

# Downtown STL Public Art Plan

Building  
Partnerships  
for a New  
Generation  
of Public Art  
Downtown

## Executive Summary



# Downtown St. Louis has a new public art plan to advance the vision that public art will support building a dense, inclusive and culturally vibrant downtown that is a vital anchor to the entire region.

## BUILDING THE PLAN

The Regional Arts Commission (RAC), Downtown St. Louis, Inc. (DSI) and Explore St. Louis recognized that public art can be a critical tool in the ongoing transformation and resurgence of Downtown St. Louis. In 2017 they joined forces to lead a process to develop a plan for how to bring more public art to Downtown.

A nine-month planning process engaged broad groups of stakeholders – Downtown residents, workers, visitors, civic organizations, cultural and arts organizations, developers, and businesses. Participants contributed creative ideas and observations that helped build the *Downtown STL Public Art Plan*, the first of its kind Downtown. It includes a shared vision, set of priorities and practical strategies for how to get things done.

## THE PLAN

The *Downtown STL Public Art Plan* recommends commissioning and supporting four key types of public art projects based on the impact they will have in Downtown. In addition to commissioning new projects, the plan also recommends that the Initiative lead programs that engage people with public art, provide support to others developing public art projects, and support the growth of artists.

## + EXPLORATION

Encourage walking and exploration of Downtown's streets and public spaces.

Areas to focus on include Tucker Boulevard, Washington Avenue East, highway underpasses, elevated walkways, the Choteau Greenway, The Gateway Mall, and the North-South MetroLink Extension.

## + POSSIBILITY

Highlight the culture of Downtown as a place for creativity and possibility.

Projects include rotating new media work projected onto buildings to activate Downtown evenings and night, an interactive public art or multidisciplinary arts festival, and artist-initiated projects, such as an annual "Ideas Competition" inviting regional artists to propose their best ideas for temporary projects at sites of their own choosing.

## + IDENTITY

Reinforce the identity of Downtown as the heart of a diverse and multifaceted region.

This includes projects that address the story of the St. Louis community in an honest, open way; examine Downtown's rich, diverse history; and engage people with the powerful and unique Mississippi River and its changing water levels.

## + WELCOME

Welcome people Downtown and demonstrate that they have arrived to a unique, vibrant and creative place, rich with history, where people from all over the region, country and world are encouraged to gather.

Areas to focus on include America's Center, major gateways, and priority mural sites on prominent parking garages and blank walls.

# GETTING IT DONE

### THE PLAYERS

The Plan recommends creating a Downtown STL Public Art Initiative, helmed by multiple partners, to make ideas a reality. The Initiative will:

- provide the vision, leadership and capacity necessary to develop and lead public art projects;
- partner with other Downtown stakeholders to launch and manage projects; and
- act as a resource for developers, property owners, arts and community organizations and artists wishing to initiate their own public art projects.

### THE WORK

There will be a dedicated staff person, hired, paid and overseen by the Regional Arts Commission and housed at Downtown St. Louis, Inc. to oversee day-to-day management of the Initiative and a Downtown Public Art Advisory Committee (DPAAC), comprised of regional visual arts professionals and Downtown stakeholders, to provide guidance and oversight.

Depending on the project, the Initiative's role may be to lead, partner with others, advise or advocate.

### THE RESOURCES

The Initiative will strategically deploy a variety of tools at its disposal to develop a broad, diversified funding pool to make its vision a reality. It will:

- leverage support from RAC;
- make the most of the City's Percent for Art Ordinance;
- seek grants, sponsorships and support from partners;
- cultivate donors; and
- encourage developers to include public art in their projects or contribute to public art projects Downtown.

# DOWNTOWN'S FUTURE

RAC, DSI and Explore St. Louis will be launching the Initiative and working together towards the bold vision set forth in this plan. Keep your eyes on Downtown and come join us as we enter a new era of public art that has the power to transform the way we think about, experience and interact with this thriving neighborhood at the heart of our region.

To read a copy of the full Plan and stay informed about the work of the Downtown STL Public Art Initiative, visit: [vision.racstl.org/downtown](http://vision.racstl.org/downtown)

The *Downtown STL Public Art Plan* was developed with thoughtful input and feedback from many people who are committed to creating a dense and vibrant Downtown. The Project Partners would like to thank the hard work of the Downtown STL Plan Advisory Committee as well as the hundreds of people who attended meetings, roundtables, and the *Imagine Art Here!* workshop and filled out our survey.

## DOWNTOWN STL PUBLIC ART PLAN PARTNERS

**Missy Kelley**  
President & CEO  
Downtown STL, Inc.

**Kitty Ratcliffe**  
President  
Explore St. Louis

**Felicia Shaw**  
Executive Director  
Regional Arts  
Commission

## DOWNTOWN STL PUBLIC ART PLAN ADVISORY GROUP

**David Allen**  
Metro St. Louis Transit

**Matt Brinkmann**  
Living Lands & Waters

**Ryan Favier**  
MC Hotel Construction

**Brian Hall**  
Explore St. Louis

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**Megan Ridgeway**  
Arcturis

**Peter Tao**  
Tao + Lee Associates, Inc.

**Solomon Thurman**  
10th Street Gallery

**Andrew Trivers**  
Architectural Consultant

**Patrick Weber**  
Aesh Design

## ELECTED OFFICIALS

**Mayor Lyda Krewson**

**Alderman Jack Coatar**  
Ward 7

**Alderman Marlene Davis**  
Ward 19

**Alderman Tammika Hubbard**  
Ward 5

**Alderman Christine Ingrassia**  
Ward 6

Downtown STL, Inc.



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