



Discussion on Public Art Blueprint Research and Community Dialog

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Overview



- Project Introduction
- Research and Engagement
- Next Steps
- Discussion

Process

Summer - Fall 2025:

Research and Community Dialog

Winter - Spring 2026:

Develop Draft Blueprint

Spring 2026: *Public Review Draft Plan, Community Engagement*

Summer 2026: *Final Plan and Approvals*

Purpose and Outcomes



Articulate Dakota County's role in public art and guide future activities

- Vision, Mission & Goals = Why
- Opportunities = Where + What + When
- Administrative Tools = How + Who



Public Art: Working Definition



- Permanent or temporary elements of a public place
- Designed by an artist or artist team
- Enrich the character of the location
- Stand-alone or integrated into infrastructure
- Can be the sole creation of the artist or be the result of a design team approach

Inventory Snapshot



- Combination of public art and portable works
- Pieces represent a range of work from sculpture, murals, mosaics, and reliefs



Triskele, Foster Wiley, Robert Trail Library

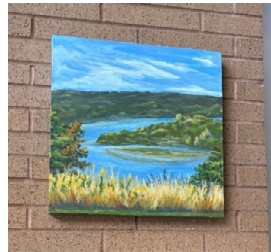


Balance, Milligan Studio, Judicial Center

Inventory Snapshot



- Works are commissioned through the Public Art Advisory Committee, supported by library friends groups, donated, or loaned
- Themes reflect elements of Dakota County nature or history



Journey, Carly Schmitt, Robert Trail Library



Charlton Tunnel Mural, Megan Moore and Meg Erke

Inventory Findings



There is a need to:

- Develop acceptance criteria for donations and loans
- Identify a centralized location for documenting work
- Collect consistent information about the work
- Consider staffing needs and how they could be met
- Update and expand on roles of staff, PAAC, and ad hoc selection committees.

Engagement Snapshot



- 500 (approx.) participated at 11 pop-up events
- 285 participated in the on-line questionnaire
- 3 stakeholder roundtables (artists, arts organizations, staff)
- Commissioner meetings



Questionnaire Results



What IMPACT should public art have in Dakota County?

Value	Percent	Count
Makes ordinary elements such as benches, signs, or shelters extraordinary.	46.2%	123
Creates memorable and recognizable landmarks.	42.5%	113
Creates opportunities for Dakota County residents and visitors to experience art.	42.1%	112
Anchors focal points or community gathering places throughout the community.	41.7%	111
Supports the development of local artists.	36.5%	97
Cultivates belonging by celebrating and reflecting diverse cultures	34.2%	91
Supports and enhances the identity of Dakota County,	28.2%	75
Supports and encourage pedestrian activity.	27.1%	72
Elevates the role of art in environmental education, stewardship, and remediation.	23.3%	62
Gives voice to the history of Dakota County.	20.7%	55
Creates an outlet for community creativity through hands on involvement.	20.3%	54

Questionnaire Results



What AREAS of Dakota County are the best opportunities?

Value	Percent	Count
Parks	92.1%	246
Libraries	61.0%	163
Bicycle and pedestrian pathways	53.9%	144
Community Centers	47.6%	127
Natural areas	34.5%	92
County facilities (e.g., administration buildings, judicial center)	24.3%	65
Large development areas	21.0%	56
Visible from the freeways / major roadways	18.0%	48

Questionnaire Results



What TYPES of public artwork would you like to see in Dakota County?

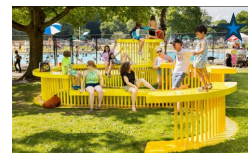
Value	Percent	Count
Artist-designed functional elements in the streetscape (benches, bike racks, crosswalks, manhole covers).	56.8%	150
Interactive and playful artworks.	56.8%	150
Artwork by local and regional artists.	56.4%	149
Artwork that is large-scale and iconic.	39.4%	104
Murals.	35.6%	94
Artwork that creates pedestrian-scale visual surprises.	34.8%	92
Socially engaged public art projects that involve the public.	21.6%	57
Street art (independent, sometimes unsanctioned, art in public spaces).	16.7%	44
Illuminated/Light-based projects.	13.6%	36
Temporary or rotating installations that last 6 months to 2 years.	13.6%	36
Artwork by nationally or internationally recognized artists.	4.2%	11
Video projection and media-based artworks.	2.7%	7

Art In Other Places



30-50%

★ Favorite Works



Commissioner Feedback



- **Impact:** County identity and history, economic development, belonging, health and wellness, community connectedness, awareness building, tourism, placemaking
- **Types:** Integration into infrastructure, support trauma informed spaces, performance, temporary, engage all senses, tactile
- **Places:** Parks, libraries, county buildings, community gateways, CDA housing,
- **Role:** Integrate art as a part of all County services, integrate art into everyday lives of residents, make art accessible and engaging
- **Partnerships:** schools and youth, businesses, cities, community art organizations

Engagement Themes



- Vibrant and memorable design
- Nature-connected art
- Gathering and inclusivity
- Everyday integration
- Local artists and cultural expression
- Art in locations that residents frequently visit



Equinox Sunrise, Juliette Perine Myers, Kaposia Library



Mourning Tree, Dale Lewis, Administration Center

Benchmarking



County Programs

- Adams County, CO
- Bernalillo County, NM
- Frederick County, MD
- Johnson County, KS
- Johnson County Parks and Recreation District, KS
- Santa Cruz County, CA

Regional Programs

- City of Minneapolis, MN
- City of St. Paul, MN

Topics

- Vision and Goals
- Funding Mechanism(s)
- Organizational Placement and Staffing
- Governing Body and Decision-Making Process

Additional Scans (In Progress)

- 12 Dakota County Cities
- 7 Metro Counties

Vision and Goals



Sense of Place & Identity

- Express community character, tell local stories, and celebrate heritage while looking forward.

Community Connection & Inclusivity

- Bring people together and ensure diverse populations feel represented and engaged.

Quality of Life Enhancement

- Make communities more vibrant, desirable, and enriching places to live, work, and visit.

Economic & Civic Benefits

- Benefits Drive tourism, economic prosperity, and civic pride as a tangible community asset.

Artist Support

- Provide opportunities for artists at all career stages and foster creative growth.

Accessibility & Broad Engagement

- Expanding art access beyond galleries into everyday public spaces.

Strategic Integration

- Public art as integral to place-making and community development, not just decoration.

Funding



- **Percent for Art is Standard Model** Nearly all the programs earmark a percentage of capital construction project costs as the primary funding mechanism: range from 0.5% to 2%, with 1% being most common.
 - Several programs specify minimum project costs to trigger the percentage.
- **Public Art Fund** Most programs reviewed establish separate accounts that allow funds to carry over years, enabling larger, more significant projects.
- **Administrative and Maintenance Set-Asides** Multiple programs allocate a portion (typically 5-10%) specifically for administration, maintenance, conservation and education.
- **Multiple Funding Streams** Most programs that utilize percent for art supplement that funding from other sources.

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Organizational Placement



- **Cultural/Arts Placement**
 - The majority are housed within a cultural, arts, or cultural services departments or divisions.
 - Some of those divisions are within the parks department.
 - Some programs are embedded in facilities/operational/capital project departments
- **Nonprofit Partnerships**
 - Some programs utilize to staff or manage the program.
- **Staffing**
 - Most programs operate with one dedicated full-time employee and/or support through their department or through capital project management.

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Governance



- **Standing Advisory Commissions**

Most public art programs have a permanent advisory body (7-11 members typically). Some have responsibilities beyond the public art program. They provide continuity, strategic oversight, and policy development.

- **Project-Specific Selection Panels**

Nearly all create ad hoc panels to guide the artist selection for individual projects. This allows tailored expertise and community representation per project. Many require a mix of stakeholders and professionals including people with professional arts experience, or knowledge of architecture or design.

Metro County Landscape



	County-wide Program	Structure	Funding
ANOKA	Artist Exhibits at the Library	County Program	Minnesota's Arts and Cultural Heritage Legacy Fund
CARVER	Art Consortium of Carver County	501c3	Fundraising – Donations and Business Sponsorships
DAKOTA	Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC), Art Programs and Exhibits at Libraries	County Program	Minnesota's Arts and Cultural Heritage Legacy Fund (programs at libraries), Public Art Fund as a part of the Dakota County's Public Services and Revenue budget (funds PAAC)
HENNEPIN	Art at the Library, One Percent for Art Program	County Program	One Percent for Art Program (exclusively funds art in libraries), Minnesota's Arts and Cultural Heritage Legacy Fund
RAMSEY	Art in Ramsey County Parks	County Program	
SCOTT	No Program	N/A	
WASHINGTON	No Program	N/A	

Next Steps and Discussion



What themes and topics are most important to focus on in the blueprint?

Next Steps

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Spring 2026: *Public Review*

Draft Plan, Community Engagement

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