

# BRIDGES TO PUBLIC ART

A Strategic Plan for Public Art in Waco, Tx





WELCOME

This Public Art Strategic Plan (PASP) presents research and conversations across the Waco community around public art. Public art planning is a best practice, as it addresses questions such as what public art is and is not, where it should go, what it should look like, who should pay for it, how to spark a public art idea, and a dozen others. The City has not done this before and the current model is inherently reactive. It is evident the community is in a place where there's enough activity to be more proactive and strategic about public art projects, processes, program structure, and resourcing. This PASP is designed to help us make good decisions so that our whole community can be proud of wonderful public art in places that will be enlivened and activated by its presence. This is designed to be a living document, and a practical guide for decision makers and anyone interested in commissioning, creating, funding or otherwise engaging in public art and creative placemaking. It is a first step toward creating amazing artwork that we will leave as a legacy to future generations.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to all the individuals and organizations who participated in this conversation.

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**DRAFT**



# INTRODUCTION

WACO HAS ALL THE  
INGREDIENTS TO BE A  
THOUGHT LEADER AND  
TREND SETTER FOR  
PUBLIC ART

## IN THIS SECTION:

- A public art program brings with it funding and workforce development. There are over 350 public art programs across the country
- Public art strategies can help meet larger community goals, like workforce development, community engagement, economic development
- Public art can aid in creating and maintaining a livable, vibrant, attractive place for people to work, live, and visit
- Having a public art strategic plan ensures that these benefits are sustained over the long term, and positions Waco as a key arts and culture destination
- This plan reinforces the goals of the City's 2040 Comprehensive plan and the Waco Cultural Plan
- This plan looks to expand public and private partnerships and investments to benefit the community
- The community recognizes Waco's history of community engaged arts as a strong base to sustainably build public art and creative placemaking across the city, such as
  - the Downtown Cultural District
  - over 100 permanent public artworks
  - a multitude of performances, programs, events, and festivals that contribute to public art in Waco
  - a total of \$4M in public artworks by leading artists from across the USA and by talented local artists have been commissioned and installed by partnership between the City, Creative Waco, Cultural Arts of Waco, and other local arts organizations and individuals
- Creative Waco is Waco's and McLennan county's arts agency, spearheaded the Cultural District application process with other partners, and has been a partner with the City in public art and creative placemaking initiatives in a growing capacity since 2018



**THE HISTORIC CROSSING OF THE BRAZOS RIVER IN WACO HAS LONG BEEN A GATHERING PLACE FOR DIVERSE PEOPLE AND CULTURES. OUR COMMUNITY'S NATURAL BEAUTY, CULTURALLY RICH HISTORY, THOUGHTFUL INTEGRATION OF PUBLIC PARKS AND OTHER SPACES, AND EXISTING WORLD CLASS PUBLIC ART MAKE IT IMPORTANT THAT WE ARE STRATEGIC IN ALIGNING PARTNERS AND RESOURCES FOR WHAT COMES NEXT. WACO'S CURRENT DECISION MAKERS WILL DEFINE THIS CITY'S CHARACTER AND CULTURAL PERSONALITY. THIS STUDY IS DESIGNED TO BE A LIVING RESOURCE FOR CONFIDENT DECISION MAKING AROUND PUBLIC ART AND CREATIVE PLACEMAKING THAT SERVES THE NEEDS AND DREAMS OF THE WHOLE COMMUNITY.**

**WACO LIFE IS ART!**

**'WE ARE WACO'S DE MEDICI GENERATION.'**

**MORE ART IN MORE PLACES ALL OVER TOWN!**

# HISTORY OF COMMUNITY ENGAGED ARTS IN WACO:

## WACO IS:

**STRATEGICALLY LOCATED:** Waco is the county seat of McLennan County and is situated 90 miles south of the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, 90 miles north of Austin, and 180 miles northwest of Houston, all of which are known arts and culture destinations. 80% of Texas residents live within a 4-hour drive. This makes Waco strategically located in the heart of the “Texas triangle,” an economic mega-region.

**GROWING:** In 2019 the U.S. Census Bureau estimated a City of Waco population of 139,239 residents, a McLennan County population of 256,623, and each has a history of steady population growth. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, Waco and McLennan County are experiencing intense growth, due in part to being the home of Chip and Joanna Gaines of HGTV “Fixer Upper” fame. Their “Magnolia Market” and new Magnolia Network drew (pre-pandemic) 35,000 visitors per week to Waco seeking quality, handmade goods, and the highest craftsmanship found within the skill sets of Waco’s architects and fine artists and designers. Visitor numbers are already rebounding, and Waco is currently #2 in the state of Texas and #7 in the country for job creation as of October 2022.

**FORWARD THINKING:** In 2004, Waco began a Community Visioning process that identified cultural and artistic needs as a priority. Subsequent community consultation (by City Council, Chambers of Commerce, the education sector, community groups, and corporate partners) recognized public art as vital for quality of life. As a result, Waco’s arts leaders united in 2011 to form Waco Arts Alliance, leading to the formation of Creative Waco in 2015 to serve as the Local Arts Agency for Waco and McLennan County. Cultural goals from the studies cited above became the basis for Waco’s “Cultural Plan,” which directs Creative Waco’s work. This plan identifies public art as essential to the goal of developing a cultural identity. In 2016, Downtown Waco achieved Cultural District status from the Texas Commission on the Arts.

**CULTURALLY VIBRANT:** Waco fosters creative growth through its three institutions of higher education: Baylor University, McLennan Community College and Texas State Technical College.

This talent spills over into a lively community arts scene with visual arts, music, literature, film-making and theatre all strongly represented. Waco’s cultural life is also enriched by wonderful museums, state-of-the-art Cameron Park Zoo, the Brazos Nights free concert series, art and film festivals, galleries, a growing live music scene, and so much more, including the Downtown Cultural District.

**DIVERSE:** Wacoans come from a variety of backgrounds, cultures, religions, and identities. 57% of the City’s residents are people of color or non-white. Baylor, Texas State Technical College, and McLennan Community College bring in a younger demographic, with a combined student population of over 38,000.

Over the years, City of Waco has partnered with Creative Waco, Cultural Arts of Waco, and other local arts organizations and individuals to commission and install over \$4M public artworks by leading artists from across the USA and by talented local artists. In recent years, visiting new public artwork has become a top family-friendly activity. There is strong demand for more public art. At the same time, increased development across the city has created an opportunity to be more strategic about how public art is generated and funded. Research conducted for this study also reveals a community desire to prioritize diversity, equity and inclusion in multiple forms, create opportunities for local artists, and represent the City’s character and hopes.

## ABOUT CREATIVE WACO

Creative Waco is a nonprofit organization with a mission to grow and support a thriving cultural and creative community in Waco and McLennan County, Texas.

As Waco and McLennan County’s arts agency, Creative Waco works to develop successful “education to industry” strategies for growing and supporting the local cultural and creative community. It provides a platform for “joined up thinking,” allowing community members to set goals, access new funding, evaluate impact, and identify needs. Creative Waco believes that creativity, entrepreneurship, and problem-solving flourish best when diverse people connect.



## WHAT IS PUBLIC ART?

This plan recognizes public art as both process and product. Getting to the outcome is sometimes more engaging and collaborative than the product itself. Public art is freely accessible to everyone, whether it is publicly or privately funded, and whether it is on public or private land. It is more than monuments, memorials and murals, although these art forms are an important part of the field.

In recent years, we have seen expansion of the field, with more emphasis on audience participation, co-creation, cross sector collaborations and engaging people in the process, leading to more than the traditional 2D and 3D visual forms such as sculpture and murals. While these are an important part of the public art field and Waco can benefit from continuing to curate these kinds of artworks, they are not the only formats and public art programs across the country are developing policies to include performance, events, spectacles, and temporary demonstration projects.

## Public Art is Different from Art in Public

in that each public art project is informed by its physical, cultural and historical contexts. Art in public does not consider the context and is usually disconnected from the community. Another term for this is “plop art.” This plan focuses on public art that engages community members through the process, considers its location within the socio-cultural context of its physical location, and is developed by artists with a connection to the community, site, or content of the artwork.

THE TEXAS ARTS AND CULTURE INDUSTRY HAS GROWN MORE THAN 30% OVER THE PAST DECADE, GENERATING \$6.1 BILLION FOR THE TEXAS ECONOMY, TOTALING NEARLY \$380 MILLION IN STATE SALES TAX REVENUE, AND \$50.1 BILLION IN GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT IN 2019.

There are approximately 350 public art programs across the country, with dedicated funding streams and staff members that engage artists as an important part of the workforce. Many of these programs are being revamped, and expanding their traditional percent-for-art funding models (when a percentage of capital improvement project costs go directly to public art associated with the project) which typically support static, object based artworks, to support temporary projects and creative work that connects economic development with community cultural development through events, placemaking, and space activation.

Many programs and cities are placing emphasis on utilizing public art as a vehicle to meet goals across departments and sectors. They achieve this by curating artists to bring their creative thinking skills to a wide variety of projects. Uplifting the value of public art can help create a culture of equity by connecting community members across the city. It can provide a safe and vibrant city to help retain current residents and attract visitors. It can facilitate economic development through support for artists and the development of the creative workforce. These benefits will continue to enhance the quality of life for everyone in Waco.

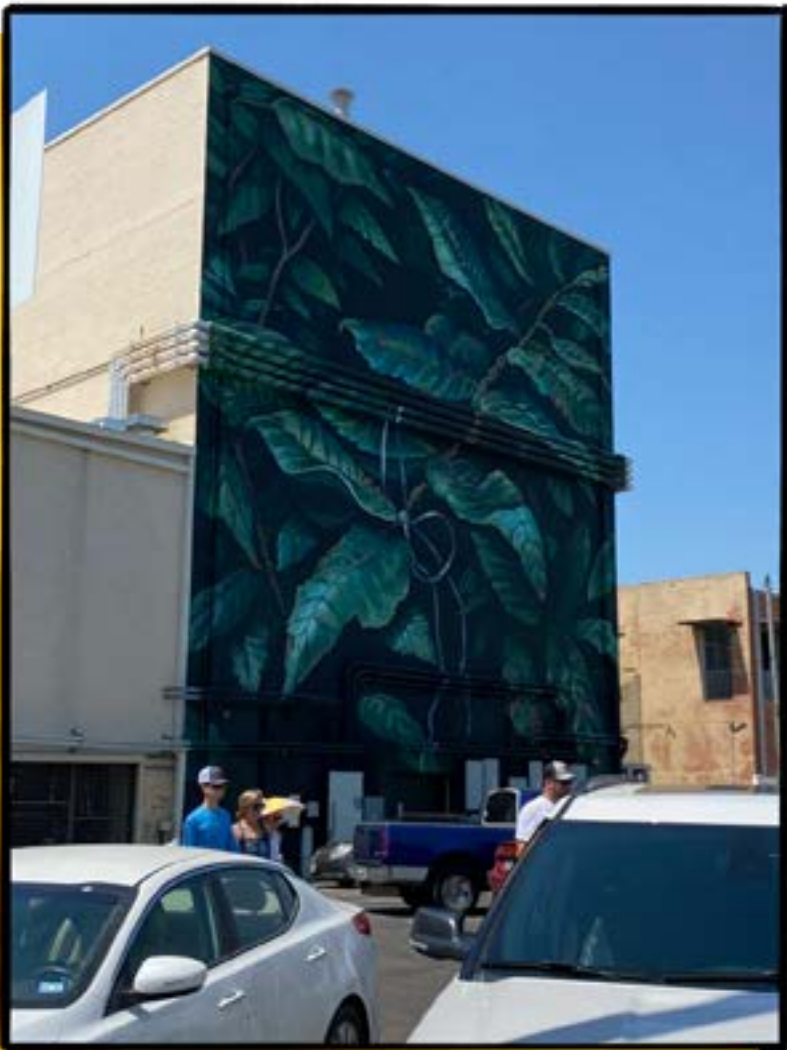
THE ARTS BOOST TOURISM. IN 2019, TEXAS TOURISM SPENDING SURPASSED \$83 BILLION. NOT ONLY DO ART AND CULTURE TOURISTS STAY LONGER AND SPEND MORE, NEARLY ONE IN FOUR VISITORS PARTICIPATE IN CULTURAL TOURISM WHEN TRAVELING TO TEXAS.

Many public art programs are currently reckoning with the monuments and memorials in their collections to understand if and how they represent the values of current and future generations of community members, and are developing guidelines around what actions need to be taken. The [City of Chicago](#) recently released a report about their current monuments and memorials, [New York City](#) released a report in 2019, and San Francisco is currently undergoing a collection review. We define monuments and memorials in the following way:

**MONUMENTS:** Structures, sculpture or other objects erected to commemorate a person or an event. A monument is a type of memorial.

**MEMORIALS:** Something established to remind people of a person or event. This could be an object, a day, an event, or a space, but is not always a monument.

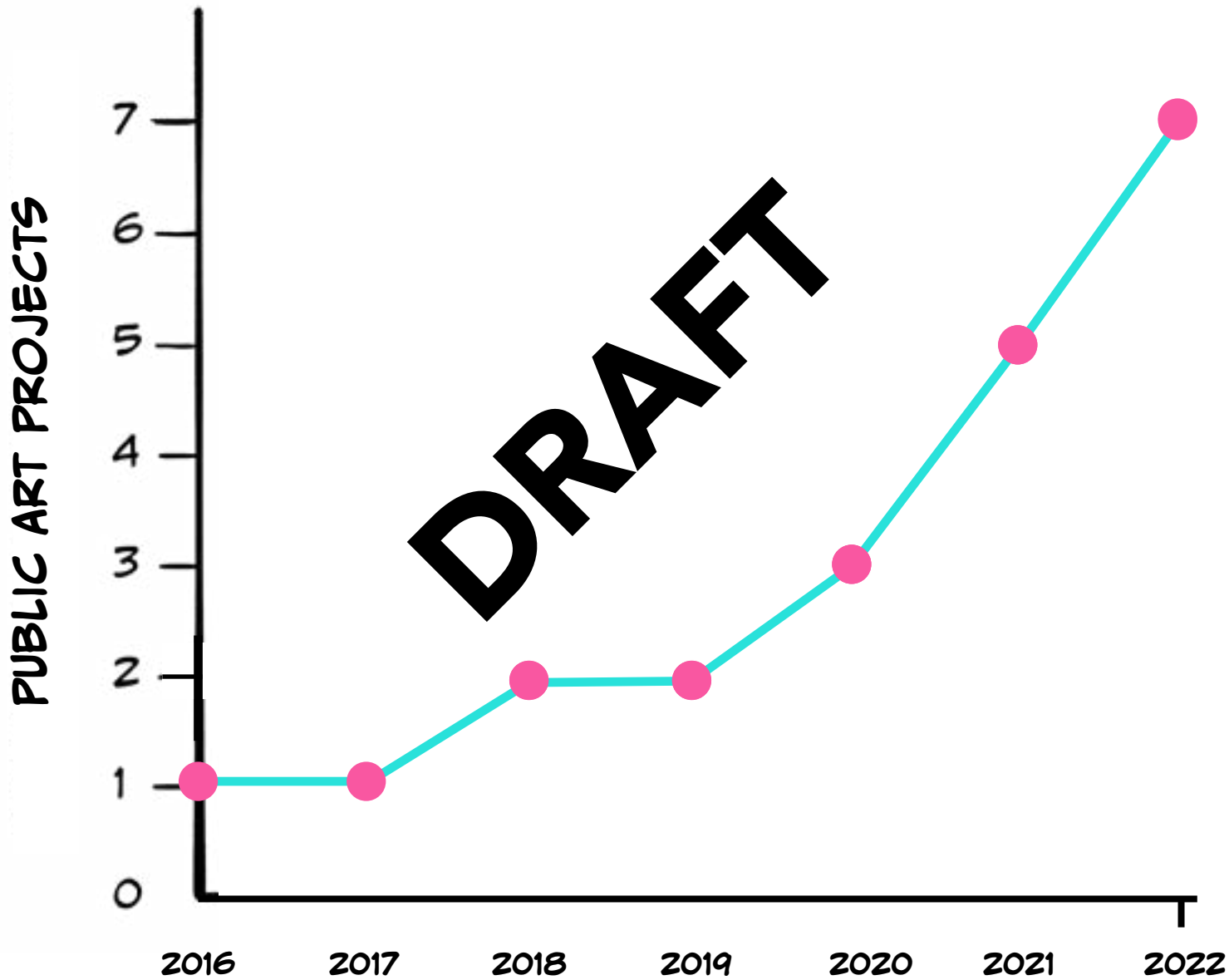








IN ADDITION TO CREATIVE WACO'S GENERAL CONTRACT FOR SERVICES WHICH STARTED IN 2016, CREATIVE WACO HAS HAD 15 ADDITIONAL CONTRACTS WORKING WITH THE CITY OF WACO ON SPECIFIC PUBLIC ART RELATED PROJECTS AND EVENTS. THIS ENERGY HAS BEEN GROWING YEAR OVER YEAR AND WILL CONTINUE TO GROW, WITH 2022 CLOSING OUT AT 5 CONTRACTS AND 2 EVENT PERMITS. THIS MODEL IS INHERENTLY REACTIVE, AND IT'S EVIDENT THE COMMUNITY IS IN A PLACE WHERE THERE'S ENOUGH ACTIVITY TO BE MORE PROACTIVE AND STRATEGIC ABOUT PUBLIC ART PROJECTS, PROCESSES, PROGRAM STRUCTURE, AND RESOURCING.





## PUBLIC ART AND CULTURAL ASSETS THAT CURRENTLY EXIST (INCLUDING PROGRAMMING AND TEMPORARY PROJECTS) IN WACO:

There are currently over 100 permanent public artworks in Waco. Mainly concentrated in the Downtown Cultural District, there are several across the Brazos on Elm Street, and others extending out further, such as the Shepherd's Heart Pantry mural at North 24th Street and Homan Avenue. These permanent artworks include:

- Sculptures, including the [Waco Sculpture Zoo](#)
- [Public memorials](#), such as [Doris Miller Memorial](#)
- Murals, including ARTPrenticeship murals and Blek le Rat murals
- Fountains

In addition to the static, 2D and 3D permanent artworks, there are many temporary artworks, performances, programs, events, and festivals that contribute to public art in Waco (this list is not exhaustive):

- Waco Cultural Arts Fest
- Food Truck Showdown
- Dia De Los Muertos
- Traveling Ofrenda
- Deep in the Heart Film Festival
- Waco Family & Faith International Film Festival
- Brazos Nights

Public art and creative placemaking in Waco have been undertaken by different organizations over time. This plan highlights some of the programming Creative Waco offers, as they have taken on more public art projects in recent years in contract with the City.

### PLACEMAKING EVENTS

#### CHALK WACO

This two-day festival brings tens of thousands of people from near and far to Downtown Waco to enjoy chalk murals created by local artists representing local businesses, a two-day market featuring over 150 vendors, and performances by local artists. In 2022, Chalk Waco drew over 24,000 attendees, and matched 59 artists with 59 local businesses to develop temporary chalk murals. Visitors to Waco not only participate in the Chalk Waco events, they contribute to the economic vitality of the city by spending time and money in local restaurants, bars, stores, museums, galleries, and more. The event's direct economic impact was estimated at \$4 million.

#### BRIDGE STREET AMPHITHEATER

A new community space in East Waco for performances, festivals, and creative projects.



### WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

#### ARTPRENTICESHIP

A program that offers talented high school creatives the opportunity to work with professional artists and learn the skills and processes to manage a creative project from concept to completion by painting a mural or making a film.

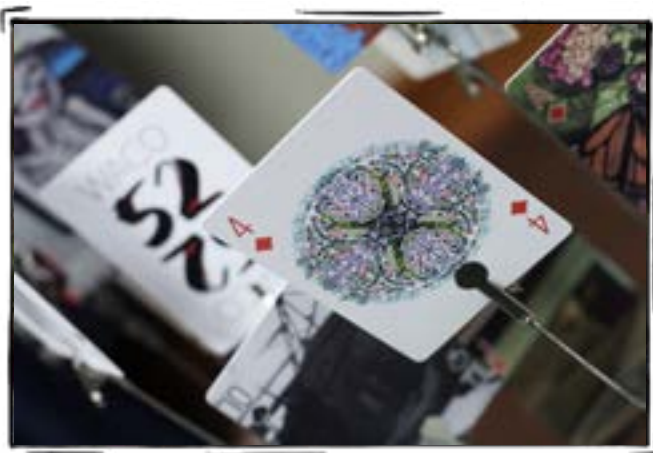


## AIR COLLABORATIVE + SHIFT WORKSHOPS

Air Collaborative is a design thinking workshop program that sparks arts and business collaboration, and coaches the exchange of skills and ideas by bringing community members of diverse backgrounds to the table together around creative problem solving.

## WACO 52

An exhibition in the palm of your hand: 52 artworks from Waco & McLennan County made into a set of playing cards. The original artworks were selected by international judges, exhibited in the rotunda of the Texas State Capitol in Austin, and then at Cultivate 7Twelve in Waco.



## ARTS MATCH PROGRAM (AMP)

Creative Waco's Arts Match Program, "AMP," is a fun way for supporting great ideas for high impact and/or innovative arts projects by providing matching grants that will help grow our community as a vibrant cultural hub.

## CREATIVE DIRECTORY

This directory makes it easy and fun to find creative people, organizations and businesses so that you can enjoy the magic they bring to the Waco community. This includes musicians to play for a party, where your creative kid can take classes, where you can see and buy art by local artists or to find someone to paint a mural for your home or business, and more!

In addition to these resources, the community also identified many cultural assets in Waco through the survey used to develop this strategic plan, such as parks, public schools and universities, musical organizations and choirs, the Brazos River, flea and farmer's markets, museums, dance companies, infrastructure such as the Waco Suspension Bridge, restaurants, festivals, arts centers, and more.

Cities are also seeing the value of public art to help connect across all members of their community. The traditional top-down approach to public art is being combined with bottom up, grass roots methods, fostering entrepreneurs and private sector producers. Artists are building their own projects, engaging community, and creating new ways of collaborating. Municipal programs are providing resources in the form of funding, technical assistance, training, and public spaces and infrastructure to continue to foster artist initiated projects. Both of these formats can exist within one program.

A growing number of traditional arts institutions are utilizing public art strategies to expand their offerings outside their buildings. They are building community engagement through public art, celebrating temporary exhibits, and moving their exhibits and performances to other parts of the city to meet audience members where they are at.

New technologies are entering the public art field in many ways. Artists are experimenting with artificial intelligence (AI) and adding value to public art through augmented and virtual reality, and other digital forms and media.

COVID-19 has, and still is, affecting the ability of artists and creatives to continue contributing as a key sector of the workforce. [Between 2019 and 2020, the arts and culture sector lost over 600,000 jobs.](#) The arts and culture industry came to a standstill in early 2020 as the nation stayed home and socially distanced. More artists and creatives are starting to see projects come back, and there has been a resurgence of interest in Works Progress era types of opportunities for artists.

COVID-19 has also focused many public art projects around public health and healing, to share messaging about the pandemic and health and safety, as well as providing a way for audiences to come in contact with art when they are not able to go to a museum, gallery, or arts event.

Across the country, municipal public art programs, nonprofits, and other arts organizations are analyzing public art processes, projects, and policies to ask who has been left out. They are working to address how to fill those gaps with a goal of participation for all.

Community involvement in many different phases of public art projects has become an adopted best practice. Public art can't happen without the public, and many programs are changing how they operate so that their processes are transparent and open to community members to participate.

A surge of projects in the creative placemaking realm has taken place over the last decade as a way to utilize arts and culture to bring economies back after the Great Recession of 2007-2009. This field (also



referred to as placekeeping, placehonoring, or placeknowing) is closely tied to public art. All of these terms focus on meeting community goals (for health, safety, economic development, social cohesion, and more) and engaging community in civic processes. Public art is the manifestation of these processes and goals in our shared public spaces.

More and more municipalities are seeing the value of public art and creative placemaking in their economic development. Waco is currently working with Americans for the Arts on gathering data for participation in an Arts and Economic Prosperity 6 Study, with results coming out in August - October 2023. The last time an [Arts and Economic Prosperity Study](#) was conducted was in 2015, and found that Waco's nonprofit arts and cultural organizations deliver \$63.7 million of economic impact per year, supporting over 2,000 full-time equivalent jobs, earning over \$7 million in tax revenue for local and state governments. Since then, we know our base economy in Waco is growing with a population growth of 1.5% in 2021, and Waco is growing as a destination with a 41% tourism growth rate in 2021. Infrastructural investment is continuing to increase with \$215,000,000 of capital improvement projects in FY 22-23 and \$292,865,650 amount in private development currently underway. All of these create opportunities for public art and a responsibility that we as a generation be thoughtful and strategic about public art is part of our growth conversation.

The [Waco 2040 plan](#) acknowledges and reinforces the value of public art and arts and culture in creating and maintaining a liveable, vibrant, and attractive place for people to work, live, and visit.

FROM [WACO 2040 PLAN](#):

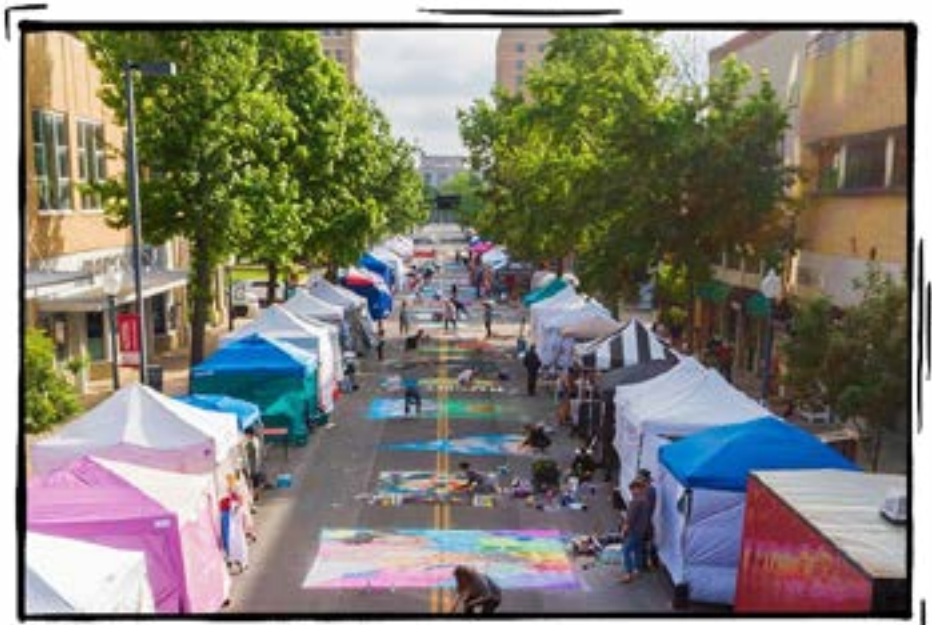
"FROM ASSISTING BUSINESSES IN ATTRACTING A WORKFORCE OF YOUNG PROFESSIONALS TO PROMOTING CREATIVITY IN CHILDREN AND YOUTH FROM DIVERSE SOCIOECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS, THE ARTS CONTRIBUTE SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CLIMATE OF OUR COMMUNITY."

FROM [AMERICANS FOR THE ARTS PUBLIC ART NETWORK GREEN PAPER](#):

"CITIES GAIN VALUE THROUGH PUBLIC ART - 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 BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND INVIGORATES PUBLIC SPACES. IT PROVIDES AN INTERSECTION BETWEEN PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE, BETWEEN DISCIPLINES, AND BETWEEN IDEAS. PUBLIC ART IS FREELY ACCESSIBLE."

Other sectors also see the benefit of incorporating public art and artists into design processes and our shared spaces.

- American Society of Landscape Architects wrote [this piece in 2012](#) about how public art can add value to public spaces, and has several other articles on their website that shares information about public art and its value.
- United Properties, one of the largest development companies in Minnesota, wrote [this piece in 2019](#) about how they see the value of public art and incorporate it into their developments.
- The LA chapter of Urban Land Institute [ULI] [wrote this piece just this year](#), 2022, and notes that "public art is an asset within development projects," and that public art is becoming more of a staple in development.
- [Harper's Bazaar wrote in 2020](#) that "public art has the capacity to put a place on the map and prove that it is a place worth traveling to, worth living in."







**WHY CREATE A  
PUBLIC ART  
STRATEGIC  
PLAN...**



# FOR WACO?

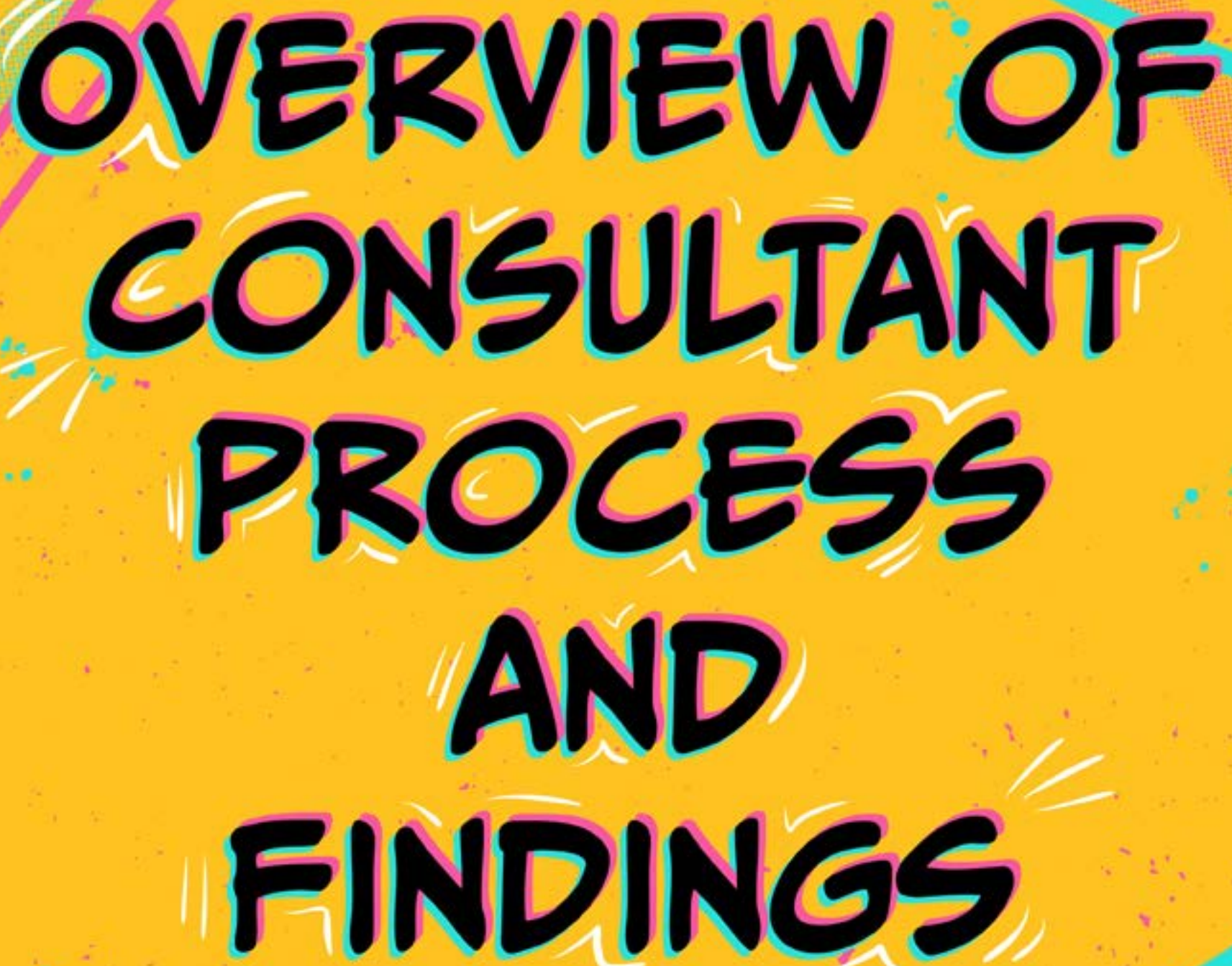
ALTHOUGH PUBLIC ART PROJECTS ARE GOING WELL, THE CITY OF WACO DOES NOT HAVE A PUBLIC ART STRATEGIC PLAN (PASP). THIS PASP CONSIDERS PUBLIC ART AS A VEHICLE BY WHICH TO ACHIEVE GOALS ACROSS THE CITY. ITS INTENTION IS TO REINFORCE GOALS OF THE [CITY'S 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN](#) AND THE [WACO CULTURAL PLAN](#), AND TO EXPAND PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS AND INVESTMENTS TO BENEFIT THE COMMUNITY. THE ONLY CURRENT MECHANISM FOR PUBLIC ART IS A DONOR OR THE CITY COMING FORWARD WITH FUNDING AND AN IDEA. WACO NEEDS A PUBLIC ART PROGRAM THAT IS BY AND FOR THE PEOPLE.

CREATIVE WACO AND THE CULTURAL DISTRICT TASK FORCE SAW THE NEED FOR FORMALIZING PROCESSES IN ORDER TO BEST AGGREGATE THE MANY ARTS AND CULTURAL ASSETS ACROSS THE CITY, TO SUPPORT AND GUIDE THE WORK OF CREATIVE ORGANIZATIONS, CITY AND COUNTY STAFF AND OFFICIALS, AND INVOLVE THE COMMUNITY IN THE PROCESS. BECAUSE OF THIS, THEY RECEIVED A GRANT FROM THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS TO FUND THIS COMMUNITY-FOCUSED, ASSET-BASED STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS.

THE FINDINGS FROM THE [ARTS AND ECONOMIC PROSPERITY STUDY 5](#), AND FROM YEAR ON YEAR DATA GATHERED BY CREATIVE WACO SINCE, SHOWS JUST HOW MUCH ARTS AND CREATIVITY CONTRIBUTE TO THE LOCAL ECONOMY. FOR EXAMPLE, CHALK WACO, AN ACTIVATION EVENT, CONTRIBUTES \$4,000,000 TO THE LOCAL ECONOMY BASED ON NUMBERS FROM THE [CVB'S IMPACT CALCULATOR](#).

HAVING A PUBLIC ART STRATEGIC PLAN ENSURES THAT THIS IMMENSE CONTRIBUTION IS SUSTAINED OVER THE LONG TERM, AND POSITIONS WACO AS A KEY ARTS AND CULTURE DESTINATION.





**OVERVIEW OF  
CONSULTANT  
PROCESS  
AND  
FINDINGS**



## IN THIS SECTION:

- Community engagement was a key component in the development of this public art strategic plan and included:
  - Developing core values and guiding questions with the Cultural District Advisory Committee
  - 1-1 conversations
  - Focus groups
  - Pop-up, creative engagement activities conducted by local team members
  - Community wide survey in both English and Spanish
  - Key findings include:
    - There is overwhelming support for all types of public art in all spaces, distributed across Waco with events, programming, and activities associated with it
    - There is support for artwork that enlivens Waco, instills a sense of pride, and supports the economy and artist workforce
    - People are supportive of public art being funded in a variety of ways, with generous support for a percent for art ordinance for new development in the city
    - Funding, processes, and maintenance for public art must be consistent and sustainable
    - Cross sector collaborations and relationship building between organizations and community members will make the program strong and build opportunities for everyone
    - It is imperative to take advantage of the fast growth currently happening in Waco
    - Accessibility and understanding of public art that promotes diversity and education is essential to helping community members find value in the PASP

The focus of the public art strategic planning process was to engage community in many different ways, and go where people already were gathering to share information about the PASP and actively listen. There was a concerted effort to seek and obtain diverse perspectives and input throughout the strategic planning process. Through conversations and aspirational activities with the Waco Downtown Cultural District Advisory Committee, the following core values, guiding principles, and questions were developed to shape the strategic planning process:

- What is the definition of public art in Waco?
- What is the process for public art in Waco? Who is involved? What does funding look like? How can every step of the public art process be democratized and diversified?
- What does support from the City look like?
- Where across the city can public art happen/how can public art elevate the uncovered jewels in the city?
- How can we build upon and capitalize on the fast development happening across the city?
- What does appreciation of the arts look like? (attention, money, staff, marketing, other types of support?)
- How can public art create/develop/uncover Waco's identity to attract tourism, and retain current residents and graduating students?
- How can we build a sustainable program?
- What types of programming and other elements need to be part of a public art program to build awareness and skills for artists and community members?
- What are the roles of Creative Waco, City of Waco and other partners?

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement was a key component in the development of this public art strategic plan. All aspects of the PASP were informed by a community engagement strategy that involved working with local artists and community members. As mentioned before, the PASP recognizes both process and product. The engagement of diverse community stakeholders in vision casting and goal development for quality public art is an essential component to the success of both of these. We conducted a variety of engagement activities throughout the process, including:

- Research of existing plans
- One to one conversations
- Focus groups
- Pop-up, creative engagement activities conducted by local team members
- Community wide survey

Through all of these engagement activities, the community taught us many things about what the past, present, and future definitions of public art are/can be. We learned that:

- There was overwhelming support for all types of public art in all spaces, distributed across Waco.
- People noted that they want to see sculptures, murals, and statues everywhere from parks/trails to public transportation spaces, and even streets!
- People noted they do not have a strong desire to see banners or flags as part of the public art in Waco.
- Accessibility and understanding of public art that promotes diversity and education is essential to helping community members find value in the PASP.

## WACO COMMUNITY POP-UPS

### WHAT IS A POP-UP EVENT?

Pop-up events are temporary, unexpected events in unique spaces. For this public art strategic plan, we worked with local creative professionals to develop art-centered conversation around what the community wanted to see in the future of public art.

We hired three local creative professionals to be part of our team and create exciting arts-based community engagement activities. These team members are:

TASHITA BIBLES  
CHRIS MCGOWAN  
RAJESH SOLANKI

This awesome team showed up at several events around town, shared information about this process with community members, and received critical feedback about public art in Waco.





# JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION



- 100 PEOPLE ENGAGED VIA CHALKBOARD SURVEY + PINWHEEL CRAFTS ACTIVITY W/ TASHITA.
- ALL AGES ENGAGED AT THIS EVENT.
- TASHITA CREATED PINWHEELS WITH KIDS AT THE EVENT WITH JUNETEENTH FLAG COLORS.
- POPSICLES WERE SHARED OUT TO COMMUNITY MEMBERS AT THIS OUTDOOR EVENT.
  
- **PUBLIC ART QUESTION THAT WAS ASKED: WHAT SHOULD BE THE PRIORITY FOR PUBLIC ART IN THE COMMUNITY?**
- THERE WAS STRONG SUPPORT AROUND PUBLIC ART THAT ATTRACTS TOURISM, PROVIDES ENTERTAINMENT, PROMOTES DIVERSITY, EDUCATES COMMUNITY MEMBERS, BOOSTS ECONOMY, BEAUTIFIES SPACES, AND CREATES ACCESSIBILITY.
- A FEW ANSWERS THAT STRONGLY DISAGREED WITH PUBLIC ART THAT ATTRACTS TOURISM.



# ANIMAL DAY AT EAST WACO LIBRARY



- 56 TOTAL PEOPLE ENGAGED VIA SURVEY. 1 CHECK MARK PER PERSON.
- AGES ENGAGED: ADULTS, BUT THE EVENT WAS MOSTLY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN.
- TASHITA MADE 37 PINWHEELS, 25 AT THE LIBRARY, SENT HOME 12 WITH A FAMILY.
- LIBRARY WOULD BE A GOOD PARTNER IN THE FUTURE, SURVEY SIGNS WERE LEFT IN THE COMPUTER ROOM OF THE LIBRARY.



- PUBLIC ART QUESTION THAT WAS ASKED: WHAT SHOULD BE THE PRIORITY FOR PUBLIC ART IN THE COMMUNITY?
- THERE WAS GENERAL SUPPORT FOR THE ARTS AND TO HAVE MORE PUBLIC ART.
- SURVEY RESULTS SHOW STRONG GENERAL SUPPORT AROUND PUBLIC ART THAT ATTRACTS TOURISM, PROVIDES ENTERTAINMENT, PROMOTES DIVERSITY, EDUCATES, BOOSTS ECONOMY, BEAUTIFIES SPACES, AND CREATES ACCESSIBILITY.
- A HANDFUL OF UNDECIDED VOTERS RE: PUBLIC ART THAT ATTRACTS TOURISM/ BOOSTS ECONOMY / DIVERSITY / ACCESSIBILITY.



# FOOD TRUCK SHOWDOWN: QUICK SURVEY



VS



- COMMUNITY MEMBERS WERE ASKED TO TAKE A QUICK SURVEY AND SHARE WHAT KINDS OF PUBLIC ART THEY WOULD LIKE TO SEE IN WACO, AND WHERE.
- THERE WAS OVERWHELMING SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC ART TO BE LOCATED ACROSS THE CITY AS OPPOSED TO CONCENTRATED IN ONE AREA.
- THERE WAS OVERWHELMING SUPPORT FOR ARTWORK MADE FROM A VARIETY OF MEDIA, THAT ADDRESSES MANY DIFFERENT THEMES, AND IS A MIX OF PERMANENT AND TEMPORARY.
- THERE WAS OVERWHELMING SUPPORT FOR A MIX OF INTERACTIVE AND STATIC ARTWORKS MADE BY BOTH LOCAL AND NATIONAL ARTISTS.
- THERE WAS OVERWHELMING SUPPORT FOR ARTWORKS THAT CAN BE EXPERIENCED IN PERSON. NO ONE WAS INTERESTED IN PUBLIC ART THAT ONLY EXISTS ONLINE.



# CHALK WACO

- 700 - 800 PEOPLE STOPPED BY THE STAND TO "BE A PART OF THE ART" AND SHARE THEIR THOUGHTS ABOUT PUBLIC ART IN WACO.
- ANSWERS WERE MARKED ON A CHALKBOARD
- APPROXIMATELY 100 KIDS ENGAGED IN CHALK MAKING ACTIVITY.
- PUBLIC ART QUESTION THAT WAS ASKED: WHAT KIND OF PUBLIC ART WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE AND WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IT?
- WE FOUND OVERWHELMING SUPPORT FOR ALL TYPES OF PUBLIC ART IN ALL SPACES.
- STATUES AND SCULPTURES IN PARKS/TRAILS HAD AN OVERWHELMING AMOUNT OF VOTES.
- BANNERS AND FLAGS HAD THE LEAST AMOUNT OF VOTES FOR ANY TYPE OF PUBLIC ART.





**THE SURVEY WAS CONDUCTED IN BOTH ENGLISH AND SPANISH, AND WAS PROMOTED BY A SHORT VIDEO BY THE MAYOR!**



**SCAN THE QR CODE ABOVE TO WATCH THE FULL VIDEO!**



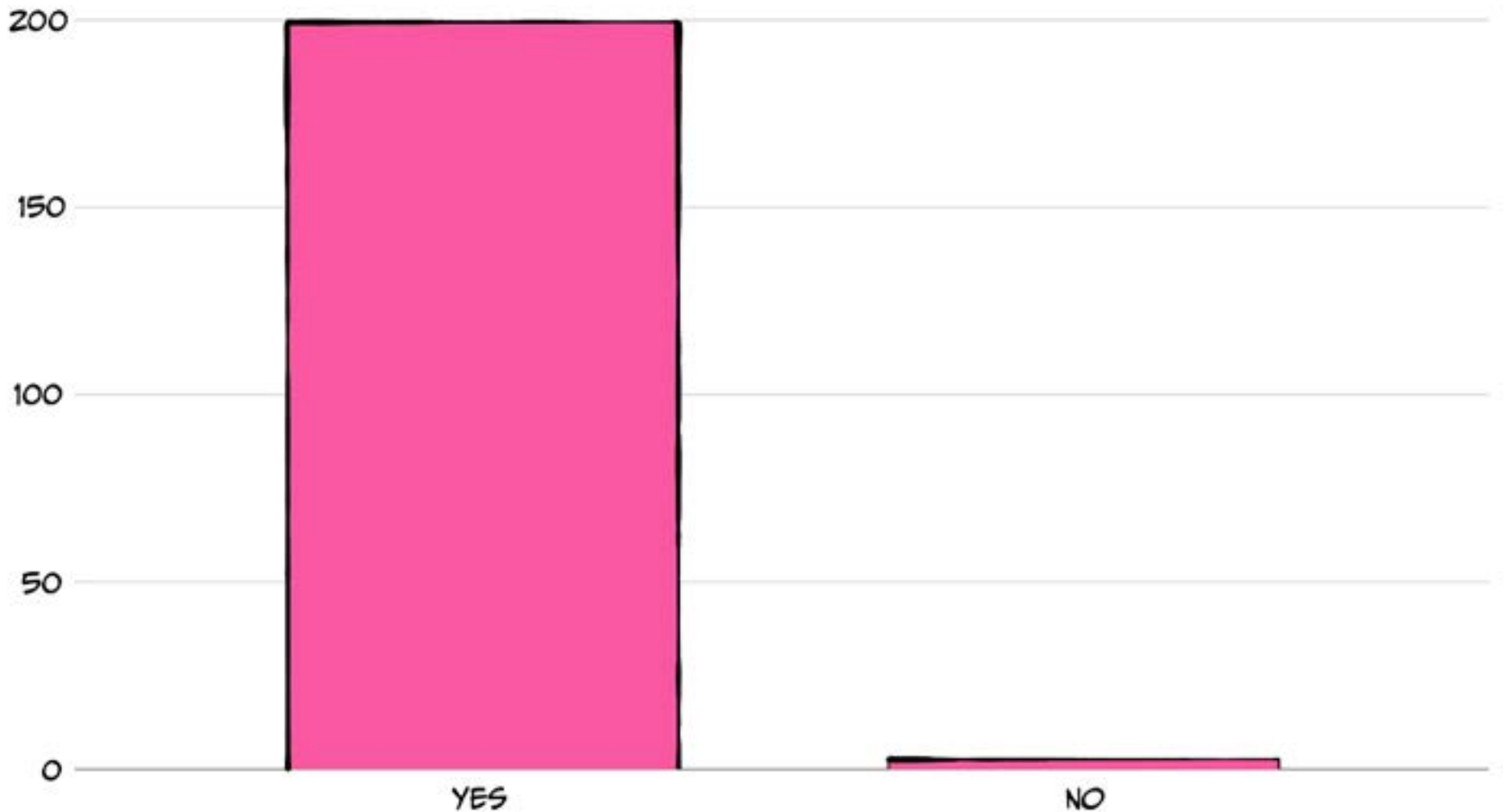




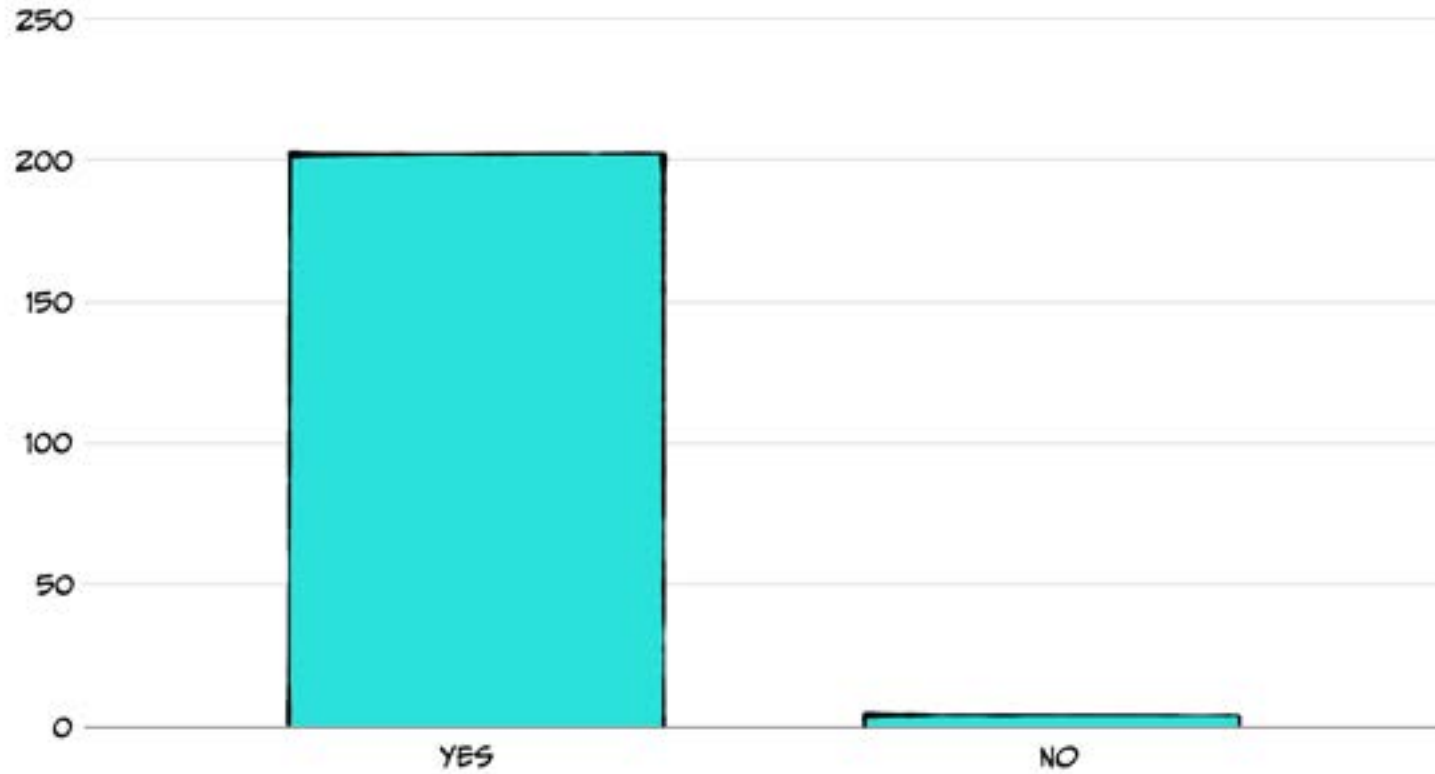
**KEY SURVEY TAKEAWAY:**

**PEOPLE ENJOY SEEING PUBLIC ART IN WACO AND MCLENNAN COUNTY, AND WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE OF IT ALL ACROSS THE CITY.**

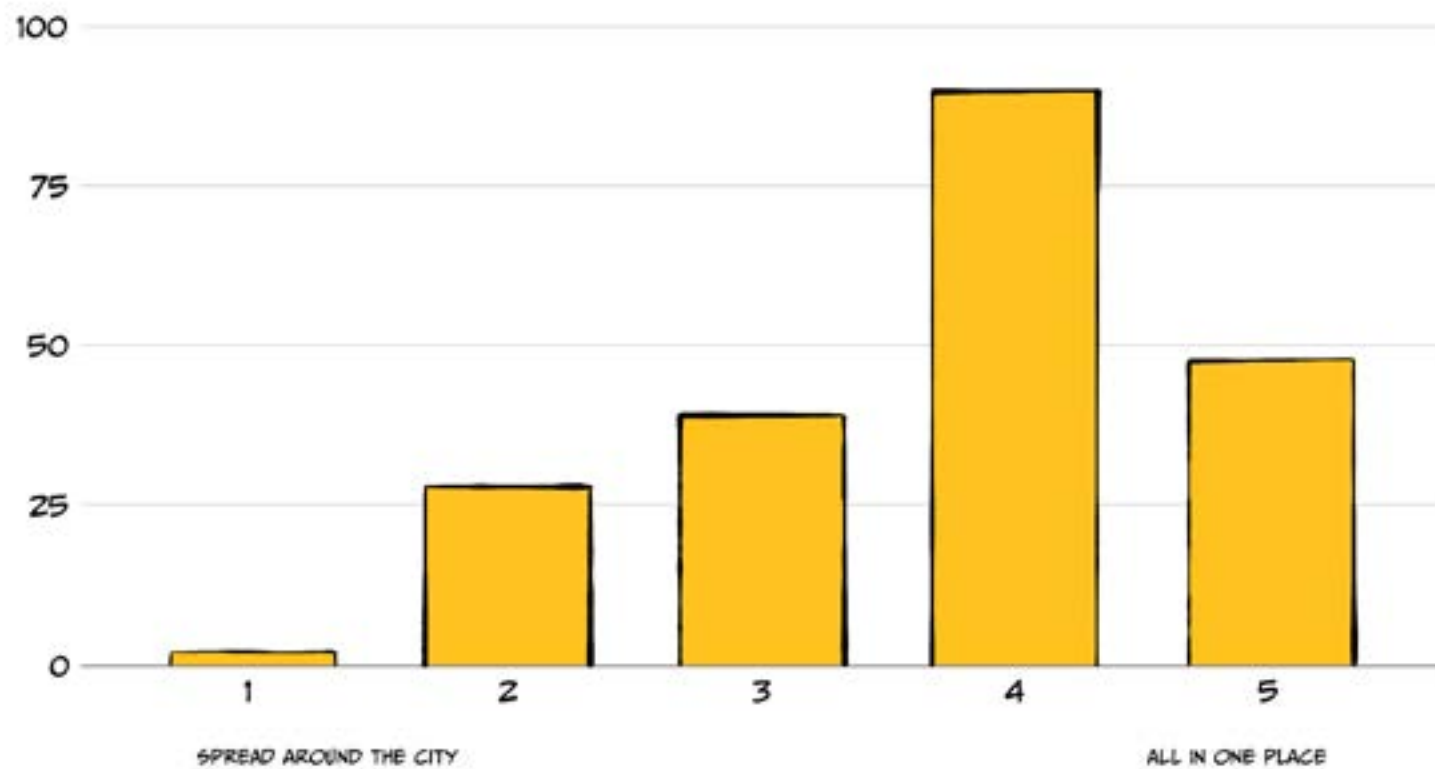
**DO YOU ENJOY SEEING OR VISITING PUBLIC ART LOCALLY?**



## WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MORE PUBLIC ART LOCALLY?



## WHICH DESCRIBES PUBLIC ART AS IT CURRENTLY EXISTS LOCALLY?



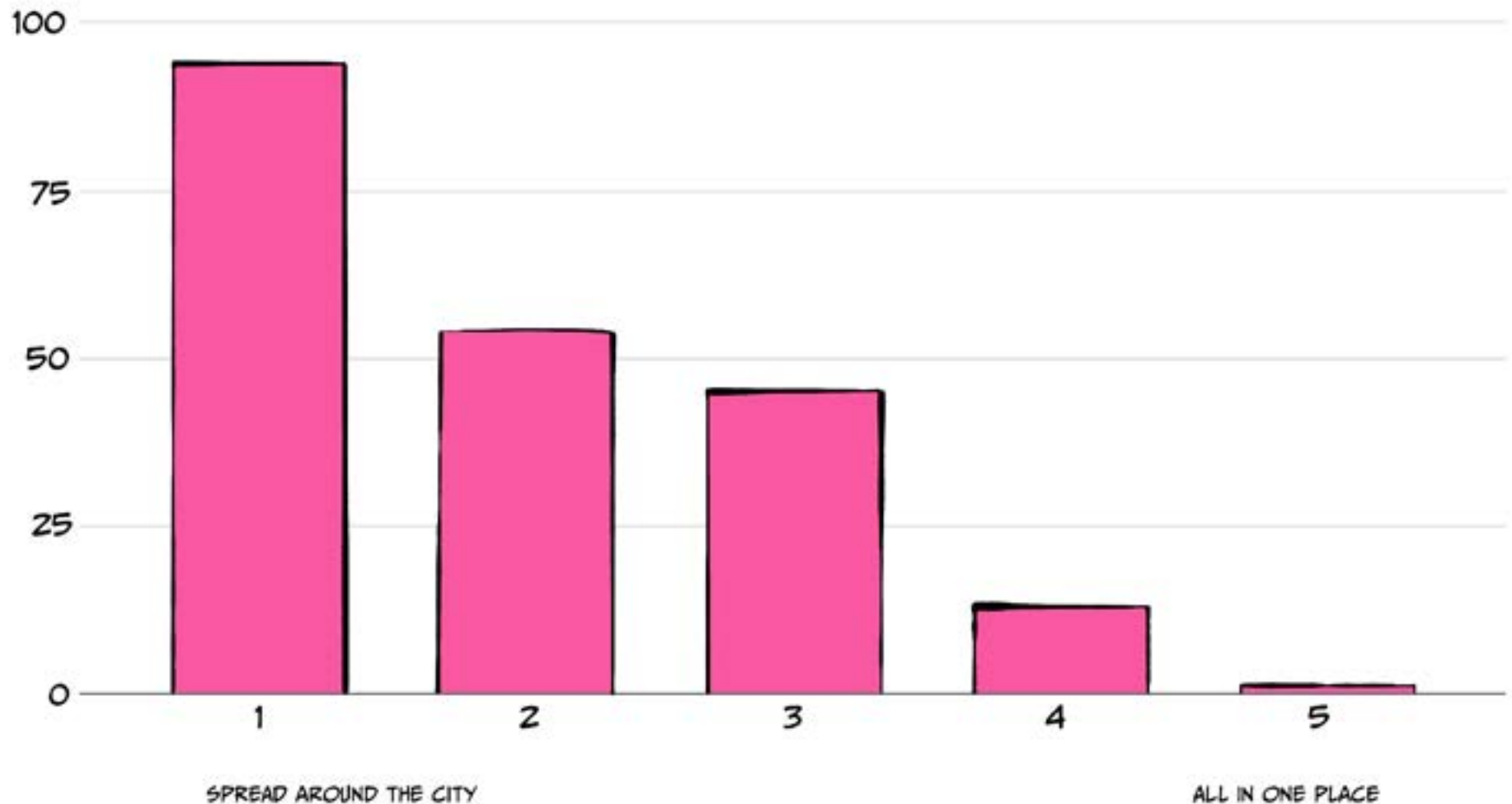


## KEY SURVEY TAKEAWAY:

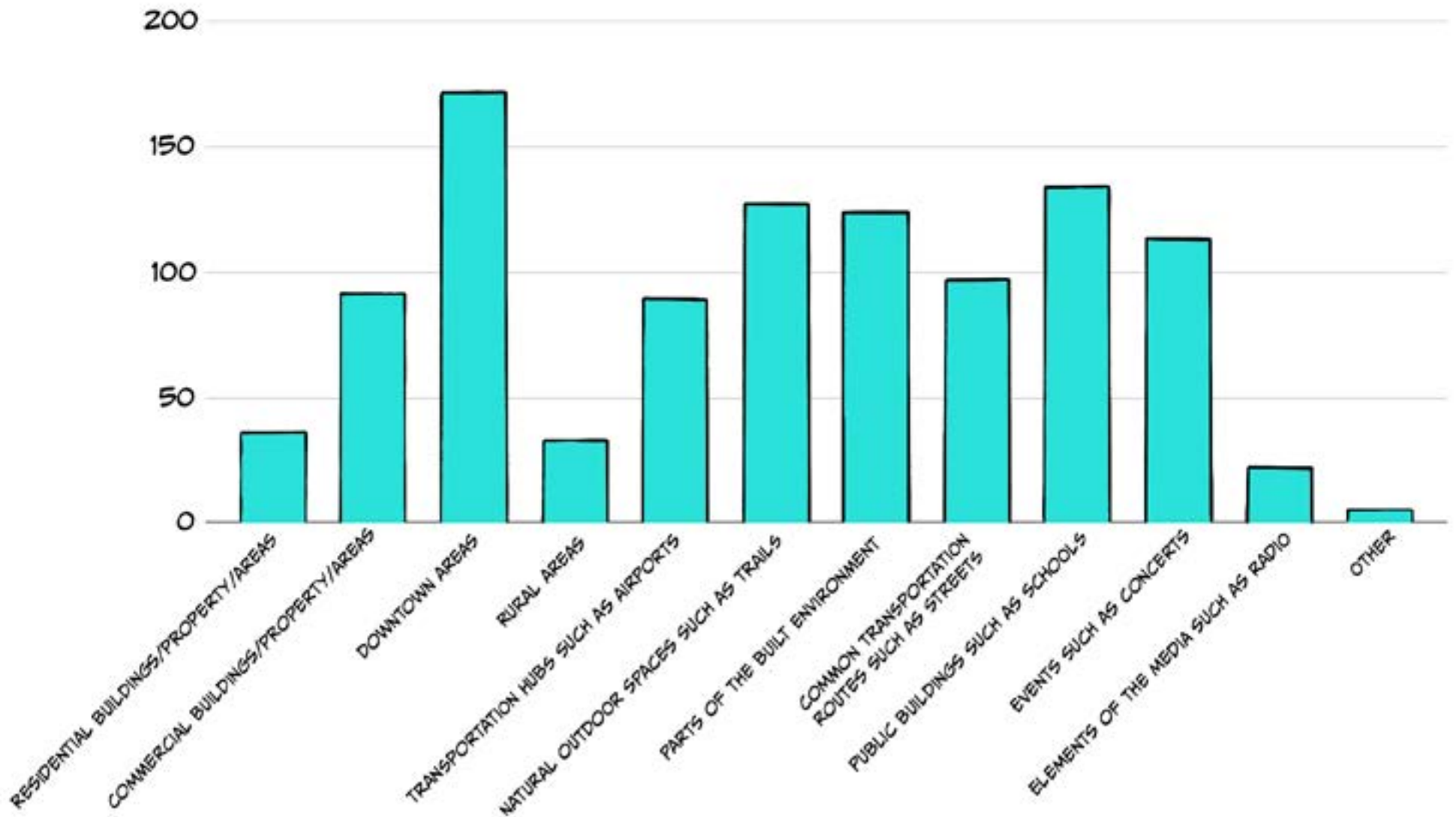
THE TOP AREAS WHERE PEOPLE WOULD LIKE TO SEE PUBLIC ART ARE:

- DOWNTOWN AREAS
- PUBLIC BUILDINGS SUCH AS SCHOOLS, POST OFFICES, LIBRARIES, POLICE AND FIRE STATIONS, YOUTH CENTERS, SENIOR CENTERS, AND CITY HALL
- NATURAL OUTDOOR SPACES SUCH AS TRAILS, PARKS, AND WATERWAYS
- PARTS OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT, SUCH AS PUBLIC WALLS, ELECTRICAL BOXES, AND BILLBOARDS
- EVENTS SUCH AS CONCERTS, FESTIVALS, OR SPORTS

WHERE SHOULD PUBLIC ART BE LOCATED?



I WANT TO SEE PUBLIC ART IN/AROUND THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

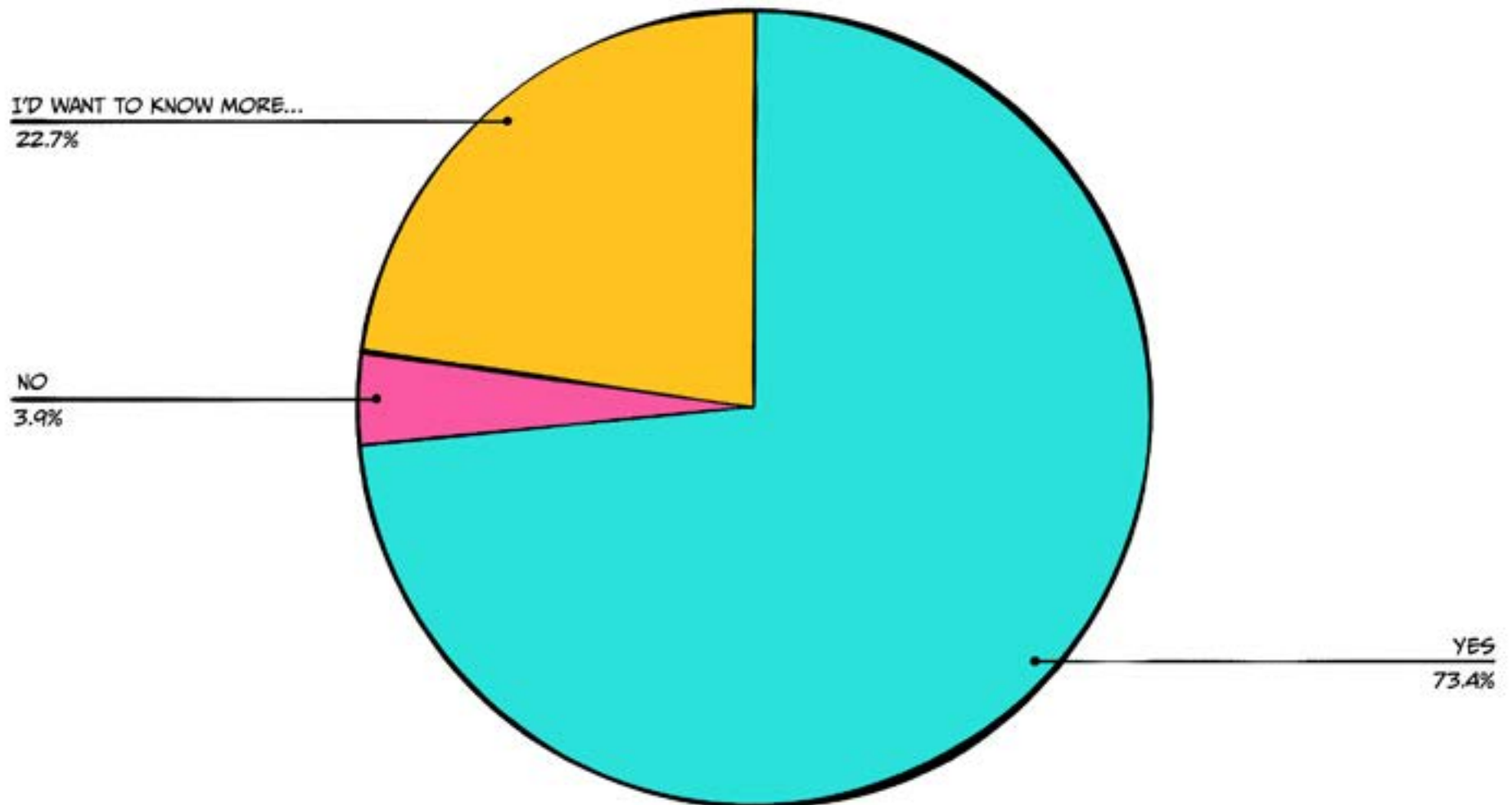




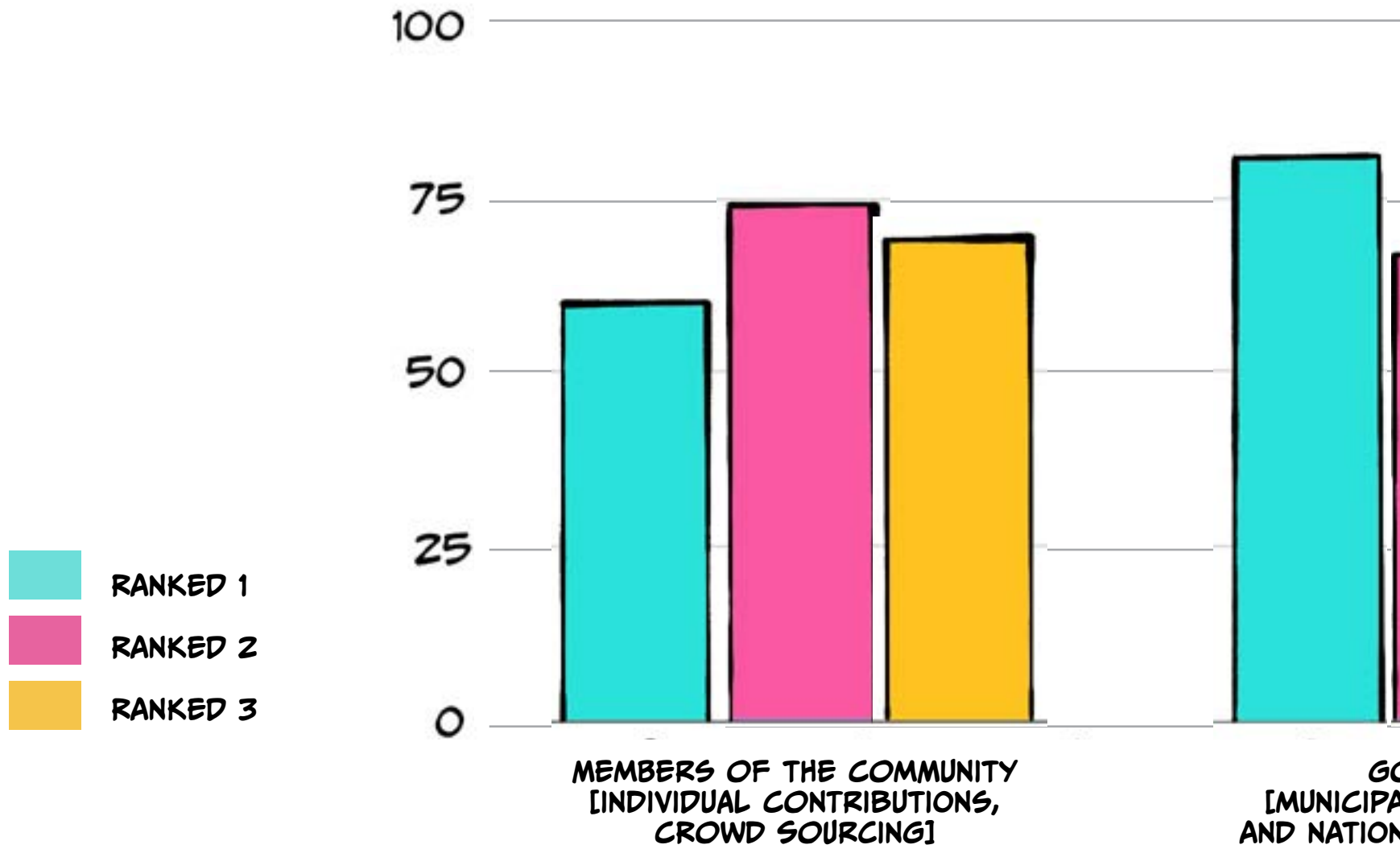
## KEY SURVEY TAKEAWAY:

- PEOPLE ARE INTERESTED IN PUBLIC ART BEING FUNDED IN A VARIETY OF WAYS, WITH GENEROUS SUPPORT FOR A PERCENT FOR ART ORDINANCE FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT IN WACO.

WOULD YOU SUPPORT A PERCENT FOR ART FOR WACO?

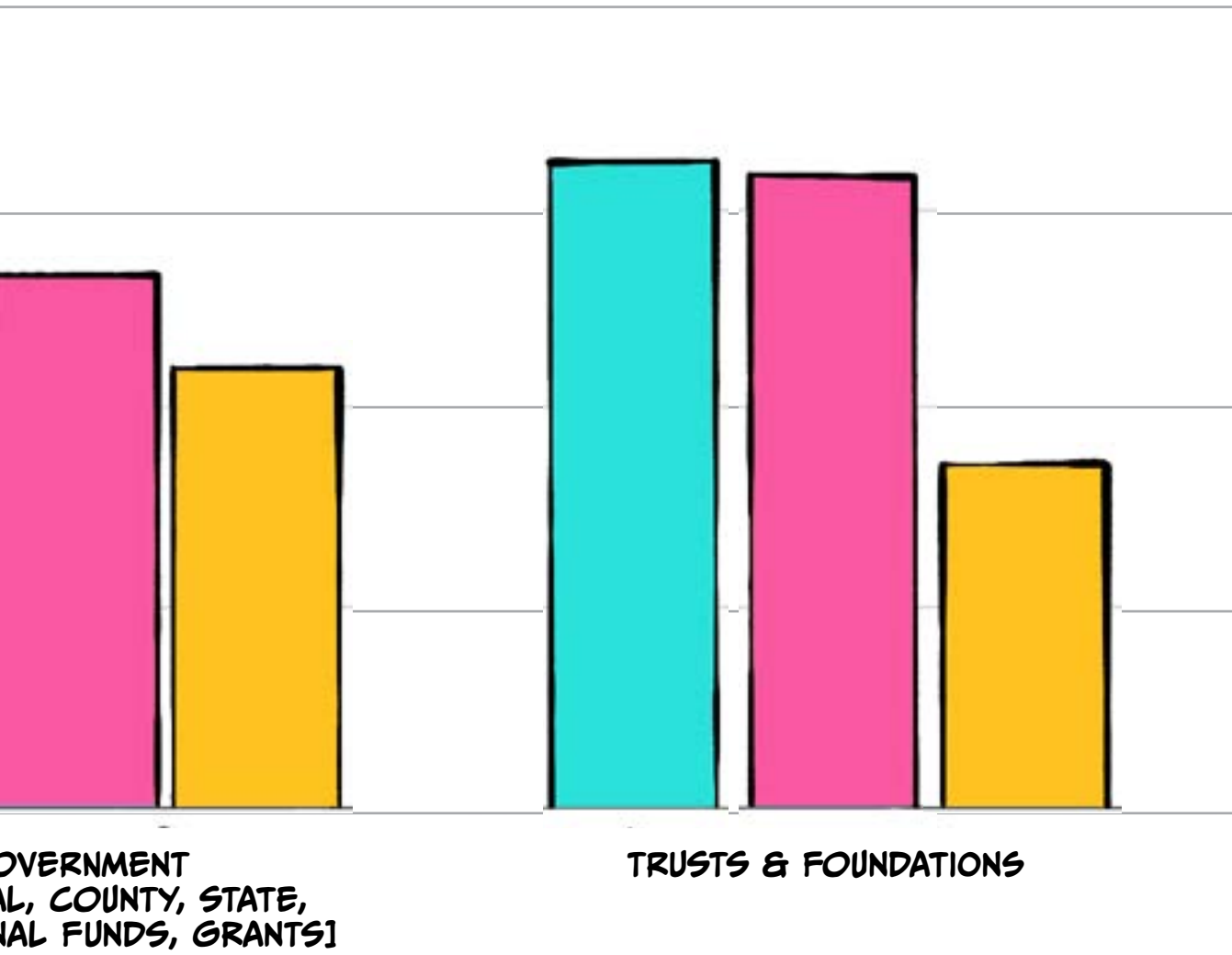


# HOW DO YOU THINK PUBLIC ART S





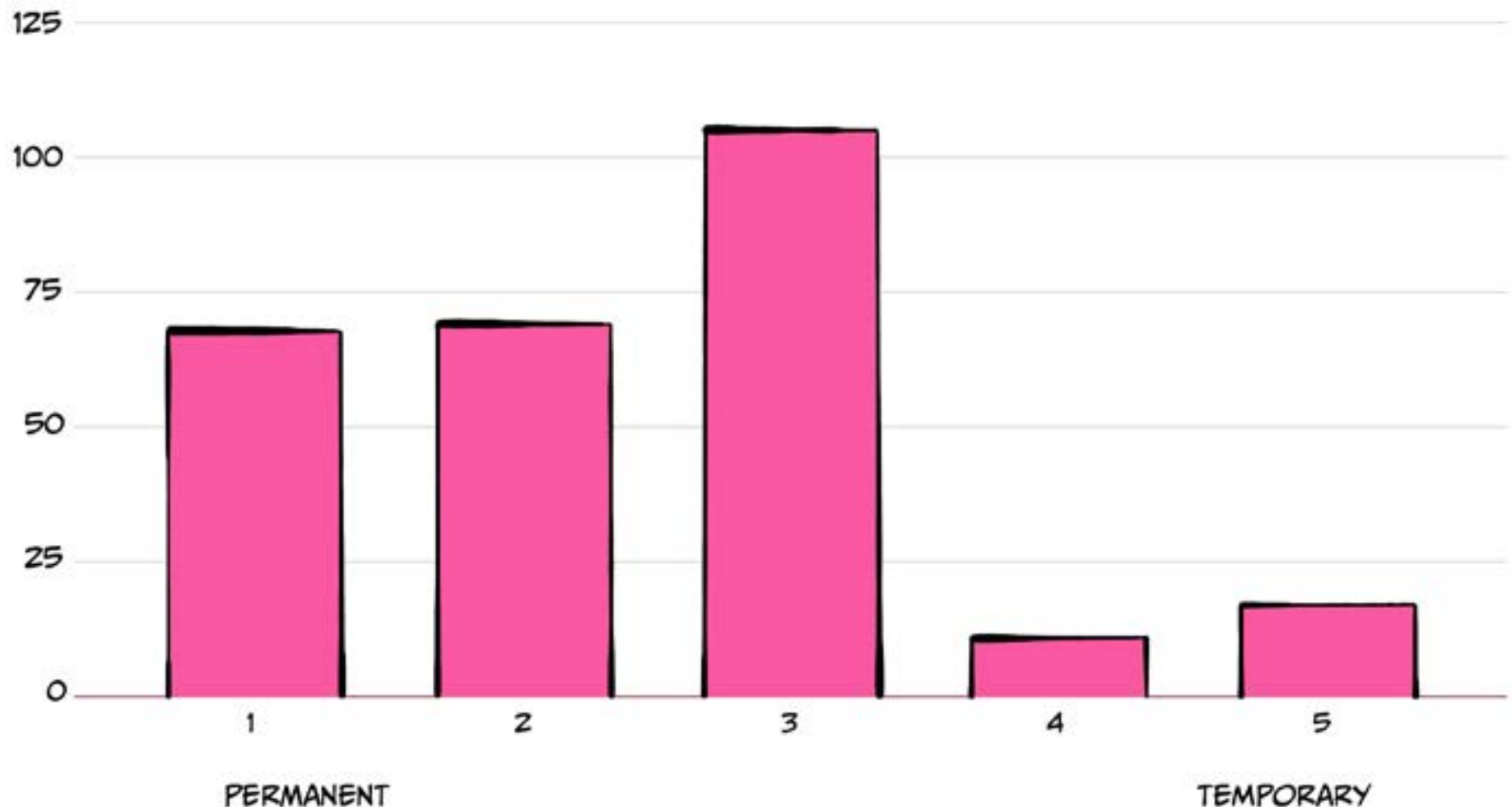
# SHOULD BE FUNDED LOCALLY?



## KEY SURVEY TAKEAWAY:

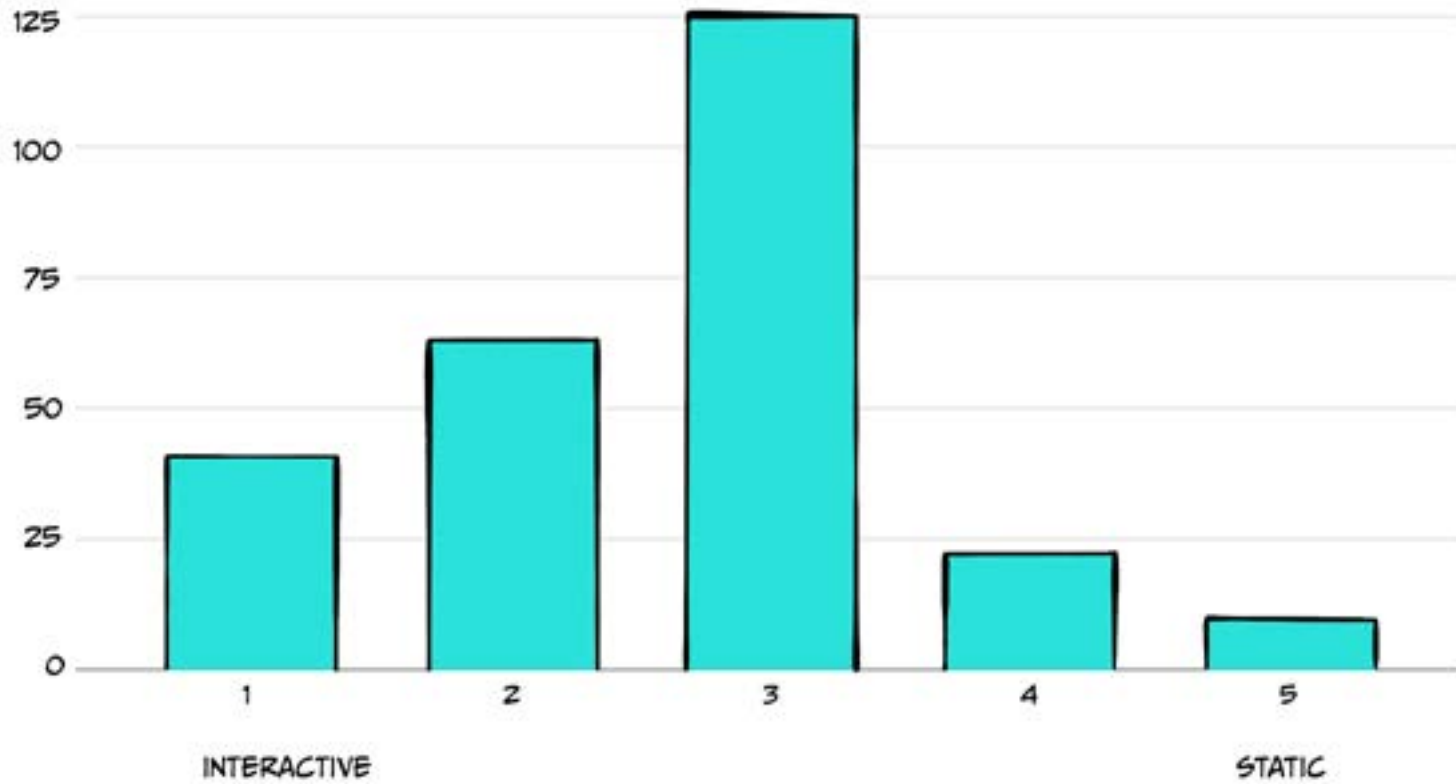
- THERE IS SIGNIFICANT INTEREST IN A WELL ROUNDED PUBLIC ART COLLECTION THAT ENCOMPASSES A MULTITUDE OF TYPES AND FORMS OF PUBLIC ART. MORE INTEREST IS IN PERMANENT PROJECTS AND ARTWORK THAT IS OF AND BY THE COMMUNITY, AND THERE IS NOT A LOT OF INTEREST IN LITERAL ARTWORKS.

WHICH DESCRIBES PUBLIC ART AS IT SHOULD EXIST IN WACO?

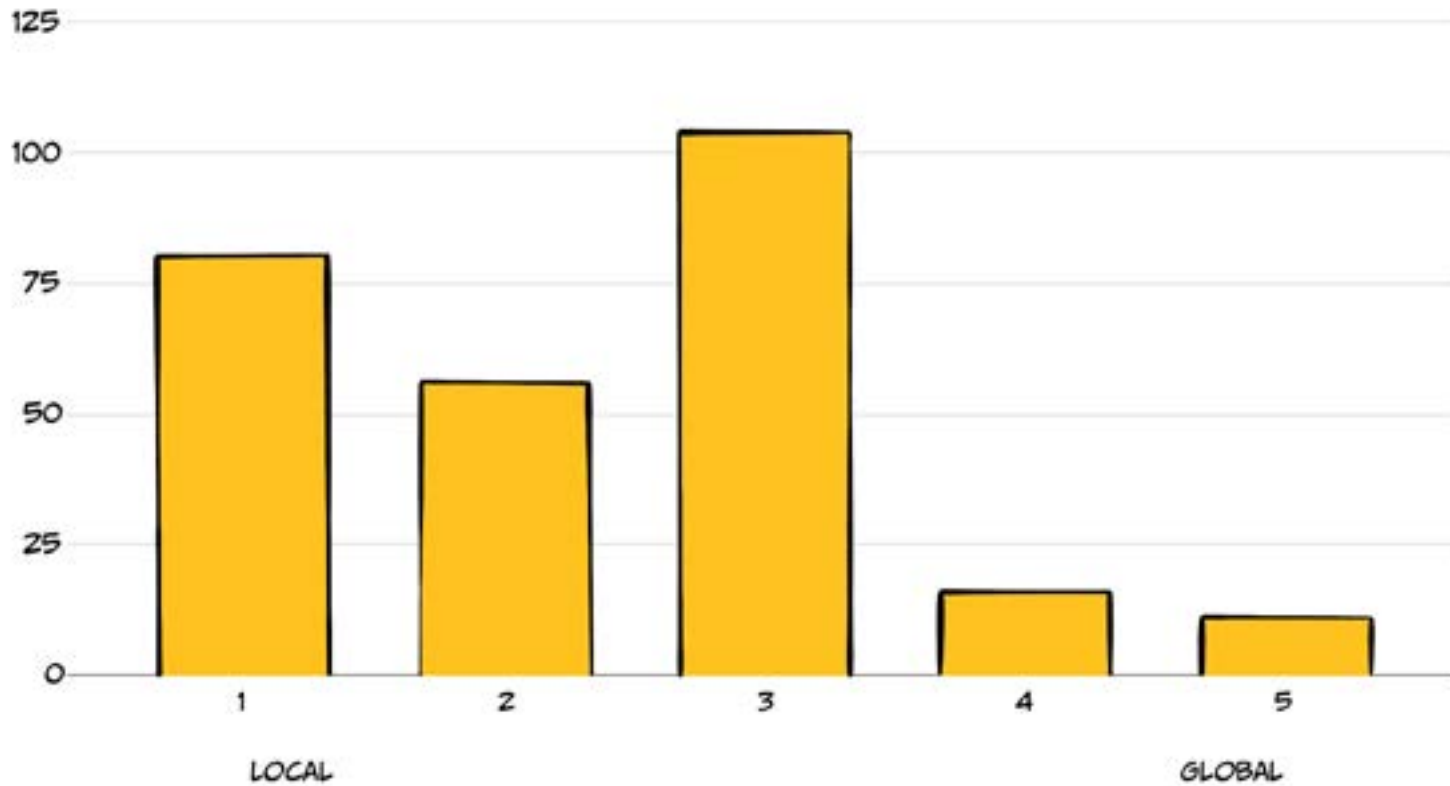




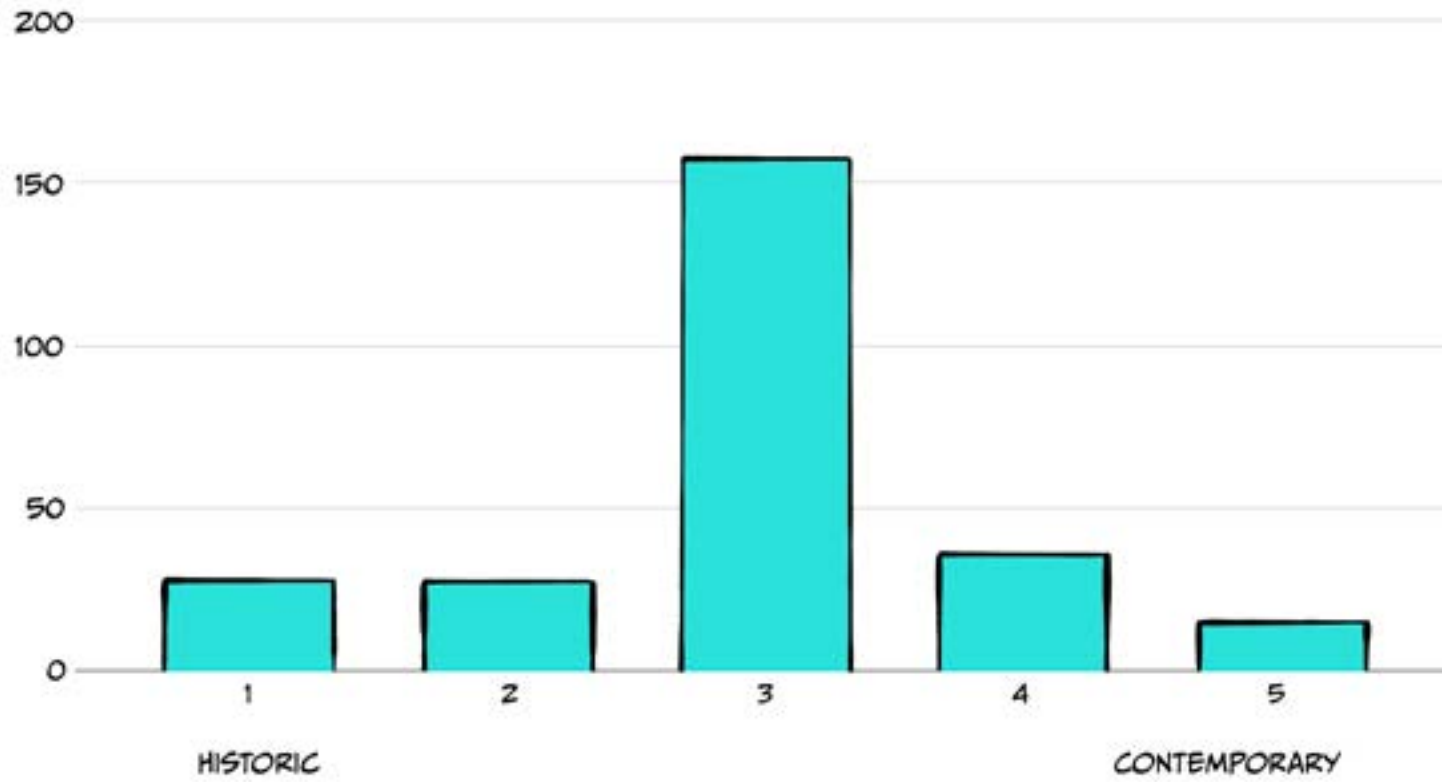
WHICH DESCRIBES PUBLIC ART AS IT SHOULD EXIST IN WACO?



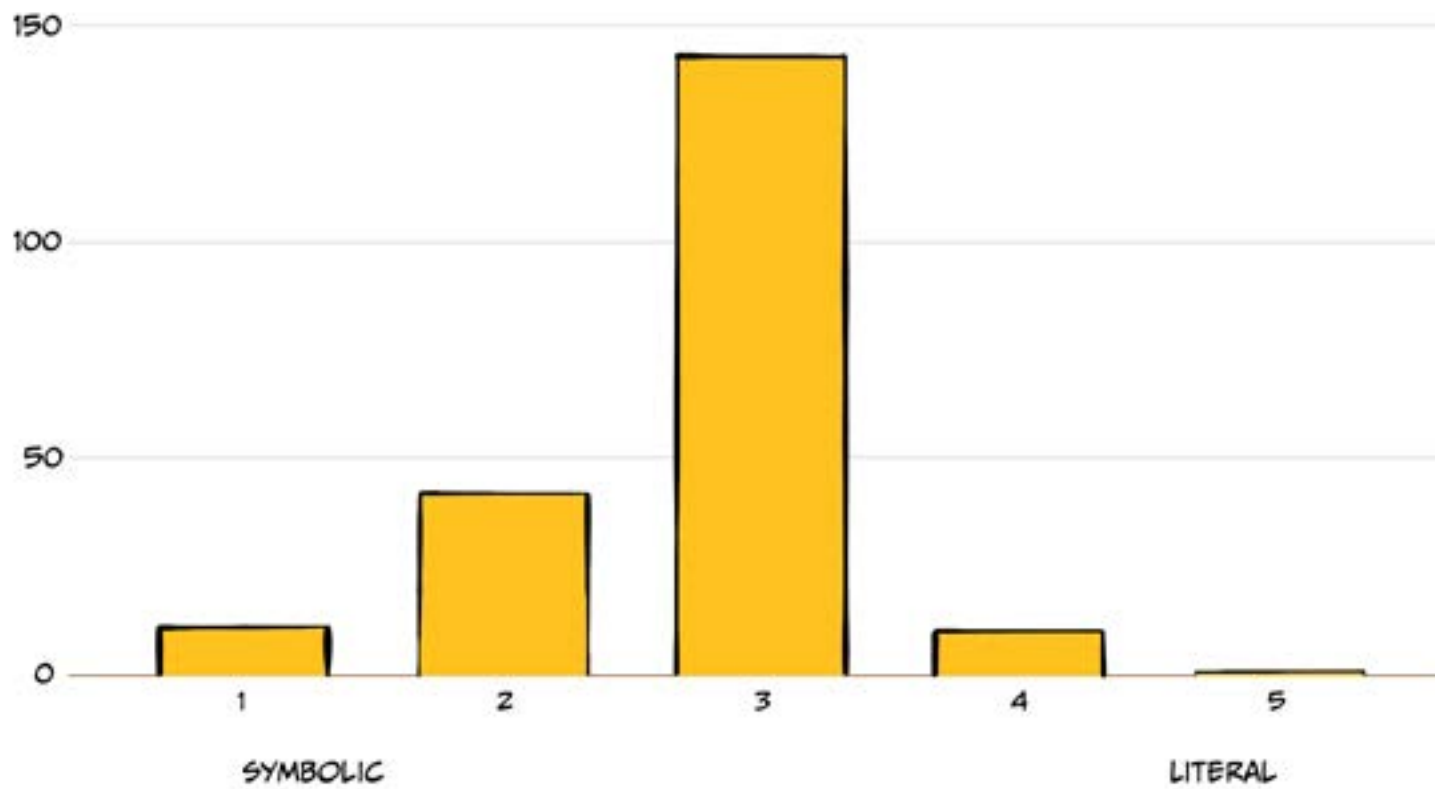
WHICH DESCRIBES PUBLIC ART AS IT SHOULD EXIST IN WACO?



WHICH DESCRIBES PUBLIC ART AS IT SHOULD EXIST IN WACO?



WHICH DESCRIBES PUBLIC ART AS IT SHOULD EXIST IN WACO?





## WACO PUBLIC ART SURVEY RESPONDENTS:

"THERE CAN NEVER BE TOO MUCH ART - WHETHER PHYSICAL OR PERFORMANCE. IT ENRICHES THE LIVES OF ALL WHO EXPERIENCE IT, EVERYTIME THEY EXPERIENCE IT. ART IS NEEDED IN ALL SECTORS OF SOCIETY."

**DRAFT**

"TO MY MIND, HAVING A ROBUST PUBLIC ART PROGRAM HAS HUGE UPSIDE AND BASICALLY NO DOWNSIDE."

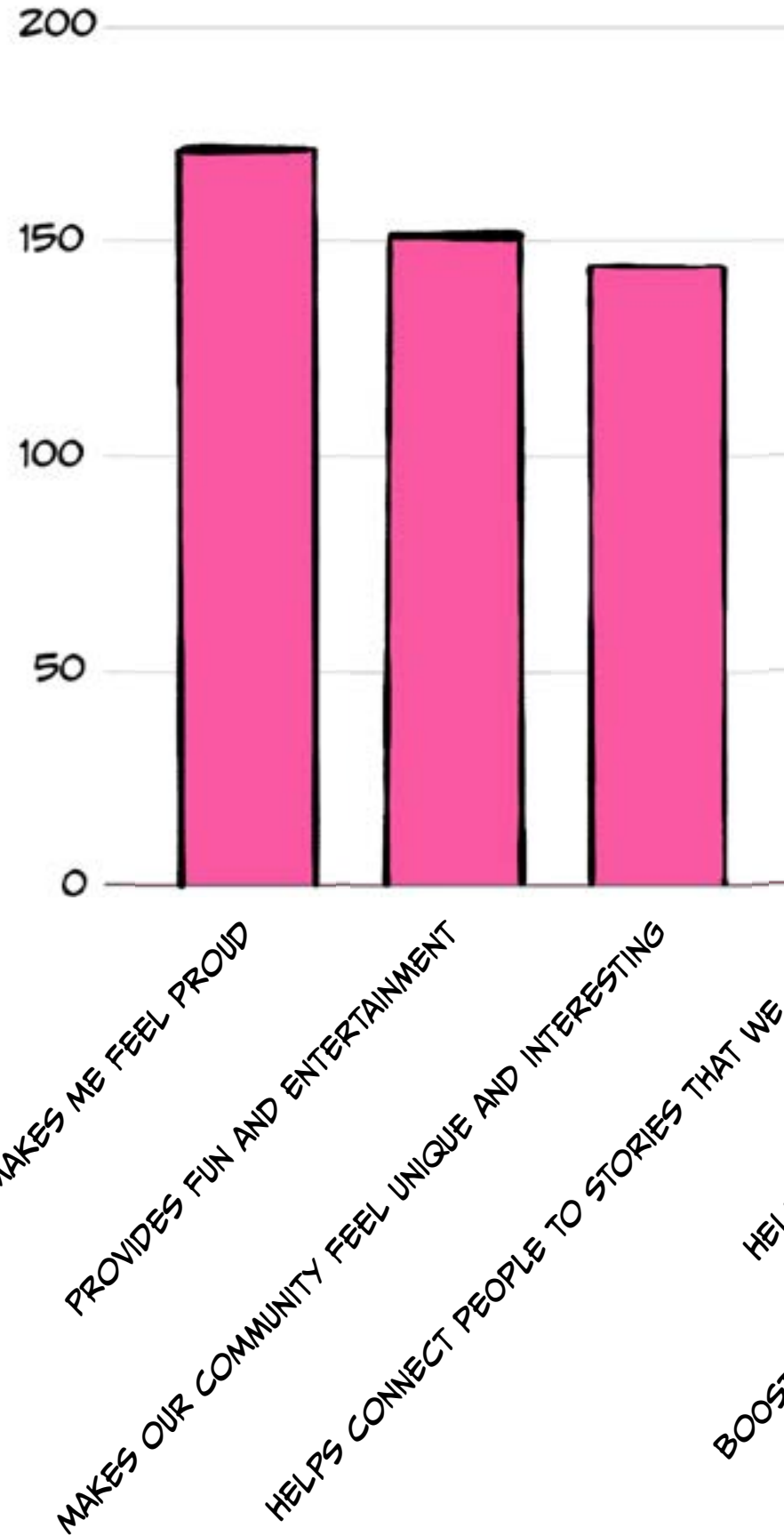
## KEY SURVEY TAKEAWAY:

THERE IS SUPPORT FOR ARTWORK THAT ENLIVENS WACO, INSTILLS A SENSE OF PRIDE, AND SUPPORTS THE ECONOMY AND ARTIST WORKFORCE. THE COMMUNITY'S TOP FIVE ROLES FOR PUBLIC ART ARE:

- BEAUTIFIES MY COMMUNITY AND MAKES ME FEEL PROUD
- PROVIDES FUN AND ENTERTAINMENT
- MAKES OUR COMMUNITY FEEL UNIQUE AND INTERESTING
- HELPS CONNECT PEOPLE TO STORIES THAT WE SHARE
- HELPS ARTISTS MAKE A LIVIN

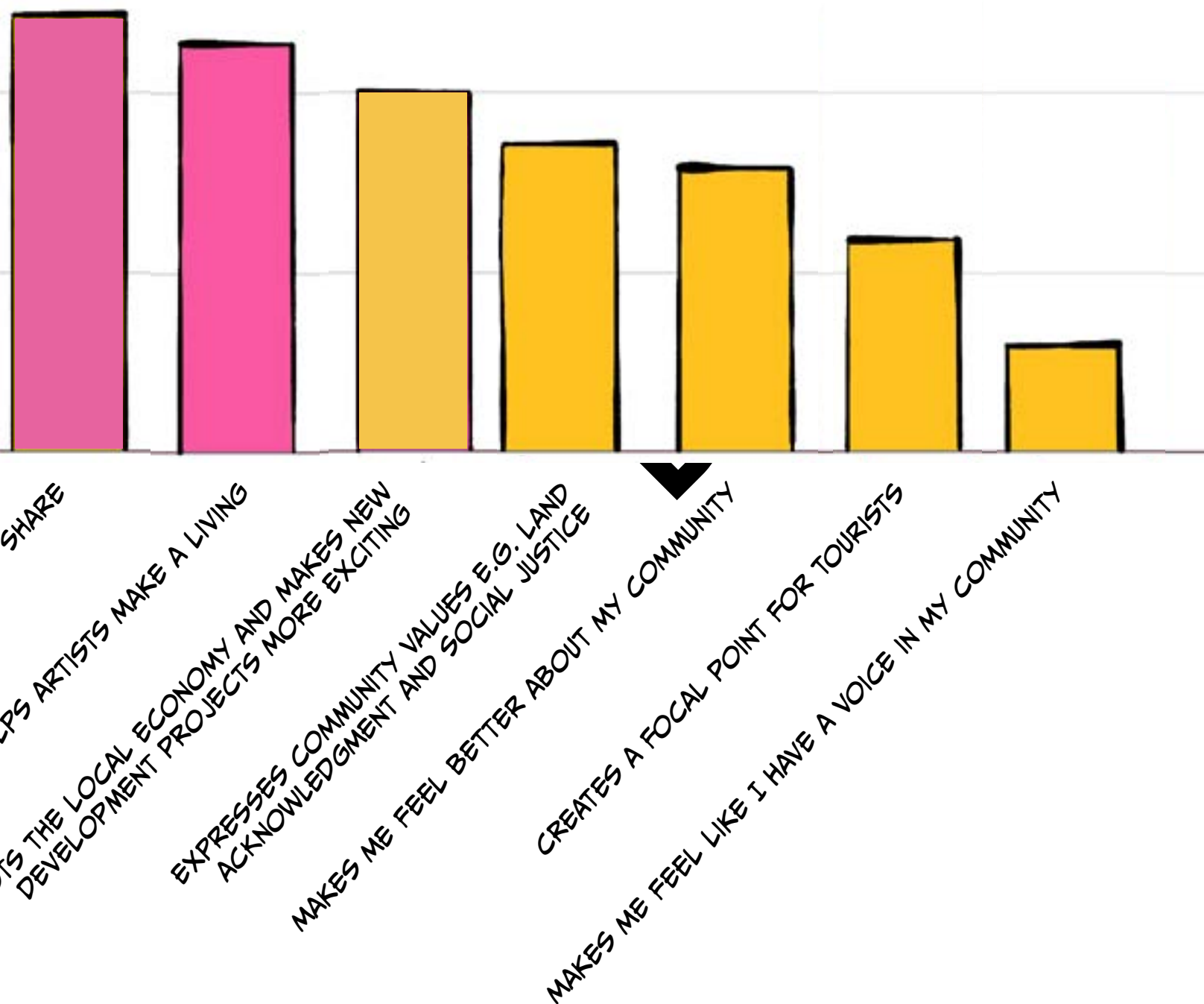
**DRAFT**

## WHAT SHOULD THE ROLE





# OF PUBLIC ART IN WACO BE?



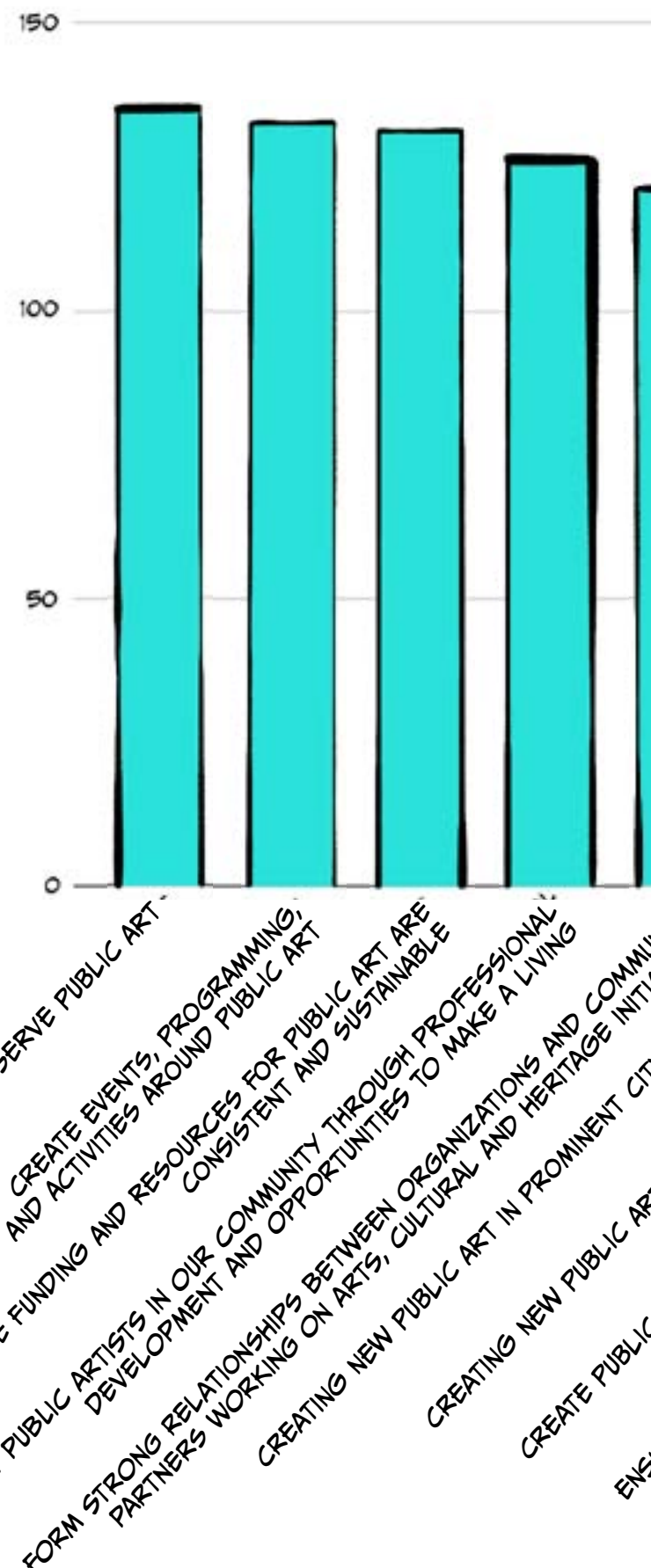
## KEY SURVEY TAKEAWAY:

IN ORDER TO DO THESE THINGS, THE COMMUNITY'S TOP FIVE PRIORITIES FOR WACO'S INVESTMENT IN PUBLIC ART ARE:

- MAINTAIN AND PRESERVE PUBLIC ART
- CREATE EVENTS, PROGRAMMING, AND ACTIVITIES AROUND PUBLIC ART
- MAKE SURE FUNDING RESOURCES FOR PUBLIC ART ARE CONSISTENT AND SUSTAINABLE
- SUPPORT PUBLIC ARTISTS IN OUR COMMUNITY THROUGH PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND OPPORTUNITIES TO MAKE A LIVING
- FORM STRONG RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS WORKING ON ARTS, CULTURAL AND HERITAGE INITIATIVES

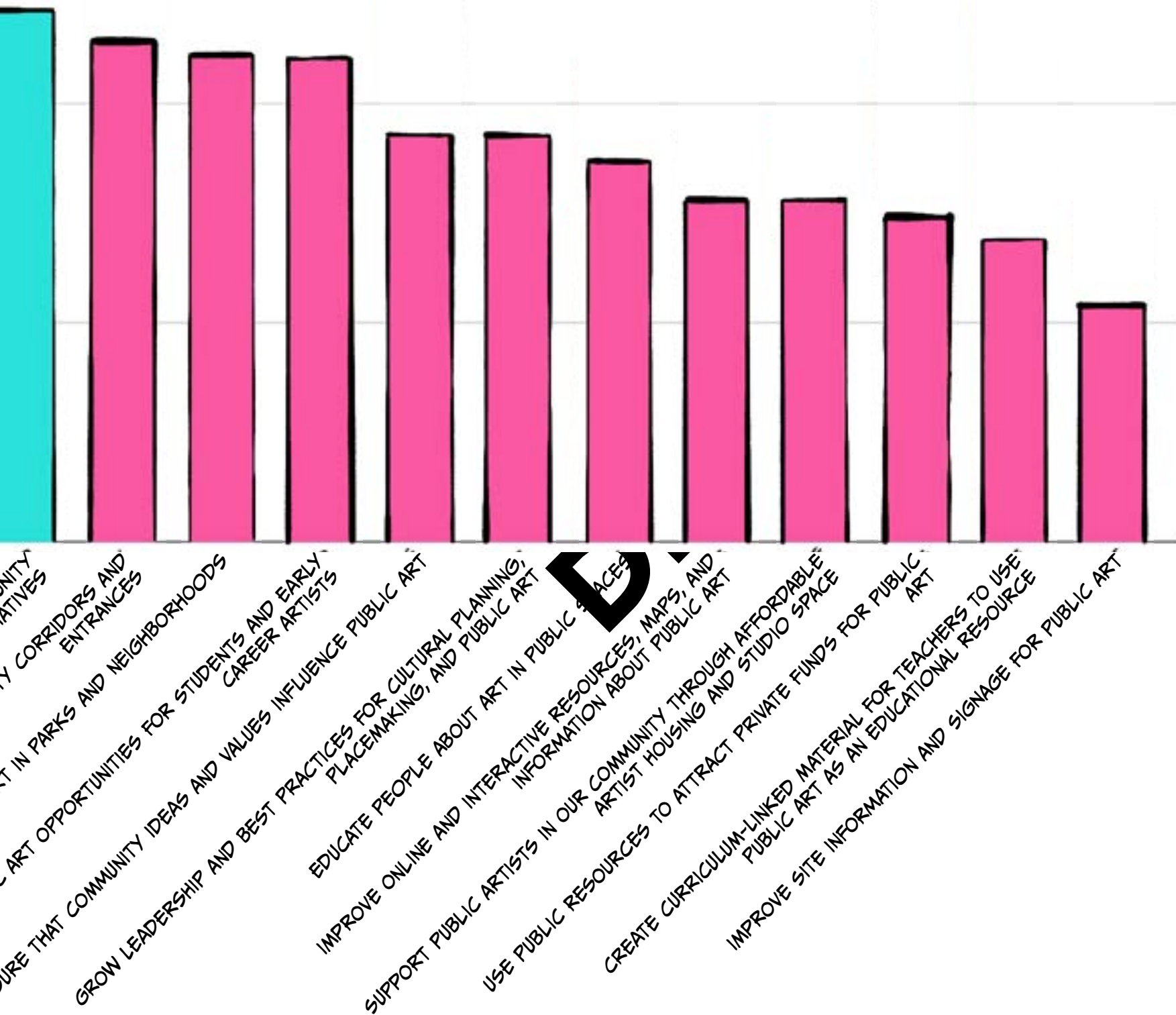
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## WHAT ARE YOUR PRIORITIES





# PRIORITIES FOR WACO'S INVESTMENT IN PUBLIC ART?



# KEY TAKEAWAYS

**COMMUNITY:** Community needs to be valued in this program and existing assets should be the foundation for the future of public art in Waco. How will existing community members be affected, and how can creative placemaking be part of local solutions? Policy decisions should reflect community values.

**GROWTH:** There is fast growth happening in Waco, and there is a need to take advantage of this while it's happening. There is a lot of opportunity to engage private developers in public art projects. Many want to incorporate amenities for tenants, but need guidance on how to budget and implement. Public space and publicly owned land is limited and there are also many opportunities to incorporate public art into capital improvement and TIF projects. TIF projects are tax incremental financing, which are value capture revenue tools that use taxes on future gains in real estate values to pay for new infrastructure improvements. TIFs are authorized by state law in nearly all 50 states and begin with the designation of a geographic area as a TIF district. There are currently [3 TIF zones in Waco](#), along with many large-scale development projects, such as streetscape planning and transit development.

**SUSTAINABILITY:** Funding, processes, and maintenance all need to be sustainable.

**MAINTENANCE:** Of utmost importance is maintenance of and insurance for public artworks.

**A LIVING STRATEGIC PLAN:** Moving Waco and the public art program into the future requires a strategic plan that can change and mold.

**DIVERSIFYING THE COLLECTION:** Looking at the mediums, themes, artists, and locations for artworks to understand where opportunities lie. The community expressed the need for:

- Art that represents Black and Native/Indigenous communities
- Art that is more than military, Western or frontier-themed
- Temporary projects as low-risk ways to inspire conversations and

experiment

- Developing public art projects in the communities/neighborhoods with the least amount of public art

**DEFINING PUBLIC ART MORE BROADLY:** Definitions of



DRAFT

public art within the collection can include more than permanent sculptures or murals. Utilize public art to provide experiences for guests and tourists, and still make sure community members are valued.

**STAFF CAPACITY:** The City currently does not have a dedicated arts and culture department. Although the City is supported by Creative Waco, their capacity is also stretched as they have gone beyond their initial scope of work with the City. This means that all public art and placemaking projects are currently reactive, rather than proactive. Creative Waco is able to respond to projects within the community but does not have capacity to take on anything beyond what is immediately in front of them, and the City has limited resources and competing priorities. This public art strategic plan will help the City be strategic and plan for future public art and placemaking projects, policies, and programs.

**ACCESS:** Access to the artworks for a wide range of community members is important, in mobility, language, and weather. (It is hot in Waco!)

**COMMUNITY SUPPORT:** There are many arts advocates and



supporters in the community, and many arts and culture organizations and initiatives that continue to engage the community in creative ways to share Waco's history and culture. People want to be engaged and are interested in continued information sharing, being involved in projects and processes, creating partnerships, and coordinating efforts across the city.

**EXPERIENCES AND STORYTELLING:** People in Waco understand what public art can do and ask that value is placed on authenticity, diversity, and equity. Wacoans are interested in public art that tells the story of Waco from a cultural standpoint--specifically about the history of the Waco (Hueco) people and current stories of Wichita people--and sharing the many stories that have made Waco what it is today while envisioning the future.

**SHARING INFORMATION ABOUT ARTS AND CULTURE ACTIVITIES:** A coordinated effort to share information about arts

and culture activities and projects will help people know what is happening, when, and where.

**COLLABORATION:** Working with philanthropy, tourism, and business entities will make the program stronger and create more opportunities for everyone. Arts organizations (outside of government) can start up diverse initiatives and incubate ideas outside the umbrella of traditional city funding.

**YOUTH:** Young Waco residents are working in the community, and there are many higher education institutions that have a large population of students. Public art can aid in a livable community that entices graduates to stay in Waco and continue building community, and that provides a career path for a variety of creatives--arts, design, industry, fabrication, manufacturing, and project management.





**OVERVIEW OF  
PROGRAM GOALS  
AND 5+ YEAR  
STRATEGIC PLAN**



## IN THIS SECTION:

- A City/Nonprofit public art program model is recommended for Waco, with Creative Waco as the lead administrator of the public art program
- The development of a Public Art Commission is recommended
- Processes are recommended for projects initiated by the City/Creative Waco, and for projects initiated by artists and/or community members
- Maintenance and deaccessioning of artworks are important parts of the program
- The following goals were developed in collaboration with Creative Waco based upon all that was heard through community engagement activities
  - Goal 1: Identify and build upon existing assets
  - Goal 2: Cultivate new relationships and build partnerships
  - Goal 3: Create pathways to public art that are inclusive of multiple stakeholders
  - Goal 4: Formalize and democratize the public art process, governance, and management
  - Goal 5: Develop projects that expand and celebrate community identity
  - Goal 6: Identify and secure diverse funding mechanisms
- These goals have been laid out over the next 10 years to strategically and sustainably grow the public art program in Waco

## RECOMMENDATION FOR GOVERNANCE, MANAGEMENT, FUNDING, AND MAINTENANCE

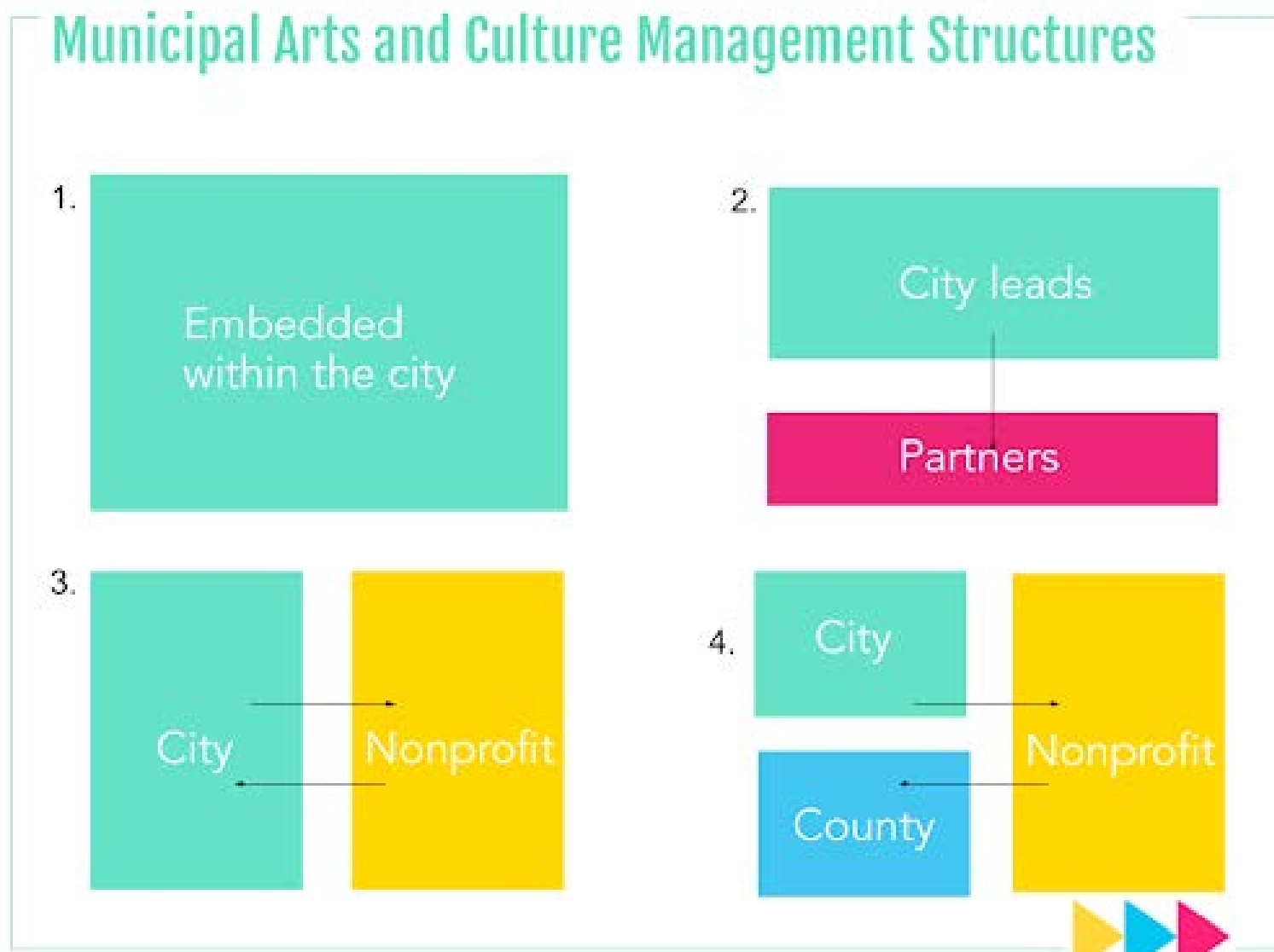
There are four common types of structures for public art programs across the country. The City of Waco has not currently adopted a model, but does collaborate with local and regional partners.

**EMBEDDED WITHIN THE CITY:** this is an option that is internal to the City and has dedicated staff to administer the program and oversee the public art collection. It also typically includes a public art commission (or something similar) that recommends projects.

**CITY/PARTNERS:** in this option, the City leads the public art program, working closely with a nonprofit organization that facilitates community engagement and partnerships with the private sector.

**CITY/NONPROFIT:** here, the nonprofit is contracted by the City to manage and administer the program. The nonprofit works strategically with other entities to manage, support, and fund public art across the city.

**REGIONAL APPROACH:** this model is led by a nonprofit that partners with multiple government agencies, such as City and County.





## RECOMMENDED MODEL

**THE CITY/NONPROFIT MODEL IS RECOMMENDED FOR WACO.** Creative Waco has a strong history and track record of initiating and managing public art projects, programs, and budgets in close collaboration with the City. This historical knowledge and experience is a solid foundation for a public art program in Waco to blossom and continue to grow. The current contract between the City and Creative Waco will need to be expanded upon to include this new responsibility. This will increase the time and budget required, however the cost of this model will be lower for the City than if public art was housed within a City department with City staff dedicated to it (i.e. the City does not have to pay benefits and other costs associated with employing City staff members).

The development of a Public Art Advisory Board is recommended. The Advisory Board's main role is to make recommendations for public artworks to the City Council based upon an overall public art strategy for the city of Waco. The Advisory Board helps garner public interest and excitement for public art and builds awareness of projects with the community.

Creative Waco would be the lead administrator of the public art program with a dedicated Chief Cultural Officer and Director of Public Art positions within Creative Waco. The Director of Public Art would be the main contact for the program, and would oversee project management, budgeting, organizing meeting logistics, strategize themes for projects, and more. An example job description is included in the Appendix.

Americans for the Arts (AFTA) has developed tools [that share best practices for program and project administration](#), as well as [guiding questions for developing a public art program](#).

Maintenance and deaccessioning of artworks are important parts of the process. When an artwork falls into disrepair, the longer it is neglected the more expensive it will be to fix. It is advised to hire a public art conservator to assess the damage to the artwork and determine the cost implications of repairing, removing, and deaccessioning. [AFTA has further resources on deaccessioning artworks](#) from a collection, and The City of San Francisco has a robust [policy for accepting and deaccessioning artworks](#). A deaccessioning policy does not currently exist for public art in Waco. The recommendations in this public art strategic plan include developing this policy.

# PROCESSES

Public art programs of any size or management structure require clear processes for a variety of scenarios including commissioning, selecting, and acquiring artwork whether initiated by community members or by the City/Creative Waco or by donation. Consider the balance between systematizing and transparency, and leaving room for life and creativity to breathe within the projects.

## PROCESS FOR CITY/CREATIVE WACO INITIATED PROJECTS:



\*Utilize RFQ processes rather than RFP processes to ensure artists and creatives are not being asked to do work without the guarantee of receiving a commission. RFQ documents should contain all the info an artist would need to know how to apply and how decisions are being made and would be developed by the Public Art Director with review from the Public Art Commission.



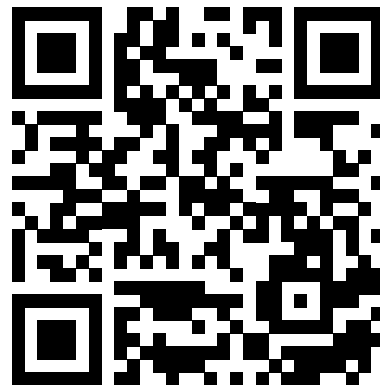
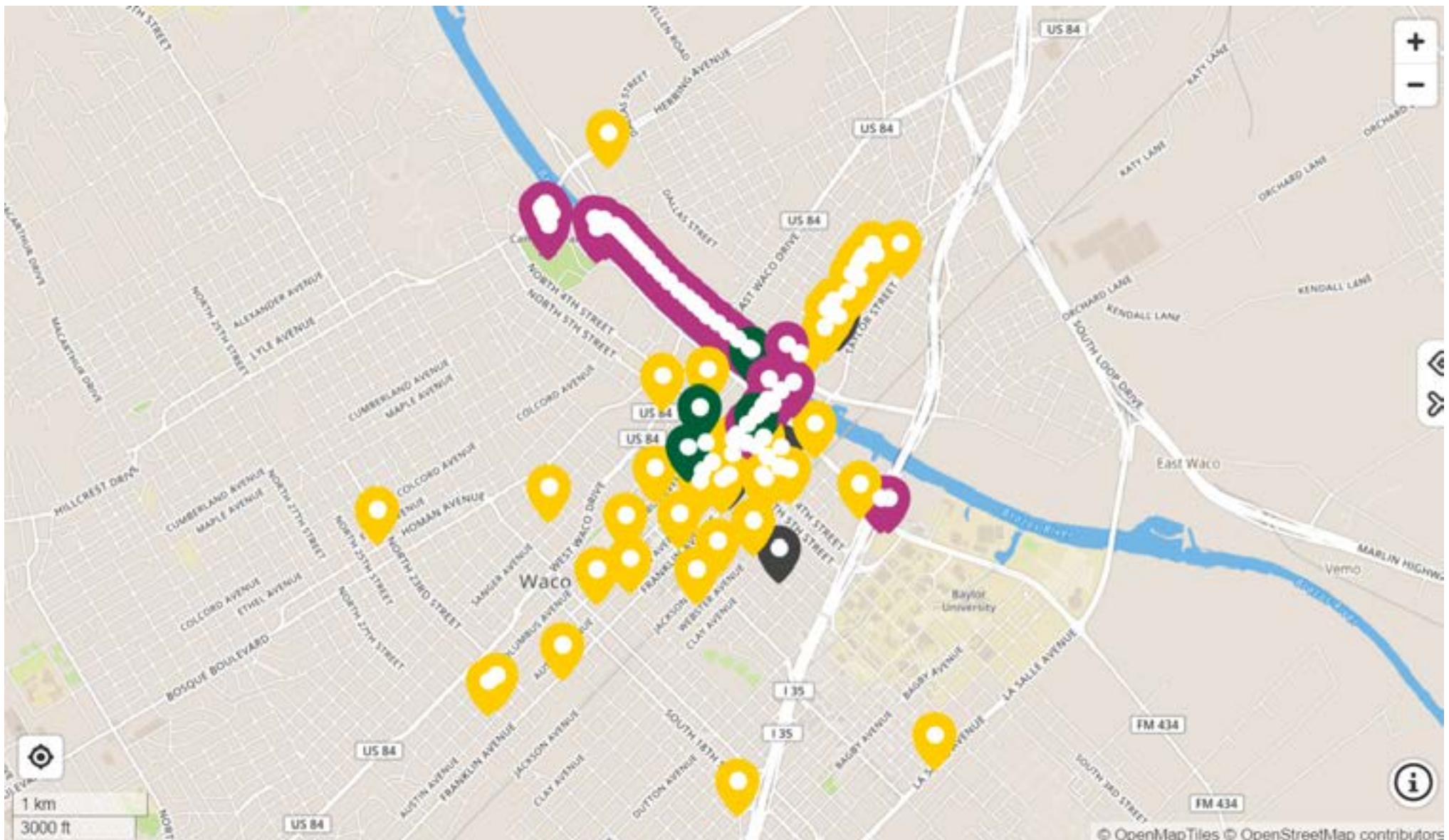
# PROCESS FOR ARTIST/COMMUNITY INITIATED PROJECTS OR DONATIONS:



\*If the project is a donation, the project should be weighed against a set of criteria. [The San Francisco Art Commission has a robust donations policy and criteria](#), and the policy for the city of Cambridge is included in the Appendix.

## MAP OF CURRENT PUBLIC ART PROJECTS IN WACO

This map catalogs the location of current public art projects in Waco, and will continue to be updated as new projects are developed and installed. This map can be used as a tool to understand what parts of the city are missing public art, and help plan for future public art projects.



**SCAN THE QR CODE ABOVE TO SEE THE LIVE MAP!**

The following goals were developed in collaboration with Creative Waco based upon all that was heard through community engagement activities. These goals tie back to the core values, guiding principles, and aspirations laid out at the beginning of the PASP process, and will help to define strategic priorities and pathways for creative placemaking that represent the Waco community, especially traditionally underrepresented stories and people.

**GOAL 1**

Identify and build upon existing assets

**GOAL 2**

Cultivate new relationships and build partnerships

**GOAL 3**

Create pathways to public art that are inclusive of multiple stakeholders

**GOAL 4**

Formalize and democratize the public art process, governance, and management

**GOAL 5**

Develop projects that expand and celebrate community identity

**GOAL 6**

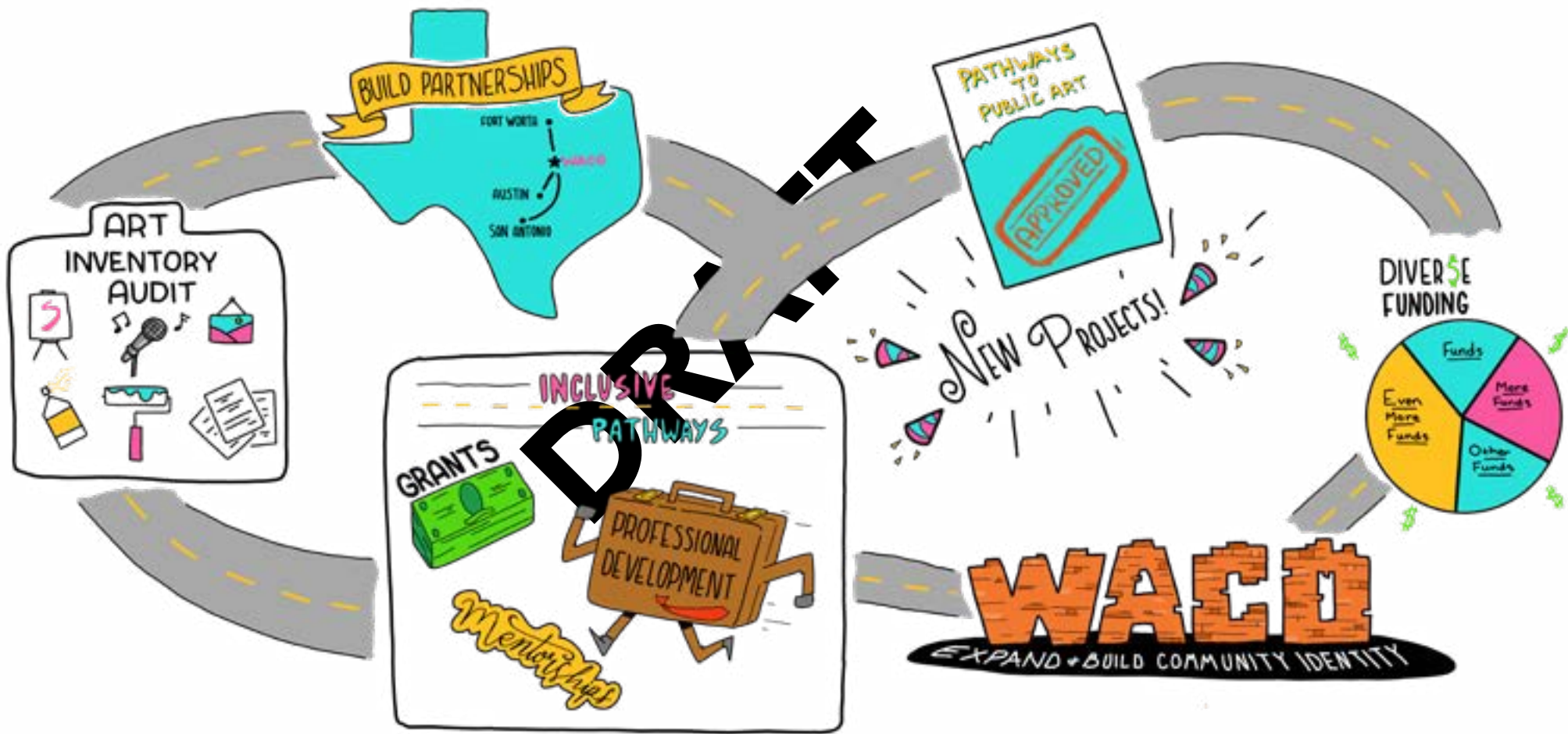
Identify and secure diverse funding mechanisms

**DRAFT**

Each of these goals has implementation strategies associated with it. These can be seen on pages 52 - 56.



# GOALS



## GOAL 1: IDENTIFY AND BUILD UPON EXISTING ASSETS

- Collection audit and inventory:
  - Take an inventory of all publicly owned land as opportunities for public art projects
  - Take an inventory of the great public art initiatives happening in Waco
  - Determine locations for public art projects [both public and privately owned land]
  - Do an equity audit of the public artworks - collect data around who the artist was, where funding came from, the content of the artwork, materials, and methods
  - Do an equity audit of the public art collection to understand who has received commissions [race, gender, age of the artists], the content of artworks, artwork materials and mediums, how much artists have been paid, the socioeconomic factors of the locations of public artworks
  - Identify gaps between current public art inventory and program aspirations
  - Create an annual work plan of projects to address these gaps, prioritizing projects that amplify stories of under-represented community members
- Conduct Arts and Economic Prosperity Study 6 for Waco
- Conduct Arts and Economic Prosperity Study 7 for Waco

## GOAL 2: CULTIVATE NEW RELATIONSHIPS AND BUILD PARTNERSHIPS

- Celebrate the plan with community
- Celebrate the percent for art ordinance passing with community
- Regularly convene stakeholders to build relationships, share the implementation plan, and gather input and ideas for future projects and partnerships
  - Artists - what projects do you want to work on? What resources do you need to be eligible for public art projects in Waco?
  - Community members - what projects would you like to see in Waco at large? In your neighborhood? How would you want to be involved in the public art process and program?
  - Educational institutions, museums, other entities - what initiatives are upcoming that could create collaborations and possible shared resources?
  - City departments - share information about public art and what it can do for the community, not just what it can be. Understand upcoming projects and priorities and collaborate on ways that public art can convey city priorities, initiatives, and plans.
  - Long time public art sponsors - what are their upcoming priorities? How might these align with future projects?
  - McLennan County - begin conversations about possibilities for formalizing a county-wide public art program
  - Fort Worth, Austin, and San Antonio - begin conversations about how to develop and market a regional cultural and artistic corridor that enhances and amplifies the creative work in these cities
- Create partnerships with educational institutions to share information about public art in Waco and the opportunities that come with it, to work to retain graduates in Waco
- Ongoing community engagement
  - Difference between community input, community outreach, and community engagement
  - Launching the plan and program should be a community celebration
  - Create an annual community engagement plan that aligns with the annual project plan. Where can community input, outreach, and dialogue be infused into the process regularly?
- This directly ties to goal 1 in the [Waco Cultural Plan](#)

## GOAL 3: CREATE PATHWAYS TO PUBLIC ART THAT ARE INCLUSIVE OF MULTIPLE STAKEHOLDERS

- Create educational opportunities for stakeholders to understand the public art process and how important their involvement is
  - Create resources to share with public and private development teams so they understand the process they will need to go through
  - Develop a resource packet for private developers that they receive when going through the permitting process, and set up a get to know you meeting with each to establish a relationship and share best practices
  - Develop a process kit for how to involve public art and artists in public and private projects
  - Build upon and develop resources for artists as a pathway to industry and workforce development
    - Artist grants: Develop a grant program for artists to create projects of their design [use Forecast grant program as a model]
    - Professional development - expand SHIFT workshops to specifically incorporate public art
    - Expand resources for artists to be eligible for future public art projects in Waco, based upon artist engagement in goal 1
    - Mentorship opportunities- Build on ARTPrenticeship program to include other mediums, like sculpture, performance, installation, etc.
- Create a plan for ongoing community engagement to build awareness around what public art can do for community members
  - Develop educational materials to share with community members as part of an ongoing engagement strategy
- Continue to revisit the definition of public art, and find ways to expand it to include a multiplicity of media, artists, and processes
- Develop a “public art ambassadors” program
  - Community members can become ambassadors for public art and share information about current and upcoming projects and events with other community members
- Share/present information about public art at City Council and other commission meetings
- Activate sponsors

## GOAL 4: FORMALIZE AND DEMOCRATIZE THE PUBLIC ART PROCESS, GOVERNANCE, AND MANAGEMENT

- Adopt “Bridges to Public Art: A Strategic Plan for Public Art in Waco, Texas”
- Develop and execute an overarching contract between Creative Waco and City of Waco for management of the public art program
- Develop a public art advisory board that presents recommendations to the decision making body
  - Determine roles and responsibilities of the advisory board
- Develop a deaccessioning policy for public art
- Continue supporting grassroots initiatives, and have a clear process for traditional government led initiatives
- Institute best practices and processes as laid out in this plan
  - Transparency in decision making
  - Accessibility to artworks, the process, being involved
  - These will provide opportunities for community involvement on many levels
- Develop a central communication location that outlines and celebrates upcoming and completed projects, artists, and opportunities. Share this location widely in all of your communications
- Develop a project plan for each year in collaboration with city departments



## GOAL 5: DEVELOP PROJECTS THAT EXPAND AND CELEBRATE COMMUNITY IDENTITY

- Develop a racial equity in public art statement and share with community along with upcoming projects that align directly with this statement
- Develop temporary projects that focus on bringing community members together to discuss shared issues
  - Create events and opportunities for community members to engage in cross-cultural dialogue
  - Collaborate with neighborhood organizations and trusted community leaders to understand the key issues and topics facing community members
  - Utilize Neighborworks America's "[Creative Community Development Tools](#)" resource to facilitate conversations about gentrification and displacement, and understand how creativity can play a mitigating role
  - Celebrate the diversity of Waco community members through the annual public art plan
- Create small neighborhood grants for neighborhood organizations and community members to develop projects in their neighborhoods
- Work with local destination partners on a wayfinding project to connect creative parts of the city - this will be a benefit to all partners and the community at large
- Create marketing strategies with the CVB that puts public art front and center, noting Waco as a key creative destination along the corridor from Dallas/Fort Worth to Austin and San Antonio.
- Create opportunities for neighborhood "gateways" to mark and celebrate the uniqueness of each neighborhood
- Celebrate current successes and retell stories of past beloved projects
- Explore development of festivals and other public space activations unique to Waco that meet shared goals and specific community needs

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## GOAL 6: IDENTIFY AND SECURE DIVERSE FUNDING MECHANISMS

- Move forward with the good work that has been done by Staff on a proposal for a CIP percent for art ordinance
- Continue to search and apply for grants on the local, regional, and national levels
  - Utilize grant opportunities to develop relationships with entities who have not yet partnered on public art, and to bolster long standing partnerships
- Activate the private sector
  - Develop sponsor packages that are values driven that allow corporations and individuals to contribute to a broad range of projects and programs of interest
  - Create pathways for public/private partnerships that surround interested parties with support and information where it is most useful
    - Train and inform key stakeholders in public and private sectors about the resources available, as well as develop and execute projects from ideation to implementation
- This directly ties to goal 1 in the [Waco Cultural Plan](#)

It takes help from everyone - an ideal public art program/initiative has a diversity of funding mechanisms, including developers, the City, visitors, and residents. Not any one of these sources should be the whole answer, rather public art funding should come from a diverse range of sources. Here are many ways that we are seeing public art being funded in Texas, and we recommend working with the City Attorney to see what's right for Waco.

- Percent for art:
  - Public Capital Improvement Projects (CIP)
  - Private development percent for art ordinances
  - In-lieu fund - a CIP or private development project can select to put their money into a public art fund rather than create a public art project connected to their project
- Other funding mechanisms - further research into the deployment of mechanisms in Waco is required
  - Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT). Up to 7% of Hotel Lodging revenue is collected as HOT. In most Texas municipalities, up to 15% of the hotel occupancy tax that is collected may be used to fund eligible arts-related expenditures. Discussion is needed whether some of this should be deployed for future arts and specifically public art use in Waco
  - A percentage of event revenue can be dedicated to future public art projects
  - Private sponsors
  - Grants - local, regional, and national, such as the Our Town grant from the NEA
  - Creative taxing mechanisms such as taxes on billboards or golf bag taxes
  - Sales tax revenue
  - TIF funding
  - Utilities tax
  - Liquor tax
  - Line item from City's general fund
  - Pull a percentage of taxes from events
  - Explore shared city/county funding possibilities



**5+ YEAR  
STRATEGIC  
PLAN**



# YEAR 1

- Adopt “Bridges to Public Art: A Strategic Plan for Public Art in Waco, Texas”
- Develop and execute an overarching contract between Creative Waco and City of Waco for management of the public art program
- Develop a public art advisory board made up of community members, developers, artists, that presents recommendations to the decision making body
- Determine roles and responsibilities of the advisory board
- Develop a deaccessioning policy for public art
- Continue supporting grassroots initiatives, and have a clear process for traditional government led initiatives
- Institute best practices and processes as laid out in this plan
  - Transparency in decision making
  - Accessibility to artworks, the process, being involved
  - These will provide opportunities for community involvement on many levels
- Develop a central communication location that outlines and celebrates upcoming and completed projects, artists, and opportunities. Share this location widely in all of your communication
- Move forward with the good work that has been done by Staff on a proposal for a CIP percent for art ordinance
  - Percent for art:
    - Public Capital Improvement Projects (CIP)
    - Private development percent for art ordinances
    - In-lieu fund - a CIP or private development project can select to put their money into a public art fund rather than create a public art project connected to their project
- Continue to search and apply for grants on the local, regional, and national levels
  - Utilize grant opportunities to develop relationships with entities who have not yet partnered on public art, and to bolster long standing partnerships
- Celebrate the plan with community
- Celebrate the percent for art ordinance passing with community
- Create educational opportunities for stakeholders to understand the public art process and how important their involvement is
  - Create resources to share with public and private development teams so they understand the process they will need to go through
  - Develop a resource packet for private developers that they receive when going through the permitting process, and set up a “get to know you” meeting with each to establish a relationship and share best practices
  - Develop a process kit for how to include public art and involve local artists in public and private projects
  - Build upon and develop resources for artists as a pathway to industry and workforce development
    - Professional development - expand Air Collaborative SHIFT workshops to specifically incorporate public art
    - Expand resources for artists to be eligible for future public art projects in Waco, based upon artist engagement in Goal 1
    - Mentorship opportunities- Build on ARTPrenticeship program to include other mediums, like sculpture, performance, installation, etc.
- Share/present information about public art at City Council and other commission meetings
- Activate sponsors
- Conduct Arts and Economic Prosperity Study 6 for Waco

# YEAR 2

- Develop a project plan for each year in collaboration with city departments
- Create a plan for ongoing community engagement to build awareness around what public art can do for community members
  - Develop educational materials to share with community members as part of an ongoing engagement strategy
- Collection Audit and inventory phase 1
  - Take an inventory of all publicly owned land as opportunities for public art projects
  - Take an inventory of the great public art initiatives happening in Waco
  - Determine locations for public art projects (both public and privately owned land)
- Develop a “racial equity in public art” statement and share with community along with upcoming projects that align directly with this statement
- Develop temporary projects that focus on bringing community members together to discuss shared issues
  - Create events and opportunities for community members to engage in cross-cultural dialogue
  - Collaborate with neighborhood organizations and trusted community leaders to understand the key issues and topics facing community members
  - Utilize Neighborworks America’s “Creative Community Development Tools” resource to facilitate conversations about gentrification and displacement, and understand how creativity can play an mitigating role
  - Celebrate the diversity of Waco community members through the annual public art plan
- Regularly convene stakeholders to build relationships, share the implementation plan, and gather input and ideas for future projects and partnerships
  - Artists - What projects do you want to work on? What resources do you need to be eligible for public art projects in Waco?
  - Community members - What projects would you like to see in Waco at large? In your neighborhood? How would you want to be involved in the public art process and program?
  - Educational institutions, museums, other entities - What initiatives are upcoming that could create collaborations and possible shared resources?
  - City departments - Share information about public art and what it can do for the community, not just what it can be. Understand upcoming projects and priorities and collaborate on ways that public art can share information to the public about city priorities, initiatives, and plans
  - Long time public art sponsors - What are your upcoming priorities? How might these align with future projects?
  - McLennan County - Begin conversations about possibilities for formalizing a county-wide public art program
  - Fort Worth, Austin, and San Antonio - Begin conversations about how to develop and market a regional cultural and artistic corridor that enhances and amplifies the creative work in these cities
- Celebrate current successes and retell stories of past beloved projects
- Share/present information about public art at City Council and other commission meetings
- Activate sponsors
- Develop further funding strategies through grants, public/private partnerships, tax revenue, and other sources (this is ongoing from year 2+). See examples on page 56.

I THINK I CAN,  
I THINK I CAN!





# YEAR 3

- Artist grants: Develop a grant program for artists to create projects of their design (use Forecast grant program as a model)
- Collection audit and inventory phase 2
  - Do an equity audit of the public artworks - collect data around who the artist was, where funding came from, the content of the artwork, materials, and methods
  - Do an equity audit of the public art collection to understand who has received commissions (race, gender, age of the artists), the content of artworks, artwork materials and mediums, how much artists have been paid, and the socioeconomic factors of the locations of public artworks
  - Identify gaps between current public art inventory and program aspirations
  - Create an annual work plan of projects to address these gaps, prioritizing projects that amplify stories of under-represented community members
- Celebrate the diversity of Waco community members through the annual public art plan
- Create partnerships with educational institutions to share information about public art in Waco and the opportunities that come with it, to work to retain graduates in Waco
- Create small neighborhood grants for neighborhood organizations and community members to develop projects in their neighborhoods
- Continue convening stakeholders to build relationships and gather input and ideas for future projects and partnerships. In addition to regular convenings with artists, community members, and city departments:
  - McLennan County - begin conversations about possibilities for formalizing a county-wide public art program
  - Fort Worth, Austin, and San Antonio - begin conversations about how to develop and market a regional cultural and artistic corridor that enhances and amplifies the creative work in these cities
- Celebrate current successes and retell stories of past beloved projects
- Share/present information about public art at city council and other commission meetings
- Activate the private sector
  - Develop sponsor packages that are values driven that allow corporations and individuals to contribute to a broad range of projects and programs of interest
  - Create pathways for public/private partnerships that surround interested parties with support and information where it is most useful
  - Training and informing key stakeholders in public and private sectors about the resources available, as well as developing and executing projects from ideation to implementation
- Advocate for a line item from the City budget to go toward public art
- Explore development of festivals and other public space activations unique to Waco that meet shared goals and specific community needs

# YEAR 4

- Develop annual work plan
- Work with local destination partners on a wayfinding project to connect creative parts of the city - this will be a benefit to all partners and the community at large
- Create marketing strategies with the CVB that put public art front and center, noting Waco as a key creative destination along the corridor from Dallas/Fort Worth to Austin and San Antonio
- Celebrate current successes and retell stories of past beloved projects
- Create opportunities for neighborhood "gateways" to mark and celebrate the uniqueness of each neighborhood
- Share/present information about public art at city council and other commission meetings
- Activate sponsors
- Pull a percentage of taxes from events
- Explore CVB/hotel/motel tax funding more thoroughly
- Explore shared city/county funding possibilities

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# YEAR 5+

- Ongoing community engagement
  - Understand the difference between community input, community outreach, and community engagement and use each one appropriately
  - Launching the plan and program should be a community celebration
  - Create an annual community engagement plan that aligns with the annual project plan. Where can community input, outreach, and dialogue be infused into the process regularly?
- Continue to revisit the definition of public art, and find ways to expand it to include a multiplicity of media, artists, and processes
- Develop a “public art ambassadors” program
  - Community members can become ambassadors for public art and share information about the program and upcoming projects and events with other community members
- Celebrate current successes and retell stories of past beloved projects
- Develop annual work plans
- Share/present information about public art at city council and other commission meetings
- Activate sponsors
- Conduct Arts and Economic Prosperity Study 7 for Waco





# APPENDICES

## EXAMPLE: FORT WORTH'S PERCENT FOR PUBLIC ART PROGRAM

Fort Worth operates a program by which a percent of capital improvement expenditure by the city is allocated for public art. They contract with Arts Fort Worth to manage the public art program.

Arts Fort Worth's current contract with the city is equal to \$1,786,730. The total city budget for 2022 is \$1.8 billion. The contract with Arts Fort Worth represents just under 0.1% of the city's overall budget.

Public art program operating costs for Fort Worth over the last five years includes public art staff salaries and benefits for 5 Full time and 2 Part Time, general operating expenses, and community engagement expenses. Office space is rent free in city facilities.

Operating costs for Arts Fort Worth to manage the public art program:

FY 2018: \$552,932  
FY 2019: \$580,712  
FY 2020: \$543,328  
FY 2021: \$505,295  
FY 2022: \$505,295

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## SAMPLE DOCUMENTS

- [Artist contracts \(for just design, for commission\)](#)
- Donations policy
  - [Baltimore](#)
  - [Cambridge](#)
- Commission/advisory committee roles and bylaws
  - [Austin](#)
  - [Brookings](#)
- [Budget templates](#)
- Acceptance letters/transfer of ownership
  - [Acceptance Letter-Denver](#)
  - [Acceptance Letter-Texas Tech University](#)
  - [Transfer of Title](#)
- Sample RFQ
  - [Brooklyn Park](#)
  - [Larry Cohen](#)
- Sample public art policy
  - [Los Angeles](#)
  - [Ft. Forth](#)
- [Sample deaccessioning policy](#)
- Sample public art program manager position description
  - [Philadelphia](#)
- [Report from Americans for the Arts about why public art matters](#)
- [A Cultural Plan for Waco](#)
- [Waco 2040 Plan](#)
- [Arts and Economic Prosperity Study 5 for Waco](#)
- [Waco CVB economic impact calculator](#)

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