

CITY OF JOHNS CREEK, GEORGIA PUBLIC ART MASTER PLAN

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Executive Summary

The City of Johns Creek was incorporated in 2006 and has a strong foundation of culture and arts. Within the City many agencies and groups actively promote the arts including: Johns Creek Beautification; Johns Creek Art Center; Johns Creek Symphony; Performing Arts North, Chopin Society, North Atlantic Dance, Arts on the Creek, and Autrey Mill Nature Preserve.

As a result of the efforts of these agencies and others, public art and culture has become a strong economic engine in the city. To build upon these existing efforts, the Leadership Johns Creek (LJC) Class of 2013 selected as its project the development of a Public Art Program for the city. As the team researched the topic, it was discovered that Public Art was not addressed in the existing City Code. The LJC Class learned that in order to have a public art program, a plan would need to be developed and reviewed and action taken by the City Council in the form of an 'enabling ordinance.' The LJC Class gained the permission of the City Council to pursue this effort. The LJC Team is proposing to present this plan to the City Council at its March 11, 2013 work session for consideration.

To successfully implement a Public Art Program in the City, the following recommendations are proposed by the Leadership Class for consideration:

1. Adopt the Public Art Master Plan as a companion document to the City's 'Enabling' Ordinance.
2. Create a Public Art Board (PAB) with the responsibility of making recommendations to the City Council on Public Art.
3. Direct the Public Art Board to develop 'standards' for Public Art and related criteria for sites and Public Art pieces.
4. Support the successful implementation of the Public Art Master Plan on public property within the City and consider allocating some funds for site improvements in the right-of-way and parks, and
5. Require with the approval and placement of Public Art within the City an accompanying plan to address ownership and maintenance of the art.

Introduction & History

History of Public Art

Public Art has long played an important role in expressing the identity of a culture. In many cases, Public Art is the legacy by which we remember a culture. Public Art has been a part of the American landscape since Colonial times, but it wasn't until the middle of the 20th century that comprehensive Public Art programs emerged. After the establishment of the National Endowment for the Arts in 1965, the field of Public Art underwent significant change. As more and more cities adopted "percent for art" ordinances, Public Art has evolved from a process that placed large-scale versions of studio sculpture in unrelated spaces into the broader understanding that art may take various forms, including being routinely integrated into the surroundings in which it is placed in, often becoming part of building or structure itself. In cities like Seattle, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Miami and others, artists working in the public realm became more involved in the design of public spaces by working closely with architects, landscape architects and engineers. The result was the use of art to shape a new public space, not just to enhance an existing one. In Seattle, Durango, Phoenix and Scottsdale, the art went one step further: it has become an integral part of civic infrastructure including, bridges, waste treatment plants, freeways, parks, sports complexes and other projects.

History of Public Art in Johns Creek

The City of Johns Creek is located within the fastest growing metropolitan area in the U.S. – Metro Atlanta. Close enough to to take advantage of Atlanta's vibrant culture and economic growth, yet far enough away to experience a quieter lifestyle, Johns Creek residents enjoy the best of both worlds.

Johns Creek Beautification was formed in 2007 o enhance and preserve the natural beauty in our common areas and public space through landscaping installations, environmental preservation, and public works of art. When the city was formed, the Median Beautification Project had begun the "Shock and Ahhh campaign" to create an oasis-like feel in the medians of SR141 as you approach the city limits from the Chattahoochee River north from Gwinnett County.

From that time, recognition from the Johns Creek Foundation has allowed Johns Creek Beautification to partner with the city on state funded grants that require a non-profit to commit matching funds in its application. From matching funds the city completed the median landscape installations on SR141 and a gateway installation. In addition they were awarded funds from the Foundation to spearhead a feasibility study of walking trails on National Park Service property (Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area) within the city limits. Johns Creek Beautification has since developed a Beautification Master Plan that targets various projects throughout the city to inspire the community and restore a sense of discovery, vitality and identity of the city, while becoming a visual record of the growth of the community and its artistic development.

The Johns Creek Arts Center (JCAC) was created in 1996 as an independent 501c (3) community arts organization in the City of Johns Creek. Originally called the Ocee Arts Center, it was founded with the purpose of bringing arts to a culturally lacking area of unincorporated North Fulton County. JCAC has grown to offer a wide selection of high quality art and theatre classes, camps, workshops, and outreach programs to youth and adult students.

Currently, examples of public art existing outside of landscaping and environmental preservation can be found in front of the Johns Creek Design Center, and in a contributing mosaic bench in Tech Park donated by the Leadership Johns Creek Class of 2011.

Why is Public Art Important?

Vision for Public Art - Public Art in Johns Creek will add to the visual identity of the City, creating memorable images of the City for visitors and residents alike. Public Art will reflect on Johns Creek's role as an emerging regional leader in culture and recreation, and it will support the City's development as a visually attractive place to live, learn, work and play.

Shaping the City - Public Art can contribute to the City's visual identity in three basic ways. Some art projects will contribute to Johns Creek's MUNICIPAL IMAGE as perceived by outsiders, reinforcing the city's role as a desirable place to live as well as to locate a business. Some projects will support individual NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY by creating local points of pride. And some projects will promote ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT by attracting visitors and raising the City's visibility.

- 1. MUNICIPAL IMAGE** is the mental picture of a city based on the features we most associate with it. This image can be driven by a concerted effort by the city or it may take its own course through a total lack of interest. It can be influenced by a single prominent landmark or riven by a collection of smaller attributes. While we typically think of an image as frozen in time, a municipal image can portray the story of what is happening within the city, the direction the city is moving, and the interests the leaders and citizens have in their city's history and future.

We live in a society that places great value on ratings and rankings. In assessing one city against another, the enterprises responsible for those ratings are influenced by a city's municipal image. Therefore, it is vitally important to a city's future welfare that it identifies what it hopes to become, actively promotes a municipal image that captures its desired future state, and then strives to achieve that state through its decisions and actions. After all, the attractiveness of a city may lie in its position within those rankings or its movement upward through those rankings. But whether already at the top or only aspiring to be there, a municipal image that portrays a city as a place where people would want to come

to visit, shop, and live will play a significant role in helping that city thrive and grow.

Public Art can play a major role in creating and enhancing a city's municipal image. The presence of Public Art delivers a message that the arts are important to the leaders and the people of the city. The belief that art is appreciated within the city attracts both the creators and consumers of the arts. As more people come to the city to take part (as creators, consumers, or both), both the quality and the abundance of art increase, bringing more art to additional venues and further enhancing the appeal of the city. To ensure that the process does not spiral out of control, it is critical that Public Art is thoughtfully commissioned, planned, and presented. If well managed, Public Art can be one of the most prominent factors in creating a municipal image and in fulfilling that image for people who come to see the city for themselves.

2. **NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTITY** is important as locations are identified for pieces of Public Art. In the 1970's, the concept of "plop art" generated lots of sculptures placed in plazas and parks with little planning or thought as to the relationship between the art and its location. More recent Public Art programs have sought to integrate art into the architecture and landscape to foster a greater sense of place. These locations over time become identified not by the more traditional monikers but by the pieces of Public Art in the area. Examples include Greenwich Village, Soho, Atlantic Station, etc. In these areas, Public Art has become the visual identity of the neighborhood
3. **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT** is a primary component to fostering the development of intrinsically strong cities. Creating a Public Art Program in Johns Creek can have a positive economic impact on our community. In addition to establishing a sense of identity and providing the community with an opportunity to experience art, Public Art projects draw attention to the city. The economic impact of Public Art is apparent in these three examples:
 1. The "Trail Drive" in Dallas has become the 2nd most visited tourist attraction topped only by Dealy Plaza.
 2. The "Cows in Parade" in Chicago generated over \$200 million in additional business revenues for the city in just a few months.
 3. Christo's "Wrapped Reichstag" in Berlin generated \$300 million in just three weeks compared to theaters and museums; Public Art has relatively low overhead, low staffing costs, and produces less waste or environmental damage.

Economic Value in a Community - Increasingly, residents, business owners, and community leaders recognize that the arts, and specifically Public Art, contribute to economic development. On the larger scale, art sites and arts institutions attract business, new residents and tourists. On any scale, well-executed Public Art can create a sense of place, a focal point and a destination.

This unique definition of place is manifest in two dimensions: the physical design of civic space, and the social/emotional benefit. Good public art supports local identity, complementing and reflecting the individual character of a neighborhood, a community or a city. Even the process of conceiving a project and selecting an artist or art proposal is an opportunity for deeper engagement by the members of the community. The resulting artwork can be a tremendous source of civic and neighborhood pride, encouraging local “ownership” in the built environment and having a salutary effect on many aspects of civic life, including public safety.

The cultural well-being of a community is as important as the aspects of infrastructure and public welfare. While some citizens struggle with this charge, many communities are finding it increasingly necessary to encourage and maintain cultural infrastructure as a viable and marketable asset. Many cities have an array of scheduled municipal events; others support educational and/or recreational opportunities for their citizens, often under the auspices of a parks and recreation department.

The Need for a Plan

Proactive planning is essential to the implementation of a strong and enduring Public Art Program that will help shape Johns Creek’s appearance and character. Throughout the United States, the most progressive and forward-thinking cities are crafting plans for expending and administering funds for art in public places with vision and responsibility.

The following plan is designed to begin the implementation of a Public Art program in Johns Creek. The best position is to proactively create a Public Art “roadmap” with planned uses for key sites and established priorities that reflect our particular community. It is also important that one board working on behalf of local government has the vision and expertise to oversee all art and design elements in the public domain (i.e., accessible in or visible from public space).

The City of Johns Creek needs and deserves a proactive vision for public art, a thoughtful curatorial perspective that can complement other planning processes and efforts, and in some cases lead the way for civic development and improvements.

Master Plan Development

Overview of Process

On November 8, 2013, Leadership Johns Creek hosted a “Non-Profit Expo” for LJC class members to meet with local non-profits in order to learn more about the organizations, form relationships and advocate for non-profits in the community. Meeting with Johns Creek Beautification and understanding their aim of preservation and beautification of Johns Creek helped provide the inspiration for installation of public art in the community. However, it was difficult to identify a clear pathway forward which enabled the installation of Public Art. Thus, the LJC Class elected to explore the creation of a Public Art Master Plan.

Master Plan

This is a document that encompasses both the long-term vision of arts for the city and the practical steps that both the city and the community need to take in order to achieve that vision. Specifically it seeks to ask the questions of how arts relate to the City of Johns Creek both in esthetic and economic impact on the community, establish procedures for site and art selection and funding, and the setting up of relevant administrative processes to enable the long term sustenance and growth of such an undertaking.

The development process involved four main steps: LJC Class research, public forums, stakeholder deliberations, and feedback from city staff.

Research

This involved a comprehensive needs assessment and evaluation of Public Art installation in the City of Johns Creek as well a study of similar projects undertaken by various cities across the country. Additionally a similar process was followed for the purpose of understanding the various art forms with an eye to installing one such art piece in the public realm.

Public Forums

To gather the opinions regarding public art in the city of Johns Creek, a series of two public forums were held at Emory Johns Creek Hospital and Newtown Park Community Center on:

- a. January 30, 2013
- b. January 31, 2013

Many of the ideas for the role of Public Art in the City of Johns Creek came directly from these public forums. The discussion included: a review of various Public Art master plans from around the country; visual preference surveys for types and styles of Public Art; identification of preferred locations for Public Art in both roadways areas and parks (the location for possible public art pieces commenced with an initial effort prepared by Johns Creek Beautification and was expanded upon by citizens at the public forum); question and answer section on the size and structure of the Public Art Board; and a survey on Public Art.

Community Survey

The Leadership Class developed and advertised a survey on Public Art to gain a larger response from the community on their perspective of Public Art. The total number of surveys received exceeded 100.

Public Art Discussions with Stakeholders and Interested Citizens

After preparing the initial draft of the Public Art Master Plan, the LJC Class presented its draft on:

- c. February 8, 2013 - to stakeholders and community members at the Chamber of Commerce office.

- d. February 25, 2013 – to the community by posting the document on the City’s webpage for comment period.
- e. February 27, 2013 – to community members at the Johns Creek Arts Center, Participation and Feedback from City Staff.

The City staff was very important in the development of the master plan beginning with a preliminary meeting in November with City Manager John Kachmar, Patty Hansen, and Justin Kirouac. Additional staff members were consulted after the public forums to review the location identified by residents as potential Public Art sites including: Public Works Director, Community Development Director, City Engineer, and Parks Director.

Final Public Art Master Plan

The final Public Art Master Plan includes additional feedback received during the public comment period February 25th through March 5, 2013

Vision, Mission, and Goals

Vision - The Public Art Program will enhance the image of Johns Creek and foster a “sense of place” for its residents and visitors.

Mission - The mission of the Johns Creek Public Art Program is to create a more visually pleasing environment and to expand the opportunities for residents and visitors to experience quality works of art.

Goals - The goals of the Public Art Program are:

- 1) Create a stimulating cultural environment by:
 - i) Promoting the aesthetic values of the entire community,
 - ii) Providing opportunity to enjoy and appreciate works of art,
 - iii) Reflecting and enhancing the City’s:
 - (1) Heritage
 - (2) Diversity
 - (3) Character
 - iv) Integrating public artworks into the architecture, infrastructure and landscape, and
 - v) Encouraging the preservation and protection of works of art.
- 2) Assist in the creation of superior and diverse aesthetic character of the City’s built environment that is:
 - i) Vital to the quality of the life of its citizens,
 - ii) Vital to the economic success of its businesses,
 - iii) An attraction for visitors, and
 - iv) Supportive of the City’s mission to make Johns Creek "the premier City in which to live, work and raise a family."
- 3) Impact the quality of life in our community by fostering:

- i) advocacy,
- ii) marketing,
- iii) education, and
- iv) Stewardship of public art that will create public understanding of the social and economic value of Public Art in the community.

Public Art Board (PAB)

A Public Art Board (PAB) should be established to advise the Johns Creek City Council as to matters concerning the selection, placement, maintenance, and removal of Public Art. The five (5) member Public Art Board should be appointed and overseen by the City Council. To support the PAB in their efforts, we propose the creation of Community Outreach Panels (COP) to serve as ad-hoc committees representing each of the major Public Art disciplines including:

- A. Sculptures,
- B. Murals,
- C. Mosaics, and
- D. Miscellaneous

A Community Outreach Panel will be chaired by a PAB member and will be comprised of four additional members who are residents of the Johns Creek area where a proposed piece of Public Art is planned. The purpose of these panels is to keep the community informed and gather feedback about the particular piece of art being considered, its artist, theme, medium, length of display, and subject matter content. The Community Outreach Panel will make recommendations to the PAB.

The PAB is proposed to be a dependent Advisory Board appointed by the City Council. The PAB will make recommendations to the City Council who will make the final determination on each piece of Public Art.

Public Art Program – General Standards

General Standards - By combining the volunteer efforts of citizens like those serving in the Leadership Class along with those serving in the Arts Community, and building upon the previous efforts of Johns Creek Beautification, Johns Creek will be prepared to create a world-class public art community. The City Council intends for all Public Art within the corporate limits of the City be selected and approved according to the Public Art Master Plan and Enabling Ordinance.

Acquisition Standards

Public Art is defined as the work of a visual artist located on public property in a publicly accessible space. Public Art includes, but is not limited to, paintings, murals, statues, stained glass, fiber art, relief or other sculpture, fountains, arches and other structures intended for ornament or commemoration, carvings, frescoes, mosaics, mobiles, photographs, drawings, collages, prints, landscape art, and crafts, both decorative and

utilitarian. Public Art may be temporary or permanent in nature. Public Art projects may also include visual or landscape artists serving on design and development teams to identify opportunities and approaches for incorporating artwork or aesthetic concepts into City building and visible public improvement projects. Regardless of the method of acquisition, certain fundamental criteria will be universally applied to any work of art under consideration including:

- A. Artistic merit.
- B. Physical condition of the artwork.
- C. History and provenance of the artwork.
- D. Compatibility with the City's Public Art program and collection.
- E. Availability of an appropriate location for siting on public property.
- F. Requirements for installation, storage, and maintenance.
- G. Liability considerations and issues of public safety.

Acceptable Art. Acceptable forms of art ("Acceptable Art") shall include but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- A. All forms of limited edition or one-of-a-kind original creations of visual art created by an artist.
- B. Project features and enhancements which are unique and produced by a professional artist such as benches and fountains.
- C. Murals or mosaics covering walls.
- D. Natural Art work.
- E. Professional artist sculptures which can be freestanding, wall-supported or suspended and made of durable materials suitable to the site and the climate.
- F. Other suitable artworks as presented in a catalogue and previously approved by the City Council.

Not Acceptable Art. The following, non-exclusive list describes those items not considered Acceptable Art:

- A. Business logos or art that incorporates a logo for the primary purpose of advertising a business.
- B. Directional elements such as super-graphics, signage or color coding except where these elements are integral parts of the original works of art.
- C. Mass-produced art objects, such as fountains, statuary objects, or playground equipment.
- D. Reproduction by mechanical or other means of original works of art.
- E. Decorative ornamental or functional elements created by the project architect instead of an artist commissioned for this purpose
- F. Electrical, water or mechanical service for activation of the works of art,
- G. Art exhibitions and educational activities.
- H. Security and publicity concerning works of art.
- I. Art used as signage.

Scale and Examples of Art

Recommended types of Public Art are described in terms of the proportion/impact of the artwork using the terms *large-scale*, *medium-scale* and *small-scale*.

- *Large-scale* art is prominent, has a significant impact due to its size and has the ability to change a location. Large-scale art works are easily viewed from a distance and impact the surrounding area. A large-scale work can be an independent sculpture, it may include several components, or it may be an artwork integrated into a large building, open space, or park.
- *Medium-scale* is on a human-size scale. Medium-scale art may be visible from a distance although it has greater impact and is better viewed at the pedestrian level. The art could be a focal point or a built-in feature.
- *Small-scale* art requires close proximity on the part of the viewer in order to have an impact. Some examples of small-scale public art include surface treatments, sidewalk inlays or functional pieces such as benches and planters.

This Master Plan focuses solely on pieces of art placed on public property. The location of the art will dictate the criteria and scale for the piece. For example, Public Art placed in city rights-of-ways and easements will be required to meet all Federal and State Traffic Management Regulations/Guidelines, as applicable. For pieces of art placed in parks, the criteria above will be used. The Public Art Board may develop these criteria further.

Funding

There are many ways to fund a Public Art Program in Johns Creek ranging from a percent-for-art program, grants-in-aid from philanthropic groups and governments, corporate contributions and private donations. The goal should be to create a funding plan which accomplishes the goals and objectives of the plan. Various options for consideration over the life of this program include:

- A. Percent-For-Art Program - This funding is traditionally viewed as the backbone of a successful Public Art Program. In some cities, 1% of the Capital Improvement Program budget is allocated to a fund providing for acquisition, placement, maintenance, advocacy and education.
- B. Start-Up Funds – Some municipalities provide start-up funds to initiate projects similar to those presented in the Appendices. The allocation of resources may fulfill the goals of the program on a faster timeline.
- C. Partner with a Foundation - A 501(c) (3) nonprofit corporation may be identified to accept donations from community businesses, organizations, and individuals interested in contributing to Public Art for community enrichment. Collaborations with individuals, organizations, or businesses are important to gaining and maintaining community involvement and support.

Ownership

Responsibility after Installation

Public Art located on City-owned property which are permanent shall be dedicated to the City. The art's final location will be reviewed and approved by both the City's Public Works Director and Community Development Director or designees to ensure compliance with the ADA and other applicable codes, and to minimize conflicts with

public utilities in City rights-of-way/parks. The City will insure and maintain all pieces on City-owned property or rely on the plan presented by the PAB.

Maintenance

As part of the Public Art commissioning process, the PAB will develop and recommend to the City Council a plan to maintain each piece of Public Art. This plan will include, at a minimum, who will be responsible for the maintenance of the art piece, specific steps to maintain the piece, removal plans should this be required, and any other conditions as deemed necessary.

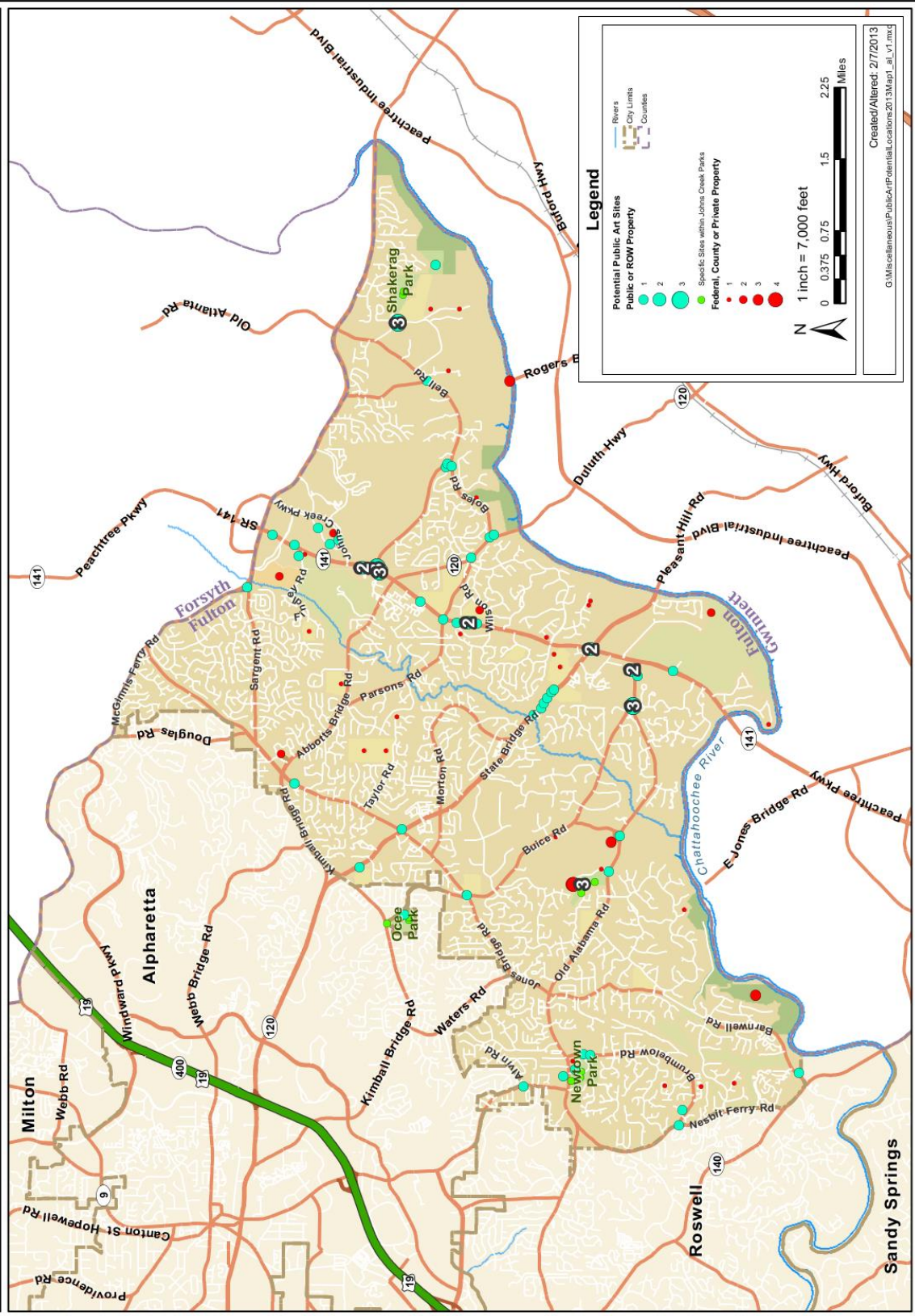
PUBLIC ART PROJECTS

Public Art projects may only be initiated by the PAB or through a request submitted by a Johns Creek based not-for-profit organization to the PAB. Each request will include an overall art plan addressing location, style, ownership, responsibility for the maintenance and conservation of the Public Art. The PAB will create a COP to review the request and provide a recommendation to the PAB for approval/disapproval.

Appendices

Potential Public Art Sites As identified by Citizens at the Public Forums

Potential Public Art Locations - Map 1 City of Johns Creek - February 2013

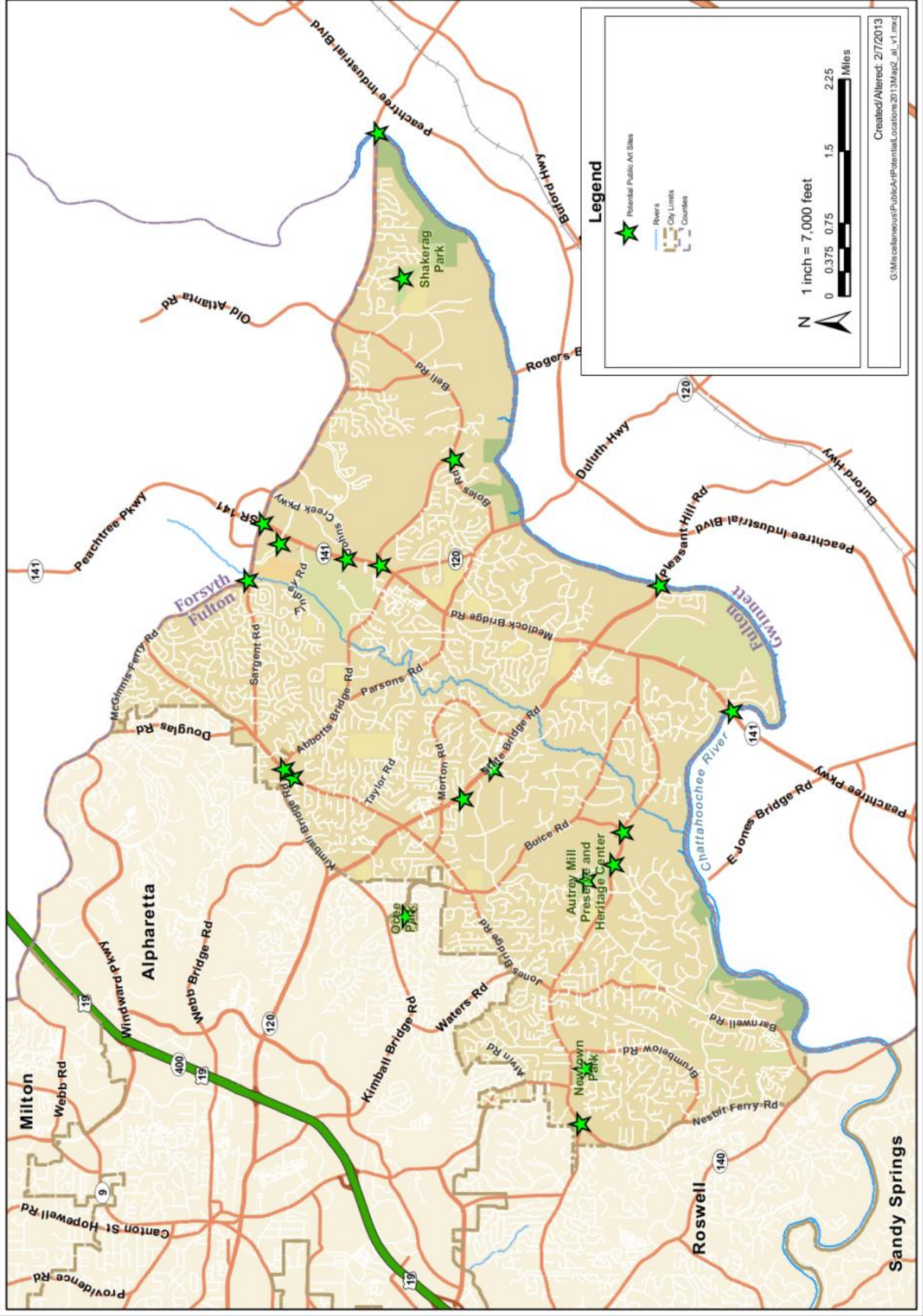


Potential Public Art Sites

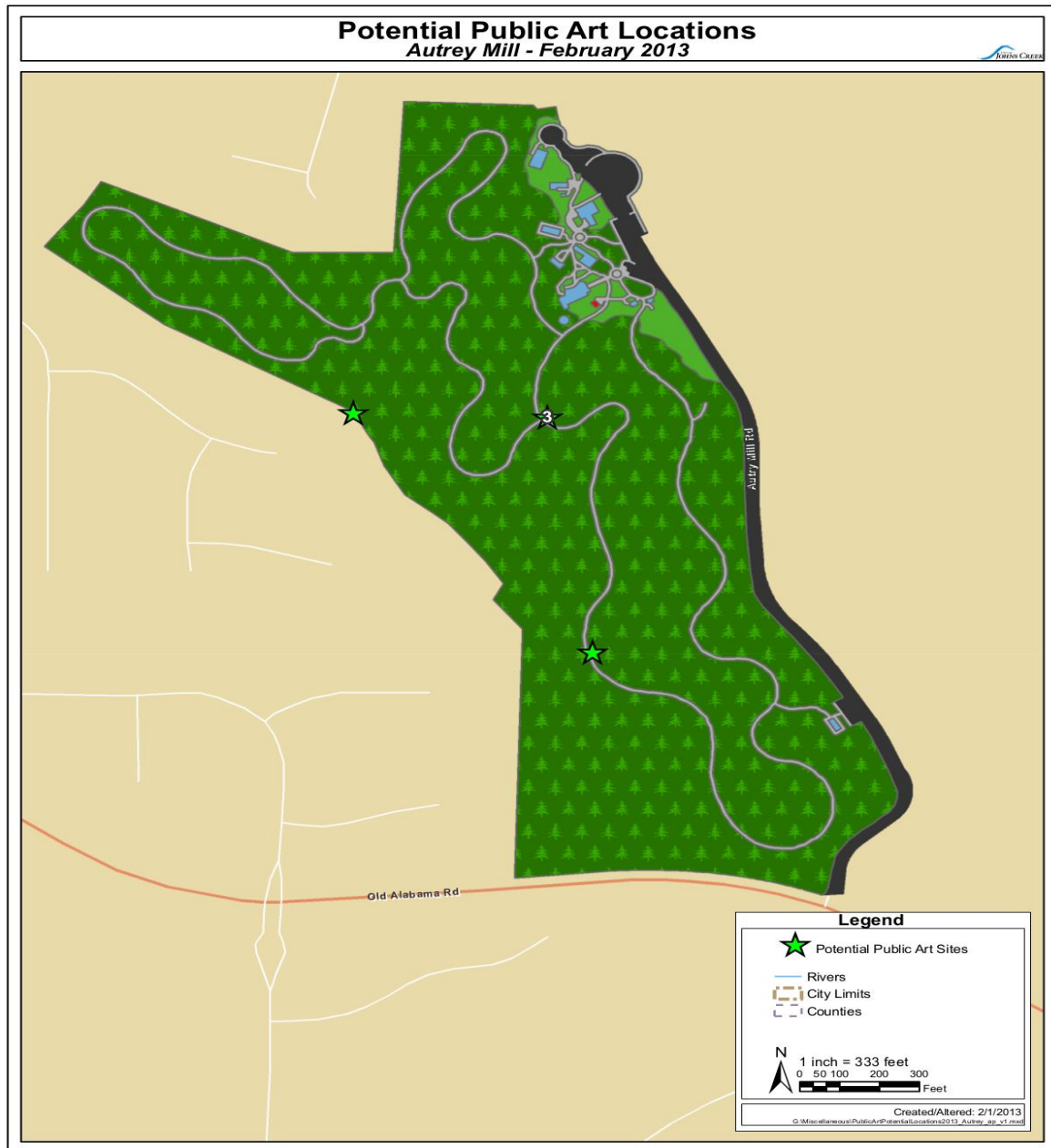
**As Reviewed and Recommended by LJC Class based on Consultation
with City Staff**

Potential Public Art Locations - Map 2

City of Johns Creek - February 2013



Potential Public Art Sites At City Parks



Potential Public Art Locations Newtown Park - February 2013



Potential Public Art Locations

Ocee Park - February 2013



Potential Public Art Locations Shakerag Park - February 2013

