

Options for

# Public Art

in Lewisville, Texas



# Presentation outline

- Define and describe Public Art
- Describe the direct and indirect benefits of Public Art
- Review past Council action related to Public Art
- Examine different types of municipal Public Art programs
- Identify options for a Public Art component to capital projects



# What is Public Art?

Images evoked by the phrase 'Public Art' are usually of static bronze or monolithic stone structures. While these works of metal and stone have a well-established place in the artistic lexicon, they only encompass a portion of what is regarded as contemporary public art. Today, public art seeks to engage the community in a manner that is not simply an aspect of the landscape, but strives to establish a sense of place and identity among a community and its people.

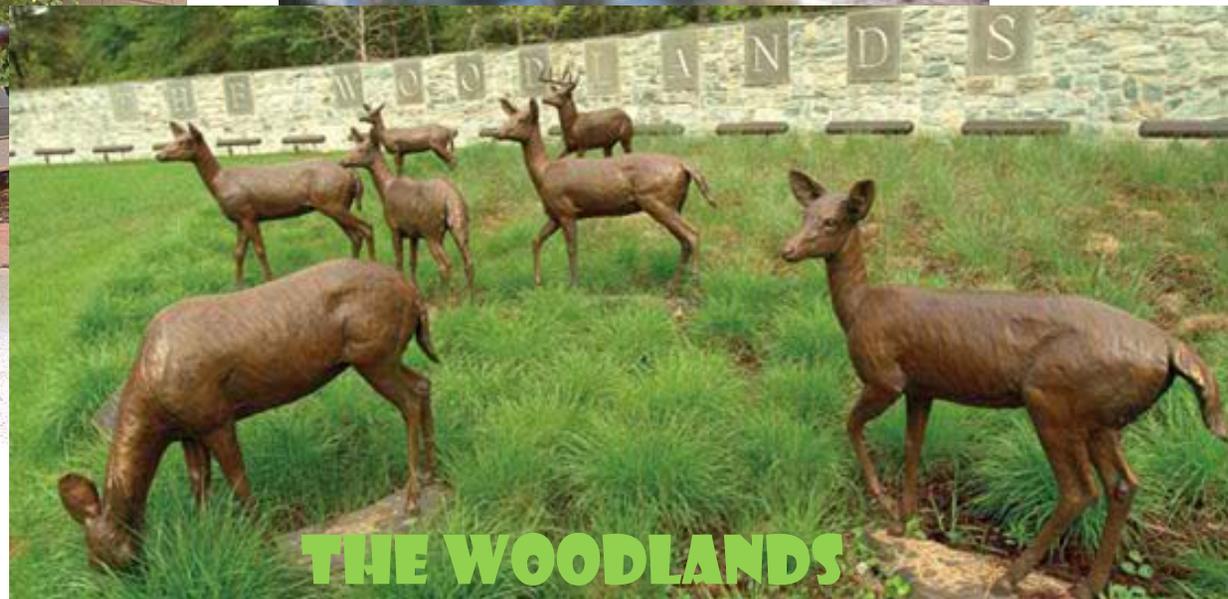
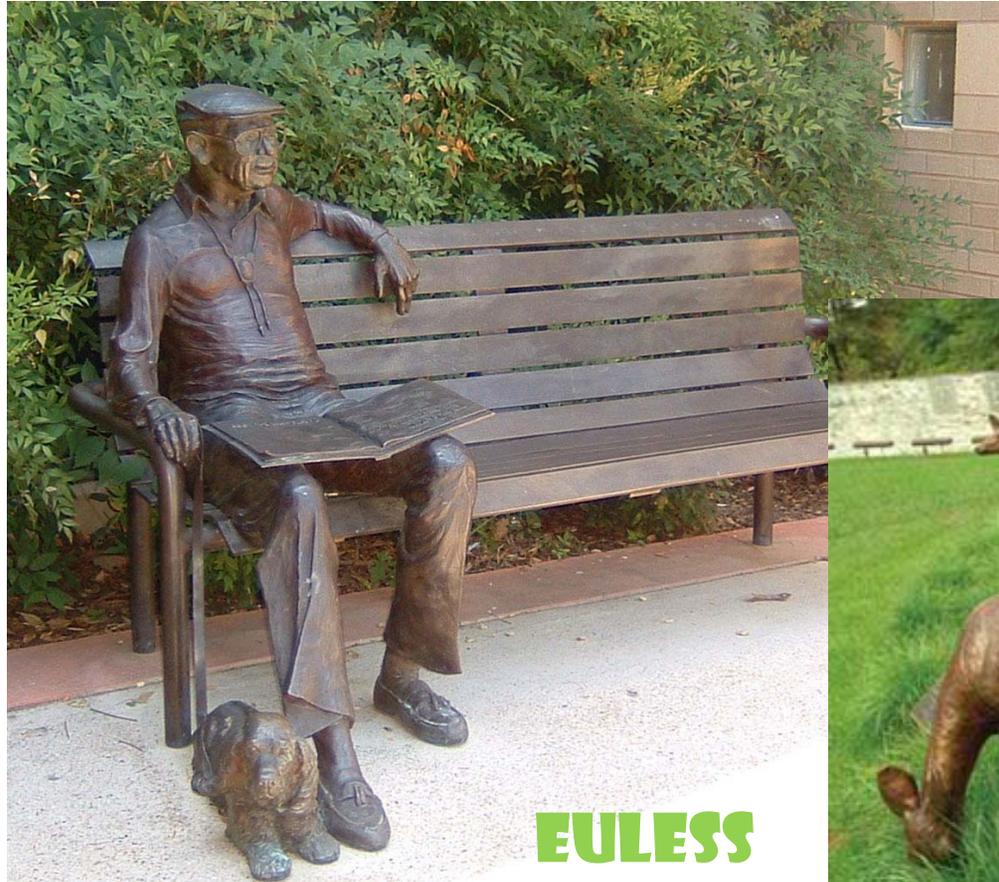
- Traditional and contemporary sculpture
- Historic monuments such as statues or obelisks
- Outdoor and indoor murals
- Themed collections of smaller artistic pieces
- Venues for public performances or recitations
- Interactive elements inviting public participation
- Specialized treatment of ground surfaces
- Creative presentation of "mundane" elements (benches, bus stops, etc.)



# What is Public Art?



# What is Public Art?



# What is Public Art?



**FT WORTH**



**MESQUITE**

# What is Public Art?

**LUBBOCK**



**FT WORTH**

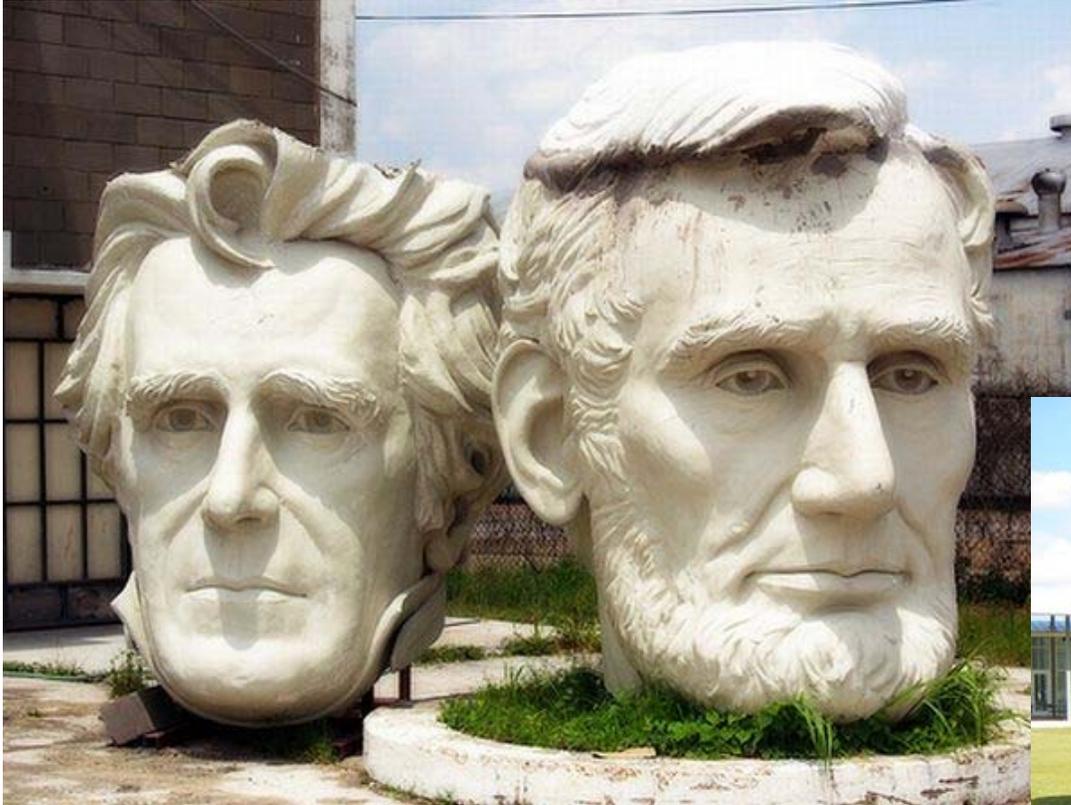


**TYLER**



**LAKE TRAVIS**

# What is Public Art?



**DOWNTOWN  
HOUSTON  
ART WALK**



# What is Public Art?



# What is Public Art?



AMARILLO

# What are benefits of Public Art?

Creates a positive economic impact:

- Community leaders around the country know that a city enriched with public art, and one that offers cultural amenities, is a city that attracts business. When Volkswagen chose to build in Chattanooga in 2012, corporate executives said the arts environment was a deciding factor. When Boeing chose Chicago for its new headquarters in 2001, officials listed the availability of quality art museums for employees to enjoy as a top deciding point.
- National Governors Association (NGA), in its 2012 study “New Engines of Growth,” found that a healthy art presence serves as a visitation draw and boosts potential tourism-related economic impacts. The study recommended “policies and programs using arts, culture and design as a means to enhance economic growth.”
- Public art and arts-related programming also help attract new residents. The same NGA study found that “the most talented individuals are migrating to a small number of cities that are most likely to maximize innovation” and identified culture and the arts as key indicators of those cities.



# What are benefits of Public Art?

Creates a connection with people:

- According to Americans For the Arts, the freely accessible nature of public art has a lasting positive impact on the community by adding cultural, social and economic value. “Public art is a distinguishing part of our public history and our evolving culture. It reflects and reveals our society, adds meaning to our cities and uniqueness to our communities. Public art humanizes the environmental and invigorates public spaces.”
- American Society of Landscape Architects agrees. “Community art can also create attachment to one’s community. Studies have looked at the economic development benefits of art, but only just recently have there been wider examinations of the effect of art on a community’s sense of place.”
- Knight Foundation’s “Soul of the Community” initiative surveyed 43,000 people in 43 cities and found that “social offerings, openness and welcomeness,” and the “aesthetics of a place – its art, parks, and green spaces,” ranked higher than education, safety, and the local economy as a “driver of attachment.”



# What are benefits of Public Art?

Creates a positive community image:

- Having a particular community identity, especially as it relates to visual appeal, is increasingly important for cities that want to be seen as a desirable place to live or visit. Use of public art can have a direct positive impact on internal and external public perception of a city.
- Americans For the Arts has found that people strongly identify cities by their visual appeal and noteworthy visual features, often forming their impression of a city based primarily on those aspects. For example, when asked what they most closely associated with St. Louis, a majority of people surveyed named the famous Arch. When asked why they chose to visit New York City, a majority of tourists surveyed said it was the cultural and visual arts.
- In his book “The Art of Placemaking,” author Ronald Lee Fleming advocates narrative, site-specific public art that engages the popular imagination through common references to history, folklore, culture and geography. He supports that with more than a dozen case studies from cities nationwide that show a connection between public art and positive impressions of a city by residents and visitors.



# How do you select Public Art?

- Lewisville City Council has given the Art Advisory Committee the authority to recommend public art projects and to oversee selection of public art. Staff is developing a Public Art Policy that could include the following selection methods:
  - Accept proposals - An artist or organization approaches the city on its own with a proposal for public art. The proposal is evaluated, including any one-time and ongoing costs, and a decision is made to accept or reject the proposal.
  - Solicit proposals - If a public art display were desired for a specific location or use, a formal proposal process could be used to actively solicit submissions from artists and groups. Selection would require a formal evaluation process.
  - Purchase artwork - If a piece of Public Art were desired for a specific use or location, suitable works could be identified and a purchase made from what is available.
  - Commission artwork - To obtain a truly original piece of Public Art, it often is necessary to commission a piece that will fit specific needs and wants. A formal selection process is used to choose an artist, who then works within our parameters to create the art.



# How do you select Public Art?

- Budget authority always remains with the Council, either through approval of the annual budget or through a supplemental appropriation for a specific project. To date, Council funding for the arts has been limited to public performances and special events.
- Council created a Public Art Fund as part of the 2014-15 operating budget, allocating “unused” portions of the 15 percent arts support cap from the Hotel Fund budget. That is estimated to be about \$10,000 this fiscal year.
- Council has not provided direction related to including Public Art with capital projects, but asked staff to get input and a recommendation from the Blue Ribbon Committee.



# What does Public Art cost?

As much as you want to spend!

- Monument-style sculptures by noted artists, art displays that feature multiple pieces such as a cattle drive in downtown Dallas, or large structures such as memorial walls or obelisks can easily surpass \$1 million.
- Smaller sculptures, wall murals, and decorative features such as benches can cost a few thousand dollars or less. While these items can have less individual impact than a larger display, their impact can be cumulatively powerful.
- Cost factors include size, materials, quality, complexity, reputation of the artist, uniqueness of the work (one-of-a-kind versus one from a run of 1,000), placement and installation, relevance to the community, public perception, interest from other buyers, current state of the market for art.



# How do you pay for Public Art?

## Capital Project set-aside:

More than 350 cities nationwide, including many cities in Texas, allocate a percentage of capital project construction cost that will be used for Public Art in some form. These policies typically exclude land cost from the Public Art calculation. Some examples from the North Texas area:

- Frisco allocates a minimum of 1 percent up to a maximum of 2 percent of construction cost to be used for Public Art enhancements to capital projects.
- Mesquite allocates a maximum of 2 percent of construction cost for Public Art enhancements to selected capital projects.
- Denton allocates a minimum of 2 percent up to a maximum of 4 percent of construction cost to be used for Public Art enhancements to facility projects (excludes infrastructure projects).
- Dallas allocates a maximum of 1.5 percent of construction costs for bond projects to commission Public Art at or near the capital project site.
- Allen allocates a fixed 2 percent of construction costs for bond projects (subject to voter approval), combined into a single fund to pay for Public Art at any of the voter-approved capital projects.



# How do you pay for Public Art?

## Capital Project set-aside:

- Per Section 444.029 of Texas Government Code, any county, municipality, or other political subdivision of this state undertaking a public construction project estimated to cost more than \$250,000 may specify that a percentage not to exceed one percent of the cost of the construction project shall be used for fine arts projects at or near the site of the construction project. (This is language creating the Texas Commission for the Arts.)
- In conversation with Texas Commission for the Arts, staff was told the actual percentage is a “local decision” and that many communities choose to exceed the 1 percent authorization found in Texas Government Code.
- Some cities that include an art component for capital projects exclude certain types of projects, such as streets, drainage, traffic control and other infrastructure projects. Others, however, do include public art funding with street projects and use that money for entry portals or for art elements in the pedestrian features.



# How do you pay for Public Art?

## Capital Project set-aside:

- When used in conjunction with voter-approved bond projects, most cities simply include it in the cost of the project. So a \$10 million project would be presented to voters as \$10.02 million (if the art component is set at 2 percent of project cost).
- In a few cities, each ballot proposition specifically states the amount to be used for a public art component (if any). There is no clear indication whether this helped or hurt voter approval of the propositions.
- Denton took a different approach in its most recent bond election, listing a separate proposition for voter approval that combined the public art component for all other items on the ballot. The item was approved with support from more than 70 percent of the voters.

