Public Art Master Plan

Johnson County, Kansas
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As a function of County government providing vital public services, the Johnson County Public Art Commission is committed to upholding and implementing the vision of the County as voiced in the “Johnson County 2030: Living our Vision” Plan.

“Johnson County will be a community of choice — an inclusive, culturally and economically diverse community — nationally recognized for its quality of life, innovation, and exceptional leadership.”

Public art plays an important role in this vision by reinforcing our community’s values, often at a deeply individual level. This Master Plan outlines how the Johnson County Public Art Commission will guide the collection and installation of art in public places to realize this vision.
Public Art Commission Master Plan

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The Public Art Commission envisions a Johnson County that acknowledges and harnesses the transformative role the arts can play in defining and redefining places. The Commission believes art should occupy a central place in implementing the Johnson County 2030: Living Our Vision plan. Artists are known as transformers of places — they find value in challenged spaces, create interest through imagining change, and lead conversion into highly desirable places.

Through this Master Plan, the Public Art Commission (PAC) has prioritized artistic activity that seeks to benefit the public life of Johnson County. It is also the PAC’s belief that this strategy not only holds clear benefit for the citizens of the County, but is unique in its ability to make a strong connection between the community’s values and individual citizens and visitors.

Johnson County has the opportunity to let public art provide a service to the County, and that service is to reflect the community’s values, to engage its citizens, to educate and illustrate, to drive activity, to inform, and to inspire.

The task of the Public Art Commission is to enliven the Vision, Mission, and Values ascribed in the 2030 Vision Plan through the individual works of art supported by the program.
What can highly integrated public artworks do for Johnson County?
Suikang Zhao, Youth and Family Services Center

The wall contains imagery including symbols of movement from one place to another, inside/outside, looking to the future, wisdom, growth, growing up, and letting go.

At Youth and Family Services, the artist worked with residents, staff, and Kansas City Art Institute students to create an outdoor wall mural, one of three art pieces within the overall project.


**Transform**

Public art can change the direction of people’s lives, change attitudes and perceptions. Including neighbors, clients, and teachers in the selection, creation and life of the work is one of the key ways to make it a “place” where people want to be. Interpretive educational programs before, during, and after the installation of the work can help this happen.

The Youth and Family Services Center project transformed...

...the kids, by giving them hope for a different future
...the staff, by expanding their job role into an artistic realm
...others involved in the project, by broadening their view of what capacities these kids have
Using a series of pipes connected to fire hydrants and capped with drinking fountains, these temporary artworks set up at fairgrounds and other community gatherings remind citizens of the source of their drinking water.

In projects for the City of Calgary, the artists collaborative group Sans façon demonstrates the value of the watershed and of the water service provided to the community.
Public art can demonstrate and underscore the services the County provides. Through integration with internal communities and sensitivity to context, artworks may publicly and powerfully broadcast the mission and value of a facility or service.

Chicago’s Millennium Park is home to *Cloud Gate*, one of the most-recognized and iconic public art works in the world, drawing tourists who add to the economy.
Identify

Public art can become an icon for a place, often driving economic value.
Saline County, KS Fairgrounds — this unique work invites community participation. Exhibit-goers help fill the air tank by blowing up a balloon and attaching to a post. *Community Air* was later moved to a gas station for citizens to use to fill car tires, soccer balls, and even the football for the homecoming game at the local high school.
Connect

Public art can connect our many cities to each other, to other entities, and to the County.
Sans façon, *Watershed*, City of Calgary

The City embedded the artists collaborative Sans façon in the waterworks department. Water pipes were filled with water from the Bow River, with the quantity of water frozen in each pipe mold approximating the amount of water present in various plants and animals commonly found in the watershed. For mammals and birds, this consisted of about 60% of their total weight, while for fish it was about 80% and for the alpine larch, 50%. The species selected ranged in size from a five-stemmed Alberta rose (the smallest ice column) to a young female grizzly bear (the largest piece of ice).
Educate

Public art can powerfully demonstrate relationships; in this example, the relationship of people and animals to their local watershed.

This garden landscape is located on a rare patch of open, south-facing land in the middle of Manhattan. The residents of Elliott-Chelsea Houses, members of the Hudson Guild community, visiting students, and the general public become more aware of organic growing cycles as they watch the garden evolve through the seasons and years.
Involve

A growing aspect of many public art projects is involvement with the community in creating and sustaining the artwork.
Project Row Houses (PRH) is a neighborhood-based nonprofit art and cultural organization in Houston’s Northern Third Ward, one of the city’s oldest African-American communities. PRH began in 1993 as a result of discussions among African-American artists who wanted to establish a positive, creative presence in their own community. Artist and community activist Rick Lowe spearheaded the pursuit of this vision when he discovered the abandoned 1 1/2 block site of twenty-two shotgun-style houses in Houston’s Third Ward.

The shotgun houses became the perfect opportunity to pursue the creation of a new form of art. They had two key elements: 1) a beautiful form recognized by the renowned Houston artist Dr. John Biggers to be filled with architectural, spiritual, and social significance, and 2) a need for social action among the community to bring the project to life.

Each of these attributes strengthens and supports the County’s guiding principles for “A Culturally Rich and Active Community”

Support efforts to sustain and enhance local and regional assets — arts and cultural programs, libraries, and parks, and recreational facilities — as part of the overall “package” of amenities that contributes to the County’s cultural richness, economic vitality, and quality of life.

Artists can play transformative roles in amplifying and reinforcing the existing quality of life in Johnson County. When public artworks are sensitively integrated to their context, as part of a larger portfolio of civic and economic strategies, they can “drive vibrancy and diversity so powerful that it transforms communities.” An integrated artistic approach considers the social and civic implications of an artwork alongside aesthetic concerns.
Michael Jones McKean, *The Rainbow: Certain Principles of Light and Shapes Between Forms*, Omaha, Nebraska
Guiding Principle: Providing opportunities for all residents to lead healthy and active lifestyles.

Johnson County recognizes the value residents place on high quality parks and recreational facilities and the important role these facilities play in the health and wellness of the community. Continued expansion of and increased access to these facilities will be a priority, with an emphasis on underserved populations and areas of the community.

Artworks and their integration to place produce significant benefit for civic and public life. Placemaking projects engage the whole life of a community. Works may be sited so that they are encountered and explored when citizens are in the midst of daily working and recreational activities. Unconventional works may be designed and installed that encourage active exploration and discovery through the community.
Theaster Gates, *Carver Bank* and Big Mama’s Sandwich Shop, Omaha, Nebraska

A joint effort by Theaster Gates / Rebuild Foundation and the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, Carver Bank is a space of public participation and cultural adventure, providing critical support to artists and the creative economy in the area and throughout the city. Carver Bank hosts regular exhibitions, events, and workshops driven by artists and community partners.

Big Mama’s Sandwich Shop is a new venture of the famed soul food restaurant that brings good food and an economic boost to a formerly vacant storefront. Carver Bank is supported by the City of Omaha, which owns the building, once home to Nebraska’s first African American-owned bank.
Guiding Principle: Developing multi-dimensional programs and facilities

Through integration with internal communities and sensitivity to context, artworks may publicly and powerfully broadcast the mission and value of the County.

Acquisition of an abandoned two-story property for reuse as a Library, Slide Archive and art space on Chicago's South Side. *Dorchester Projects* encompasses a cluster of formerly abandoned buildings that artist and cultural planner Theaster Gates renovated from sites of neglect into a vibrant cultural locus. After making his home in a former storefront on South Dorchester Avenue, Gates purchased the neighboring two-story vacant house and initiated a design project to restore and reactivate the home as a site of community interaction and uplift. The success of this project led to the acquisition of a third building across the street, which has been redesigned as a space for film programming and artist residencies.
Guiding Principle: Supporting efforts that raise the arts/cultural profile of the county and region.

Artists have long been hailed for their unique ability to bring ingenuity and creative problem solving to issues facing urban, rural and suburban contexts.

A fundamental idea of placemaking activity is that our sense of place is developed through a subtle mix of spatial and architectural qualities, social dynamics and the hard-to-define emotional resonance through which our attachment to a place accrues. Yet this mix contributes to the success or failure of places as diverse as parks, shopping malls, coffee shops, and sports arenas.
The Public Art Commission proposes that this highly integrated approach to public art is one which will benefit the community and reinforce the vision, values, and mission of the County. This approach provides greater focus to the Program and aligns with the original resolution for public art. This master plan proposes this approach on all future 1% for Public Art projects.

Johnson County’s next opportunity for Public Art is the Justice Annex at 588 Santa Fe in Olathe. This building houses District Court Services, the District Court Trustee and the Sheriff’s Office. Thoughtful public art can reflect the services provided, involve constituents, be accessible to the public, and amplify the changes that have already occurred in this formerly blighted area.
Purpose

The Purpose of the Public Art Commission was set forth in the 2006 Resolution (121-06) that established the Program and the Commission:

The Purpose of the Public Art Program is to recognize that works of art are public improvements and should be a prominent part of Johnson County’s profile…(to) enhance appreciation of the building or promote art works throughout the community…(and to) include and encourage the active involvement of the community in setting high standards and guidelines for achieving scale and excellence in public art projects.
Johnson County Vision

Johnson County 2030: Living Our Vision

Johnson County will be a community of choice — an inclusive, culturally and economically diverse community — nationally recognized for its quality of life, innovation, and exceptional leadership.

This vision will be built from a strong focus on six themes of equal importance:

• Economic Vitality
• Excellence in Education
• A Safe, Healthy and Caring Community
• A Sustainable Pattern of Development and Redevelopment
• A Culturally Rich and Active Community*
• Efficient and Effective Government

Johnson County’s richness as a community will be defined by its diversity of people and ethnicities and its use of arts and cultural programs, parks and recreation facilities, volunteer opportunities, historic resources, libraries, and institutions to enrich the lives of residents and promote a community that is active and engaged in its surroundings.
Public Art Commission Vision

THE JOHNSON COUNTY PUBLIC ART PROGRAM WILL BE NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED FOR ITS CONTRIBUTIONS TO A CULTURALLY RICH ENVIRONMENT THAT BINDS ITS DIVERSE POPULATION INTO A COMMUNITY OF CHOICE.

The Johnson County Public Art Program is structured to create unique works of art commissioned by the County and installed for the benefit and illumination of citizens. Such works are vital to making our County a vibrant and desirable place to live, work, be educated, and grow a business. The Program envisions that such works of art, implemented in the broadest range of media and methods, can cultivate a sense of community and amplify connections between the multiple cities, towns, neighborhoods, and public places comprising Johnson County. The public art program, collections, and initiatives will encourage awareness of and appreciation for the services provided by County government and will advance the missions of the County departments wherein the projects reside.
Public Art Commission Mission

TO FOSTER A MULTI-DIMENSIONAL APPROACH TO THE JOHNSON COUNTY 1% FOR PUBLIC ART PROGRAM THAT RAISES THE ARTS AND CULTURAL PROFILE OF THE COUNTY AND REGION.

The Public Art Program demonstrates the County’s commitment to enhancing the collective quality of life for County residents and to making the County culturally rich and engaging. The Johnson County Public Art Program is a key element of "all major capital building projects undertaken and/or funded, in whole or in part, by the County." The public art works commissioned through the Program are integral to their locations and settings. Through direct visits, publication, and other multi-dimensional programs such works sharpen the dynamic profile of the County, its facilities and services.
Johnson County Values

Johnson County 2030: Living Our Vision

What will it take to achieve our vision in this area?

To work toward this vision, the guiding principles center on:

• Fostering a collective approach to quality of life amenities,
• Providing opportunities for all residents to lead healthy and active lifestyles,
• Developing multi-dimensional programs and facilities,
• Supporting efforts that raise the arts/cultural profile of the county and region.”
Public Art Comission Values

The Johnson County Public Art Commission values and will pursue initiatives that:

- Honor the unique histories, qualities, characteristics and cultural realities of Johnson County, Kansas
- Enhance Johnson County’s profile as an active, leading member of the regional cultural community
- Create a “sense of place” — both through the potency of artworks and by augmenting the character of public spaces — that resists pre-conceived notions of homogenized, contemporary suburbia
- Demonstrate sustainable and environmentally responsible practices through material selection, manufacturing processes, and integration to site
- Provide opportunities for diversity in County public art programs, projects and activities that directly engage underserved populations.
- Exemplify the highest standards of professional practice in artist relations, collections care and management, exhibition, education, and interpretation of public art works
Program History

The Johnson County Government Public Art Program was established in 2006 by the Board of County Commissioners ("BOCC") to "authorize and oversee the acquisition and construction of public improvements" in the form of works of art. The Program is funded through allocation of a percentage of revenue generated by County capital building projects. This Program commits 1% of the capital cost of County building projects to commissioning and installing works of art. Projects may range significantly in size and budget; the County maintains a trust fund that can be spent on smaller projects on the recommendation of the Public Art Commission ("PAC") and at the discretion of the Board of County Commissioners.

The PAC, comprising community volunteers appointed by the members of the BOCC, is established by the Program legislation. The PAC serves as both advisory body to the BOCC and manager of the Public Art Program. The PAC administers the selection process for artists and artworks, recommends final selections to the BOCC, makes recommendations for educational and promotional activities, and advises on Collections Management Policy and Procedure for maintenance of the growing collection of County-owned works of art.

Suikang Zhao’s project for the Youth and Family Services Center — the first Public Art Program project undertaken by Johnson County Government — is an ideal instance of a stakeholder-driven partnership in which the internal community of the facility fueled the creation of the work. Suikang’s collaboration with that facility’s community established permanent cultural capital and a social bond within a facility traditionally noted for its challenges. Additionally, various works have been located on other County sites, such as the “Children of The Trail” in the Courthouse Square and Jesse Small’s work at the Sunset Office Building.
Johnson County Goals

Johnson County 2030: Living Our Vision

Recommended Actions

Support Increased Access to Parks and Recreation

Develop Broad-based, Sustainable Support for the Arts
  • Encourage arts and humanities organizations to work collaboratively in building broad-based sustainable support for the arts and arts-related initiatives in Johnson County.

Promote innovation in the delivery of library services

Identify new ways to engage all sectors of the community
  • Coordinate with organizations and groups that engage volunteers and promote community service, philanthropy, and positive change to develop a central clearinghouse for information about volunteer opportunities and to identify new ways to involve the community’s youth, under-represented populations, and others in community service activities.

Support programs and services that are inclusive and accessible
  • Support programs and services that promote acceptance, inclusion, and respect for cultural and ethnic diversity. Ensure programs and services are accessible to residents of all abilities and means.
Public Art Commission Goals

The Johnson County Public Art Commission’s Program goal is to leverage County investment in art-as-public-improvement to enhance the County’s identity and establish dynamic and exciting places that clearly and authentically identify the County to citizens and visitors. The Johnson County Public Art Commission intends that this plan will guide the commissioning of new artistic projects that:

• Drive awareness and appreciation of public services provided by County government,
• Develop integral connections between public buildings, their missions and surrounding communities and enhance the public programs and services being delivered,
• Establish Johnson County’s national reputation for its public art projects and program,
• Integrate planning and development processes for public buildings and public art with the larger planning processes of the County,
• Seek to enhance and interpret the County’s Public Art collection.
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2006.

A regular meeting of the Board of County Commissioners was held on Thursday, December 14, 2006, with the following members present and participation, to wit;

Chairman Annabeth Surbaugh
Commissioner C. Edward Peterson, Commissioner John P. Segale
Commissioner David A. Lindstrom, Commissioner Dolores Furtado
Commissioner Douglas E. Wood, Commissioner John M. Toplikar

WHEREUPON, there came before the Board the matter of adopting the Johnson County Public Art Program.

The Board, after thorough discussion, upon a motion duly made, seconded and carried, adopted the following Resolution, to-wit:

RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE JOHNSON COUNTY PUBLIC ART PROGRAM
Resolution No. 121-0.6
WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners is the governing body for Johnson County Government and has authority to administer the business of county government; and
WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners does WHEREAS, the public
improvements and building used for the operation of county business are community
facilities which do reflect a visual image of the community; and
WHEREAS, the Board deems it advisable to include art works as an integral part of the
public building projects undertaken by the Johnson County Government or the Johnson County Public Building Commission.
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of County Commissioners of Johnson County, Kansas that the attached policy and provisions, entitled Johnson County Public Art Program, shall be and hereby are adopted effective January 1, 2007, and shall be implemented by and through the facilities Department of the County.
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED by the Board that there shall be and hereby is established, within the General fund of the County, an account to be designated as the Public
Art Program Trust Fund account, which shall be used for the purpose described in the Program to the extent legally possible, and that Program funding through debt financing and/or through the Public Building Commission shall, when authorized by law, be reserved within a similar account, if not transferable to the Public Art Program Trust Fund account, and used for the purposes authorized under the Program.
Johnson County Public Art Program

I. PURPOSE
The purpose of the Public Art Program is to recognize that works of art are public improvements and should be a prominent part of Johnson County’s profile. The program is intended to provide a mechanism for the commissioning, accessioning, and financing of major works of art by the County Government in conjunction with its public improvement projects.

II. POLICY STATEMENT
It is the policy of Johnson County Government that each major capital building project undertaken by the County through its departments or agencies shall include funding for one or more works of art that may enhance appreciation of the building or promote art works throughout the community. It is further the policy of Johnson County Government that funding in an amount equal to at least one percent (1%) of the total, original authorized project cost, but not exceeding $1,000,000 for one project, shall be reserved for and committed to financing the costs of approved art works related to that project, or when appropriate, incorporated into another project.

It is the policy of Johnson County Government to include and encourage the active involvement of the community in setting high standards and guidelines for achieving scale and excellence in public art projects conducted by the County and in participating in the selection and siting of art works for the County.

It is further the policy of Johnson County Government to manage public moneys to ensure that public improvement projects are constructed and operated in a cost effective manner and, whenever feasible, to solicit and utilize contributions, grants and other funding sources for public improvements, including works of art.

III. APPLICATION
The Public Art Program is intended to and shall apply to all major capital building projects undertaken and/or funded, in whole or in part, by the County, its departments or agencies, or by the Johnson County Public Building Commission that have an original authorized project cost of $1,000,000.00 or more and that involve the acquisition or construction of a new building or the reconstruction or renovation of a newly acquired building. The project scope and authorized cost shall include the costs of any equipment, furnishings, and other fixtures which are acquired and installed as a part of the building project. However, capital improvement projects, for the purposes of this Program, shall not include wastewater, storm water or roadway projects nor those projects which involve primarily the purchase of equipment, machinery, personal or real property, furnishings, goods, vehicles or other tangibles but do not involve a major capital construction component, and shall not include capital projects which involve only the purchase of services, preliminary studies, and professional consulting.
IV. PROGRAM
A. Works of Art and Art Projects
The Public Art Program covers only those works of art or art projects which are specifically commissioned or acquired by the County as Public Art and which are created or provided by an identified artist in response to the commission or request for acquisition. Public art may be permanent, fixed, temporary or portable, may be an integral part of a building, facility, or structure, and may be integrated with the work of other design professionals. It includes but is not limited to:

- Sculpture, which may be made of any material or combination of materials; may be free standing, wall-supported or suspended, kinetic, electronic or mechanical;
- Murals or paintings, which may be made of any material or variety of materials with or without collage; may be made with traditional or non-traditional materials and means;
- Earthworks, neon, glass, organic materials (i.e., fiber, clay, wood, etc.), mosaics, photographs, prints, calligraphy, audio and video media, film, CD-ROM, DVD, and holographic or computer generated technologies.

“Public Art”, whether a work of art or an art project, under the Program is intended to be a major artistic activity and will almost always include the selection and use of an artist. The size of the work or project is expected to have a minimum cost that exceeds $75,000.

B. Interrelated Project Features
Public art is intended to supplement the visual elements of public building projects. While coordination is important between a public art project and the visual elements of a public building, the “public art” is separate and distinct from those important project elements. Architectural design features, decorative building art, landscaping, and similar project elements are considered as a part of the public building project itself and would not ordinarily qualify as “public art” under the Program.

C. Program Funding
Funding for the Public Art Program will be generated through all available funding sources, including contributions, grants, and county financing for its capital building projects. The generated Public Art Program funds, including County funding, will be set aside in a separate Public Art Trust Fund account.

County funding shall be provided in the following manner:
1. For each capital building project, that costs more than $1,000,000.00, funding in an amount equal to at least 1% of the total project cost, but not to exceed $1,000,000 for one project, shall be credited to a special Public Art Trust Fund, to be accumulated for use in securing the acquisition and installation of public art on public property or public buildings of the County.
2. Funds from other available sources as authorized by the Board, including private contributions, grant receipts, or uncommitted capital projects funds, may be made available for deposit to the special Public Art Trust Fund or as supplemental funding for a specific public art project.
D. Use of Program Funds

1. Project Designation. The Public Art funds derived from any specific capital building project through the percentage allocation shall be expended for works of art located at that project whenever the amount is at least $75,000 unless the Board of County Commissioners or the Public Building Commission determines, at the time of project approval, that the project is not an appropriate improvement for the placement of art, in which case, the funding shall be deposited in the Public Art Trust Fund for use on an approved art work.

2. Expenditures. County Funds designated for “public art” shall be used for the purpose of selecting, securing and installing art in public places and may, when authorized, be used for the payment of the costs of administration for the program, including costs of community participation, artist selection processes, community outreach or publicity, project documentation, education and similar administrative or processing costs. Funds committed to the Public Art Program shall be expended in accordance with the guidelines, policies and procedures of the County and any requirements associated with the source of funds.

3. Trust Fund. Funds accumulated in the Public Art Trust Fund, whether derived from capital building projects, donations, grants, or other sources, will be accumulated and spent on “public art” projects which have a total cost, including any artist fees and construction costs, of at least $75,000.

E. Administration

1. County Management. The Public Arts Program shall be administered by the Facilities Department under the supervision of the County Manager. The Facilities Director, or his designee, shall be responsible for the oversight of the Program and shall be the responsible management official for the approval of all expenditures authorized by the Board from the public art funding.

2. Artistic Consultant. The County shall retain, either by employment or independent contract, the services of an artistic consultant, who shall be responsible for advising the County on issues arising under the Program and for providing oversight of the artist selection process.

3. Costs and Expenses. Costs and expenses for administration of the Public Art Program, including costs for community participation, artist selection processes, artist candidate fees and reimbursed expenses, community outreach and publicity, project documentation, education and other related costs, may be paid (1) from the Public Art Fund, (2) as a part of the ordinary project administration costs for the related public building project, or (3) from budgeted funds of the Facilities Department.

F. Public Art Commission.

1. Purpose. There shall be and hereby is created the Public Art Commission for Johnson County Government. The purpose of which is to serve as a link between the Board of County Commissioners and the citizens of Johnson County.

2. Responsibilities. The Public Art Commission (PAC) shall serve as an advisory commission to the Board and shall be responsible for administering the county’s public art program, including the selection processes for artists and art works to be commissioned or acquired under the Program and making recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners for final selection action.

3. Membership and Appointment. The Public Art Commission shall consist of at least seven (7) but no more than (9) members to be appointed by the Board of County Commissioners. One member shall be appointed by each district commissioner including the Chairman. The Director of the Facilities Department or his designee shall serve as a member, and one member shall be appointed by the Board as nominated by the Arts Council of Johnson County, if the Council so chooses. Members shall be appointed for terms of three years, with the terms staggered so that the terms of not more than three members expire in any given year.
4. **Duties.** The Public Art Commission is responsible for advising the Board of County Commissioners on policies and procedures that promote, encourage and increase support for public art, and on general issues pertaining to the Public Art Program as follows:

a. Recommending program policy and general oversight for the Public Art Program;

b. Recommending guidelines, policies and procedures for the selection, implementation and conservation of public art;

c. Establishing policies and procedures under which the Public Art Program and PAC operate;

d. Recommending to the Board of County Commissioners, and the County Manager, an annual public art work plan with proposed sites for the future placement of works of art on county property and a proposed budget;

e. Working with the County Facilities Department and County departments and agencies directly responsible for the capital projects to ensure that all departments are working together for the betterment of the Public Art Program;

f. Designating appropriate Artist Selection Panels (ASP) for each public art project;

g. Advancing recommendations from the artist selection process to the Board of County Commissioners for their acceptance or rejection;

h. Reviewing and recommending proposed gifts of art, as well as loans and long term exhibitions of art on County-owned property, as requested by the County or any of its agencies; and County or any of its agencies.

5. **Conflicts of Interests.** Any member of the Public Art Commission, or a member’s immediate family or business associates, having a direct conflict of interest, or the appearance of a conflict of interest, whether financial or otherwise, in any particular project brought before the membership shall disclose such conflict prior to the start of discussions and said member shall refrain from participating in discussions or voting regarding such project.
G. Art Selection Process

1. General. The artist selection process shall be an open and competitive process and one that allows for the selection of the artist to be based on the artist’s talent and creativity, and a willingness to work with input from the community and the design team.

2. Artist Selection Panel. Project specific Artist Selection Panels (ASP) will be seated for each project where an artist will be engaged to fulfill the percent for art program requirements. ASPs will be composed of volunteers and organized to review and rank artists’ applications, to interview artists, and to recommend artists for involvement in these projects to the Public Art Commission.

An ASP shall include:

a. one representative from the County’s primary project consultant (Architect, Engineer, Contractor or Landscape Architect);

b. one representative from the population who will be working at the site when completed, if appropriate;

c. one member from the community at large who resides in the vicinity of the project;

b. two community members with visual arts expertise;

e. at least one arts professional;

f. The County project manager.

Members of the Public Art Commission are not eligible to serve on Artist Selection Panels.

An ASP convenes only as long as the selection process for one project continues. The ASP is not convened to select artists for multiple projects; a separate ASP is organized for each project, though individual ASP members may serve on more than one ASP.

3. Board of County Commissioners Approval. All art work must receive approval by a majority vote of the Board of County Commissioners following a positive recommendation from the Public Art Commission.

H. Ownership.

All art objects acquired pursuant to this Resolution shall be acquired in the name of Johnson County, Kansas, or the appropriate agency, and title shall vest in the County or said agency.

V. COLLECTION PRACTICES

A. Establishing the Collection

The Facilities Department, in consultation with the Arts Council of Johnson County, and when formed, the Public Art Commission, shall inventory the existing works of art owned by the County or its departments or agencies and shall identify which of those works should be included within a “public art” collection for the County. The list of recommendations shall be presented to the Board of County Commissioners for review and approval. Upon approval of the listing, such works of art shall be the public art collection of the County, which thereafter shall be managed and maintained consistent with policies and procedures of the Board, including procedures for accessioning new works to the collection and deaccessioning works from the collection. All works of art and/or art projects acquired or commissioned under the Public Art Program shall automatically be accessioned to the collection.
B. Accessioning of Art Work

1. Donations. At the request of the Board of County Commissioners or one of its agencies, the Public Art Commission will advise the County on proposed donations of artwork or money that is designated for the creation of a piece of art intended for public display. All donations must conform with existing policies and plans of the County or the County department involved. Bequests for commissioning a work of art will be considered according to the gifts and donations guidelines.

2. Acquisitions. Acquisition of art works using County funds or processed under the Public Art Program shall be considered for accessioning unless the Public Art Commission recommends that the work not be included in the collection and that recommendation is approved by the Board.

3. Conditions. Works of art, whether proposed for acquisition or donation, which are subject to any form of restriction or condition for its use, display, ownership, or preservation will not be accepted for accessioning unless expressly approved by unanimous decision of the Board, and the Board reserves the right to reject any art work that has such conditions or restrictions.

C. Deaccessioning Of Art Work

1. Criteria. The Public Art Commission shall develop criteria for consideration in deaccessioning a work of art from the County collection. At the request of the County Commissioners or one of the County agencies, the Public Art Commission will advise the appropriate entity on deaccessioning or withdrawing an artwork from the public art collection. Deaccessioning will be considered only after a careful and impartial evaluation of the artwork within the context of the collection as a whole.

2. Deaccessioning Procedure. Unless otherwise requested, the PAC will appoint a Deaccessioning Subcommittee consisting of no more than five art professionals/experts, including 4 members of the PAC and an art conservator or curator. The subcommittee will report its findings to the PAC, which in turn will make recommendations to the Board and/or the appropriate County agency.

3. Disposal. Any work of art which is deaccessioned from the collection shall be disposed of in a manner consistent with County policies and procedures; provided, however, when possible, the artist of the work shall be notified, and the artist’s interests shall be considered as a factor in the disposal.
Process - Selection

It is the intent of the Public Art Commission to continue the selection process defined in Resolution 121-0.6 above. With this, a stronger curatorial hand will be required to shepherd the thoughtful public art process to desired outcomes. From defining the possibilities, creating the interactions, and exchanges needed between artist, architects, users, and the public, and assisting the artist selection panel in finding the best match between the problem and proposed solutions, a strong curatorial role will be needed.
**Existing Cultural Assets and Partnerships**
The Public Art Commission shall seek to partner with the municipal arts commissions within Johnson County and the immediately surrounding region to develop a shared inventory of cultural and public art assets and collections. As a combined resource, this information would be invaluable to the public understanding of the diversity and richness of public art in the County.

This inventory of cultural resources may ultimately assume a variety of forms. In the short-term a public, shared Google map populated with locations and images of relevant public artworks has been made available through AIMS mapping. (See Appendix)
Process - Marketing / Public Engagement

To achieve the broad goals of the program, the Public Art Commission, in association with relevant staff and external contractors will develop marketing plans for each commissioned artwork to introduce the piece and educate the public about the work’s concepts and integration with its site. As each work is unique, the marketing will be tailored to the project’s specific attributes. (Supports the Goal: Drive awareness, and Establish a National Reputation)

Twenty percent of the public art funds in the Public Art Fund are reserved for program administration, community participation, artist selection, community outreach, and project documentation — this funding source will provide the primary public engagement and marketing budgets.
On-site
The Public Art Commission will develop a standardized signage system that will be installed at all project locations, interior, and exterior. The signs will contain basic information about each project — lead artist and work information, project team members and sponsors. The goal of the signage is to provide information about the works in the absence of a docent.

Website / Mobile App
As the Public Art Program grows and commissions new works, it is the Commission’s goal to develop additional tools for the public to access and learn about the collection. A key goal is for the Johnson County Public Art collection to be documented and searchable through an ongoing web and digital presence. The fundamental goal is to make the collection accessible to as broad an audience as possible — audiences that may or may not have physical access to the works.

Printed materials
Printed materials may range from postcards or brochures to more substantial forms, such as books and catalogues. Determinations of printed materials appropriate for a given work will consider public benefit, the scope of the project, and available funds.

Public events / dedications
The Public Art Commission, in association with staff, will plan public dedications for each commissioned work. The dedications provide an opportunity to introduce the public to the work and celebrate its gift to the County and community. These events may be promoted through alliances with local media.

Educational programming and partnerships
The Public Art Commission will seek partnership opportunities in relationship to commissioned works to provide specific public engagement and educational opportunities. These partnership opportunities are wide-ranging and ideally emerge organically from the process set forth by the artist. Partnerships may be both internal and external. Suikang Zhao’s project for the Youth and Family Services Center, is an ideal instance of an internal partnership in which the creation of the work was driven by the internal community of the facility. Suikang’s collaboration with that internal community established permanent cultural capital and a social bond within a facility traditionally noted for its challenges.

An external partnership may result in an artist engaging a community in advance of the design process of the work. In that case, the artist may be able to incorporate community feedback into their development of the work.

Another partnership could result in a curriculum emerging from the themes of a given work that could be integrated in a local school, providing hands on education and a deep relationship between the work and local communities.
Opportunities

Sites, zones, contexts

The Johnson County Strategic Master Plan identifies a number of potential new buildings for the County, the majority being library buildings. Additionally, the County has approved funding for three projects in the next five years: the already completed building renovation at 588 Santa Fe in Olathe (The Justice Annex), 8788 Metcalf in Overland Park (the former King Louie building), and Monticello Library, Phase 1. Also submitted in the five-year plan but not currently funded are three more libraries and a new County Courthouse building. In the ten and fifteen year windows are six additional libraries. Sites are mostly suburban, but vary in context of surrounding neighborhood, and amount of vehicular and pedestrian traffic.
## Potential Public Art Opportunities

### 5 Year
**2014 to 2018**

- (Budgeted)
  - 588 Santa Fe
  - 8788 Metcalf
  - Monticello Library Phase 1

- (Unbudgeted)
  - Monticello Phase 2
  - Courthouse
  - Corinth Library
  - Antioch/Cedar Roe

### 10 Year
**2019 to 2023**

- (Unbudgeted-SFMP) Libraries:
  - Blue Valley North
  - Lackman
  - Gardner

### 15 Year
**2024 to 2028**

- (Unbudgeted-SFMP) Libraries:
  - Blue Valley
  - Spring Hill
  - Aubry/Stilwell
Appendix
EXISTING ASSETS - Johnson County

- Active Johnson County Pieces
- Active City Pieces
EXISTING ASSETS - Lenexa
COLLECTION MANAGEMENT

Art acquisition, Administration, Accessioning, and De-accessioning (See Resolution)

Maintenance / Management

Conservation Treatment and Maintenance

1. Definitions

1.1 Maintenance: Regular routine inspection and care of artwork, such as cleaning and applying protective surface coatings. A conservator usually carries out maintenance, though a skilled County employee can be trained by a conservator to carry out routine maintenance.

1.2 Treatment or Conservation Treatment: Repair is done when needed to return artwork to its original condition and integrity, which may be the result of flaws, neglect, aging, damage or vandalism. A professional conservator usually carries out treatments, often in collaboration with artists or other experts.

1.3 Condition Assessments: Inspections of artwork include information on the present location, the current condition and the treatment or maintenance needed. Inspections may be carried out by County staff, but thorough assessments should occasionally be conducted by the Public Art Administrator or a professional conservator.

2. Objectives

2.1 To inspect the condition of County-owned public artwork on a regular basis;

2.2 To clean and provide other appropriate routine maintenance to public artwork;

2.3 To insure timely conservation of public artwork;

2.4 To integrate longevity and maintenance considerations into artist’s planning, and County approval processes for artwork;

2.5 Maintain artworks so that they continue to be safe and contribute to the vitality of communities.

2.6 To establish a treatment and maintenance program for public art with regular procedures, agreements and documentation;
2.7 To educate public employees about public art and its important role in public infrastructure and planning:

2.8 To use public funds wisely by avoiding costly conservation expenses resulting from neglect; and

2.9 To leverage private and volunteer support for maintenance of public art, whenever possible.

3. General Policies for Conservation Treatment and Maintenance

3.1 Purpose: Art works shall be efficiently maintained and preserved in the best possible condition as understood by the Johnson County 1% for Public Art program and consistent with the artist’s original intention.

4. Responsibility, Authority and Partners
The Johnson County Public Art Commission shall have the final authority in decisions regarding conservation of public art. The Public Art Administrator shall oversee the condition assessment, treatment, maintenance, disposition and relocation of artwork, working in collaboration with the following partners:

4.1 Experts: Arts professionals, professional arts conservators, County staff, and other individuals familiar with art materials, fabrication methods, and the artistic intent shall inspect and evaluate artwork.

4.2 Artists: Artists shall develop artwork with maintenance requirements that can be realistically maintained by the County. Artist’s specifications may be taken into account in maintaining artwork along with applicable conservation standards. Artists (if possible) shall be notified of all repairs and may be involved in conducting treatments and maintenance.

4.3 Site Owners, Site Managers and Other Partners: The Johnson County 1% for Public Art program may work with the following site representatives and partners, as appropriate, to implement these policies: Facilities, Department of Public Works, Johnson County Park Board, Johnson County Library Board, other governmental agencies, and private businesses or landlords. Contractual agreements for treatment and maintenance shall be developed for artwork on the property of Johnson County. These agreements shall seek to insure the integrity of the artwork. They shall also be consistent with the policies and procedures of each partner and shall stipulate the roles of each respective party in staffing and funding treatment and maintenance for the life span of the artwork. Property owners shall be responsible for keeping the area surrounding the artwork clean and groomed. They shall also be responsible for protecting the artwork from maintenance equipment, such as mowers and plows.
5. Maintenance Planning and Documentation for Existing Works

5.1 Assessing Repair and Maintenance Needs of Existing Works developed through the Johnson County 1% for Public Art program: Artwork shall be inventoried and receive cursory inspections once a year. Artwork shall receive regular, thorough, condition examinations, which include the present locations and conditions of artwork, as well as cost estimates for treatment and maintenance. These thorough examinations shall occur every 1-5 years, depending upon the needs of individual works. They shall also occur when required by reports of damage.

5.2 Maintenance Plans for Existing Works: Treatment and maintenance plans for existing artwork shall be developed by the responsible department or agency as treatments and repairs are applied. A maintenance plan shall include detailed specifications for monthly maintenance, winter maintenance, maintenance of plantings (if applicable), annual routine maintenance, other periodic maintenance and a long-term prognosis. The Public Art Administrator shall periodically request a copy from these partners of these maintenance or treatment plans.

6. Maintenance Planning and Documentation for New Works

6.1 Preventative Maintenance:
- Sustainable Artwork: Artists shall be commissioned to develop sustainable artwork, that is artwork which can be realistically maintained by the County, using County resources and within the guidelines described in these policies and procedures. Artists shall work with the Johnson County Public Art Commission program and its partners to implement preventative maintenance strategies (such as applying graffiti coatings, selecting durable materials and providing wood chip borders near mowed areas) as part of the construction and installation of artwork, as long as those strategies do not interfere with the approved artist’s proposal or integrity of the artwork.
- Design Approval and Final Receipt and Completion: Before design approval and prior to final receipt and completion, an art conservator, or other qualified County staff, such as engineers, concrete experts, landscape architects, maintenance crews and police, shall review the proposed design for possible flaws in structural design and fabrication. Is there any mention of Inherent Flaws? Yes, Inherent Flaws: Artists shall also be responsible for the cost and execution of repairs related to any defects in workmanship or inherent flaws in artwork, which they are commissioned to fabricate. Inherent flaws may include any quality within the material or materials incorporated into the artwork which, either alone or in combination, result in the deterioration of the artwork. Artistic plans for public artwork shall be reviewed and approved by certified structural engineers. When an artist is commissioned to fabricate an artwork, this review may be at the artist’s expense. (County staff shall encourage artists to contract with vendors, obtain warranties and hold manufacturers accountable for inherent flaws in their work.)

6.2 Maintenance Plans for New Works: All new artwork must have a treatment and maintenance plan that projects both staff time and funding needs. As part of their contractual requirements, commissioned artists shall consult with the Johnson County Public Art Commission, and all other appropriate partners on a maintenance plan for each new artwork. These maintenance plans shall include documentation of materials used to fabricate the artwork and a reasonable annual budget for maintenance. Artwork that includes landscaping as an integral part shall include a maintenance plan for the landscaping elements as well. Maintenance plans for new works shall be reviewed and approved by the Public Art Commission to ensure there are no major concerns with materials, safety or maintenance.
6.3 Landscaping as Part of the Artwork and Artist’s Original Design:
• Artwork with landscaping elements shall be commissioned only for sites with an irrigation source and an ongoing source of funding for the operation and maintenance of the irrigation system. Exceptions shall only be made if plantings are sustainable within the local climate without irrigation and a budget provides watering for two years or until the plantings are established.
• Artists shall create a landscaping plan for such artwork. Property owners and experienced horticulturists or landscape architects shall approve this plan. Such landscaping shall also be included in the artwork’s maintenance plan and contractual agreements with property owners.
• The County’s responsibility for funding maintenance of such landscaping shall be proportional to its original role in funding the creation of landscaping portion of the artwork.
• Volunteer and garden club maintenance is not an acceptable solution for the life span of an artwork.

6.4 Landscaping Altered by Installation of Artwork: Any landscaping disturbed or altered by the installation of artwork shall be restored afterward in a manner consistent with the design for the artwork and the site, and at the expense of the Johnson County 1% for Public Art program. These maintenance plans shall include documentation of materials used to fabricate the artwork and a reasonable annual budget for maintenance. Artwork that includes landscaping as an integral part shall include a maintenance plan for the landscaping elements as well.

6.5 Supplemental Landscaping: Maintenance of decorative landscaping that is supplemental to the artwork and not part of the artist’s original design shall not be staffed or funded by the Public Art program. This may include landscaping in the area where the artwork has been installed or landscaping that has been added later. The artist and the property owner shall approve such landscaping in advance.

6.6 Life Span of Artwork: Condition assessments and maintenance plans for new works shall also include an estimated life span for each artwork. This life span shall be selected from one of four categories: 1) temporary-up to 5 years, 2) midspan-up to 15 years, 3) long term-up to 50 years, 4) permanent or site integrated- part of site/structure and cannot be removed.
7. Implementing Conservation Treatment and Maintenance

7.1 Roles and Responsibilities: When treatment or maintenance is approved, the Public Art Commission, in conjunction with its partners, shall handle repairs, in consultation with a qualified art conservator. The artist shall be notified (if possible) of all repairs and may be involved in the treatment and maintenance of the work, if practical and for a reasonable fee. If an artist disagrees with the conservator’s condition assessment and does not think the suggested alterations are in keeping with the integrity of the artwork, they may request changes to the repair plan in writing to the Public Art Administrator. Other independent contractors shall be involved in treatment and maintenance as needed.

7.2 Annual Maintenance Plan: Condition examinations and plans for artwork shall be reported to the Public Art Commission by the Public Arts Administrator, which shall meet annually to review potential treatment and maintenance projects and make recommendations for priorities. Public Art Commission recommendations shall result in an annual treatment and maintenance plan, which shall include staffing, treatments and restoration for specific artwork, ongoing routine inspection and maintenance for all artwork, and artwork to be deaccessioned.

7.3 Repair by Other County Departments, Site Owners and Managers: To ensure proper repair, other County departments, County agencies, other governmental partners, site owners and site managers, shall consult with the Public Arts Administrator before beginning any cleaning procedures, treatment or emergency maintenance activities conducted on artwork under the jurisdiction of County departments.

7.4 Emergency Repairs: The Public Art Administrator may approve emergency treatment or movement necessary to prevent damage to artwork, to facilitate emergency repairs of County infrastructure or to insure public safety. This includes removal of graffiti.

7.5 Training and Technical Assistance: Commissioned artists shall be trained in maintenance prevention strategies. The Public Art Commission shall be responsible for communicating these Conservation Treatment and Maintenance Policies to artists, as well as any County department, County agency, or site responsible for routine maintenance of artwork or adjacent areas. A professional conservator shall train staff conducting routine maintenance of any kind on artwork. These staff may include building custodians, snowplow operators or landscaping crews. The Public Art Commission or Public Art Administrator shall develop a maintenance manual for each artwork and coordinate and fund all training for these staff.
8. Criteria

Criteria for determining treatment and maintenance priority shall include:

8.1 Use Resources Wisely:
• Does the artwork not have any of the following problems: Requiring excessive maintenance or repair, having faults of design or workmanship, or securing the artwork is impractical or unfeasible (without substantially replacing it)?
• Will immediately treating or maintaining the artwork stabilize its condition?
• Is it more practical within the overall maintenance plan to repair the artwork at this time (i.e. cost-effective to do two similar treatments at same time)?
• Can County maintenance workers be trained to maintain the artwork within standard County maintenance procedures and cycles?
• Are conservation costs less than fifty percent of the artwork’s financial value?
• Will immediately addressing short-term maintenance needs prevent increased long-term treatment costs?
• Does conservation of this artwork provide an opportunity for a specific grant, private partnership or donation?

9. Funding for Conservation Treatment and Maintenance

9.1 The Johnson County 1% for Public Art Program: The County shall establish and dedicate a percentage of the Johnson County 1% for Public Art program budget for funding treatment and maintenance costs for artwork generated through the program.

9.2 The County shall only acquire new artwork if an annual maintenance for such artwork is budgeted and funded for the life span of the artwork. The Public Arts Administrator shall be available to assist them in the development of these budgets. These entities shall be responsible for funding repairs to any artwork damaged by their staff or equipment (i.e., mowers and plows) while working in adjacent areas.

9.3 Gifts: The County shall only accept artwork as gifts and loans of public art if an annual maintenance for such artwork is donated or otherwise funded for the life span of the artwork.
10. **Insurance**  
Subject to conditions of coverage and policy limits, the Board of County Commissioners shall provide theft, comprehensive and general liability coverage for the collection. This coverage will be administered through Johnson County’s Risk Management Department. A content and value list of the collection will be updated annually by the Public Art Administrator for use by the Risk Management Department in assessing necessary coverage.
### COMPARATIVE ART PROGRAMS

#### Select U.S. Municipal Art Agencies, Public Art Programs / Sorted by Population Growth 2010 to 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>Agency Name</th>
<th>Public Art Program (CIP Capital improvement Projects)</th>
<th>Local/Metro Population</th>
<th>FT Staff where available</th>
<th>Pop. % Increase 2010-12</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Frisco, TX</td>
<td>Public Art Board</td>
<td>2% Public Art eligible CIP</td>
<td>3K</td>
<td>1 to 5</td>
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<td>2 New Orleans, LA</td>
<td>Arts Council</td>
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<td>7.39</td>
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<td>3 Austin, TX</td>
<td>Cultural Arts Division</td>
<td>2% eligible CIP</td>
<td>843K/8.8M</td>
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<td>8.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Charlotte/Mecklenburg, NC</td>
<td>Arts and Science Council</td>
<td>1% Public Art</td>
<td>751K/2.2K</td>
<td>15+</td>
<td>5.93</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Denver, CO</td>
<td>Arts and Venues</td>
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<td>5.68</td>
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<td>6 Atlanta, GA</td>
<td>Bureau of Cultural Affairs</td>
<td>1.5% Public Art</td>
<td>4.9M/5.4M</td>
<td>5 to 10</td>
<td>5.66</td>
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<tr>
<td>7 Washington DC</td>
<td>Commission on the Arts and Humanities</td>
<td>1% Public Art</td>
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<td>1 to 5</td>
<td>5.06</td>
</tr>
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<td>8 Fort Worth, TX</td>
<td>Arts Council</td>
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<td>9 Raleigh, NC</td>
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<td>10 Charleston, SC</td>
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<td>4.58</td>
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<td>11 Boulder, CO</td>
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<td>4.54</td>
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<td>12 Columbia, MO</td>
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<td>13 Aurora, CO</td>
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<td>15 San Antonio, TX</td>
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<td>1.22M/15K</td>
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<td>21 Miami-Dade County, FL</td>
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<td>22 Tampa, FL</td>
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<td>Overland Park Arts Commission/Arts and Rec Foundation</td>
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<td>165K/5.5M</td>
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<td>27 Boston, MA</td>
<td>Mayor's Office of Arts, Tourism, and Special Events</td>
<td>Private/Public Art</td>
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<td>Type of Art</td>
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<td>Albuquerque, NM</td>
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<td>550K</td>
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<td>Los Angeles, CA</td>
<td>Department of Cultural Affairs</td>
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<td>3.85M/2.8M</td>
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<td>Greater Des Moines Public Art Foundation</td>
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<td>Cultural Eligibility</td>
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<td>Commission on Public Art</td>
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<td>462K</td>
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<td>Metropolitan Art Commission</td>
<td>Public Art</td>
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<td>Wichita, KS</td>
<td>Arts and Cultural Division</td>
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<td>Office of Promotion and the Arts</td>
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<td>Cincinnati, OH</td>
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<td>Community Partnership for Arts and Culture</td>
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<td>Council Bluffs, IA</td>
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<td>Public Art</td>
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CREATIVE PLACEMAKING ARTICLES

From ArtPlace America, Principles of Successful Creative Placemaking
Successful creative placemaking...

...places artists and art at the center of planning, execution and activity.

...leverages the creative potential already present in a place. All places have creative potential just waiting to flourish. Even while drawing on resources from outside, leveraging local artistic and organizational talent and assets increases the value in, and commitment to, the local community. All while nurturing an enduring sense of place.

...creates opportunities for people of all income levels and backgrounds to thrive in place. As its value increases, a place that is intentionally inclusive and connected is more likely to spur economic opportunity and allow people to succeed where they are.

...supports economic diversity in the community, providing multiple points of entry and interaction for people of all incomes. The more economically integrated a community is, the more access to opportunity exists for all.

...creates interesting places that capitalize on distinctiveness. A creative approach improves the aesthetics of a place, whether it is the look, feel, sound or even smell. The difference sets that place apart as more interesting than others. A place that expresses its distinctiveness and resists commodification and sameness is more likely to have long-term appeal.

...creates a place where people want to go and linger. Successful places attract people beyond those required to be there. People lingering is an investment of time in a place and is apt to lead to additional investments.

...contributes to a mix of uses and people that makes places more diverse, more interesting and more active, thus making spontaneous interaction more likely. Intensifying and mixing activities creates the promise that visitors can stumble onto the fun, mingle with other people, or happen upon opportunity.

...fosters connections among people and across cultures. The relationships built among diverse groups of people create safer, more open places that create more opportunity and foster a sense that everyone is welcome.

...is always presenting itself to the public and encouraging pedestrian activity. Whether open or closed, a place that is a consistently interesting and active presence to the street promotes more pedestrian activity and creates the public perception that the place is safer and more animated. More pedestrians mean more prospective customers on the street to support more small businesses.

...creates a place where business wants to be. As a place becomes more active, commerce is likely to respond, thus giving people even more reasons to be there.

...convinces people that a place can have a different and better future.
Public Art in Unlikely Places
Dawn Lewis-Walling | October 16, 2013

It was really by chance, or maybe fate, that I learned about some of the inner workings of public arts along with becoming a contributing artist. The Arts Council of Johnson County had already been working hard on gaining the support of the County Commissioners. They had a resolution to spend one percent of each newly constructed government building on art! As it turned out, there were other ideas on the horizon too; Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative sponsored by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Our community wanted to tell kids, even those in trouble, that they are valued and should never lose hope.

This would be communicated in the construction of a Youth and Family Services Center which would have warmth imbued in its purpose, architecture, art, and people! It was the perfect springboard for the one percent art allocation; art would be found in an unlikely and unexpected place.

I was on the Artist Selection Committee when becoming acquainted with the New York artist Suikang Zhao; a Shanghai native who became a U.S. Citizen in the 80’s. Committee members confidentially ranked each artist after having a chance to review the artist statement, background, awards and recognition. The finalists then gave an interview. During this time, each artist gave a more in depth explanation of their own artwork. They presented ideas and concepts, which they had begun to envision for our particular project. Suikang communicated a strong desire to give to us artwork that would have real meaning for our community. The art would become an integral part of the architecture and purpose.

Unknown to me, I had been selected by the artist as a helper. During our introductions, Suikang learned that I am a Kansas City Art Institute graduate and had been providing art classes to detained youth. Suikang always had a dream to include the community in the creation of his art, making it unique in a way. He needed me to be the bridge between him and the youth. Of course kids really love art and now we would have the opportunity to help create Johnson County’s first One Percent Art Project! The County Commissioners accepted the proposal and a crowd cheered. This was really exciting!

Then comes the hard work, the fun, the laughter, tears at times, and all sorts of emotions. In the beginning Suikang told the kids how valuable they were and he encouraged them to dream. He then demonstrated working in the clay. I worked with the teens on creating their first impressions. We did drawings, looked at books, and talked about their ideas. We worked on a concept called, “Peace with Justice is in Reach” and Suikang deconstructed this along with client writings (the writings were for the glass wall). I was able to keep one element that I had designed, “Stairs and Peace in Letting Go.”

Suikang reviewed everything and had his own dream; a vision that began pulling all the pieces together. I worked with him in creating the composition. We made a huge template, which would then be transferred, onto the clay. The kids and I pressed clay onto boards, all 96 feet and then we began sculpting. Some kids worked on the project for months while others just a few days. In all, over 50 youth worked on the 96-foot art wall. Recent KCAI graduates Kara Foster and Phil Smith worked on finishing the piece; adding their own touches! Finally, Suikang himself worked over
the entire piece, which gave it a good continuity. The four of us made the molds and the masons completed the task with one huge cement pour! Suikang left us with new possibilities; public art in unlikely places.

Dawn Lewis-Walling is working on other projects with teens in the Juvenile Detention Center. These murals are intended to be uplifting for the clients and the staff who care for them.

Placemaking and Public Art  
Dr. Larry Meeker | October 10, 2013

Placemaking is a relatively new term in the public art arena, often used to describe public art that creates people-friendly places. Anish Kappor’s “Cloudgate”, often referred to as “The Bean” in Chicago’s Millennium Park, is a perfect example. It attracts thousands of visitors daily to marvel at reflections of Chicago’s skyline on its polished surface. It’s a place where people want to gather and where total strangers feel a kinship in its presence. It creates a vibrancy not often found in public places.

Although a relatively new term in the public art arena, the notion of government’s role in placemaking is not new. Indeed, the role of government is placemaking. From defending one’s borders to enacting zoning regulations that keep a slaughterhouse from being built in a residential area, government is about creating economically viable and people-friendly places.

Economic development ranks high on the placemaking agenda of most governments on the premise that a growing economic base of businesses with well-paying jobs is the key to prosperity. This activity has focused largely on attracting and retaining capital-intensive manufacturing businesses with a host of incentives from cheap land and tax abatements to below market interest rates on loans.

Today, however, the key ingredients for many 21st Century businesses are often not land, buildings and equipment so much as they are attracting and retaining intellectual capital or a skilled workforce. Where workforces once followed businesses to gain employment, businesses are increasingly locating near skilled workforces to obtain the workers they need.

Over the years Johnson County leaders appear to have understood this shift in business focus as they created quality of life amenities that attracted and retained talented people. From nationally ranked schools, parks and libraries to one of the very best community colleges in the nation, Johnson County has excelled. Its per capita income ranks high in the Nation and its cities are ranked as some of the best places to live and raise a family.

From icon to festival, public art is playing an increasingly important role in the placemaking competition among communities. Sydney, Australia’s opera house and Charleston, South Carolina’s Spoleto Festival are signatures for those cities. Yes, architecture and festivals both warrant prominent places on any community’s public art inventory; both contribute to and send clear signals about quality of life.

Closer to home, “Shuttlecocks” at the Nelson-Atkins Museum and “Sky Stations” atop Bartle Hall serve similar purposes in terms of iconic imagery for Kansas City. However, these artworks differ significantly in how they accomplish placemaking: whereas “Cloud Gate” is both iconic and attracts large crowds of people, “Sky Stations is far removed from people, simply making its statement as an icon. “Shuttlecocks” accomplishes a bit of both, attracting people for a photo op and serving as one of Kansas City’s icons.

Public art can also be subtler in its placemaking role, underscoring the purpose of a building or
activity, relating to the people who work there and the customers/clients who use the facility. Artist Suikang Zhao’s one percent for public art project for the Johnson County Corrections Department’s Youth and Family Services Center is an outstanding example. Working with detained youth to create the relief wall outside the building, Suikang underscored the Center’s intent to reach out and work with troubled youth in constructive ways. Inside, his artwork transcends both public and private spaces, linking those in detention to the outside and vice versa. Today, the artwork continues to play a role in programming. Along with the facility’s striking design and gold LEED certification, the project underscores Johnson County government’s high standards and makes clear the County’s core values.

Placemaking within the realm of public art is as multi-faceted and complex as placemaking is in the broader context of government responsibilities. Sometimes placemaking with public art can be challenging when public buildings are in remote locations or their functions—a detention center, for example—require special consideration. Regardless, public art offers the opportunity for government to underscore its purposes, its services and its standards while broadcasting the community’s quality of life to people and businesses. Why else would public art be featured so prominently in many communities’ economic development literature?

In its 2030 “Living Our Vision” document, the Johnson County’s Citizens Visioning Committee recognized the importance of the arts when it identified “A Culturally Rich and Active Community” as one of the six focus areas important to making Johnson County a community of choice. The Committee appears to have understood the insight of the high school evaluation professional that observed when a school had a strong arts program he was virtually certain other aspects of the school were also strong.

The value of public art reaches far beyond the sites it touches. It is a key ingredient in the placemaking identity of a competitive, 21st Century community.

A life-long Kansas resident and avid collector of contemporary art, Larry Meeker holds a masters in business administration and a doctorate in business from the University of Kansas. Dr. Meeker is a professor in the School of Business at Western New Mexico University where he teaches economic development. He is widely published in academic and professional journals. He is also a retired Vice President of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City where he spent 28 years regulating banks and bank holding companies, conducting research, mediating community protests of bank merger applications and developing programs to help banks better serve the credit needs of lower-income individuals and small businesses.

Dr. Meeker is active in his community, serving and having served in both elected and appointed positions and leadership roles. He currently chairs the Johnson County Museum Foundation Board, the Johnson County Public Art Commission and is a member of the Kansas Creative Arts Industries Commission. He also serves on the Entrepreneurship Advisory Board for Johnson County Community College and the Nerman Museum collections committee. He recently served on the Johnson County 2030 Visioning Committee and as Mayor of the City of Lake Quivira, Kansas. He has chaired the Kansas City Jewish Museum Foundation Board and the Arts Council of Johnson County. Dr. Meeker is president of Meeker Consulting, a financial institutions and economic development
consulting firm that places special emphasis on the needs of economically disadvantaged populations. He also facilitates strategic issues discussions in support of organizational planning and engages in professional witness work.
