



Sherman Cultural District

CREATIVE PLACEMAKING REPORT

2020

Foreward

Sherman has much to celebrate! This charming North Texas City is poised to embark on an exciting venture brought to fruition by the culmination of the 2018 Texas Commission on the Arts designation of the Sherman Cultural District and the award of the Our Town Grant from the distinguished National Endowment for the Arts.

The strength of partnership between the City of Sherman, Austin College, business leaders, and community stakeholders, has built a bridge for citizens to embrace art as a unique and vital resource to help shape and reflect Sherman's cultural identity. This important work represents the City's commitment to cultivate community through culture, enhance civic design, promote tourism and economic investment, and bolster a sense of pride in place.

We are pleased to present this document as a tool to help navigate Sherman's vision to incorporate public art into the landscape of everyday life. The goal has been to establish a strategy for the selection of meaningful art projects that create a positive and inclusive place that will bring people together. While building a vibrant downtown through planning and revitalization, the time is ripe to grow a public art program to reinforce and amplify the City's role as a cultural hub and destination in North Texas. It has been an honor for Martha Peters and me to work with you on this project and we look forward to experiencing with you the transformation of Sherman through the lens of public art.

Karen Wiley, President & CEO, Arts Council of Fort Worth

“The Sherman Cultural District is a lively, imaginative, and evolving artistic hub that engages all people in the creative life of the community.”

VISION

SHERMAN CULTURAL DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLAN 2018 - 2023

“The mission of the Sherman Cultural District is to advocate for the arts and artists, improve the built environment, promote arts-based tourism and economic growth, and create opportunities for inclusive cultural and civic engagement with art in all forms.”

MISSION

SHERMAN CULTURAL DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2023

Introduction

In January 2017, Cary Wacker and a group of Austin College students visited the Arts Council of Fort Worth to gain an understanding of the role our organization plays in supporting the arts in Fort Worth. A key interest was the Fort Worth Public Art program, established by City Council in 2001 and managed by the Arts Council. We shared information and ideas over a few hours in our conference room at the Fort Worth Community Arts Center overlooking the Fort Worth Cultural District.

Fast forward to Spring 2020, when Ms. Wacker shared the news of Sherman's new state-designated Cultural District and of the *Focalpoint(!) project*. As a culmination of that effort, we were invited to facilitate a Creative Placemaking Workshop to develop initial recommendations as a starting point for creating a public art plan.

On a tour of the Sherman Cultural District in June 2020, I learned about Kidd-Key College and Conservatory (1892-1935) and came to appreciate just how deeply rooted the arts are in the community. On July 17, 2020, Creative Placemaking Workshop Panelists and community stakeholders discussed types of public art projects and potential locations in and around the Sherman Cultural District. One week later, the Creative Placemaking Workshop was held to generate specific ideas for public art that build upon the Sherman Cultural District Strategic Plan. The community was invited to an informal presentation at the end of the day.

It has been invigorating to engage with a diverse group of citizens and guests with backgrounds in visual art, theater, graphic design, architecture, and planning, along with elected officials, in this process. Clearly, there is all the talent, vision and enthusiasm to establish a successful public art program that will contribute to making the Sherman Cultural District a lively, walkable, entertaining, and artful destination for residents and visitors alike.

Martha Peters, Director of Public Art, Arts Council of Fort Worth

Focalpoint(!)

Community Photography Project | Sherman TX





Online Community Survey

JUNE/JULY 2020

What Attracts You?

1. What attracts you to the Sherman Cultural District?

- 83% Arts Events
- 69% Restaurants
- 68% Festivals
- 58% Art Exhibitions / Art Classes

What Kind of Public Art?

2. What kind of public art would you like to see in the Sherman Cultural District?

83%	Murals
83%	Local Art
68%	Sculpture
58%	Performing Arts

Where?

3. Where within the Sherman Cultural District would you like to see public art?

- 92% Outside Public Buildings
- 83% Exterior Walls of Privately-Owned Buildings
- 81% Landscape or Streetscape Elements
- 75% Inside Public Buildings

Your Role?

4. What role would you like to have in enhancing the Sherman Cultural District?

73%	Attendee
54%	Volunteer
41%	Arts / Culture Organization
37%	Visual Artist

Creative Placemaking Orientation

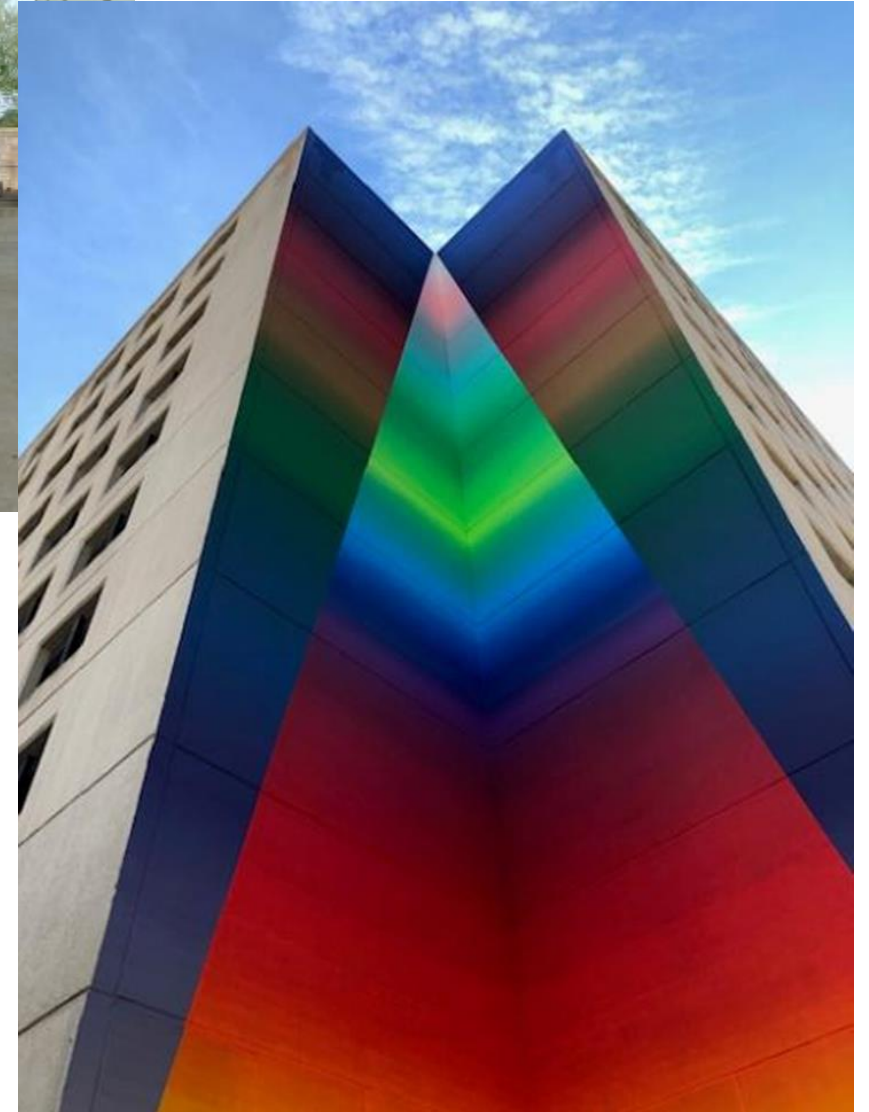
JULY 17, 2020

“Creative placemaking animates public and private spaces, rejuvenates structures and streetscapes, improves local business viability and public safety, and brings diverse people together to celebrate, inspire, and be inspired.”

WHY CREATIVE PLACEMAKING?

Workshop Panelists

- **Phung Banh**, Austin College intern team | psychology & art major (*attended remotely*)
- **Daron Holland**, Holland Logos | and Sherman City Council, District 4
- **Mark Monroe**, Artist | Sculpture Professor, Austin College
- **Ilknur Ozgur**, Artistic Director and Founder, Artstillery, West Dallas
- **Heidi Rushing**, Associate Director of Marketing, Austin College
- **Jared Tredway**, Tredway Workshop | Co-Director, Ghost Town Arts Collective
- **Giovanni Valderas**, Artist | Exhibition Manager, Fort Worth Community Arts Center



Examples of Public Art by Benito Huerta, Anthony Dominguez, Michael Pavlovsky (Fort Worth) and Josef Kristofoletti (Austin)

Discussion Questions:

1. What is your favorite work of public art and what do you like about it?
2. Where do people gather in the Sherman Cultural District?
3. What aspirations do you have for the Sherman Cultural District?
4. What do you want visitors to remember about the Sherman Cultural District?

Community Input

On July 17, 2020, the invited Workshop Participants along with community stakeholders gathered remotely via Zoom to hear about the goals of the Creative Placemaking Workshop and to see examples of various types of public art. The discussion generated themes and indicated preferences that were informative to the participants.

ARTS COUNCIL
OF FORT WORTH

Creative Placemaking Workshop

JULY 24, 2020

“In creative placemaking, partners from public, private, non-profit, and community sectors strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighborhood, town, city, or region around arts and cultural activities.”

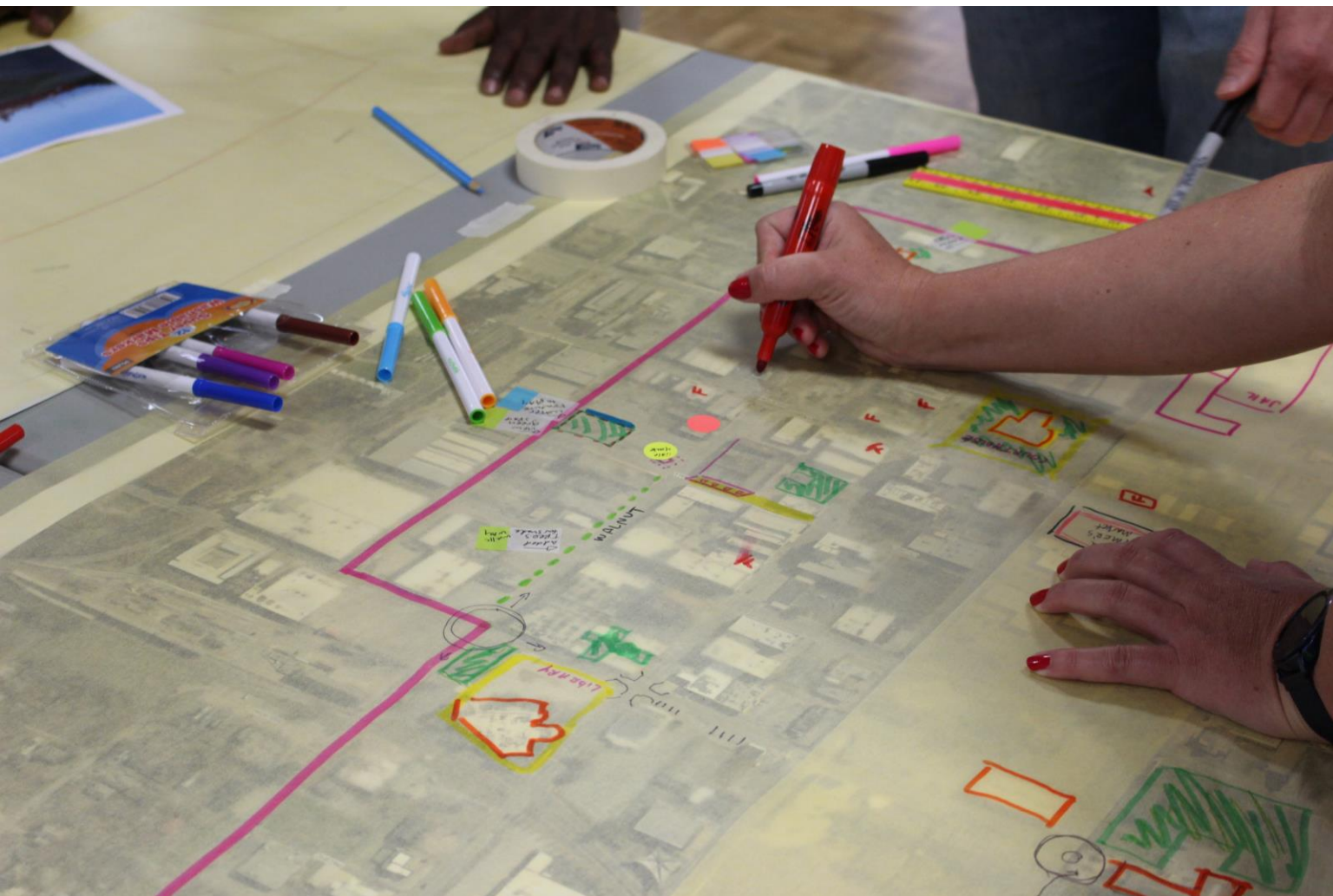
WHAT IS CREATIVE PLACEMAKING?



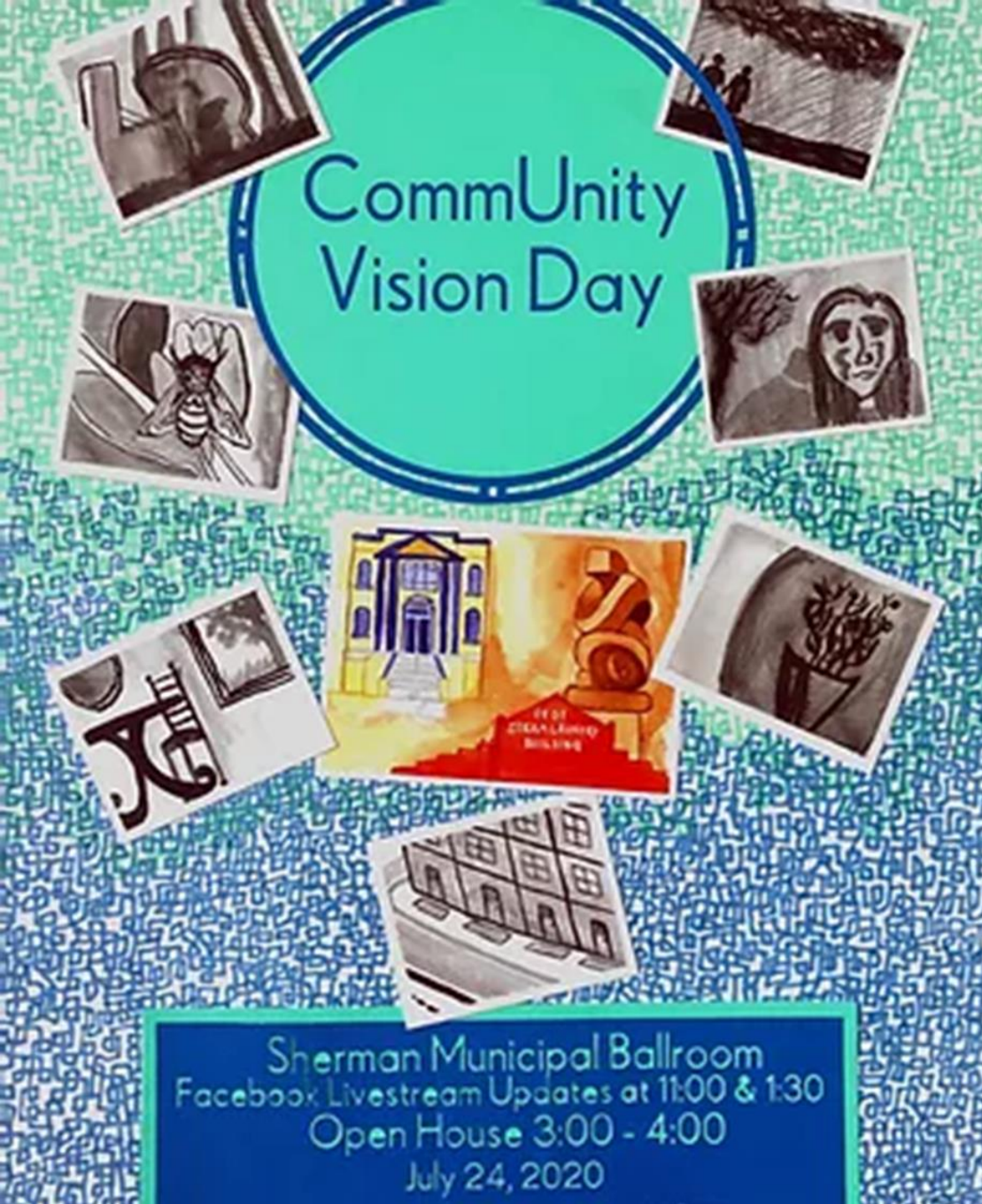
Mapping Cultural Assets



Discussing how public art can create connections...



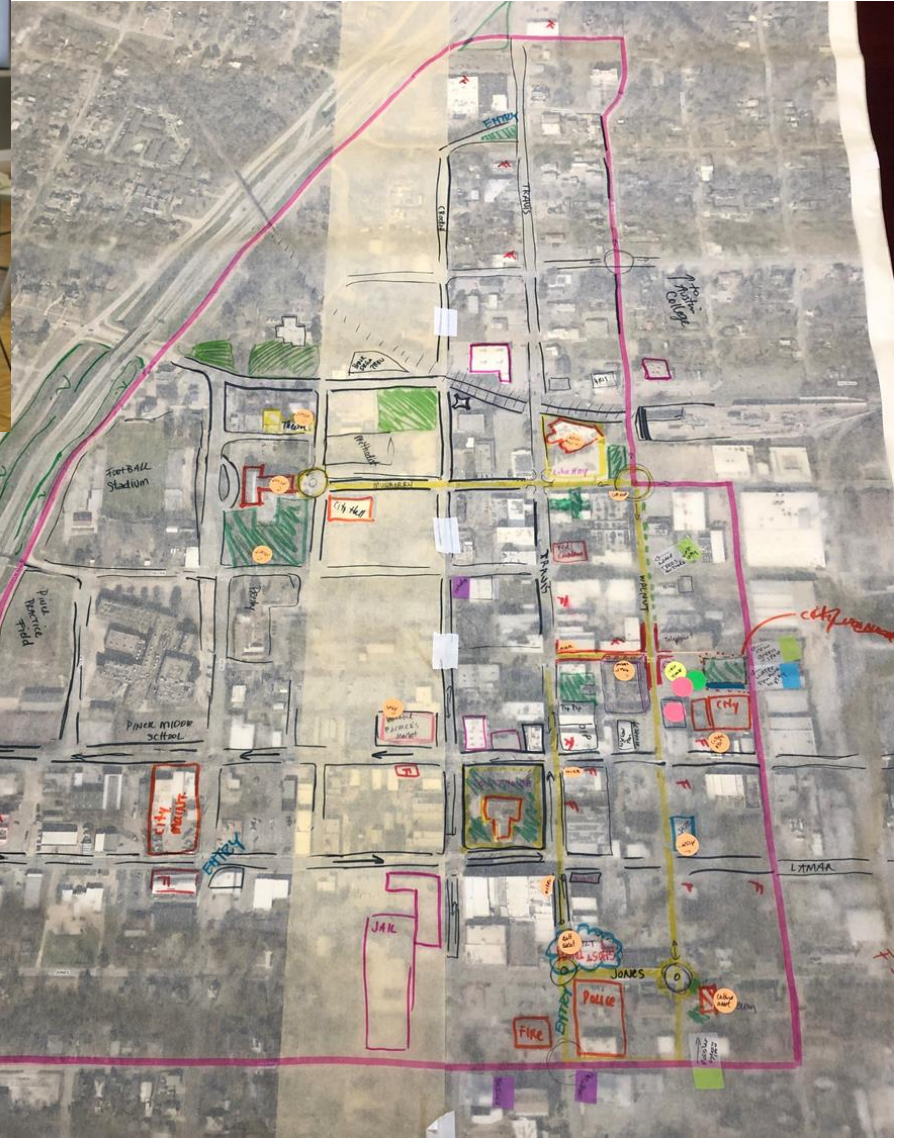
Considering locations and various types of public art...



Sherman Cultural District

COMMUNITY VISION DAY

FRIDAY, JULY 24 , 2020, 3 - 4 PM





Panelists (from left): Mark Monroe, Daron Holland, Heidi Rushing, Jared Tredway, Giovanni Valderas, Ilknur Ozgur

Recommendations

Connect Cultural Assets

Workshop panelists noted that most of the existing cultural assets in the Sherman Cultural District are located along E. Mulberry Street (*Elm to Walnut Streets*) and N. Walnut Street (*Mulberry to Cherry Streets*).

By thoughtful placement of public art along these two corridors an “Art Walk” would be created to encourage pedestrians to explore the district and visit these institutions. It could also be marketed as a tourist destination.



❖ Wall Street Mural Program

Exterior walls of historic buildings along Wall Street provide a series of “canvases” for murals of diverse styles and subjects. “Wall Street Walls” was the suggested name. Property owners could become key partners in this effort, both by granting permission for placement of a mural on their wall(s) and, ideally, underwriting all or some costs of materials, including artist’s fee, wall preparation and good quality paint (\$25 - \$50 per square foot). Since murals have a limited lifespan, it is suggested that murals be considered “long-term temporary”, allowing for new murals to be painted in the same location(s) over time.



Wall Street, Sherman

❖ Wall Street Mural Program



Inspiration Alley, The Foundry District, Fort Worth

This program would provide opportunities for diverse artists and institutions from throughout Sherman/Grayson County to have a presence in the Sherman Cultural District. In addition, artists from other North Texas cities could be selected to create murals through a “Call for Qualifications”. A Design Review Committee that would include representatives of the Sherman Cultural District, Main Street, City of Sherman, the property owner, as well as visual art professionals is recommended. Contracts between the property owner and the artist(s)/institution(s) should be utilized to outline roles and responsibilities and state maintenance responsibilities and the lifespan for the mural(s).



PRECEDENT: Inspiration Alley, Fort Worth (thefoundrydistrictfw.com)







PRECEDENT: Mag & May Apartments, Fort Worth (magandmay.com)

Temporary Art Installations

- Empty Storefronts
- Abandoned Billboards
- Projections on Silos During Cultural District Events



❖ Temporary Sculpture Program

Short-term temporary sculpture exhibitions (3 – 6 months) could activate of the vacant lot on the southwest corner of Wall and Lamar Streets in an exciting way. Other potential locations include Kidd-Key Park and other green spaces, empty storefronts, as well as unconventional locations that artists could be asked to propose. Existing programs in Austin and Fort Worth could serve as models and a Cultural District grant from the Texas Commission on the Arts could be an excellent funding source.



❖ Temporary Sculpture Program



This approach could provide opportunities for diverse artists local and regional artists to make proposals within specific parameters. A Design Review Committee that would include representatives of the Sherman Cultural District, Main Street, City of Sherman and property owner providing the site, as well as visual art professionals is recommended. In addition, contracts between the property owner (s) and the artist(s) should be utilized to outline roles and responsibilities and state maintenance responsibilities and the duration of the installations.



Anne Allen, Art Tooth at SOMA, Fort Worth (arttooth.com)

Reflect Diverse Histories

- Texas Historical Commission Marker
- National Memorial for Peace and Justice



❖ African American History

Confronting painful aspects of Sherman's history, such as the lynching of George Hughes and subsequent destruction of the thriving African-American Business District in May 1930, through engagement, education and a historical marker and/or work of public art opens a path to reconciliation and greater equity in the community. A two-fold approach should be considered:

- ✓ Commemorate the African-American Business District along East Mulberry Street with a marker at the southeast corner of the Sherman Public Library property, near the site of the former district
 - Apply for a **Texas Historical Commission** *Undertold Stories Historical Marker* utilizing University of North Texas Ph.D. candidate Donna J. Kumler's 1995 dissertation, which documented 6 businesses and 7 professional offices in the African-American Business District up to 1930
- ✓ Participate in the Equal Justice Initiative's *Community Remembrance Project* to honor the memory George Hughes at the **National Memorial for Peace and Justice** in Montgomery, Alabama and in Sherman, Texas

❖ Other Diverse Histories

Engaging diverse communities in Sherman, including recent immigrant communities, will be an important effort to undertake. The stories that unfold could become rich subject matter for murals, temporary or permanent public artworks in the Cultural District so that all residents of Sherman see themselves reflected in there. The first steps might be the following:

- ✓ Engage diverse local artists to propose mural or temporary art projects that share untold stories
- ✓ Identify a local historian to gather written documentation of community histories in Sherman and Grayson County
- ✓ Identify an experienced community facilitator to conduct meetings or workshops to reveal diverse histories
- ✓ Work with Austin College and/or the Sherman ISD to discuss establishing an oral/video history project that the students could undertake as part of a class assignment

Permanent Sculpture Commissions

- Streetscapes and Green Spaces
- May be functional
- Require larger budgets, longer timelines and management



Leticia Huerta, *Back to Nature*, 2017,
Hemphill Berry Urban Village, Fort Worth

❖ Permanent Sculpture

After the Sherman Cultural District has completed some murals and temporary sculpture installations programs and has gathered diverse community histories, planning for more ambitious, permanent works should commence.

It would be advisable to hire a public art consultant to assist with planning, artist selection and management of the artist's contract from design through installation to insure a successful outcome. Ideally, a local arts professional would work closely with the consultant to assist and gain experience with public art project management.

It is suggested that the pool of potential artists for such a project be widened to include North Texas artists with public art experience that would widen the array of styles, materials and techniques for consideration.



Phillippe Klinefelter, *Earth Fountain*, 2009/2016, Byers Green on Camp Bowie Boulevard, Fort Worth



Bart Shaw, *Memory: Fairmount Park*, 2015, Fairmount Park



Sedrick Huckaby, *The Welcome Space*, 2019, Highland Hills Park, Fort Worth

Establish a Public Art Committee

- To Oversee the Public Art Program
- Set Program and Project Goals
- Seek Locations and Funding Sources



❖ Public Art Committee

To provide structure to Sherman's fledgling public art program, it is important that the Sherman Cultural District:

- ✓ Identify and formalize a relationship with an existing not-for-profit organization or institution, ideally with ties to the City of Sherman
- ✓ Appoint a Public Art Committee (PAC) composed of 5 – 7 diverse citizens, most with expertise in the arts and design fields, for staggered terms of office

Once established, the PAC should:

- ✓ Elect a Chair and Vice Chair, develop by-laws, set a regular meeting schedule and prioritize project(s) to undertake during the first few years
- ✓ Initially, serve as volunteer staff to seek approval for public art locations and funding support for projects
- ✓ While the PAC may serve as an artist selection panel for the initial project(s), it is recommended that others in the community be invited with serve on artist selection panels which would include at least one PAC member.

❖ Short-Term Goals

1. Launch the “Wall Street Walls” Mural Program by commissioning a first mural
 - Identify location / budget & funding source / thematic approach / artist selection process
2. Engage Sherman’s diverse community in conversations about their untold stories to inform future murals, temporary, and permanent artworks
3. Commission temporary artwork(s) for existing events after COVID-19 restrictions are lifted
4. Identify a permanent structure for the Sherman Cultural District Public Art Program
5. Develop a plan for future permanent public artworks

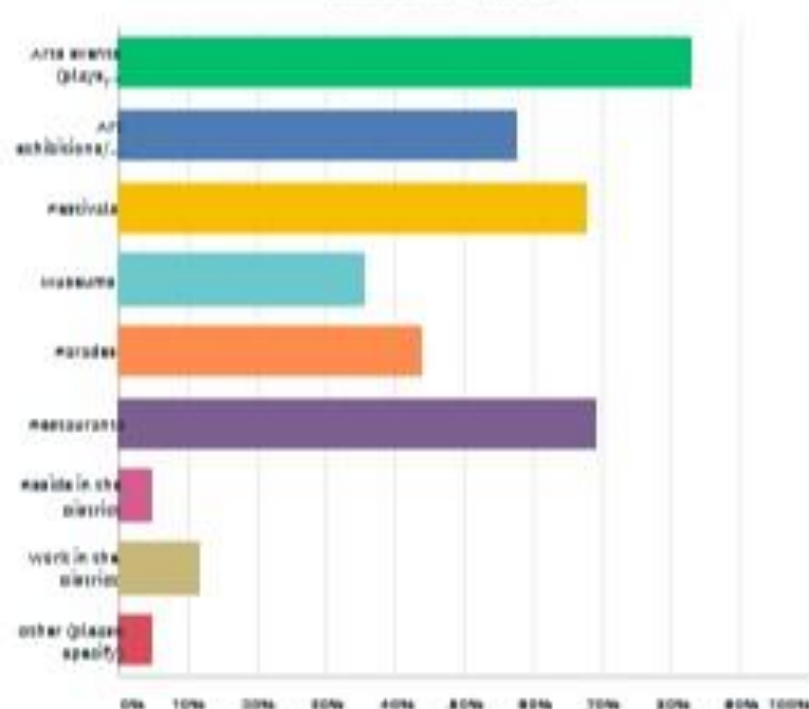
Conclusion

Appendix

Online Survey Results

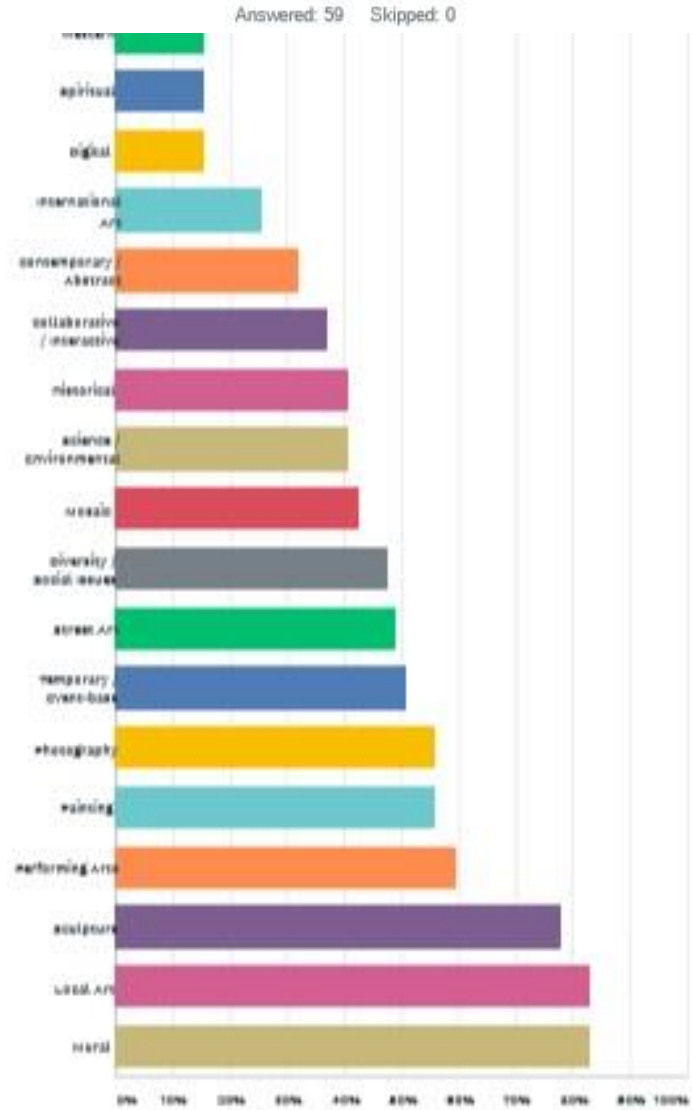
Q1 What attracts you to the Sherman Cultural District? The Cultural District is defined as the downtown Sherman area between U.S. 75 on the west and Montgomery Street (east), and Cherry Street on the south and Evergreen Street (north). (Check as many as you wish)

Answered: 59 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Arts events (plays, musicals, concerts)	83.05%	49
Art exhibitions/art classes	57.52%	34
Festivals	57.52%	40
Museums	35.59%	21
Parades	44.07%	26
Restaurants	69.49%	41
Reside in the District	5.08%	3
Work in the District	11.86%	7
Other (please specify)	5.08%	3
Total Respondents: 59		

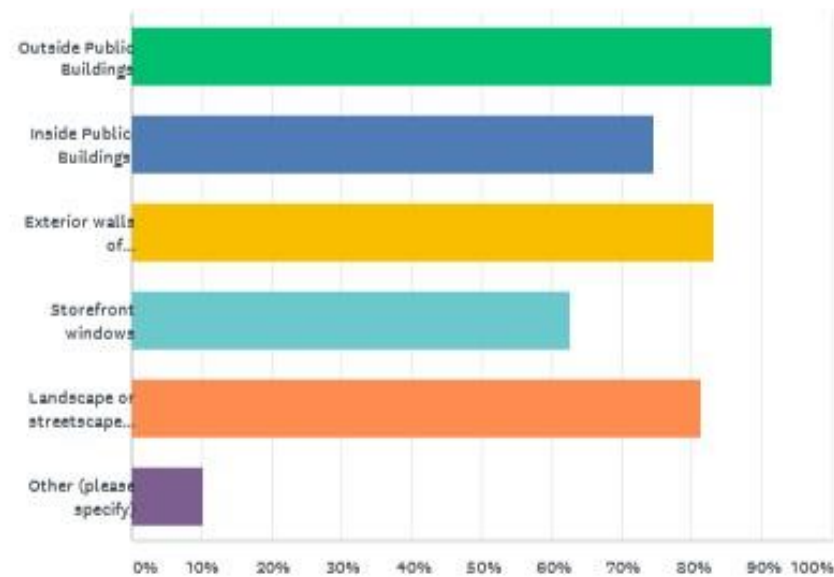
Q2 What kind of public art would you like to see in the Sherman Cultural District? (Check as many as you wish)



Public Arts Survey		SurveyMonkey
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Western	15.25%	9
Surreal	15.25%	9
Digital	15.25%	9
International Art	25.42%	15
Contemporary / Abstract	32.20%	19
Collaborative / Interactive	37.29%	23
Historical	40.68%	24
Science / Environmental	40.68%	24
Mosaic	42.37%	25
Diversity / Social Issues	47.46%	28
Street Art	49.15%	29
Temporary / Event-based	50.85%	30
Photography	55.93%	33
Painting	55.93%	33
Performing Arts	59.32%	35
Sculpture	77.97%	46
Local Art	83.05%	49
Mural	83.05%	49
Total Respondents: 59		

Q3 Where within the Sherman Cultural District would you like to see public art? (Check as many as you wish)

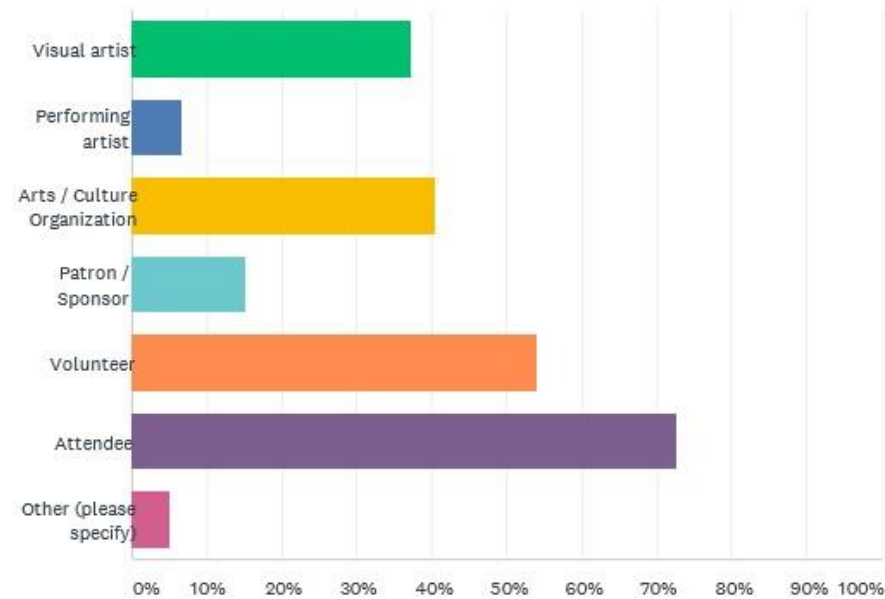
Answered: 59 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Outside Public Buildings	91.53%	54
Inside Public Buildings	74.58%	44
Exterior walls of privately-owned buildings	83.05%	49
Storefront windows	62.71%	37
Landscape or streetscape elements	81.35%	48
Other (please specify)	10.17%	6
Total Respondents: 59		

Q4 What role would you like to have in enhancing the Sherman Cultural District? (Check as many as apply)

Answered: 59 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Visual artist	37.29%	22
Performing artist	8.75%	4
Arts / Culture Organization	40.68%	24
Patron / Sponsor	15.25%	9
Volunteer	54.24%	32
Attendee	72.88%	43
Other (please specify)	5.08%	3
Total Respondents: 59		

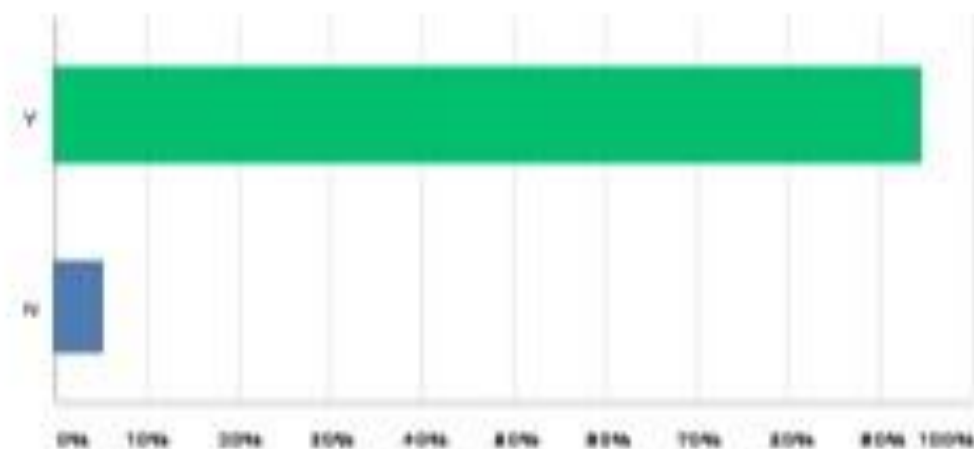
Q5 If you are interested in staying informed, please provide your name and email address below (your information will not be shared)

Answered: 36 Skipped: 23

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Name:	100.00%	36
Email:	100.00%	36

Q6 Are you a resident of Sherman or Grayson County?

Answers: 33 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Y	94.54%	33
N	5.36%	3
TOTAL		33

Online Community Survey Notes

The Sherman Cultural District/Austin College distributed an online survey to the community via Survey Monkey. In all there were 59 respondents. Of the 56 respondents to the residency question 53 stated that they reside in Sherman or Grayson County. Additional write-in responses were received for some questions, as follows:

- Q1. Walking; Shopping; Urban Design/Older Neighborhoods/Architecture/History
- Q3. Parks; Schools; Empty Lots; Derelict Buildings; “Empty” Portions of Buildings; Outside Privately-owned buildings; Comment that property owners should determine the subject matter and artists for murals
- Q4. Organizer; Ecological Art (tree groves with oxygen level displays); Venue for performing artists (musicians)

Cultural District Analysis

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, GOALS/IDEAS

Cultural District Strengths

DOWNTOWN CHARACTER

- Mix of architectural styles (Victorian to mid-century modern)
- Historic buildings being restored
- Abundance of space / land for development
- Green spaces
- Store fronts
- Community's genuine fondness of downtown Sherman
- Walkable
- Scene of place
- Adjacent to historic / diverse neighborhoods
- Freeway goes to downtown (does not bypass)
- Opportunity to blend historic preservation with affordable housing
- Character defining ordinance drafted for Cultural District
- Multiple churches
- Tacos / Farmer's Market / Culinary School
- Walking with alcohol allowed during events

CULTURAL ASSETS

- Deep roots in the arts
- Established cultural institutions
- Creative people in the community
- Proximity to DFW arts scene / visitors
- Sherman Public Library
- Sherman Art League

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

- Connection with academic institutions
 - Austin College
 - Grayson County College (culinary school)
 - Piner Middle School

Cultural District Weaknesses

DOWNTOWN CHARACTER

- County seat associated businesses (legal/bond/jails/court)
- East of downtown is industrial
- Large truck traffic on Houston and Lamar Streets
- Lack of connectivity to downtown due to freeway
 - Loss of Washington Park / Creek (swimming pool / amphitheater)
 - Loss of Rainbow Bridge
- New housing overlay ordinance requirement of 70 % of brick (doesn't blend with historic homes)
- Reactionary approach to City needs
- Not yet valuing Mid-Century Modern architecture
- Crumbling buildings / exterior walls
- Lack of eateries / outdoor dining with shade

Cultural District Opportunities

POTENTIAL PUBLIC ART LOCATIONS / EVENTS

- Walls Street, east of the Square blocked off for festivals
 - Churches in the Cultural District as partners for community gatherings
- Signifying Event for Sherman to attract cultural tourism (e.g. “Weekend in Sherman”)
- Build upon existing events:
 - “Craft the Night Away” beer festival (40% visitors)
 - “Wine Stroll” (30% of attendees are visitors)
- Digital Imaging / Projection Mapping (using themes
 - Silos
 - Walls of older buildings
- Abandoned billboards
- Neglected spaces (art interventions in unexpected places)
- Empty storefronts (temporary art installations)
- Entrances to Sherman Cultural District

POTENTIAL FUNDING / ADVOCATES

- TCA Cultural District Grants (available now thanks to recent designation)
- City of Sherman’s upcoming improvements to downtown sidewalks (\$ 1-2 million project)
- Foundations
- Non-profits
- Local businesses
- Public/private partnerships

Public Art Goals / Ideas

- Use public art to connect cultural assets in the Sherman Cultural District
 - Mulberry & Walnut (from Elm to Cherry)
 - Wild West Pawn Shop faces Walnut (potential mural wall)
 - Wall facing Lamar at Travis
 - Structure for Calls to Artists
 - Build upon success – engage/recruit others to help
 - Create Sherman Cultural District Public Art Program
 - Create synergy
 - Partner with City of establish a body to revamp zoning for historic neighborhoods
 - Historic Preservation Officer
 - Planning Staff
 - New development ordinance
 - “Wall Street Walls” Mural Project
 - Based on FocalPoint(!) photos
 - Other organizations, kids, Austin College
 - Institution-based / transcending
 - Pocket Park (Wall & Montgomery)
 - Parklets in parking spaces; shut down one street for one month
 - Mural beside Old Iron Post
 - 3-d movement, sound art; use students, empower them
 - Interactive art experience
 - Art cars being painted
 - Performances
 - Show visible from cars (FM radio transmitter)
 - Create a structure through which projects can happen
 - Organizers vs. Doers
 - Participate in the ... to memorialize George Hughes
 - Tie Sherman cultural District Board (501c3 pending)
 - Ghost Town
 - Theatrics
 - Sherman Community Players
 - Sherman Symphony Orchestra
- With Main Street Board (appointed by City Council) and tap into HOT tax funds (\$12K per year = \$1K grant)

Mural Program

Diverse Histories

African-American Histories

Memorialize the Death of George Hughes on May 9, 1930

National Memorial for Peace and Justice

<https://museumandmemorial.eji.org/>

Community Remembrance Project

Community Soil Collection Project

Historical Marker Project

<https://eji.org/projects/community-remembrance-project/>

Sam Houston State University *Lynchings in Texas Project*

<https://www.lynchingintexas.org/items/show/39/>

African-American Histories (con't)

Commemorate African-American Business District

Texas Historic Commission

Undertold History Marker (applications accepted November 1 – December 15, 2020)

<https://www.thc.texas.gov/preserve/projects-and-programs/state-historical-markers/undertold-markers>

Public Art Resources

Public Art Programs

Americans for the Arts Public Art Network

Texas Public Art Administrators Group

North Texas Public Art Administrators Group