are there technical constraints that would prevent this from being a good site?
- **Process:** Are there any changes happening at the site in the near term (such as public improvements or private development) that would provide an opportunity to commission or place work there?
- **Impact:** Does the site lend itself well to commissioning or placing a work of art? Could a project at the site have a strong visual impact? Does the site get sufficient traffic that would result in the artwork being viewed by a large number of people?

### Program Priorities

The evaluation of project ideas in terms of the criteria and priorities above resulted in seventeen projects that the Arts Commission could consider for the next few years. The following strategies guided the prioritization of the projects for the Arts Commission's first cycle of commissions. They also articulate outcomes against which the Public Art Program's progress can be evaluated:

- Focus on "quick wins" – projects that can be implemented effectively over the next few years, have a foundation of public and City support and can be supported through private fundraising.
- Make sure that projects are geographically dispersed, not concentrated in one area of the City, and that they are located in places where they can be experienced by a broad section of the community.
- Commission work that is legible and accessible, reflects the spirit of McKinney and helps set McKinney apart from its neighbors.
- Generate work that reflects a mix of public art approaches, styles and media.

### Project Categories

The prioritization of project ideas led to the creation of five categories of projects. The categories relate to how the projects might actually proceed and the role that the Arts Commission might play in bringing them to fruition.

Some projects could be undertaken by the Arts Commission over the next five years, with private fundraising and small allocations from the Arts Commission's budget. Others would move forward only when an underlying City capital project advances or when the Arts Commission and the City are able to secure more funding than is likely

to be obtained through private fundraising. Others would move forward through partnerships with other organizations, with the Arts Commission playing a technical or advisory role.

- *Near-term projects.* These are high priority opportunities for which the McKinney Arts Commission will raise funds and on which it will begin working immediately.
- *Mid-term projects.* These are also considered high priority opportunities, but will require a further City commitment in order to be realized.
- *Long-term projects.* These are opportunities that the McKinney Arts Commission will keep in mind for the next five-year work plan.
- *Watch list projects.* These are City capital projects that may be strong candidates for public art, but are still in the planning phases and their timing is uncertain. When these projects move into design stages, they would become “mid-term” projects, and opportunities for public art should be discussed.
- *Collaborations.* These are projects that may be led by others – developers, nonprofit cultural organizations, homeowners associations – who will look to the McKinney Arts Commission for guidance and support.

## Near-Term Projects

### Alleyscapes

One block off of the main square in downtown McKinney, in each direction, there is a narrow street that is effectively an alleyway because of its scale and orientation to the backs of buildings. This network of streets is frequently utilized by pedestrians, mostly for walking from parking into downtown. It includes Cloyd Street between Kentucky Street and Johnson Street, Johnson Street between Louisiana Street and Herndon Street, Herndon Street between Wood Street and Johnson Street, and Wood Street between Virginia Street and Herndon Street. All of these blocks fall within the jurisdiction of the Commercial Historic District and/or the Historic Preservation Overlay District.

### PUBLIC ART OPPORTUNITY

The buildings along these streets can become a canvas for art installations that turn the streets into places for creative exploration, strengthen pedestrian connections and highlight McKinney's historic character.

For the first phase of projects, we recommend commissioning one to three murals, which, if installed properly could have a life expectancy of fifteen years before they need to be restored. These murals could be thought of as a series or collection, and therefore might relate to each other either through the medium and format and/or an overarching idea or theme to which artists are asked to respond. The murals should be oriented towards a pedestrian audience, and therefore should largely be confined to the first story of the building façade. The murals should be located on buildings where:

- The alley is heavily used by pedestrians, such as where the alleys intersect the main streets or are used by pedestrians to connect from parking areas to main streets.
- There is a willing property owner.
- The mural would not impede or conflict with existing signage.
- The wall would not require cost-prohibitive repair work prior to installation.

### GOALS

- Enhance the experience of using the alleys, making them feel more intentional and safe.
- Create better connections between parking areas and downtown retail blocks.
- Create visual surprises for people who are visiting downtown McKinney.

### NEXT STEPS

The Arts Commission should develop an Individual Project Plan for this project. The first step would be to identify possible sites, which would depend on permissions, technical feasibility and the curatorial idea behind the project. The second step would be to develop a curatorial idea around which the murals would be organized. With that information, a budget and artist selection process could be outlined and the Individual Project Plan could be completed.

More specifically:

- Contact property owner(s) of the top priority walls to assess their willingness to host murals on their buildings.  
In addition, develop a standard agreement with the property owners that gives the City an easement for the mural and outlines the responsibilities and rights of each party, including the artist. This agreement may need to be completed before property owners agree to allow their walls to be used.
- Conduct a preliminary assessment of the walls to see what type of preparation will be necessary to ready the wall for installing a mural, and the costs associated with preparing the walls.
- Consider a curatorial focus for the mural series. Are the murals to be thought of as a collection? If so, what holds them together? Is there a theme, organizing idea, or focus for the collection?

The Arts Commission should also coordinate with the City's Historic Preservation Officer, as façade alterations in these blocks would require a Certificate of Appropriateness.

### ARTIST SELECTION APPROACH

The McKinney Arts Commission should issue a Request for Qualifications to develop an Artist Roster for the Alleyscapes murals. The Artist Roster would be juried initially by a Selection Panel. Then, for each individual project, the same Selection Panel would use the Artist Roster to select an artist for the project. Artists would be selected based upon their qualifications, focusing on their past work and their ability to create an artwork appropriate to the site. If artists do not have previous experience with murals, outside help may be needed to provide technical expertise regarding methods for applying the mural and/or curatorial expertise regarding how to translate their artwork in terms of scale and site. Once selected, the artists would begin work on Concept Designs for their specific sites.

### BUDGET RANGE

Budget up to \$20,000 per mural. The actual cost would vary depending on the size of the mural. The budget estimate does not include any repair that may need to take place to prepare the wall for installation, or maintenance after the mural is complete. The estimate does include design, materials and application of the mural, and any supplies or equipment necessary to apply the design. Certain costs for the project might be shared with the building owner.

## Towne Lake Sculpture Trail

Towne Lake Recreation Area is a community-scale park along Wilson Creek in east McKinney that is popular for recreational activities and the special events that occur there. The main feature of the 108-acre park is a 22-acre lake. and it also includes a wide range of facilities – hike and bike trails, two picnic pavilions, a playground, two sand volleyball courts, nine lighted horseshoe courts, a fishing pier, paddle boat rentals , restrooms and concession service. Special events include fireworks, summer concerts and a trout derby. The park is located at 1405 Wilson Creek Parkway, across the street from McKinney High School, and is part of a chain of parks that occupy most of the corridor of Wilson Creek between the southeast City boundary and Highway 380.

## PUBLIC ART OPPORTUNITY

Towne Lake is encircled by a 1.2 mile long loop trail that is heavily used and is a key segment of the Wilson Creek hike–bike trail corridor. It is already popular with joggers as well as tree enthusiasts, who have mapped a “trail of trees” highlighting a variety of species. Works of art can be commissioned or acquired and placed along the trail to create a sculpture-trail experience as well. The collection can be added to over time, allowing it to grow and respond to user patterns that emerge after the first pieces are installed.

There are certain important planning considerations. Most of the trail is in the floodway, and a segment of it is in the 100-year floodplain, so the placement, foundation and design of the works themselves will need to be coordinated with the City’s Floodplain Manager and the City Engineering Department. Also, the artworks should be located along segments of the trail that comply with accessibility requirements, and located in a manner that minimizes conflicts with joggers, rollerbladers and other active recreation users of the trail.

## PUBLIC ART GOALS

- Create an amenity for people who currently use Towne Lake Park and its trails, as well as a new reason for people to visit the park.
- Create visual reference points that draw people along the trail and through the park.

## NEXT STEPS

The following issues should be explored prior to initiating the project:

Develop a curatorial focus for the sculpture trail. If the sculpture along the trail is to be thought of as a collection, what holds it together? Is there a theme, organizing idea, or focus for the collection? What experience should people have as they walk, run or bike along the trail?

Develop an overall strategy for placing art along the trail. Where are the ideal locations, what will sightlines be like, how many sites are optimal and which sites would be worked on first?

Consult with the City’s Floodplain Manager and the City Engineering Department regarding appropriate locations, media and foundation needs for works in the Floodway and Floodplain.

Consult with the City’s Parks, Recreation Department and Open Space (PROS) staff regarding coordination in planning, site preparation, installation and maintenance of artworks.

### ARTIST SELECTION APPROACH

Works of art at Towne Lake Park should be commissioned specifically for their sites. Artists should be solicited through a Request for Qualifications. Up to five finalists should be selected to develop Design Concept proposals, from which the final selection would be made.

### BUDGET RANGE

A minimum budget of \$50,000, and up to \$100,000 should be considered for each artwork. This budget would include the cost of design, fabrication and installation of the artwork, as well as modest design fees for the finalist artists. The budget estimate does not include foundations and site work, which can be estimated when sites are selected.

## Mid-Term Projects

### Highway 5 Gateway

The intersection of Spur 399 and SH 5 is an increasingly important gateway to McKinney. Currently, many people use the Sam Rayburn Tollway / Highway 121 to reach McKinney, and an increasing number continue from the Tollway to Spur 399 and connect to Highway 5 to reach downtown. In the coming years, as SH 5 / McDonald Street is upgraded into an attractive urban boulevard, this will become an even more popular route.

#### PUBLIC ART OPPORTUNITY

This intersection is appropriate for an artwork that marks a major entry into McKinney and becomes a potent symbol for the City, while being responsive to the landscape and the scale of the site. It is dominated by a large grassy area, with a gentle slope and a stand of ornamental Crape Myrtles, that would be an appropriate backdrop for an artwork. The artist should be asked to consider creating a work that fills the site horizontally as well as having a vertical presence adequate to be viewed by passing cars. The work could easily be situated to complement the existing Crape Myrtle grove.

#### GOALS

- Create a memorable visual enhancement for the intersection, letting people know that they have arrived in a community that cares about quality art and design.
- Develop a design approach that specifically addresses the broad, open character of the site and the drive-by nature of the experience.
- Reflect the City's "unique by nature" motto through natural and organic forms and materials.

#### NEXT STEPS

Prior to initiating the project, the City should consult with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) and the North Texas Tollway Authority (NTTA), as necessary, regarding the technical guidelines, review process and coordination process for placing public art in its right-of-way.

#### ARTIST SELECTION APPROACH

Artists should be solicited through a Request for Qualifications. Due to the complexity and scale of this project, three to five artists should be interviewed and the final artist should be selected based upon their qualifications and general approach to the project.

#### BUDGET RANGE

A minimum budget of \$150,000 should be considered for this artwork. This budget estimate includes the cost of design, fabrication and installation of the artwork. It does not include the costs of site preparation, foundations or lighting, which can be determined when a specific site is determined and a project concept is developed.

### **Gabe Nesbitt Park Gathering Place**

Gabe Nesbitt Community Park is a major regional recreation facility at the intersection of Eldorado Parkway and Alma Road. The park is generally used by people from a broad area of the City who are visiting to take part in a specific sports activity. In addition, the trails are being used increasingly by park neighbors.

The park currently features softball, baseball and tennis complexes. A new skate park and two additional baseball fields are currently under construction. Future phases of the park will include additional sports fields and trails. The park is also a proposed location for an aquatic center, and possibly a recreation center.

The park is located near other community facilities and connected to them by trails. The John and Judy Gay Library is located in the northeast section of the park. Serenity Park, Evans Middle School and Wolford Elementary School are across Eldorado Parkway.

### **PUBLIC ART OPPORTUNITY**

Public art in Gabe Nesbitt Community Park should be located in places that are already active with park users and that have good linkages to the internal trail system. A large number of visitors come to the park because their family members are playing on one of the sports fields. For these visitors, artworks in the area of the sports facilities would heighten their enjoyment of the park by giving them something to do besides watching sports. Possible locations include one of the lawn areas at the center of the softball complex on the west side of the park, or near the baseball fields on the east side of the park. The artworks should be engaging, interactive and related to sports and recreation, but not necessarily about sports.

Over time, there may be the opportunity to incorporate artwork in this manner into multiple destination points within the park.

### **GOALS**

- Create amenities or focal points that strengthen gathering places in different areas of the park.
- Appeal to a broader group of users than those who are coming to the park to participate in sports activities.
- Reflect the child and family-friendly nature of the park.

### **ARTIST SELECTION APPROACH**

Artists should be solicited through a Request for Qualifications and up to five finalists should be selected to develop Design Concept proposals.

### **BUDGET RANGE**

A budget of between \$75,000 and \$125,000 should be considered for this project. This budget would include the cost of design, fabrication and installation of the artwork, but would not include foundations, site work and lighting, which could be determined after a site is identified and a concept is developed. Because the sites under consideration are currently open lawn, more extensive site work such as seating and landscaping may be needed to create an artwork that serves as a gathering place and focal point. The site work should be part of the artist's design, but done in consultation with the City to ensure it meets with the City's ability to contribute to this part of the project.

### **Bonnie Wenk Park Gathering Place**

Bonnie Wenk Park is a new park under development just east of Hardin Boulevard. Its first phase, just north of Virginia Parkway, will be complete in the spring of 2013. The park is heavily wooded and will mostly be passive use. The 38-acre first phase includes a dog park, amphitheater, walking trails and a pond. The park will eventually grow to 200 acres and will include ballfields. Wilson Creek and the Wilson Creek Hike and Bike Trail run through the park.

#### **PUBLIC ART OPPORTUNITY**

Artistic features at special gathering places in the park can reinforce the uniqueness of those places. The best opportunity in the first phase of park development is a grass lawn between the amphitheater and the parking area. An artwork there could be oriented along the walking trail that leads people to the pond and amphitheater and could also be visible from the parking lot. A specific site could be identified by the Arts Commission in collaboration with Parks, Recreation and Open Space staff prior to initiating the project. Alternatively, an artist could be invited to explore this area of the park and create a Concept Design for a site of their choosing.

#### **GOALS**

- Create an amenity or focal point that strengthens this area of the park as a gathering place.
- Mark a transition between the parking and park destination.

#### **ARTIST SELECTION APPROACH**

Artists should be solicited through a Request for Qualifications and up to five finalists should be selected to develop Design Concept proposals.

#### **BUDGET RANGE**

A budget of between \$75,000 and \$125,000 should be considered for this project. This budget would include the cost of design, fabrication and installation of the artwork. It would not include foundations, site work or lighting, which could be determined after a site is identified and a concept is developed. Because the recommended site will be constructed as open lawn, more extensive site work, such as grading, landscaping and/or seating, may be necessary to create an artistic setting that serves as a gathering place and focal point. The site work should be part of the artist's design, but done in consultation with the City to ensure it meets with the City's ability to contribute to this part of the project.

## Long-Term Projects

### Mitchell Park

Dr. Glenn Mitchell Memorial Park is a one-acre urban park located downtown, two blocks west of the square. Mitchell Park features a fountain, benches, grassy lawns and a sculpture, and the streets surrounding it have on-street parking. The park is located at the edge of the downtown retail area and is used mostly for quiet and passive activities, although it hosts an occasional civic event, such as the lighting of the City's Christmas tree. It also offers something of a gateway or an arrival point to visitors arriving from the west along Louisiana Street.

Mitchell Park would be a good location for a new public artwork, but only in the context of a broader re-imagining of the park, because artworks, to be successful here, should be thoughtfully integrated into the function and the design of the place. One option would be to create a gateway-style artwork on the Louisiana Street side of the park. A gateway artwork should catch the eye of drivers arriving downtown and create a memorable moment; it might also have a landscape component. Another option would be to create an artwork that serves as a functional element, such as a terrace or a shade structure, in a part of the park where people actively gather. In either case, consideration should be given to relocating the sculpture that is already located in the park to another place, such as Chestnut Square, where its scale would be more appropriate.

The primary goal of a gateway artwork would be to create a strong and memorable moment of arrival for downtown. The primary goal of an artwork that also serves as a functional element would be to provide a place in which people could immerse themselves in space of creativity through the experience of texture, color, material and light. In either case, because of the prominent civic nature of this space, an important goal for the artwork would be to capture the spirit of McKinney in an iconic way.

### Virginia / Louisiana Gateway

As visitors to downtown McKinney approach from the west along Virginia Parkway, the road splits and eastbound traffic is directed one-way onto Louisiana Street. This occurs at the point where the urban pattern transitions from conventional suburban strip development to the texture of downtown's historic residential neighborhoods. The splitting of the streets creates a triangular open space that has become a perceptual entry into downtown, and already includes a modest, attractive welcome marker for downtown. The marker is located in City right-of-way. The landscaped site to the east is owned by the neighboring First Baptist Church of McKinney.

This site would be an appropriate location for a larger-scale artwork that serves as an entry marker to downtown. The effect should not only be to welcome visitors but also to slow people down and transition them from the highway into the residential environment. Given that the site is already nicely landscaped, it would be especially appropriate for an artwork that reflects the City's "unique by nature" motto through natural, organic or arching forms.

### **Finch Park**

Finch Park, just south of downtown McKinney, is the City's oldest park. It is a popular community gathering place and features a variety of recreational features, from basketball and tennis courts to a mile-long loop trail.

The City is upgrading the park incrementally based on a master plan that was completed in 2010; most recently a picnic pavilion / shade structure was replaced. Public art should be considered in future phases of the park's upgrade, particularly in relation to facilities that promote community gathering and "functional fun," such as the splash park, stage area or pavilion. This is also a good location for interpretive artwork that helps to tell the history of McKinney and the park. Finally there is an opportunity for an environmental artwork or outdoor classroom type of project that relates to the riparian corridor that passes through the park. A decision about what type of project and approach to follow would also benefit from early community input, before the project plan is finalized and an artist selection process begins.

### **Old Settler's Park and Recreation Center**

Old Settlers Park is a heavily used, 29-acre park east of downtown (1201 East Louisiana Street) that features ball fields, an aquatic center and a recreation center with a boxing gym, among other community facilities.

Determining the best option for an artwork here would require better understanding of user patterns, review of long-term plans for park improvements and consultation with the community. Public art at Old Settler's can enhance gathering spaces, and foster community pride, ownership and a sense of belonging. Potential directions include artworks integrated with park elements, such as play sculpture or picnic shelters, and a two-dimensional project on the exterior of the recreation center building.

## Watch List Projects

### **New City Hall**

The City has discussed a long-range plan to build a new City Hall, although the location and timing of such a project have not been established. This project, should it occur, would be a strong candidate for public art. Public art at the new City Hall could make an important civic statement about people's pride in their community and serve as a symbol of the City's identity and spirit.

### **Collin County Regional Airport Terminal**

The City has discussed a long-range plan to build a terminal for Collin County Regional Airport, although the location and timing of such a project have not been established. This project, should the City proceed with it, would be a strong candidate for public art. Public art at the new airport terminal could celebrate McKinney's connections to the world beyond and the City's success as a business center.

### **Aquatic and Recreation Center(s)**

The City has discussed a long-range plan to build a new aquatic, and possibly a new recreational center, at Gabe Nesbitt Community Park, although the timing of such a project or projects has not been established. These facilities would be a strong candidate for public art. Public art at the new aquatic center and recreation center could express McKinney's community identity, capture the spirit of aquatics and recreation and help anchor the facilities even more strongly in the community's life.

### **Erwin Park**

Erwin Park, north of U.S. 380, features natural wooded areas, mountain bike trails, a fishing area, picnic pavilions, playgrounds, a camping area and large amounts of undeveloped space. The master plan for the park envisions a place where opportunities for outdoor activity are balanced with areas where people can explore the different native environments of McKinney.

As Erwin Park evolves, it should be considered a candidate for public art. One opportunity is to commission artworks with features, such as the proposed amphitheatre, that will be focal points of activity. Another opportunity is to invite environmental artists to create projects that reflect the park's focus on providing visitors with an experience of indigenous landscape.

## Collaborations

### Downtown Temporary Exhibitions

McKinney's historic downtown is a walkable place with attractive architecture and engaging shopping and dining opportunities. While the Alleyscape project would create gateways into downtown for people parking in the lots behind the buildings, temporary artworks could add another layer of life to the streets in and around the square. This is a strategy that is commonly used in urban public spaces, from parks to business districts to airports.

Every year, McKinney might sponsor a new temporary work of art – or a series of artworks – somewhere in the historic downtown. The artworks should be calibrated to surprise and delight, thereby adding a new layer of interest in downtown McKinney for visitors. In order to undertake this project, the Arts Commission might need to collaborate with Historic Downtown McKinney or an organization that is experienced in organizing temporary art projects.

### Towne Lake Temporary Exhibitions

Towne Lake Park is described above as a priority location for new commissions or acquisitions, which could be organized over time into a sculpture trail along the paths that encircle the lake. In addition to permanent commissions, the Arts Commission could also consider staging temporary exhibitions in the same areas. By presenting rotating artworks, the Arts Commission could turn the display of sculpture into more of an exhibition, which would create a sense of anticipation and change in the park and help build audiences. As with downtown temporary art, an exhibition would require a partnership with a gallery or an arts organization experienced in organizing outdoor sculpture displays.

### U.S. 75 Gateway

Gateway, a 90-acre site northeast of the U.S. 75 and SH 121 interchange, is owned by the City through the McKinney Economic Development Corporation and is being developed for office, education, hotel and meeting facilities. Collin College and Emerson Process Management are anchor tenants. The City has just entered into an agreement with a developer for the hotel and conference center.

The new hotel and conference center are key opportunities for public art. Artwork integrated into the buildings' architecture could create a significant gateway presence, especially for drivers arriving in McKinney along the elevated roadways at the U.S. 75 – SH 121 interchange. Artwork could also be commissioned for the conference center itself, creating an iconic centerpiece for a gathering space that will likely be seen by tens of thousands of people a year.

Artwork in these locations would require a collaborative approach involving the hotel and conference center developer and manager.

### Downtown Infill

The City is seeking development proposals for various City-owned parcels around downtown, primarily around the site of the former County Government center and in the blocks between Wysong Central Fire Station and City Hall. As proposals are received and reviewed, the City should encourage proponents to embrace the

recommendations for public art that are in the McKinney Town Center district. Public art in this area could create local landmarks (recommended on Chestnut Street in the Town Center Study Initiative) as well as an engaging, walkable public environment and public spaces.

## PRIVATE DEVELOPER COMMISSIONED ART

The City of McKinney encourages commercial developers to include public art in their projects as a design enhancement, or to contribute to the City's Public Art Trust Fund. Public art in private development helps to advance the key components of the City's public art vision – community place making, civic design and tourism/economic development. By including public art in their projects, developers can help strengthen the quality and character of McKinney's built environment, and the value of the community as a place to live, visit and do business.

Already, developers of several large-scale residential, commercial and institutional projects throughout McKinney are enhancing the character and image of their developments by voluntarily commissioning or acquiring artworks for their projects. Most of these artworks are documented in the *Inventory of Public Art in McKinney*, developed as part of this master plan process.

McKinney's development code does not include any formal requirements for including public art in new projects. Rather, development standards for the Town Center district and for the REC provide specific guidance about the types of locations where public art would be most appropriate as an urban design feature or public amenity.

### Opportunities for Encouraging Public Art in Private Development

There are several circumstances in which the Arts Commission should actively advocate for the strongest consideration to be given including public art in private development.

1. From time to time, the City issues RFPs for underdeveloped City-owned land or enters into development agreements for such sites, and has broad discretion to set the expectations for what development partners should provide. These tend to be in high-profile locations, such as the areas adjacent to the historic downtown. If and when the City issues an RFP in the future, the City should urge the inclusion of public art as one of the design enhancements and public benefit that it is seeking.
2. The new development regulations for the Town Center and the REC districts indicate situations in which public art would be most appropriate. These include considering public art as gateway features or focal points for public spaces.
3. Large institutional developments, such as educational and health care facilities, may regard the incorporation of public art as supporting their organizational mission. In these circumstances, the City should encourage public access to as much of the artwork as possible.

### What the Arts Commission Can Do

The McKinney Arts Commission should be prepared to encourage all developers to incorporate public art into their projects, and to provide assistance to the extent possible.

1. The Arts Commission should develop clear and compelling tools that describe to developers how they can include public art in their projects in the manner that is described in the REC and Town Center Study Initiative. These tools could include regionally-specific case studies of how developers have

- approached art in private development. These case studies could be formatted as a short publication or visual presentation and could be developed in collaboration with neighboring municipalities.
2. The Arts Commission should develop a simple set of standards and practices that communicate the City's values for public art in private development. These could be derived from the standards and practices in McKinney's *Public Art Program Administrative Guidelines*, and offered to developers to be followed on a voluntary basis.
  3. The Arts Commission should provide developers with information about how they can obtain professional fine art and public art services to help them formulate and commission their projects.

## Reviewing Proposals for Public Art in Private Development

Generally, public art components of private development projects would be reviewed through the same mechanisms that are in place to review the other design aspects of the projects.

For projects being developed in the REC and Town Center districts, the review would involve the staff Development Review Committee, the Planning Commission and the City Council.

For projects being developed through development agreements with the City, the Arts Commission should play a participatory role with the DRC, Planning Commission and Council. The Commission should:

1. Develop a simple set of guidelines that communicate best practices for public art in private development. These standards and practices should include:
  - The artist should meet definition of artist that is included in this plan.
  - The artist should be chosen through a competitive process that considers professional qualifications, not price.
  - The artwork should respond to the specific goals and objectives of the design guidelines under which it is being developed (e.g., Town Center form-based code or REC design guidelines).
  - The artwork should demonstrate excellence in aesthetic quality, workmanship and creativity.
  - The artwork should be appropriate to the site in scale and form, and be of materials/media that are suitable for the site.
  - Maintenance and conservation protocols should be considered as the project is being developed, should be clearly recorded and should be committed to by the owner of the artwork.
  - The artwork should be included in the City's Public Art Inventory as "privately placed public art."
2. When appropriate, assist in the development of site-specific goals or guidelines for public art.
3. Provide access to support resources for developers who wish to commission artwork. These resources could include guidance on selecting artists, examples of artist contracts and approaches to maintenance and conservation.

## Interpreting and Conserving Public Art

The Arts Commission should encourage developers to voluntarily list their artworks on the Arts Commission's Public Art Inventory. This would enable the Arts Commission to:

1. Maintain accurate records about McKinney's cultural resources.

2. Include the artworks in the public information that is disseminated about public art in McKinney.
3. Monitor artworks for maintenance and conservation issues and inform the developer when issues arise.

## PUBLIC OUTREACH AND DOCUMENTATION

The success of a public art program lies not only with the commissioning of new work but also with the level of audience engagement, interaction and benefits the work engenders.

### Public Engagement

The McKinney Arts Commission should establish a baseline protocol for public engagement while it is commissioning or acquiring art. This would include posting information about projects under development, engagement with artists while projects are in development, dedication ceremonies and periodic public events on topics related to public art in McKinney.

### Public Art Inventory

The McKinney Arts Commission should continue its effort to create a Public Art Inventory that documents all publicly accessible artwork in McKinney, including the City's growing Public Art Collection, the City's Portable Collection and Privately Placed Public Art.

In addition to maintaining thorough records about all newly commissioned and acquired work, the Arts Commission also should consolidate information about all works in the Public Art Collection and Portable Collection into this database. The Commission should also make an effort to keep records on Privately Placed Public Art, to ensure that knowledge about these works is maintained even if property should change hands over time.

This inventory should become part of the City's record-keeping because:

- it will help improve public understanding of and access to artworks in McKinney,
- it can provide an important archive for information that is often poorly documented and
- it can support future conservation and maintenance efforts.

Once documented, this information should be made available to the public on the City's website in a user-friendly format.

## APPENDIX A: PLANNING PROCESS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### Planning Process

The process for developing McKinney's Public Art Master Plan involved a significant amount of consultation with City elected leaders and staff; arts, business and civic leaders; and the community at large. The basic steps involved talking with a range of people about the overall aspirations for public art in McKinney, conducting a visual inventory of existing artworks and potential sites for new artworks, developing principles and criteria for selecting project sites, and honing a list of priority projects, complete with goals, budgets and strategies for moving forward.

*Voicing Aspirations and Articulating a Vision.* The consulting team began by exploring a basic question: What are the overall aspirations for public art in McKinney? The team conducted numerous direct interviews and roundtable discussions that included the Mayor and Council members, Arts Commission members and downtown McKinney business and property owners, artists and creative professionals from throughout the City. The team organized a trolley tour of art programs in neighboring Allen and Frisco, to provide context about how cities in the Metroplex are approaching public art. The team also organized a public workshop, *Imagine Art Here!*, at which about 40 residents explored possibilities for projects throughout the City. These conversations surfaced ideas about what the big-picture vision for public art might be, as well as numerous specific suggestions about possible locations for artworks.

*Identifying Opportunities.* Next, the team began to evaluate the opportunities for new public art projects in McKinney. Its first step was to review City plans – the comprehensive plan, long-range plans, area plans for the Town Center and Regional Employment Center, and master plans for various parks – and discuss them with City staff responsible for long-range planning, current planning, capital project planning and capital project management. The team visited all areas of the City and made repeated visits to locations suggested as possibilities for artworks. These included places described as gateways, areas scheduled for new parks, existing parks that are being upgraded, hike and bike trails, master planned areas being managed by private developers, and sites the City owns and is trying to develop through partnerships.

*Evaluating Options.* As this work progressed, the team began to compare the big-picture visions that were expressed to us with the opportunities that people recommended. With the help of the project's steering group, the team developed sets of criteria for prioritizing these opportunities, and using those criteria, developed a list of about 20 ideas. The team brought these ideas to the community in a public workshop, "*Imagine Art Here!*" which was attended by about 40 people. At that workshop, the team was able to gain even more insight into those locations, discuss specific possibilities and goals for artwork in those locations and get a further sense of the community's priorities.

*Finalizing a Vision and Priorities.* The team then refined the ideas list further, presenting the Arts Commission and the steering group with three scenarios that reflected different approaches to the Public Art Program – one focused on community place making, one on civic design and one on economic development and tourism. In that public work session, the Commission gave final direction on the big-picture vision for the public art program, as well as the prioritization of projects, both of which are reflected in this master plan.

## Acknowledgements

The City of McKinney Public Art Master Plan is the product of the hard work and creative input of many people. We appreciate the thoughtfulness, time and energy contributed by numerous volunteers and representatives from the City.

### The McKinney City Council

Mayor Brian Loughmiller  
Don Day, District 1  
Geraldyn Keever, District 2  
Mayor Pro Tem Travis Ussery, District 3  
Ray Ricchi, District 4  
Roger Harris, At Large  
David Brooks, At Large

### The McKinney Arts Commission

Linda Spina, Chair  
Hamilton Doak, Vice Chair  
Matthew Bado  
Sherry Tucker  
Janet Farr  
Pamela Harden  
Beth McGuire

### The Public Art Master Plan Advisory Committee

Matthew Bado, McKinney Arts Commission  
Cindy Evans, resident  
Karen Klassen, McKinney Main Street Board  
Gail McLaughlin, artist  
Dori Momers, RTKL Associates  
Tracy Rath, McKinney Community Development Corporation  
Linda Spina, McKinney Arts Commission  
Sherry Tucker, McKinney Arts Commission

#### From the City of McKinney:

Ross Altobelli, Planning Manager  
Jenny Baker, Senior Park Planner  
Emily Braht, Landscape Architect  
Guy Giersch, Historic Preservation Officer  
Patricia Jackson, Facilities Construction Manager

### Imagine Art Here Participants

Aretha Adams  
Toni Andrukaitis  
Connie Baldazo  
Jenny Baker  
Sandra Bell  
Stephen Brainerd  
Juan Carlos  
Sarah Christie  
Don Day  
Hamilton Doak  
Pernie Fallon  
Janet Farr  
Pamela Hardin  
Corey A. Hendon  
David Hobson  
Stephanie Hobson  
Pat Johnson  
Deborah Kilgore  
George Lodge  
Brian Magnuin  
Jill McAaram  
Michael McEntire  
Tom Michero  
Richard Pedretti-Allen  
John Patton  
Annie Royer  
Pete Samsury  
Linda Spina  
Terree Stone  
Jeni Tomlinson  
Wendy Walker-Davis

### **Artist Roundtable Participants**

Elaine K. Adams  
K.D. Hafley  
Barbara Johnson  
Cindy Johnson  
Amanda Kelly  
Sona Knox  
Risa LaBarge  
Gayle Ledbetter  
Gail McLaughlin  
Silky Hart Michero  
Tom Michero  
Cate Robbins  
L.C. Tobey  
Lynne Weinberger

### **Main Street Roundtable Participants**

Merry Caroline Canter  
Jake Dobscha  
Johnny Galyean  
Karen Klassen  
Ty Lake  
Linda Fogg  
Karen Dawkin  
Bonnie Shafto  
Jodi Ann LaFreniere  
Jan Elwell  
CoCo Good  
Jan Temples  
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Kathleen Stewart, City of Frisco

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Stephen Brainerd, Park Development Superintendent  
Rob Daake, Deputy City Manager  
Ty Lake, McKinney Main Street/MPAC Director  
Lemuel Randolph, Director of Parks, Recreation and  
Open Space  
Michael Quint, Director of Planning

## APPENDIX B: CHART OF PROJECTS

|  | GOALS   | BUDGET ESTIMATE                   |
|--|---|-----------------------------------|
| NEAR-TERM PROJECTS                         |   |                                   |
| Alleyscapes                                | <p>Enhance the experience of using the alleys, making them feel more intentional and safe.</p> <p>Create better connections between parking areas and downtown retail blocks.</p> <p>Create visual surprises for people who are visiting downtown McKinney.</p>   | Up to \$20,000 per mural          |
| Towne Lake Recreation Area Sculpture Trail | <p>Create an amenity for people who currently use Towne Lake Park and its trails, as well as a new reason for people to visit the park.</p> <p>Create visual reference points that draw people along the trail and through the park.</p>  | \$50,000 to \$100,000 per artwork |
|  |   |                                   |
| MID-TERM PROJECTS                          |   |                                   |
| Highway 5 Gateway                          | <p>Create a memorable visual enhancement for the intersection, letting people know that they have arrived in a community that cares about quality art and design.</p> <p>Develop a design approach that specifically addresses the broad, open character of the site and the drive-by nature of the experience.</p> <p>Reflect the City's "unique by nature" motto through natural and organic forms and materials.</p> | \$150,000 to \$250,000            |
| Gabe Nesbitt Gathering Place               | <p>Create amenities or focal points that strengthen gathering places in different areas of the park.</p> <p>Appeal to a broader group of users than those who are coming to the park to participate in sports activities.</p> <p>Reflect the child and family-friendly nature of the park.</p>  | \$75,000 to \$125,000             |

|  |   |                        |
|--|---|------------------------|
| Bonnie Wenk Gathering Place              | <p>Create an amenity or focal point that strengthens this area of the park as a gathering place.</p> <p>Mark a transition between the parking and park destination.</p>   | \$75,000 to \$125,000  |
|  |   |                        |
| LONG-TERM PROJECTS                       |   |                        |
| Mitchell Park                            | <p>Create a strong and memorable moment of arrival for downtown (gateway approach).</p> <p>Provide a place in which people can immerse themselves in a space of creativity (functional element approach).</p> <p>Capture the spirit of McKinney in an iconic way.</p> | \$100,000 to \$200,000 |
| Virginia/Louisiana Gateway               | <p>Welcome visitors to McKinney.</p> <p>Mark the transition to downtown.</p> <p>Reflect the City's "unique by nature" motto through natural, organic or arching forms.</p>  | \$150,000 to \$250,000 |
| Finch Park                               | <p>Add artistry to the design of new park elements.</p> <p>Tell the history of McKinney and the park.</p> <p>Create interactive experiences that appeal to all park users, especially children.</p>   | \$75,000 to \$125,000  |
| Old Settler's Park and Recreation Center | <p>Enhance gathering spaces.</p> <p>Foster community pride, ownership and a sense of belonging.</p>   | \$75,000 to \$125,000  |
|  |   |                        |

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| WATCH LIST PROJECTS                     |  |  |
| New City Hall                           | <p>Make an important civic statement about people’s pride in their community.</p> <p>Serve as a symbol of the City’s identity and spirit.</p>                  |  |
| Collin County Regional Airport Terminal | <p>Welcome people to McKinney.</p> <p>Celebrate McKinney’s connections to the world.</p> <p>Celebrate the City’s success as a business center.</p>             |  |
| Aquatic and Recreation Center(s)        | <p>Express McKinney’s community identity.</p> <p>Capture the spirit of aquatics and recreation.</p> <p>Help anchor the facilities in the community’s life.</p> |  |
| Erwin Park                              | <p>Enhance the park’s gathering spaces.</p> <p>Reflect the park’s focus on providing visitors with an experience of indigenous landscape.</p>                  |  |
|   |  |  |
| COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS                  |  |  |
| Downtown Temporary Exhibitions          | <p>Add a new layer of interest in downtown McKinney for visitors.</p>  |  |
| Towne Lake Temporary Exhibitions        | <p>Create a sense of anticipation and change in the park.</p> <p>Draw people to the park.</p>  |  |
| U.S. 75 Gateway                         | <p>Create an iconic centerpiece that will likely be seen by tens of thousands of people a year.</p>  |  |
| Downtown Infill                         | <p>Create local landmarks.</p> <p>Support the development of an engaging, walkable public environment and public spaces.</p>                                   |  |

APPENDIX C: MAP

