

CRAFTING CONNECTIONS

ART AS A CATALYST FOR ACCESS & BELONGING

A CASE STUDY COLLECTION FOR THE BAY TRAIL | FEBRUARY 25, 2025

SUMMARY PRESENTATION

Prepared for



Prepared by

**STREET
PLANS**

ABOUT THE PROJECT TEAM

STREET PLANS

URBAN DESIGN • PLACEMAKING TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Urban planning and design firm dedicated to creating active, safe, and human-scale streets and public spaces.

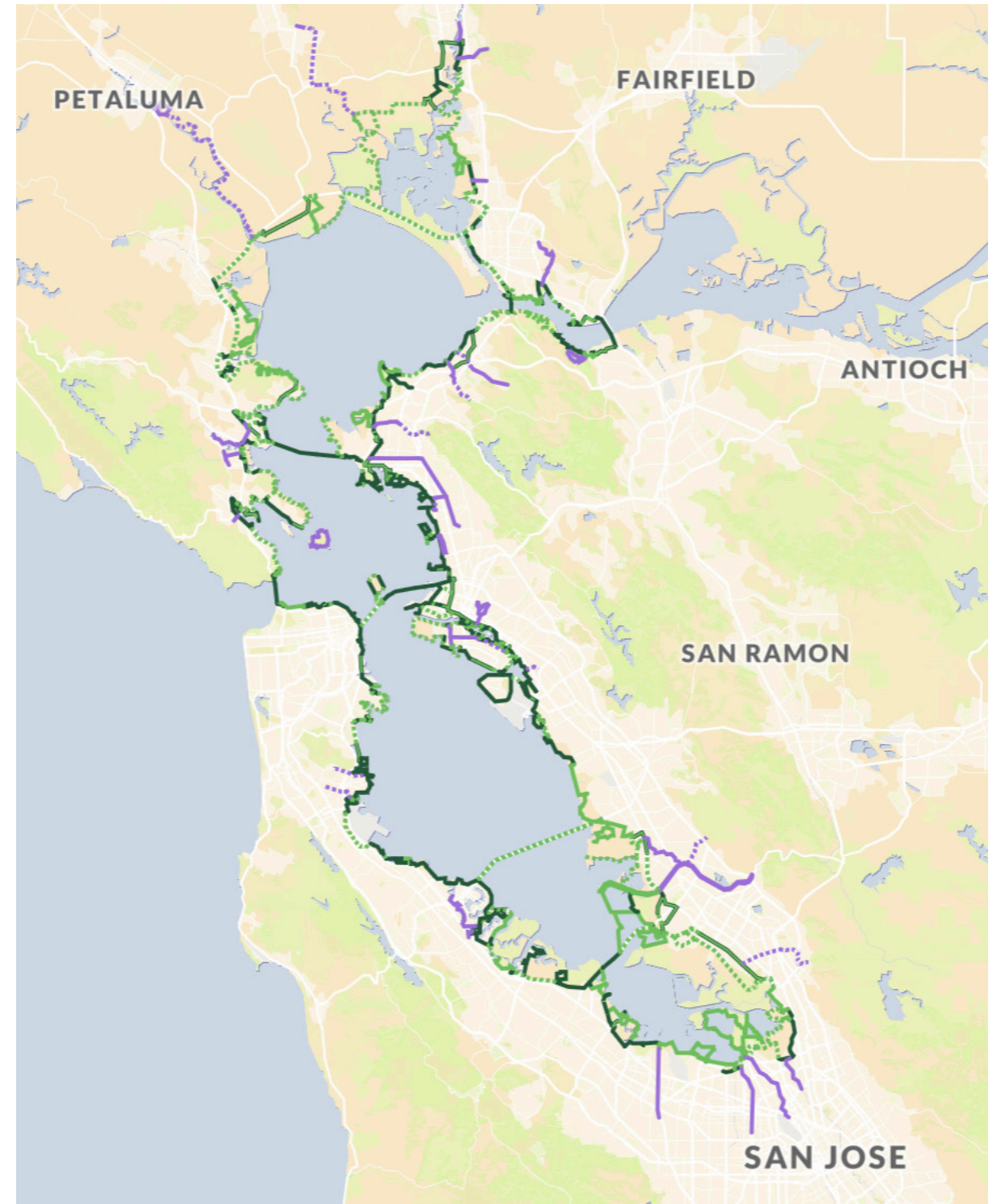


METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION



The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) is the transportation planning, financing and coordinating agency for the nine-county San Francisco Bay Area.

The Bay Trail, currently more than 350 miles, connects communities, parks, open spaces, schools and transit and is a core MTC program. For more info and to view this map, visit [MTC's website](https://mtc.ca.gov).



SOURCE: mtc.ca.gov/operations/regional-trails-parks/san-francisco-bay-trail/bay-trail-interactive-map

How are government agencies collaborating with artists to advance community equity goals and/or foster a sense of belonging in public space?

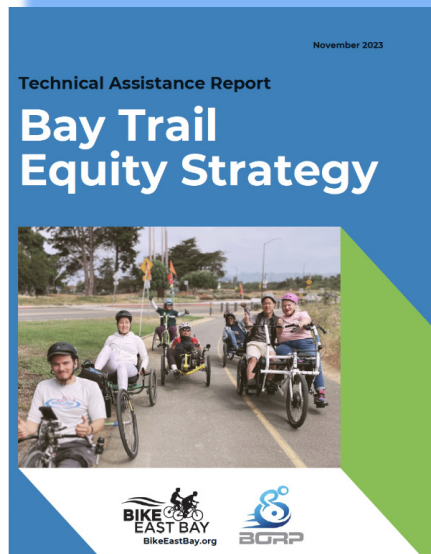
IDENTIFY REPLICABLE BEST PRACTICES
FOR COLLABORATIONS BETWEEN ARTISTS
AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

UNCOVER EXAMPLES IN WHICH ART HAS
IMPROVED ACCESS TO AND THE SENSE
OF BELONGING FOR PUBLIC SPACE OR
TRAIL SYSTEMS

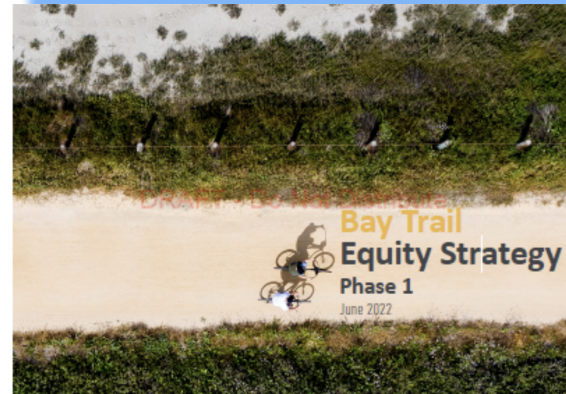
PROJECT PURPOSE + GOALS

EXPLORE A RANGE OF PRECEDENTS - THIS
MIGHT INCLUDE PUBLIC ART PROGRAMS, ARTIST-
IN-RESIDENCE PROGRAMS, POLICIES AND OTHER
EFFORTS THAT INCREASE CONNECTION TO
COMMUNITY THROUGH ARTIST PARTNERSHIPS

BACKGROUND RESEARCH



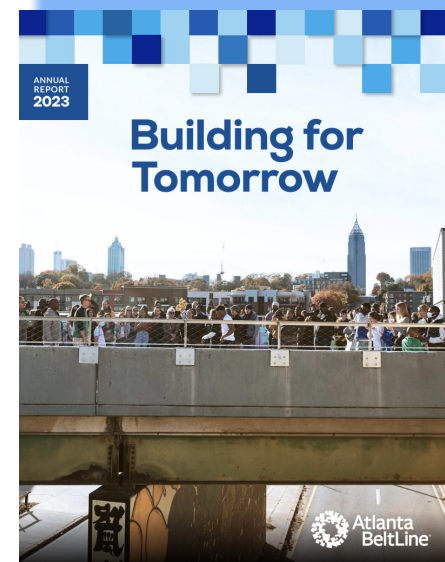
**Bay Trail Equity Strategy
Technical Assistance Report
(Nov. 2023)**



**Bay Trail Equity Strategy
Phase 1 (2022 DR document)**

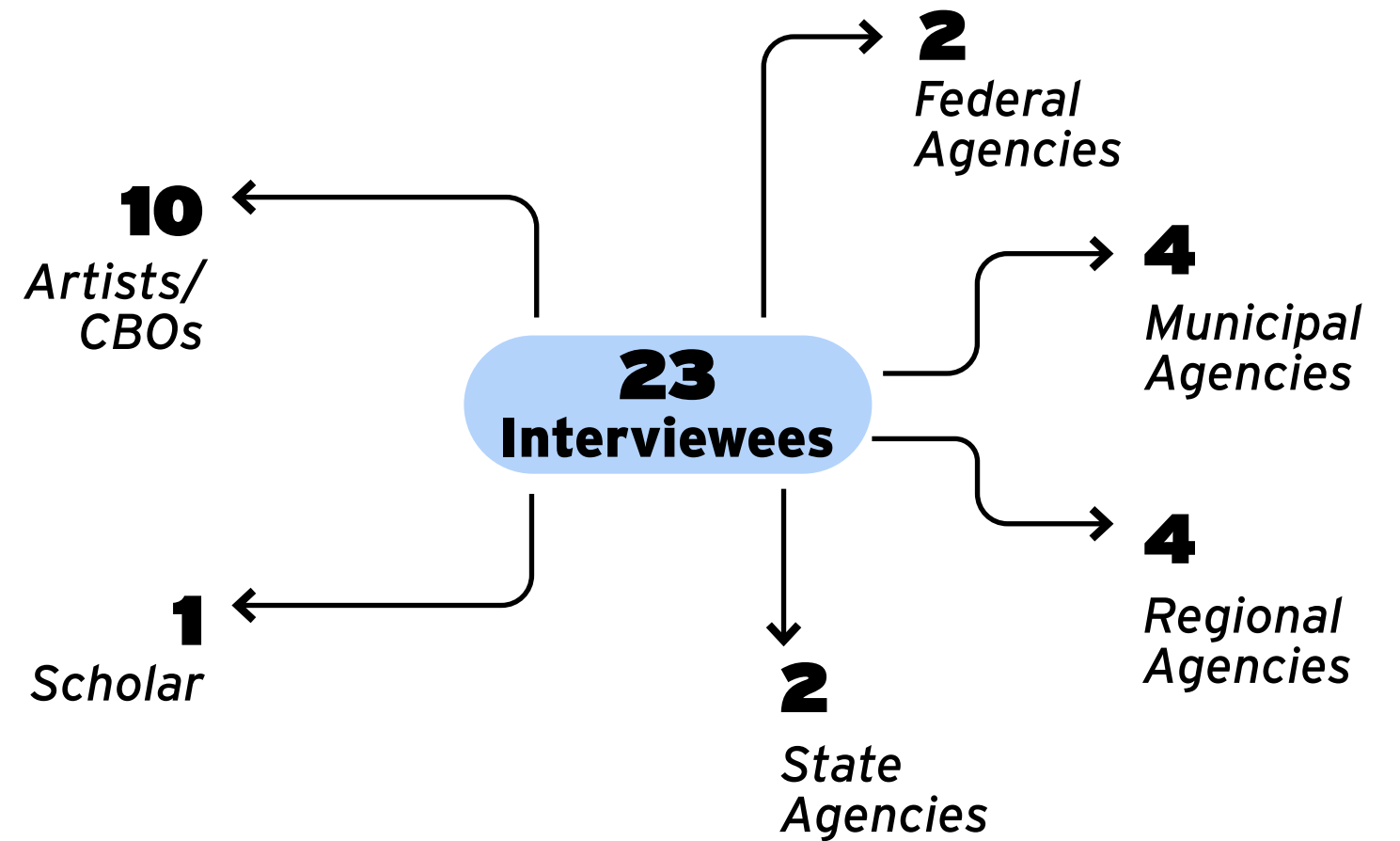


**LA County Arts Report: Cultural
Equity & Inclusion Initiative
(Apr. 2017)**



**Atlanta Beltline Annual
Report (2023)**

INTERVIEW SUMMARY



RESEARCH CATEGORIES



**Program Overview
+ Purpose**



**Program
Development**



**Program Operations
+ Resources**



**Administration
+ Agreements**



**Community
Engagement**



Program Evaluation



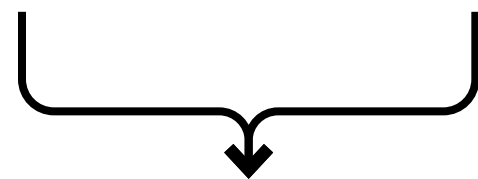
**How this project
advances Equity +
Belonging**



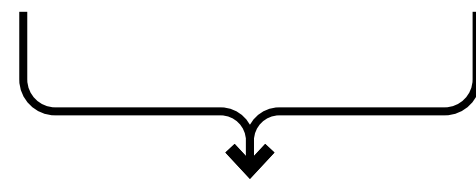
**Key Challenges
+ Assets**

ART + GOVERNMENT

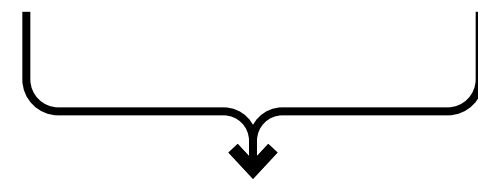
Our research revealed a spectrum of program models in which governments are working with artists to foster a sense of belonging in public spaces and advance equity goals.



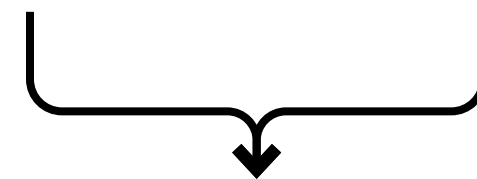
**UNSANCTIONED
ART: LOOK THE
OTHER WAY**



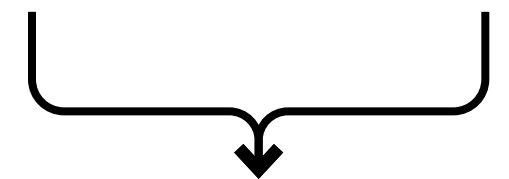
**CULTURAL
STRATEGIES +
POLICIES**



**OPERATING +
FUNDING PROGRAMS
(ART, COMMUNITY,
ETC.)**



**ARTIST IN
RESIDENCE
PROGRAMS**



**EQUITABLE
DEVELOPMENT
INITIATIVES; ARTISTS
IN LEADERSHIP;
INCUBATORS**

CASE STUDIES OVERVIEW



ALLOW PLAN FOR SUPPORT EMBED CO-CREATE

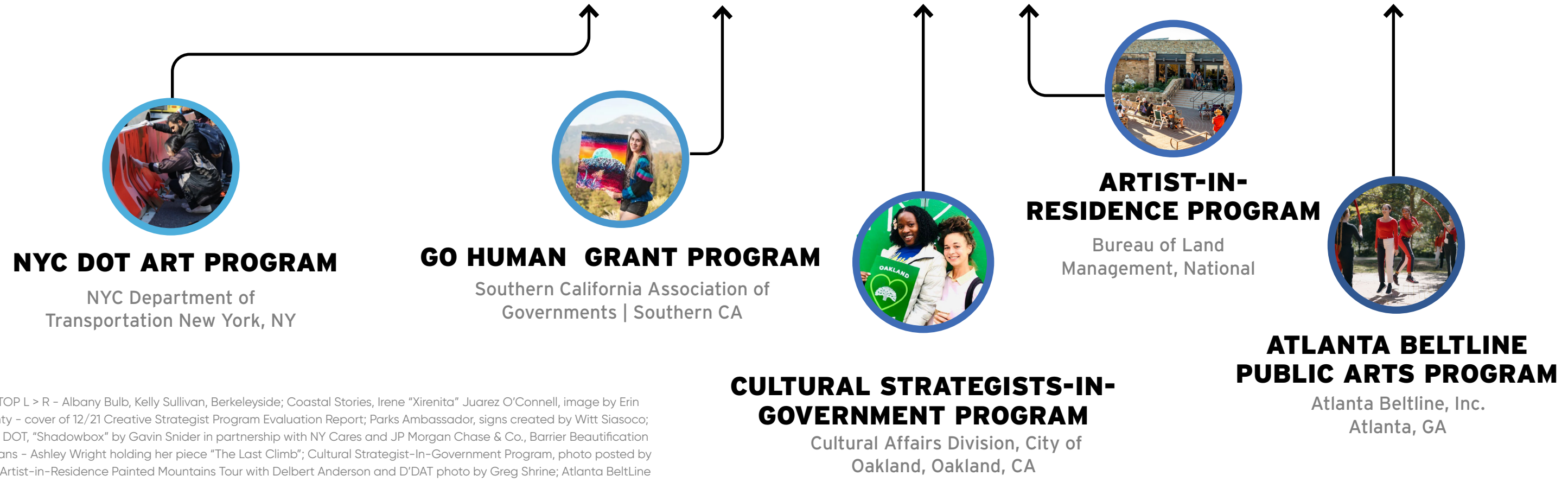


IMAGE SOURCES | TOP L > R - Albany Bulb, Kelly Sullivan, Berkeleyside; Coastal Stories, Irene "Xirenita" Juarez O'Connell, image by Erin Lory CWC; LA County - cover of 12/21 Creative Strategist Program Evaluation Report; Parks Ambassador, signs created by Witt Siasoco; BOTTOM L > R - NYC DOT, "Shadowbox" by Gavin Snider in partnership with NY Cares and JP Morgan Chase & Co., Barrier Beautification (2018); SCAG GoHumans - Ashley Wright holding her piece "The Last Climb"; Cultural Strategist-In-Government Program, photo posted by @azhiablackgrl; BLM Artist-in-Residence Painted Mountains Tour with Delbert Anderson and D'DAT photo by Greg Shrine; Atlanta BeltLine dance performance by Nadya Zeitlin, photo via Atlanta BeltLine website

ALBANY BULB ART

Location: Albany, CA

Agency: City of Albany

Interviewees:

- »» Jeff Bond, Community Development Director
- »» Julia Price, Program and Volunteer Coordinator at Love the Bulb

»» **ALLOW**

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Mad Mark's Castle, Photo by Peter Merts, <https://www.michaeljohngrist.com/>

Overview + Purpose

- Albany Bulb is a former landfill, now a well-used public space
- People have been making informal art from discarded materials there since the landfill ceased operations in 1984, and the site is now a haven for unsanctioned art
- Artists span from well-known people to those who are anonymous and experiencing homelessness
- The antithesis of a formal art program, the Bulb is a place where creativity runs free

Program Development

- “Low touch” approach to unsanctioned art is in part the result of multiple factors including complex jurisdictional boundaries and geographic isolation of the site
- Efforts to change/streamline jurisdiction galvanized community support of the informal art there
- Recent planning efforts have more formally recognized the site as a public space asset, including recognition of the need to preserve the tradition of public art to maintain the site’s character
- New community group “Love the Bulb” acts as advocate and nurtures informal art and nature-based programming

Program Operations + Resources

- City, East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) and State do not have any formal art programming for the site
- Love the Bulb efforts are fueled on a small scale through grants from several foundations, but organization remains entirely volunteer-run

ALBANY BULB CONT.



Administration + Agreements

- Both the City and EBRPD conduct routine maintenance
- No formal maintenance of the art, save for removing unsafe works
- Love the Bulb engages in volunteer-led clean-ups, etc.
- Unkempt, gritty character is embraced



Community Engagement

- Outreach primarily conducted during City of Albany Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan (2022), as well as “transition plan” effort for the Bulb (2016)
- Current approach to allowing art to stay in place aligns with community desires
- Love the Bulb encourages visitors to advocate for the Bulb, resulting in numerous recommendations in recent plans for art programming



Program Evaluation

- N/A - Informal/Emerging



Equity + Belonging

- Anyone can make art here to express themselves
- Bulb is viewed as a unique and endangered “wild” space
- Bulb’s body of art is a never-ending collaborative project between artists and members of the community from all walks of life



Photo above by Dapper Dan 9 (Atlas Obscura User)



Key Challenges + Assets

- History as a former dumping ground created unique conditions that have allowed the site to flourish into an eccentric community space
- Concerns that as erosion occurs, it could uncover hazardous materials that are at risk of being carried into the Bay. This may make major site interventions necessary, which would impact art, among other things

“Love the Bulb is a non-profit organization that builds community and supports Bay Area art and performance by celebrating and protecting a unique outdoor space for the human imagination. We are dedicated to preserving the creative spirit of the Albany Bulb landfill, to enhancing this inclusive cultural zone for all people, and to protecting its rich natural habitats.”

- Love the Bulb Mission Statement, Love the Bulb Website

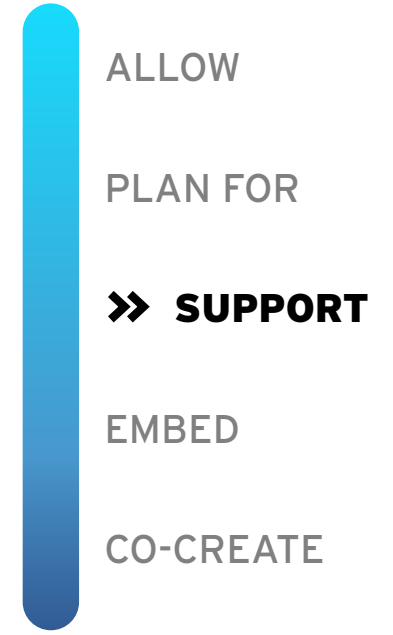
COASTAL STORIES GRANT PROGRAM

Location: California (Statewide)

Agency: California State Coastal Conservancy (SCC)

Interviewees:

- » Shalini Kannan, Project Manager & Tribal Liaison
- » Erica Johnson, Project Manager



Above: The Tlaloc storm drain mural in Beach Flats Park by artist Irene Juarez O'Connell, sourced from coastal-watershed.org

Overview + Purpose

- Program seeks to foster inclusivity and belonging in outdoor spaces through storytelling
- Grants fund projects that implement storytelling installations representing communities whose stories and perspectives have been historically excluded
- Tribes, nonprofit organizations, and public agencies are given grants of up to \$175,000 to implement projects that add storytelling and interpretive elements to public spaces

Program Development

- Coastal Stories grew out of the Conservancy's Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) staff committee, which was established in 2017 to address inequities in the grantmaking process, improve community engagement, and increase staff diversity
- JEDI Guidelines included a push to fund more programs and projects that increase equity and environmental justice throughout the coast
- Internal Committee developed program was a way to promote inclusive coastal access and fund more community-based work led by BIPOC people
- Program embedded as a key tactic in Strategic Plan for 2023 through 2027

Program Operations + Resources

- Funding identified from existing resources (ex: bond funding streams for "interpretive exhibits" and "educational exhibits"; general fund community engagement, etc)
- 2024 cycle will be the last round of grants SCC undertakes until more funding is found
- No dedicated program manager, as staffing is distributed to regional project managers
- Program has evolved to get more applications that align with goals (ex: seeking physical interventions on trails, not podcasts)

COASTAL STORIES GRANT PROGRAM CONT.



Administration + Agreements

- Program requires a partnership between a community based organization or Tribe and the landowner
- Grantees responsible for acquiring permits and permissions
- Program does not provide administrative assistance for permitting
- Maintenance terms vary depending on project lifespan, but program does not fund long-term/ongoing maintenance



Community Engagement

- Project criteria require strong community engagement
- Most of the grantees are led by BIPOC applicants or are partnered with historically excluded communities to co-create the project



Program Evaluation

- Too early for annual evaluation reports (program is very young)
- Number and diversity of partner organizations viewed as key metric
- Program viewed as a tool to advance SCC's equity goals



Above: Coastal Stories funded Mural in Maywood, Los Angeles. Photo: Agua por Vida



Equity + Belonging

- Priority is given to projects that serve disadvantaged communities
- Strong emphasis on partnerships with tribes/indigenous stakeholders
- Project expressly works to elevate stories of underrepresented communities



Key Challenges + Assets

- Administering large grants to smaller CBOs admittedly has its challenges.
- Grant requirements can be hard for smaller CBOs to meet
- Cash flow: grant is dispersed in reimbursements
- Maintenance terms set by funding source (bond laws) can be hard for CBOs to meet in some cases

NYC DOT ART PROGRAM

Location: New York, NY

Agency: NYC Department of Transportation (NYC DOT)

Interviewees:

- Jaclyn Whitney, Director of Digital Communications and Public Art
- Angelik Vizcarrondo-Laboy, Director of NYC DOT Art
- Leah Rosofsky, Project Manager, NYC DOT Art
- Vanesa Álvarez Díaz, Artist
- Talisa Almonte, Artist

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"Union with the Universe" by Vanesa Álvarez Díaz; In partnership with Union Square Partnership, Arterventions (2023)

Overview + Purpose

- Since 2008, NYC DOT Art has programmed over 450 temporary art installations across all five boroughs.
- NYC DOT Art Founding Goals: Create attractive corridors, activate public space, promote healthy lifestyle, build community partnerships.

Program Development

- Sustainable Streets Strategic Plan pushed for improved transportation policy (2008) and included recommendations on how to enliven streets.
- NYC DOT Art emerged as part of the large-scale effort to make New York's streets more vibrant and inviting.

Program Operations + Resources

- Program enables temporary art installed by artists in partnership with CBOs. Art is permitted for up to 11 months.
- NYC DOT Art funds various programs via Community Commissions, Asphalt Art Activations, and Bike Barrier Beautification, and also offers permit opportunities for self-funded projects.
- RFPs and RFQs issued throughout the year for asphalt art, site-specific artwork, and special event installations.

NYC DOT ART PROGRAM CONT.



Administration + Agreements

- Partner organizations maintain artwork throughout its display period when self-funded.
- Maintenance requirements can be challenging for smaller or new organizations.



Community Engagement

- Partnerships are viewed as a core part of Community Engagement - there's a major effort to reach more communities and new partners every year.
- Community input shapes site selection and project development.



Program Evaluation

- Outcomes tracked are posted on NYC Open Data.
- Staff want to better visualize key takeaways and impact metrics and find standardized ways to quantify the impact.



"Vivid Chroma Locomotion" by Andrea von Bujdoss (Queen Andrea) in partnership with Projectivity Group, Community Commissions (2019)



Equity + Belonging

- Program aims to provide broader access to the arts citywide, viewing increasing access to art as a central component of equity in the program.
- Program unlocks new partnerships between artists, CBOs and NYC DOT.



Key Challenges + Assets

- Major support across all corners of NYC DOT is an asset.
- Requirement to hold liability insurance can be limiting for partners.
- Partner organizations may have difficulty identifying an artist to partner with for self-funded projects.

NYC DOT ART PROGRAM CONT.

Program Overview



"Unparallel Way" by Emily Weiskopf in partnership with Old Stone House, Arterventions (2013)



"Back to Essence" by Marka27 in partnership with DUMBO BID and Street Theory Gallery, Arterventions (2021)



"Los Tropos (Spinning Tops)" by Héctor Esrawe and Ignacio Cadena



"Unity" by Hank Willis Thomas (photo: NY Times)

Temporary Art Program

Works installed by artists in partnership with community based non-profit organizations

NYC DOT-Funded Initiatives

- »» Community Commissions
- »» Asphalt Art Activations
- »» Barrier Beautification
- »» Special Projects

Self-Funded Initiatives

- »» Arterventions

Responsibility: NYC DOT Art funds a number of initiatives but also offers permit opportunities for self-funded projects

Areas of focus: sidewalks, fences, triangles, medians, bridges, jersey barriers, step streets, public plazas, and pedestrianized spaces

Common art types: murals, projections, sculptures

Permit length: up to 11 months on NYC DOT property

Application: Open call submission (NYC DOT-funded) and applications on a rolling basis (Self-funded)

Applications reviewed by the NYC DOT Art Advisory Committee (consisting of a group of outside arts professionals)

Criteria: public safety, artistic merit, site suitability and artwork durability

Public Art at NYC DOT Events

Interactive public art installation commissioned by NYC DOT

Responsibility: NYC DOT is responsible for hosting events and may support during installation

Areas of focus: Designated NYC DOT-hosted event route

Permit length: Artwork to be removed post event hours

Application: Open call submission

Criteria: public safety, proposal merit, and event suitability

Permanent Art Collection

Permanent public art commissioned by NYC DOT in collaboration with NYC DCLA dictated by the Percent for Art ordinance

Responsibility: NYC DOT responsible for managing and maintaining its permanent art collection

NYC DOT ART PROGRAM CONT.

Temporary Art Program Detail - NYC DOT-Funded Initiatives



Asphalt Art Activations
by Ansley Randall (2022)



"Shadowbox" by Gavin Snider in partnership with NY Cares and JP Morgan Chase & Co., Barrier Beautification (2018)



"We Call This Place Home" by Chat Travieso and Sam Holleran (2016)



"I am Here at Bay Street and Victory Boulevard, Staten Island" by Harumi Ori, in partnership with Staten Island MakerSpace, Community Commissions (2017)

Asphalt Art Activations

NYC DOT partners with artists to paint murals on pedestrianized asphalt street space

Applicant: Artist

Responsibility: Partner organization and artist, NYC DOT-Funded up to \$20,000

Areas of focus: Designated by NYC DOT - Curb extensions, slip lane closures, bike share stations, plazas, or other fully pedestrianized areas

Permit length: Up to 11 months

Application: Biennial open call to artists to submit application for consideration for future asphalt art opportunities

Barrier Beautification

NYC DOT partners with artists to paint murals onto jersey barriers located along bike lanes and sidewalks

Applicant: Artist

Responsibility: NYC DOT-Funded, artist; NYC DOT may provide support during installation

Areas of focus: Jersey barriers on NYC DOT assigned site

Permit length: Up to 11 months

Application: Open call to artists to submit application to enter artist registry for consideration for future jersey barrier opportunities

Special Projects

NYC DOT Art commissions temporary art interventions on NYC DOT property to compliment street improvement projects and other agency priority initiatives

Responsibility: NYC DOT-Funded

Areas of focus: Street improvement projects on NYC DOT property

Permit length: Up to 11 months

Application: by commission

Community Commissions

Community-driven, site-responsive art with a preselected partner organization on NYC DOT infrastructure citywide

Applicant: Partner Organization and Artist

Responsibility: Partner organization maintains, NYC DOT-funded; may include engineering support for sculptural installations

Areas of focus: Partner organizations identify NYC DOT-owned property

Permit length: Up to 11 months

Application: Open call released in partnership with community partners followed by one for artists

NYC DOT ART PROGRAM CONT.

Temporary Art Program Detail - Self-Funded Initiatives



"Highbridge Flower" by Laura Alvarez in partnership with the Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation (WHEDco) (2019)

Arterventions

NYC DOT partners with professional artists, galleries, business improvement districts and arts, community-based and other nonprofit organizations to commission artwork or relocate existing artwork currently on exhibit in a gallery, alternative art space or in a storage facility to NYC DOT-owned property

Applicant: Artist & Organization

Responsibility: Partner-Funded (proposal of site and design/installation)

Areas of focus: NYC DOT property, proposed by applicant

Permit length: 3-6 months on average, depending on site; up to 11 months

Permit procedure: Applications accepted on a rolling basis



source: nyc_dotart instagram
Photo Credit Jane Kratochvil
"Flowing Together" by Talisa Almonte in partnership with Union Square Partnership, Arterventions (2024)

GO HUMAN GRANT PROGRAM

Location: Southern California

Agency: Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG)

Interviewees:

- Rachel Om, AICP
- Andrés Carrasquillo
- Additionally, we watched several recommended videos from grantees and project partners talking about their specific projects and what they achieved

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Photo by Omar Ornelas

Overview + Purpose

- *Go Human* program advances traffic safety by providing resources and technical assistance to local jurisdictions/CBOs
- Community grant program provides funding to community-based organizations to implement traffic safety projects that target structural issues that affect the safety of people walking and biking. There have been 6 funding rounds since 2018. In this most recent round in 2024, SCAG provided awards up to \$30,000.
- Though not directly arts-based, is a model for CBO and regional government collaboration.

Program Development

- *Go Human* was developed as the result of a 2014 resolution that was adopted by the SCAG Regional Council to address the region's growing rate of bicycle/pedestrian deaths and injuries.
- *Go Human* began as an advertising campaign, and grew to a suite of resources, including community grants.
- Community Streets Grant Program, explicitly but not exclusively supports projects that prioritize outcomes for low-income families and communities of color that are most harmed by traffic injuries.
- SCAG's 2021 Racial Equity Early Action Plan identified *Go Human* grant program as a key tool.
- SCAG has since written many *Go Human* strategies into the agency's RTP/SCS to embed this approach.

Program Operations + Resources

- Funding primarily from grants: California Active Transportation Program (ATP), California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS), and SS4A
- Strong funder relationships have led to repeat grants
- Project proposals are evaluated using five selection criteria: impact, equity and justice, engagement, feasibility, and cost-effectiveness.

GO HUMAN GRANT PROGRAM CONT.



Administration + Agreements

- Awardees typically have between 10-12 weeks to implement projects, but this is dependent on funding sources/rounds
- Awardees must provide Mid-Project Update and a Final Report
- Insurance requirements and reimbursement-based grant can be hard for some CBOs



Community Engagement

- Core of every project is community engagement
- Many awardee projects give residents the opportunity to inform street improvements in their neighborhoods. Many involve audits, charrettes, etc.



Program Evaluation

- Awardee final reports are compiled into program-scale impact report
- All reports posted online for public review
- Staff apply for funding each year, provides a chance for evaluation



Source: Provided by SCAG staff



Equity + Belonging

- Program is intrinsically tied to advancing equity goals
- By supporting community-based organizations in implementing their own strategies, the program builds community leadership locally



Key Challenges + Assets

- Strong policy foundation
- Challenges around lack of dedicated funding stream and restrictions on what funding can be used for

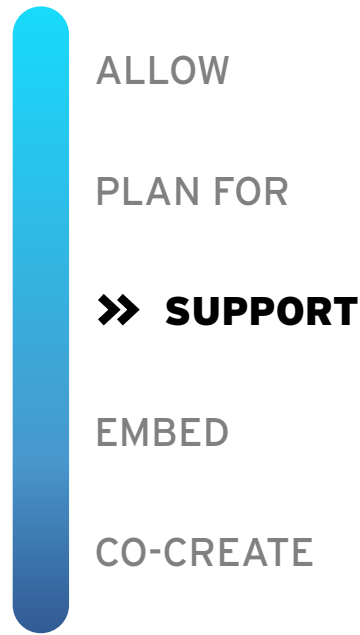
ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE PROGRAM

Location: National

Agency: Bureau of Land Management

Interviewees:

- » BLM Staff (Federal) - Greg Shine, National Interpretation Program Lead & National Artist-in-Residence Program Coordinator
- » BLM Staff (Site) - Kathy Torrence, Black Rock Desert National Conservation Area
- » Artists: Madeleine Grace Kelly; Lisa Rock; Courtney Sennish



Above: Lewis Williams paints Razorback Ridge, a prominent feature within the Black Rock Desert NCA

Overview + Purpose

• **How it works:**

- » National BLM agency provides program framework, from within Division of Recreation & Visitor Services (program is considered an Interpretive element)
- » All program management, resource allocation, and interpretation happens at the local level by participating BLM field offices
- **Purpose:** The program engages artists as Interpretive partners. The residency provides artists with an opportunity to engage with their public lands through art and creative practice, with the goal of promoting a deeper understanding of, and dialogue about, the significance of public lands managed by the BLM

Program Development

- Overhaul in 2021 reinvigorated program after a period of struggle due to staffing challenges and loss of institutional knowledge
- Program was rebuilt using:
 - » A specific opportunity to bring a Native American jazz trumpeter to BLM sites
 - » Collaborations with the BLM legal team to determine the best agreement frameworks

Program Operations + Resources

- Interpretation Lead provides framework and tools
- All management, resource allocation, and interpretation happens at the local level

ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE PROGRAM CONT.

Administration + Agreements

- Artists are volunteers
- Federal OF-301a Volunteer Service Agreement serves as the primary legal document memorializing the artist and agency relationship

Community Engagement

- Program is viewed as a rare chance for BLM to engage with community in a deeper way vs responding to complaints/maintenance issues
- Artists lead project-specific community engagement work

Program Evaluation

- Minimal - primary goal is documenting what local sites are doing and expanding how many BLM sites participate

Equity + Belonging

- Some eras of the program have had a strong equity mandate, with focus on indigenous populations
- Equity priorities change with federal administration and are unpredictable



Above: Photo of artist Delbert Anderson event, provided by Greg Shine of BLM

Key Challenges + Assets

- Distributed/"opt in" program for local sites makes it possible for federal agency to host a program of this nature
- Lack of dedicated resources may limit how many local sites can/want to participate
- Awareness of the program is growing but not yet widespread; scalability is unique to each site and can be challenging at new sites

"The program is founded on a belief that artists have unique observational skills, which allow them to look closely at the way the world works, notice things others may have missed, challenge ideas, and experiment. The program encourages artists to use these observational skills to portray the diverse cultural and natural resources on BLM lands, including geological features, plant and animal life, historic structures, artifacts, cultural landscapes, and more."

- BLM program website and staff interview

CULTURAL STRATEGISTS-IN-GOVERNMENT PROGRAM

Location: Oakland, CA

Agency: Economic and Workforce Development Department - Cultural Affairs Division

Interviewee:

➤➤ Vanessa Whang, Senior Program Consultant

Program Type: Cultural Strategists-In-Government, aka CSIGs (residence program)

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Sample program photos, provided by Vanessa Whang

🎯 Overview + Purpose

- The CSIG Program goal is to advance transformational change in City government through a cultural equity lens and build a more fair and just city for all Oaklanders.
- Cultural Strategists play a role different from typical artists-in-residence: not expected to create an artistic product, they serve as thought partners with the city, who use their skills and perspectives to foster equity and belonging in the policy-making process.

⚙️ Program Development

- CSIG Program was one of two pilot initiatives launched as the first implementation steps of the city's cultural development plan plan, "Belonging in Oakland" (2018), that has equity as its driving force.
- Program sought to highlight the role of culture in all city government policies and practices, and the need for embedding diverse perspectives to "operationalize belonging."
- Plan included a specific recommendation for the Cultural Affairs Division to create the program in 2019 with city funding.

🛠️ Program Operations + Resources

- Phase 1: 6 CSIGs in 5 city entities, funded via one-time appropriation (CSIGs received \$10,000 in fees and a small stipend for expenses)
- Phase 2: Partnership with Oakland Fund for Public Innovation to secure \$900,000 grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Grant enabled CSIGs in 11 city offices with higher stipends. (CSIGs received \$40,000 and up to \$8,000 for materials)
- Phase 3 launched in 2024, supported via grant of \$500,000 through the Bay Area Creative Corps (CSIGs will receive \$50,000)
- Start-up program design and staffing provided by interviewee Vanessa Whang, Senior Program Consultant

CULTURAL STRATEGISTS-IN-GOVERNMENT PROGRAM CONT.

Residence in Government Cont.



Administration + Agreements

- Scope determined by host agency and Strategists collaboratively
- Typically a 12-18 months with CSIGs working around 400 hours on their project, depending on the timeframe and scope (not a full time position)
- Compensation varies each year based on resources



Community Engagement

- Cultural Strategist projects are centered around expanding civic engagement and building trust between residents and government.
- Ex: Cultural Strategist used a community-based inquiry process to uncover experiences of BIPOC vendors at Lake Merritt, which led to greater vendor voice in city policymaking around outdoor vending.



Program Evaluation

- No formal evaluation framework, rather qualitative documentation.



Equity + Belonging

- Program purpose connects CSIG scope to Oakland's equity goals.
- CSIGs have roots/networks within historically marginalized communities, and their projects are informed by these perspectives.



Key Challenges + Assets

- Funding has helped the program grow, but consistent funding is a struggle
- Lack of dedicated, adequately-resourced staffing is an issue



Sample program photos, provided by Vanessa Whang

"... my project was set up for success because my City partners gave me a lot of trust and transparency from the beginning. "

- Cycle 2 Strategist

CREATIVE STRATEGIST PROGRAM

Location: Los Angeles County, CA

Agency: Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture

Interviewees:

- » Kim Glann (she/her), Sr. Manager, Cross Sector Initiatives
- » Clement Hanami, Japanese-American artist and program participant

Program Type: Creative Strategist in Residence, operated at County level

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Above: Sandra de la Loza's Creating Connections, via lacountyarts Flickr

Overview + Purpose

- Brings creative professionals into County Departments to “work alongside staff, project partners, and community stakeholders in a collaborative process to develop, strategize, promote, and implement artist-driven solutions to complex social challenges.”
- Creative Strategist helps implement the host department’s equity work.

Program Development

- Program enabled by a strong and layered policy foundation, which has provided an implementation mandate and bedrock of resources.
- Program initially grew out of the LA County Cultural Equity and Inclusion Initiative (CEII) which included direct mandate to create and pilot the program (including resource allocation)
- Additional policy supports have included Countywide Cultural Policy and the County’s Anti-Racism, Diversity, & Inclusion Initiative
- Program is now widely viewed as a tool to implement cross organizational policy goals

Program Operations + Resources

- Program Management provided via 50% FTE commitment balanced with other duties, and one part time support staffer
- Year one funding was \$235,000 to facilitate two paid Creative Strategist positions, with mandates to grow resources and headcount for several years over time

CREATIVE STRATEGIST PROGRAM CONT.



Administration + Agreements

- Creative Strategists are viewed as consultants (AB5 compliant)
- \$50,000 for time, up to \$25,000 for materials
- Scope created with host agency at the start of the residency



Community Engagement

- Project Specific and Artist Led
- Ex: Clement Hamani vision zero workshops



Program Evaluation

- Initial motion authorizing program created mandate for evaluation
- Fellow from American Council of Learned Societies developed framework
- Theory of Change graphic as emerged as a significant asset



Equity + Belonging

- Program is intricately connected to equity policy goals at both the county wide and host agency level.
- Program is viewed as key tool in implementing the County's Anti-Racism, Diversity, & Inclusion Initiative and complementary policies



Above photo by Monica Almeida



Key Challenges + Assets

- Strong policy mandate, and well-resourced
- Unrealistic expectations: "transformational change" can't happen in 1 yr
- Significant investment needed up front with host agency and CSIG
- Follow-up/scaling up of best practices has proved challenging

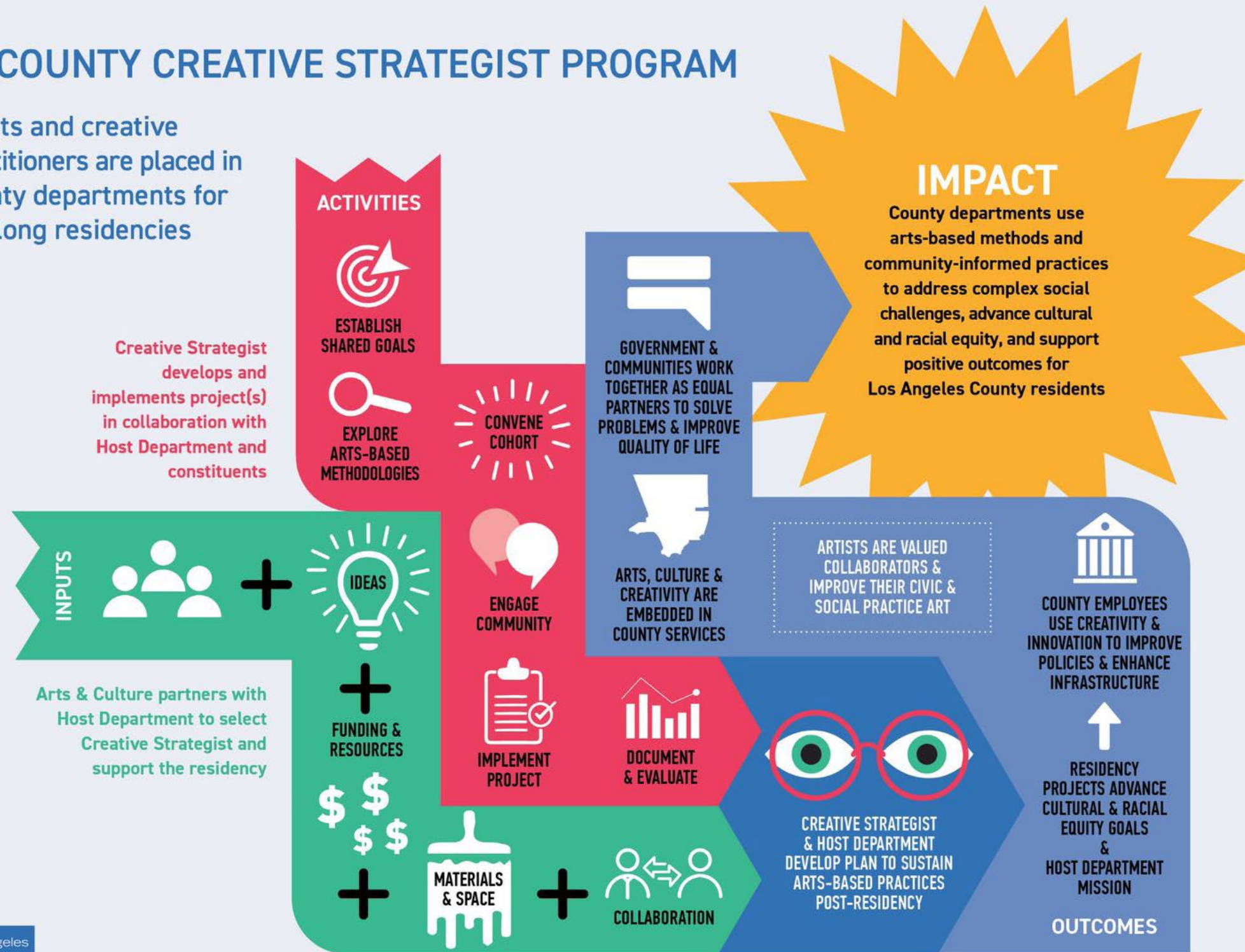
"...most of the creative strategists spent a significant amount of time early in the residency expanding the view of their how departments form thinking about art products to thinking about art as a process that could help them achieve their mission."

- Creative Strategist Program Evaluation Report (Dec 2021)

CREATIVE STRATEGIST PROGRAM CONT.

LA COUNTY CREATIVE STRATEGIST PROGRAM

Artists and creative practitioners are placed in County departments for yearlong residencies



lacountyarts.org/CreativeStrategist
Cultural Equity & Inclusion Initiative

Theory of Change

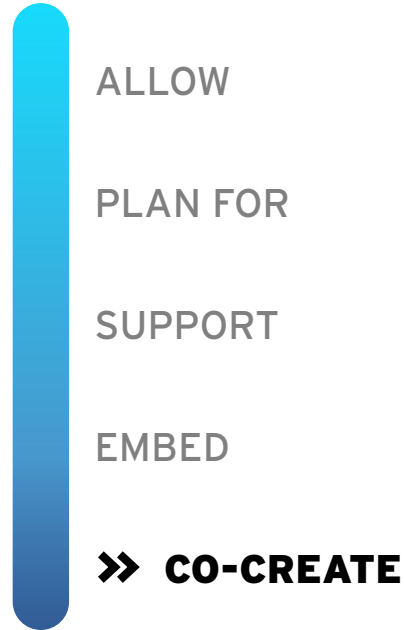
PARKS AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

Location: Twin Cities metropolitan region, MN

Agency: The Metropolitan Council

Interviewees:

- » Amanda Lovelee, Parks Ambassador at the Metropolitan Council
- » Witt Siasoco, Artist



Above: Tree Hugger project for Met Council by Witt Siasoco in collaboration with Amanda Lovelee. Image by Mae Hanzlik, Smart Growth America

Overview + Purpose

- Program’s goal is to ensure that all residents know about and feel welcome using the region’s world-class parks and trails system.
- Met Council created a dedicated position for a Parks Ambassador: a senior-level outreach coordinator who would focus on advancing equity and access in regional parks and trails.
- A local artist with deep experience in community practice and government collaborations was hired for the role.

Program Development

- Parks Ambassador Program was born out of the Thrive MSP 2040 long range plan
- Plan identified that a key barrier to regional park use was lack of awareness.
- Parks Ambassador Program is a direct effort to address lack of awareness.

Program Operations + Resources

- Program run by full time staff position - Met Council chose to hire an artist vs traditional planner role despite job description originally calling for traditional planning skill set
- Parks Ambassador leads collaborative projects that meet the broad goal of ensuring that all residents know about and feel welcome and comfortable using the region’s world-class parks and trails system.
- Many projects have involved deep partnerships between artists, communities, and partner agencies. Parks Ambassador must work closely through partnerships with the 10 regional park implementing agencies
- Funding for individual projects has varied greatly, depending on the scope and focus. Funding identified via existing line items at partner organizations.

PARKS AMBASSADOR PROGRAM CONT.



Administration + Agreements

- Approaches vary by project scope/focus and host agency requirements
- There is great value in having an artist in the program manager role, because they understand the artist perspective and can scope agreements and administrative processes accordingly
- Significant effort placed on acknowledging artist's contributions, including clear expectations for credit, use of images, etc.



Community Engagement

- Program itself is a direct response to community needs/feedback
- Individual projects are specifically developed with local stakeholders and CBOs using varied engagement tactics



Program Evaluation

- Existence of program is tracked as an outcome/metric from Thrive MPS 2040
- Minimal public information available about program impact or evaluation



Image: Nature Connector bus wrap designed by Greta McLain (GoodSpace Murals), sourced via <https://metro council.org/>



Equity + Belonging

- Intentional focus on engaging underrepresented communities.
- Aim is to build authentic relationships and trust to encourage use of the regional parks system and build support for its future.
- Engages artist as an "inside agent" in key staff role



Key Challenges + Assets

- Major goal of the program is building trust . Building trust takes time! Impossible to see results right away.
- Time is required to prepare other key partners involved in any specific project effort: artists and agencies don't always speak the same language, and there is a significant role for the Parks Ambassador in translating between the two parties to make a great project idea into a reality.

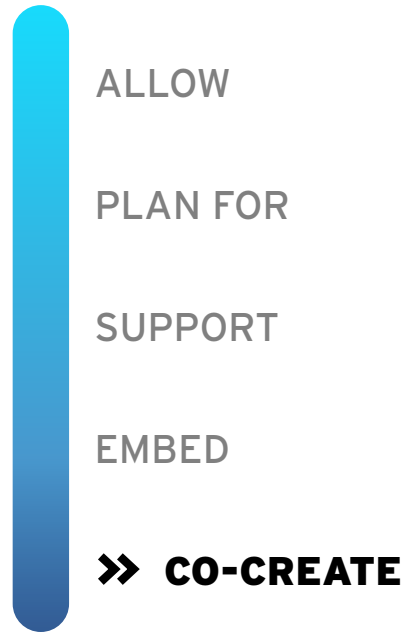
ATLANTA BELTLINE PUBLIC ARTS PROGRAM

Location: Atlanta, GA

Agency: Atlanta Beltline, Inc. (City of Atlanta's implementation agency); and Atlanta BeltLine Partnership (nonprofit organization)

Interviewees: Atlanta BeltLine staff were unavailable for interview despite numerous attempts. We were able to interview:

- »» Nedra Deadwyler, Scholar in Residence 2020
- »» Miranda Kyle, Former Chief Curator, Arts & Culture Program Manager, ABI



Mural by Drew Borders, The Fates

Overview + Purpose

- Program Types: Public Art, Residencies, Incubators
- Public Arts Programming is part of the overarching Atlanta BeltLine project, which seeks to sustainably redevelop the railroad corridor that formerly encircled the city of Atlanta (transit, housing, and more)
- Two-part organizational leadership: Atlanta BeltLine Partnerships (ABP) and Atlanta BeltLine, Inc. (ABI) - ABI manages land acquisition, design, and construction for infrastructure
- The program fosters artistic development of the careers of artists at every level from all over the world with a special focus on local, underrepresented communities
- “Bringing the gallery and the museum to the people” is a key goal
- Three types of residency tracks (artist, curator, scholar)
- Two types of incubators: local businesses, artists

Program Development

- Art on the Atlanta BeltLine began as a way to encourage people to use the Atlanta BeltLine trail while it was in an interim state
- The strategic spacing of art encouraged people to move along the trail
- Program began with an annual exhibit for 60 days and was expanded to 1 year to allow for more inclusion of programming types and expanded exhibition times for under-represented artists
- Today, program touches 45 diverse neighborhoods with unique curatorial approach for each
- Best practice recommendation: map and have a strategy to protect assets before you start any arts programming

Program Operations + Resources

- Arts and Culture programs benefit in a limited way from funding streams of overall redevelopment effort including a Tax Allocation District (TAD)
- Fundraising a huge part of the effort - grants, private investments, etc.
- Typically staffed by dedicated Arts and Culture Program Manager

ATLANTA BELTLINE PUBLIC ARTS PROGRAM CONT.



Administration + Agreements

- Art is temporary for the most part, used for exhibition only
- For artists in residence, BeltLine retains the rights to 1 piece for foundational collection
- Typical residency includes: work space, \$20K stipend for 12 months, access to key archives, resources and people connections



Community Engagement

- Strong effort to engage indigenous communities and hyperlocal neighborhoods along the trail
- Major events draw crowds and engage people citywide (BeltLine After Dark, Lantern Parade)
- Neighborhood outreach includes paint days and other creative partnerships



Photo By John Becker



Program Evaluation

- Major focus on how the program is enriching and reflecting ATL's diverse communities: tracking types and scales of partnerships, demographics of artists (high % women), etc.
- Metrics summarized in Atlanta BeltLine Annual Report (high level)



Equity + Belonging

- BeltLine strives to be an equitable development project at the highest level
- Arts program committed to: democratizing access to art through free exhibitions and events throughout city; providing a platform for artists from under-represented communities; and creating good arts and culture jobs, including paying artists a living wage.
- Incubator programs: (1) BeltLine Business Ventures: Artist Edition; (2) BeltLine Marketplace



Key Challenges + Assets

Assets

- Overarching equity mission and view that arts and culture can implement equity goals
- Two-part organization structure creates ability to buy the land
- Some dedicated funding (TAD)
- Momentum

Challenges

- Maintaining adequate staffing/resources for scale of program
- Challenges with succession/cross training staff
- Grappling with impact the public art program has on the cost of land/real estate: squaring the project's equity-focused mission with the threat (and sometimes reality) of gentrification of arts and culture spaces.

KEY

TAKEN AWAYS

KEY TAKEAWAYS: PROGRAM OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

HOW ARE LEAD AGENCIES ARTICULATING THE “WHY” OF THEIR PROGRAM?

Goal vary by program type, but common program goals include:

- Advancing **equity**
- Expanding **access to arts and culture** (free, outdoors, etc.)
- Improving or **deepening community engagement**
- Catalyzing new and **more diverse partnerships**
- Providing **direct support to artists** and CBOs via opportunities and grants
- Ushering in a **new way of working/doing business** within the agency

WHAT CONTRIBUTES TO SUCCESS?

- **Leadership from land-owning agency**
- **A planning or policy “mandate”** - 6 of the 9 programs reviewed emerged from a planning or policy exercise that provided a foundational directive
- **Program champions at all levels:** staff, executives, elected officials, CBOs
- **Multiple Funding Sources:** Grants, existing line items, operating/general funds
- **Realistic Scoping:** Understanding that the process may be the product, and aligning expectations with resources and staff/artist’s available time
- **Realistic Timelines:** don’t expect to move faster than the speed of trust!
- **Permitting Approach:** Ask “how can we take the heavy lifting off the artist or CBO?”
- **Maintenance:** How long does an item need to be out there? What partners can help?
- **Institutional Knowledge-Sharing:** systems to memorialize and scale best practices

