

Dunwoody Public Art Implementation Plan

Summary of Survey Findings

The Dunwoody public art survey was launched on April 4, 2020, and closed on May 21, 2020. Announcements about the survey were published by the city, the *Dunwoody Crier*, the *Dunwoody Reporter* and What's Up Dunwoody. We also asked a variety of organizations, including the Dunwoody Homeowner's Association, to circulate word through their social media and newsletter channels. There were 438 responses received.

What Can Public Art Accomplish?

Understanding how people think public art can benefit Dunwoody is the first step in crafting a plan and policies that are right for the city. Survey respondents were given a list of potential goals and asked to pick five that represented their top priorities.

Overall, respondents indicated a desire for public art to improve the visual appearance of the city, especially places where people gather, and to create a sense of pride and welcoming. The top priority, by far, was to “enhance the appearance of gathering spaces.” After that, the top priorities clustered around “enhance the appearance of infrastructure,” “create landmarks,” “increase pride” and “welcome people to the city.”

Other potential goals ranked lower by a third, so the results suggest a high degree of confidence in these goals for public art in Dunwoody.

What Parts of the City are Best for Public Art?

Understanding where people think public art would be most appropriate in Dunwoody is another important step in making a plan and policy. The survey explored that topic in two ways. One question asked people what areas of the city were most appropriate for public art. Another set of questions asked people where people thought different types of public art would be most appropriate.

By the first question's measure, respondents clearly see public art as something that benefits the less urban areas of the city the most – respondents clearly see public art as something that should focus on places that serve the broader community, though not necessarily Perimeter Center. Parks, community commercial areas and cultural facilities ranked as the best places for public art.

By the other measure, Dunwoody Village (22 percent of responses), Perimeter Center (21 percent) and Brook Run (20 percent) were the areas where people saw the most opportunity for public art. Following that, in descending orders of magnitude, were Georgetown (15 percent), Greenways and Multiuse Trails (12 percent) and Gateway locations (6 percent).

What Type of Public Art is Preferred?

Overall, functional landscape artworks are the type of public art that respondents think would be most appropriate for Dunwoody. (This is a catch-all term that refers landscape elements, such as planters, that are designed by artists.) After that, functional streetscape and wayfinding artworks would be next most appropriate. After that, playful sculpture, site-specific sculpture and civic sculpture would be of interest.

The types of public art that are least popular with respondents, based on the low frequency with which they were indicated as appropriate, are interactive community artworks. The types of public art that are most disliked by respondents, based on their “don't like” responses, are environmental infrastructure artworks and murals on utility boxes.

What Themes are Important to Dunwoody?

Dunwoody's public art implementation plan should tap into the uniqueness of the city, both as it is understood by people who live and work there, and as it might be interpreted by artists who are looking at it freshly.

The survey included two questions that help us understand what aspects of the city respondents would like to have reflected through public art: "Tell Us Something Unique About Dunwoody an Artist Might Want to Know," and "If You Were to Create a Monument in Dunwoody, What Would it Be?"

Overall, the most prevalent answers can give a sense of common narratives about the city that are shared by large numbers of people. Small clusters of answers can provide revealing insights into little-known aspects of the city, or unusual ideas that can prompt public discussion.

What Would You Want an Artist to Know about Dunwoody? (287 responses)

By and large, the topic mentioned most by respondents was the events that occur in town – about a quarter of responses mentioned events such as the Fourth of July Parade, Lemonade Days, Light Up Dunwoody and Dunwoody Arts Festival (23 percent of responses).

The next most common theme was the city's farming history and roots (15 percent). This was expressed in several ways, ranging from the general idea of the city's former agricultural base, to mention of specific farmhouses, to description of the idea that Dunwoody has transitioned from an agricultural community to a suburb. The city's railroad history was mentioned by 5 percent of respondents.

Another common theme was Dunwoody's small town feeling (12 percent). Sometimes this was associated with a sense of neighborliness, community and caring. Sometimes respondents noted that Dunwoody retains its a small town feel while being near a big city or in a metropolitan area. Still others noted that the small-town feel comes with a sense of community, and an ability to pull together to accomplish things.

Other general themes that were mentioned frequently included diversity, with a few mentions of the original Native-American settlers, family and traditional values.

Several specific places or aspects of Dunwoody were mentioned frequently as well. These included parks, including Brook Run Park (5 percent), the Nature Center (6 percent), arts and culture resources (6 percent), the EBWOK sign (6 percent) and Dunwoody Village (5 percent).

What is striking is the connections between memories and places. People remember the process of establishing the city, the way that preservation efforts resulted in the saving of old farmhouses, the way that Brook Run Park emerged from the Brook Run Center, even storefronts that were run by family businesses. People remember struggles that the city overcame, such as a series of tornadoes. This is communicated in a spirit of pulling together, accomplishing things, and resilience that can't quite be quantified by the responses.

What Monument Would You Create for Dunwoody? (264 responses)

The topic expressed most by respondents was community, unity and coming together (14 percent). This was expressed through many terms, such as "caring," "character," "coming together," "connection," "friendly," "generosity," "heart," "tolerance," "unity" and "warmth." The comments seemed to express how people behave towards each other in the community, as well as Dunwoody's ability to pull together to accomplish important things.

The second most-frequently mentioned topic was the environment (8 percent). Responses referred to the trees in the city, and the environment and nature more generally.

After that, there was a cluster of categories: diversity and inclusivity (6 percent), children and family (5 percent), railroad history (5 percent) and agricultural / farming themes (4 percent).

There were two type of individuals referenced in the responses: the founders of Dunwoody (4 percent) and first responders / veterans / teachers (4 percent).

About 11 percent of responses said that a monument should not be a high priority for Dunwoody. About 4 percent suggested that usable public spaces and/or water features would be more important.

Types of Public Art that Fit Best into Dunwoody

The survey presented respondents with 29 photographs that depicted a variety of types of public art projects. The respondents were asked to indicate areas of the city where different types of artwork would be appropriate, or whether they did not like that type of artwork at all.

The data from this question helps us evaluate, for each area of the city, which types of artwork would be most appropriate. It helps us understand what areas of the city are the highest priority for public art in general.

Best Areas of the City for Public Art

The responses clustered into three tiers: Dunwoody Village (22 percent of responses), Perimeter Center (21 percent) and Brook Run (20 percent) were the areas where people saw the most opportunity for public art. Following that, in descending orders of magnitude, were Georgetown (15 percent), Greenways and Multiuse Trails (12 percent) and Gateways (6 percent).

Types of Public Art that Fit Best into Dunwoody

Overall, functional landscape artworks are the type of public art that respondents think would be most appropriate for Dunwoody. After that, functional streetscape and wayfinding artworks would be next most appropriate. After that, playful sculpture, site-specific sculpture and civic sculpture would be of interest.

Dunwoody Village

Dunwoody Village is the area where respondents are most interested in seeing public art, by a slight margin. In this area, functional landscape projects were most popular, with streetscape, pop-up interactive, wayfinding clustered in a slightly lower tier.

Perimeter Center

Perimeter Center is also a place where respondents are very interested in seeing public art. Here, there interests were more diverse: where respondents could image the most diverse types of artworks. Murals, architecturally integrated artworks, streetscape, light, wayfinding, functional landscape projects, and gateway features were the most popular for this area.

Brook Run Park

Brook Run Park is the third of the three areas that are most popular for public art. Here, respondents were most interested in is playful sculptures. After that interactive play features and functional park artworks would be the next most popular, with ground murals close behind.

Georgetown

Respondents expressed a strong interest in seeing public art in Georgetown, but by an order of magnitude less than in Dunwoody Village, Perimeter Center and Brook Run Park (interest was about $\frac{3}{4}$ as strong). Here, functional landscape and functional streetscape projects were most interesting to respondents.

Greenways and Trails

The interest in public art along greenways and trails was about half as strong as it was for public art in Dunwoody Village. For this area, respondents were most interested in seeing public art incorporated as ground murals and trail markers.

Gateways

The interest in public art along at gateways was about a quarter as strong as it was for public art in Dunwoody Village. In these areas, respondents were interested in seeing public art as gateway features.

Least Popular Types

The types of public art that are least popular with respondents, based on the low frequency with which they were indicated as appropriate, are interactive community artworks. After that, artworks in environmental infrastructure, playful urban artworks, trail markers and interactive light artworks were of low interest, except that trail markers were of high interest along trails. Urban murals and public art integrated into urban spaces were also of low interest.

Most Disliked Types of Public Art

The types of public art that are most disliked by respondents, based on their “don’t like” responses, are environmental infrastructure artworks and murals on utility boxes.