

# PUBLIC ART CREATIVE PLACEMAKING FOR BUS SHELTERS

## REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

In their book *Atlanta City Design – Aspiring to the Beloved Community*, the Atlanta City Planning Department identified the challenge of updating our hub of transportation for a new generation while also building a sense of community and place.

The Atlanta Regional Commission has partnered with MARTA and the City of Atlanta Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs and Public Art Services to respond to that challenge and is seeking artists or artist teams (referred to as "Candidates") with experience in creating public art that fosters a unique sense of place to create new bus shelters being installed on two bus routes that connect the Jimmy Carter Museum & Library aka "Carter Center" and the Martin Luther King Jr. Historic Park aka "King Center."



If you are interested in being a part of this project and contributing to the artistic transformation of one or more of the bus shelters/stop on MARTA Bus Routes 809 or 816, please submit requested information and RFQ questions to (insert POC's email) with "PublicArt: Bus Stops" in the subject line. Artists shall direct RFQ questions to (insert POCs name) and will submit their applications for the Public Art Bus Shelters to (insert POC's email).

## PROJECT BACKGROUND

ARC will hire artists or artist teams to create public art that will prioritize bus riders' and community members' access to and enjoyment of bus stops along the route. The goal is to enrich the bus rider experience by:

- creating stops that are well-integrated into the communities they serve at the local level;
- meeting the needs of passengers through useful amenities; and
- serving as accessible, active, sociable and comfortable public spaces.

Bus stops should not just be a safe/clean place to wait for the bus, but a community amenity: a portal for information, a location for accessing needs and a venue for **storytelling**.

We imagine that the encouragement of ridership offers opportunity to share in community and connection, celebrate these destination points for locals & visitors, while encouraging sustainable practices. Improving the transit experience and overall quality of life for those in historically marginalized communities, as such bus shelters will be installed at five stops that lack shelters and/or other amenities. To improve the ridership experience, between two culturally significant landmarks, five stops along bus routes 816 and 809 that will be redesigned by the candidates after engaging community stakeholders to inspire the final design.

We value offering accessible, beautiful, engaging bus stops that tell the story of past, present, and aspiration and dreams for the future of its riders, residents and businesses.

Recognizing the need to improve the experience of our transit system, ARC seeks artists or artist teams to create artworks that contribute to the interest and aesthetic appeal of the bus shelters and the riders' experience. Specifically, we are seeking the following:

- The artwork may relate to the location in design and content. For example, art could connect visually to the site or interpret historical, environmental, decorative, architectural or cultural aspects of the site.
- The artwork may be fabricated using any materials the artist chooses, however, the final artwork, including materials, installation process, and upkeep must be approved to ensure safety and sustainability.
  - For example, an artist may photograph found objects or use recycled art supplies to create an artwork that may be converted to a high-resolution digital file for a printed installation on an already existing bus shelter.
- Artists should consider that shelters are experienced by bus users as well pedestrians on-foot and in vehicles.
- Artwork should be designed to last at least three years. Artwork may be open to the elements (i.e. weather damage, graffiti, theft) and any permanent damage to the artwork may result in its early removal.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The intent of this project is to build a network of art installations along at five bus shelters along two MARTA bus routes 816 and 809 that connect the King Center and Carter. Reinforcing the transit corridor in this location parallels other initiatives to create a "Peace Path" along the PATH Foundation trail between the two centers through Freedom Park. By connecting these routes, we connect two Nobel centers located at either end of Freedom Park. A brief description of both routes is offered below:

## Bus Route 816

The 816 route departs from Five Points station to Michael Street and Rollins Way along Peachtree Street., Peachtree Center Avenue., Ralph McGill Blvd, East Freedom Parkway., North Highland Avenue., Johnson Road, Briarcliff Road., Clifton Road and Michael Street. The 816 routes travels through downtown Atlanta, and then on to beautiful tree nestled neighborhoods in the Old Fourth Neighborhood and Virginia Highland. Point of interest on the bus route include Wellstar Atlanta Medical Center, Carter Center, Center for Disease Control and the Martin Luther King Jr. Historic Site.

## Bus Route 809

The 809 route departs from the Lindbergh Center and King Memorial MARTA stations starting with service on Boulevard and Monroe Drive. The 809 route travels through Old Fourth Ward, an urban and artsy Atlanta neighborhood just east of downtown. As a transitional area, there's low-income tenants, hip housing, parks and nightlife spots. Some of the more popular destinations include the Old Fourth Ward Park, Ponce City Market and the Beltline Eastside Trail, which forms the neighborhood's eastern border. The 809 bus route operates everyday, the regular schedule hours are 5:15 AM – 11:20 PM.

The two routes offer a transit connection between two major tourist destinations, connects five in-town neighborhoods, and provides ripe **story-telling opportunities** for the history of Atlanta - specifically its history of civil rights and the civic action that resulted in the formation of Freedom Park. The reason Freedom Parkway exists, and the Carter Center within it, is because the community banded together to stop the highways that were planned to cut through in-town Atlanta in the 80's, but only after over 600 homes were demolished.

By telling these stories of displacement, gentrification, and human rights, we hope to **spark a collective curiosity** about this specific place by **kindling conversations** about our collective past, present, and future. The pictorial presented below highlights some of the major milestones of Freedom Park from the Civil War to Civil Rights that captures the rich history of the area.

### PARK SYSTEMS INVENTORY

#### Character



The rich history of Freedom Park from the Civil War, to civil rights and struggle have vastly influenced the character of the site. Understanding the historic landmarks and political impacts on the park later influenced design decisions. Adjacent neighborhoods and historic districts create a strong narrative surrounding the park. Existing wayfinding indicates areas of importance but signage is lacking in key areas within the park.



Source: Freedom Park Conservancy Master Plan 2021



Per Georgia Department of Transportation's standards, proposed artwork should not disrupt the function of the bus shelter. Art must not create safety hazards for motorists and pedestrians. Art with highly reflective surfaces, colors, and moving parts, or flashing or bright lights, is strongly discouraged. However, each proposal will be analyzed on a case-by-case basis to determine if it could potentially create adverse distractions or vehicular movements that interfere with traffic flow. Art should not have moving parts nor simulate movement. Art that may distract or confuse motorists or expose observers to undue risk will not be approved.

## I. SITE DESCRIPTION



*Example of standard bus stop shelter*

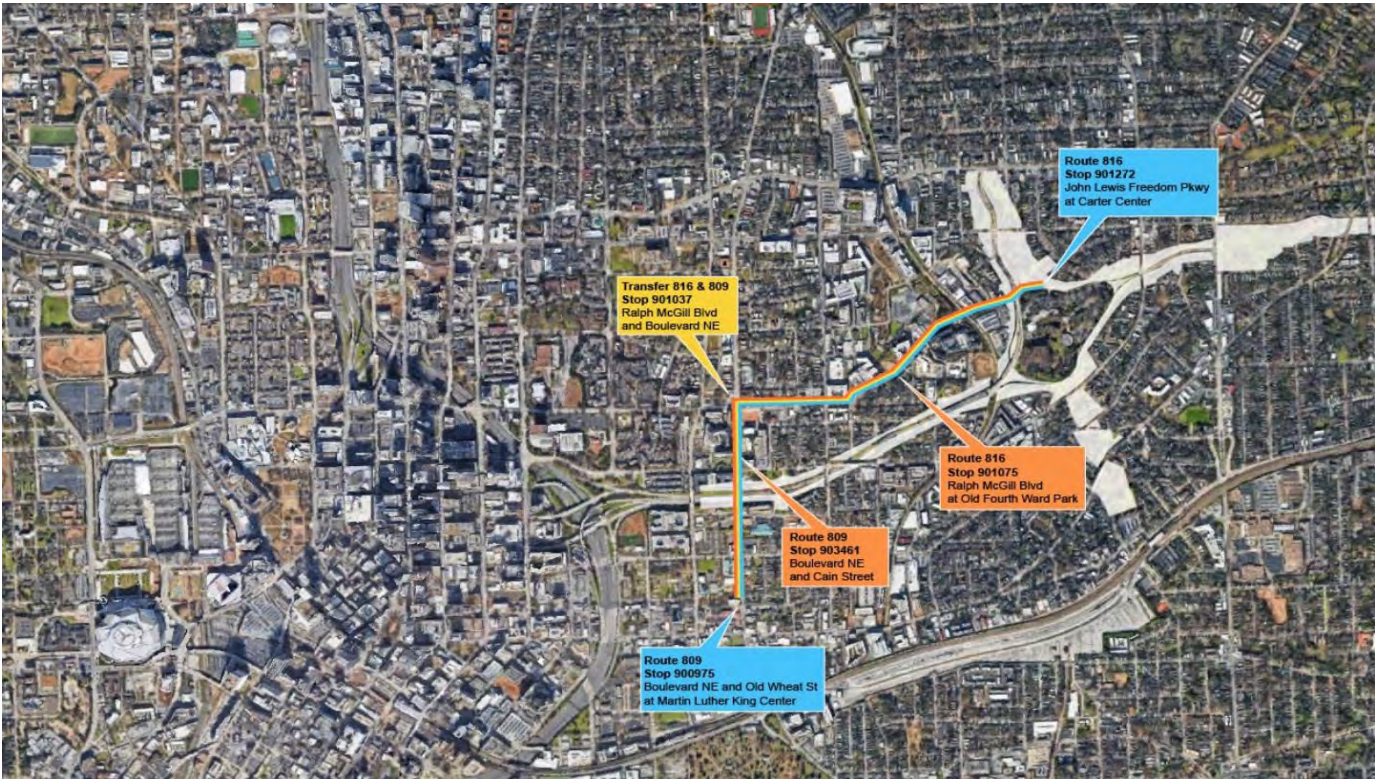
For the stops that have glass display cases, the bus shelter is approximately 48 inches wide by 69.5 inches tall and allow for the display of artwork or digital displays on both the interior and exterior of the case.

### Inspiration from Other Bus Stop Projects





Maps of Bus Route





Bus Shelter Locations

Location of Stop	Photo Capture of Bus Stop
<a href="#">John Lewis Parkway @ Carter Center</a> <a href="#">(Bus Stop# 901272)</a>	

Ralph McGill Blvd @ Old  
Fourth Ward Park

(Bus Stop# 901075)



[Ralph McGill Boulevard @  
Boulevard N.E.](#)

(Bus Stop# 901037)

(Transfer point)



[Boulevard N.E. @ Caine  
Street](#)

(Bus Stop# 903461)



[Boulevard N.E. @ Old Wheat Street](#) (Martin Luther King Jr. Center)  
(Bus Stop# 900975)



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The selected Candidate (artists or artist teams) will plan and facilitate community engagement activities to encourage public input and participation. The selected Candidate will be expected to host, facilitate, and participate in community engagement activities before finalizing their designs to gather feedback from residents living in the city and the neighborhood where the bus shelters will be located. Candidates can use a combination of combination of web/social/surveys/community meetings/interactive installations to solicit community feedback.

Here are some suggestions to help you think about community engagement:

- **Go to the people.** Change up how you gather community input. Go to where people hang out whether it is a physical gathering space, like a coffee shop or community center, or a "virtual" space like Facebook or online neighborhood forums.
- **Get to know the community** (demographics, stakeholders, networks) and how they get their information. This knowledge is the foundation for how you will design community engagement activities and communicate about your project.
- **Spread the word.** Create a communications strategy that includes project branding, messaging and tactics for talking about your project effectively.
- **Ask for people's personal story.** Encourage people to express their experiences and opinions in their own words first. Consider using their voices and stories and incorporating them in the art installation.
- **Design project activities in a way that provides dignity** to everyone and offers a safe space to air concerns.
- **Engage around interests.** You may have to participate in community issues that matter to others before making a connection to your own project.
- **Think about the details.** When you hold a community event, think through how you can make it more inclusive (e.g. time, location, child care, transportation, food, translators, facilitators).
- **Use technology** ... if it's a fit. There are many great high-tech and low-tech ways to engage people so pick strategies that are a fit with whom you are trying to reach.

## II. ELIGIBILITY

This RFQ is open to all residents of Georgia, but preference will be given to residents of Fulton County. Candidates must be artists, designers, or fabricators or partner with artists, designers, or fabricators, eligible to work in the United States, and age 18 and older. People from diverse backgrounds are encouraged to apply. Candidates are eligible regardless of race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, gender, gender identification, military status, sexual orientation, marital status, or physical ability.

## III. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Submissions must be received by **Monday, July 19, 2021 at 11:59 PM EST** and shall include the following:

- A. **Statement of interest:** narrative outlining your qualifications and interest in this project.
- B. **Community Engagement:** Describe how will you engage residents and stakeholders to celebrate the diversity of the neighborhood, which incorporates a number of cultures, and the rich history in order to capture the essence of the community.



- C. **Advancing Racial and Social Justice:** ARC recognizes there are many strategies to advancing racial and cultural justice and will support a variety of approaches that benefit artists and communities marginalized by current and historic systems of oppression. Furthering this goal may look like, but not limited to: supporting an artist of color, indigenous artist, artist with disabilities, or trans artist; supporting a project that deals with issues of racial or cultural justice; supporting a process that specifically and authentically engages communities who have been historically marginalized. Describe how this project will advance racial and cultural justice?
- D. **Work samples:** Visual representations of past artwork that demonstrate your qualifications for this project. Sample work could include a video/website/digital interface. In order to be considered for this project, the applicant may submit up to ten (10) images of no more than five (5) previously completed projects. We request that the artist submit at least five (5) images. Each sample should have an accompanying summary of the title, location, cost, materials/media, and timeline associated with that piece.
- E. **References:** Each artist should provide three (3) current references (non-familial) or recommendation letters with contact information for each reference, who can speak to your work ethic, skills and strengths.

#### IV. SELECTION PROCESS

- A. The Review Committee will include staff from the Atlanta Regional Commission, MARTA and the City of Atlanta Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs - Public Art Services and community members from the neighborhoods in which the bus stops will be installed.
- B. The Review Committee will review submissions for completeness and may reject incomplete or non-responsive submissions.
- C. The Review Committee will evaluate applications based on criteria that may include, but is not limited to the following:

Criteria	Points Assigned
i. Past projects and the creativity and originality for the proposed concept for this installation.	50%
ii. Planned strategies for community engagement to be undertaken in the process of creating public artwork.	15%
iii. Proven track record of using the materials and methods appropriate for this project.	15%
iv. References and demonstrated ability to manage projects with similar budgets on-time and within budget.	20%
Total	100%

- D. The Review Committee will invite up to five (5) finalists to interview with the committee.
- E. Finalists may be required to visit site location and interview in-person or online with the Review Committee.
- F. After the interviews, the Review Committee will recommend an artist(s)
- G. MARTA and the selected artist(s) will enter into a written contract detailing mutual responsibilities and the full scope of work, including a project budget.

## **V. SCOPE OF WORK**

The services and obligations that will be required from the candidate during the contract period include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Participating in an engagement process to solicit community input in one or more sessions, prior to submission of conceptual design for bus stop(s).
- Collaborating with MARTA on the final design.
- Oversee the fabrication and installation of the public art piece.
- Submission of a reasonable maintenance plan to ensure proper conservation of the piece.
- Completing project within agreed upon timeframe.

## **VI. PROPOSED TIMELINE**

- Monday, June 28, 2021 – Release of Public Art for Bus Shelters in Atlanta RFQ
- Wednesday, July 7, 2021 – Information Sessions via Zoom meeting 6:00 p.m. EST
- Friday, July 9, 2021 – Information Sessions via Zoom meeting 9:00 a.m. EST
- July 19, 2021 – Proposal submission deadline 11:59 p.m. EST
- July 21 – July 28, 2021 – Review Committee to meet to evaluate applicants.
- July 28 – July 31, 2021 – ARC to notify artist(s) of decision.
- August 2 – August 6, 2021 – ARC and artist(s) to enter into contract.
- August 9 – October 1, 2021 – Design Development and community Engagement
- November 1, 2021 – Final Designs will be shared with the community.
  - December 3, 2021 – Artists submit Final Designs to ARC for final approval.
  - Spring 2022 – Installation of bus shelters; printing and installation of public artworks

## **VII. BUDGET**

The total budget for this project is \$100,000, of which \$62,500 will be earmarked for artist/artist team commissions and \$37,500 will be for fabrication and installation of the bus stops.

### **Artist/Artist Team Commission:**

For each of the five bus stops, ARC will pay each artist or artist team a commission of \$12,500 to complete the community engagement, including travel and materials, and development of the conceptual design. Fifty percent (50%) of the art commission (\$6,250) will be paid upon submission of the community engagement activities that have been undertaken as a part of the project and the artist's conceptual design of the bus stop. The balance of the commission payment (\$6,250) will be paid upon installation of the bus shelter. For tax purposes, the 1099



issued to the artist will be only for the artist commission.

**Fabrication and Construction:**

- a. Two transit bus stops with an existing standard shelter are eligible for **\$5,250** to include all potential improvements in shelter, panels, and the concrete pad). **Total Funds: \$10,500**
- b. Three non-sheltered transit bus stop are eligible for **\$9,000** to include all include all improvements in shelter. **Total Funds: \$27,000**