

LOVE NORTHBORO

# A PUBLIC ART CAMPAIGN

sponsored by the  
Northborough Cultural Council

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## PUBLIC ART NORTHBOROUGH • OPENING DOORS • 2021

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## PUBLIC ART NORTHBOROUGH • SMALL TOWN BIGHEARTED COMMUNITY

The presence of art in public places defines a community and helps to create a distinct sense of place. It encourages a community's fullest use and enjoyment of its public spaces and provides distinctive landmarks, aesthetically enhanced gathering areas and unique cultural experiences. This document is the Northborough Cultural Council's first public art campaign plan. It strives to enrich and support the vision of the town outlined in the master plan and provide a multi-year roadmap for creating public art in Northborough.

### A VISION OF PUBLIC ART

Art of many genres has played an important role in building urban and civic culture and remains layered in the landscapes of our towns and cities. Over the years, there has been a shift from using art merely as an embellishment for architecture and public space, to seeking art that creates a sense of identity, community, and connection to local history and culture with a vision for future. Public Art projects now document, celebrate, and explore communities and bring a common sense of identity to a community. NCC's vision is that public art should be a force for placemaking – for creating strong, meaningful connections between people and the places that are important to our community.

### OBJECTIVES AND CONNECTIONS

The objective of NCC public art effort is to develop public art projects that will resonate with Northborough's sense of place, reflect town history and culture, complement existing town initiatives and strategic goals, and support area artists. The plan focuses on several opportunities to realize this object:

- Develop and support public art projects that support the vision of placemaking in Northborough.
- Work collaboratively with town administration, organizations and residents to cultivate partnerships to support and enhance Northborough public art projects.
- Focus limited volunteer and financial resources on projects with the strongest placemaking impact.

- Integrate art with the existing architectural, landscape, and infrastructural design of the town.
- Provide support for and gain exposure to local youth and adult artists.

This public art plan connects to and supports the Northborough master plan in two of the plan's focus areas, Land Usage and Economic Development, and directly supports the following goals.

***Land Use G2:** Enhance Downtown by promoting a pleasing and welcoming appearance - one that promotes a sense of place - enabling it to become the community's proud central gathering area for residents and visitors alike.*

**Connection:** Public art fosters a unique sense of place in for a community, creating enjoyable and special spaces that enhances the sense of pride in a town. This campaign focuses on projects within the town's central gathering spaces, primarily the downtown area, and with the primary goal of placemaking.

***Land Use G3:** Ensure Northborough's future land uses support its Vision and established community character.*

**Connection:** The objective of this plan is to support public art efforts which will bring the community together in a way that exhibits the unique character and identity of this town and people. The spaces that are used in this effort will be available, open and engaging to all who live in or visit Northborough.

***Economic Development G1:** Define Downtown in terms of its geography (e.g., Downtown Business District), appearance, branding, and function.*

**Connection:** The downtown business district is the primary focus of the campaign and placemaking through public art can be a key objective. Secondary areas of focus include main town thoroughfares and public parks and spaces.

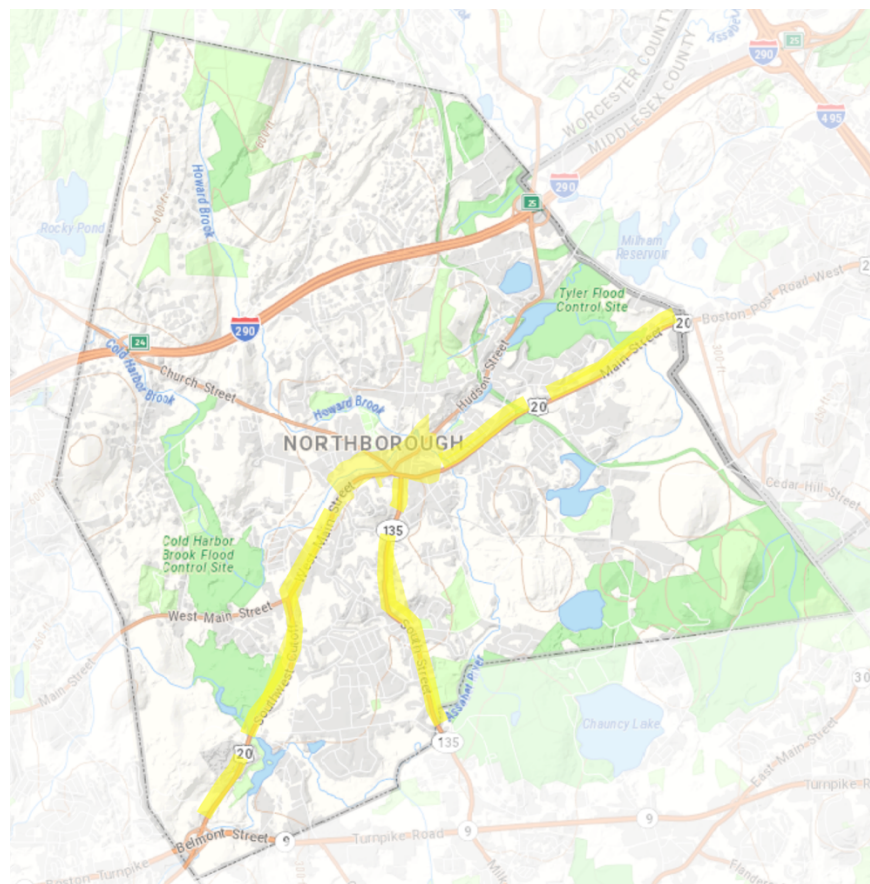
***Economic Development G4:** Position the Town to attract more visitors and commercial tax revenue.*

**Connection:** Public art enriches physical environments, bringing parks, streetscapes, town buildings, and schools to life.

## PLACEMAKING IN NORTHBOROUGH

This public art campaign strives to be a force for placemaking in Northborough, a way to create connections between people and places that are important to our community. The first area of priority to support both our community connection goal and the Northborough master plan is the downtown business district; with the aim of using public art to create identify and a unique sense of place around the town common, both enhancing and supporting surrounding businesses.

The secondary area of focus for placemaking are the major thoroughfares in Northborough, primarily, opportunists along Route 20 and Route 135. Streetscapes are a way for public art to both visually enhance and easily communicate branding in a community.



*Northborough, MA, NCC public art campaign areas of focus*

## PUBLIC ART PROJECT TYPES

Public art can have many forms, from large scale permanent installations to interactive art experiences. This plan strives to support the following public art projects.

- **Permanent Installations**  
These include murals and sculptures mounted on buildings or other structures that tend to be large scale and highly visible on the street.
- **Temporary Projects**  
These include installation of permanent art that is only designed to be displayed for a fixed period of time and usually to support a specific event or theme. Artwork can be of varying sizes and types.
- **Engagements**  
These art projects are collaborative or interactive in nature and usually involve an artist and a subset of the public creating artwork in limited time frame. This is temporary art meant to fall apart or degrade in some fashion. It normally makes some kind of statement about community art and sense of place.

## BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS AND OBTAINING RESOURCES

Public art helps Northborough create a highly desirable sense of place and is facilitated by the Northborough Cultural Council working collaboratively with town departments, committees, community service organizations, downtown businesses, and interested residents. The Northborough Cultural Council works with support of the Massachusetts Cultural Council through subject matter expertise and grants to support individual projects. Public support through fund raising efforts and volunteer hours is also key to have these efforts realized. Where appropriate, collaboration will also occur with Massachusetts organizations supporting public art in the state.



## PROJECTS AND WHERE WE ARE GOING

This plan lays out a framework for public art efforts in Northborough for 2021-2025. The overall public art campaign theme of Small Town Bighearted Community - Where You are Welcomed with Open Doors is reflected in the first public art project.

### *2021 Effort:*

The 2021 kickoff project will be a Temporary Exhibition of painted upcycled doors exploring Northborough's vibrant atmosphere entitled *Go Out Side - Northborough*. It is intended these painted doors will be displayed in or around the downtown business district supporting our campaign's efforts to enhance a sense of place in this area of Northborough. Depending on response, other key areas of Northborough may be included in this launch effort.

This project is in collaboration with the larger regional effort 'Go Out Doors - Neighbors' originally displayed on the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail and now encompassing twelve cities and towns in Massachusetts with over fifty art painted doors. We will be working with The Umbrella Arts Center to provide subject matter expertise on this launch project.



*Bruce Freeman Rail Trail 'Go Out Doors - Neighbor' public art campaign sponsored by The Umbrella Arts Center Concord - Artists: Sophy Tuttle, Caroline Provost, & Emily Passman*

### *2022 Effort:*

The 2022 project following our campaign kickoff effort will be that of a permanent public art installation. Our goal is to commission a mural to be painted within the Downtown Business District to further enhance the sense of pride in our town and further the connect of residents to the town center.

The theme for this permanent installation will be determined in conjunction with town stakeholders to showcase both Northborough's heritage and its vision of the future and fitting into the overall campaign framework of using art to celebrate, inspire and create a unique sense of place in our town.

### *Examples of outdoor public art murals in Massachusetts*



*"The Protector" by David, Lynn, MA*



*"Resonance" by Super A, Dewey Sq, Boston MA*





*"Sunday Afternoon On The Charles River" by David Fichter, Boston, MA*

### *2023-2025 Efforts:*

These efforts are yet to be defined but will be comprised of Permanent Installations, Temporary Projects and Art Engagements. Town feedback and engagement from the first two efforts will be used to define the plans for 2023, 2024 and 2025.

## ARTIST ENAGEMENT AND SELECTION

As a Northborough Cultural Council initiative, public art efforts supported by this program will strive where possible to support Northborough and surrounding town artists. Where dictated by a particular effort, the scope may be widened to include all Massachusetts artists.

Artist selection for each project will vary according to project specifications. Specifications for selection will be outlined in each project's Call for Proposals document.

## PROJECT EVALUATION, ORGANIZERS & SUPPORT

At the end of each art project, NCC will solicit feedback from the Northborough community on the effectiveness of meeting the objectives and connections. This can

be done by face to face discussions, surveys, and closely monitoring the discussion and feelings people have. Subsequent projects can then grow and incorporate that feedback to create the best outcome for Northborough!

This Northborough Public Art Campaign is sponsored and supported by the Northborough Cultural Council. For questions, comments, or more information, contact NCC chair, Terry Underwood, or NCC public art lead, Suzanne Cox via the town of Northborough website under Cultural Council.