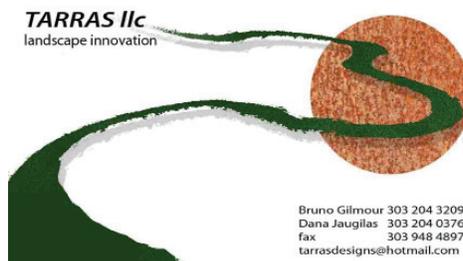


City of Boulder Transit Village Area Public Art Master Plan

StudioTerra, Inc., Tarras LLC, Christian Muller Inc.

December 2009



Christian Muller Inc.

Phone: 303 807 1039
303 998 0600
bylermuller@comcast.net

Public Art

Public art refers to objects integrated into the shared urban environment that are intended for public interaction. This could range from infrastructure with a deliberately aesthetic quality, to a purely aesthetic object amid infrastructure. A key function of art in general is to inspire us to see the familiar in less familiar ways. Public art has the potential to take an environment that could be generic and familiar, and render it a place, unique and memorable. Through drawing on specifically local influences, whether they be cultural, historical, environmental, public art aims to establish visual and material cues indicating a sense of place.



A different perspective. Art helps us to see the familiar in ways that are free of habit, allowing a richer relationship with our surroundings.

Discovery

Public art has the potential to add a layer of ongoing discovery. Themes and connections between individual works can facilitate an extended interest in getting to know a place, while adding layers of interest and meaning. Themes could be informative, whether culturally, historically or environmentally, or more whimsical and abstract, relating to the works only. Simpler still, material connections can be made, particularly between components that are both infrastructure and artistic, to create a logic of movement or spatial hierarchy.

Composition and Themes

The stand-alone and infrastructure art elements described in this document can tie together to form a unified composition that reflects the overall theme of “transit” or movement. Transit is defined as “the act of passing over, across, or through something.” There are many aspects and sub-themes of transit that can be referenced for artistic expression. The rail line, bus line, automobile, bicycle and pedestrian modes of transport are all inspirations for this artistic expression. As well, less conventional aspects of transit such as the overhead power transmission lines, the conveyance of water in Goose Creek, and the tectonic plates of the earth’s crust are also elements of transit that can be artistically explored. The history and future of transit in Boulder Valley will also be important to weave into the overall composition in order to relate the art to this specific site and time in history. The juxtaposition of the more natural corridors with the urban built environment provides an interesting theme to be explored. Each art element will help create an overall design vocabulary that becomes specific to the Transit Village area and helps create its’ unique identity.

Background to this Master Plan

The Transit Village Area Plan (TVAP) was adopted by the Boulder Planning Board and City Council in September 2007. The Plan envisions “a lively mixed-use pedestrian oriented place where people will live, work, shop, and access regional transit. The following vision was adopted to provide direction for the future development of the area. The Transit Village area will be:

- A lively and engaging place with a diversity of uses, including employment, retail, arts and entertainment, with housing to serve a diversity of ages, incomes, and ethnicities;
- A place that is not overly planned, with a “charming chaos” that exhibits a variety of building sizes, styles and densities where not everything looks the same;
- A place with both city-wide and neighborhood scale public spaces;
- A place that attracts and engages a broad spectrum of the community;
- A place that emphasizes and provides for alternative energy, sustainability, walking, biking, and possible car-free areas, e.g. “eco-village.”

The TVAP calls for an Arts and Aesthetics Plan to identify opportunities for public art to create a unique and interesting place.

Additional context for the Public Art Master Plan is included in the Transit Village Area Plan Guidelines, which set up an overall framework, within which this Art Master Plan functions. The following excerpts from the Plan Guidelines provide context for this Art Master Plan:

General Guidelines:

Usable Open Space:

Incorporate well-designed, functional open spaces with trees, quality landscaping and art, access to sunlight and places to sit comfortably.

Bus Stops:

Include the following for bus stops adjacent to the development projects: a shelter, benches, route and schedule signage. Additional enhancements are encouraged, such as pedestrian lighting, art, landscaping and waste receptacles.

Junction Place

In addition to the street trees, sidewalks and bike facilities specified by the Junction Place streetscape section, provide seating planters, art, special pavement and lighting along junction place. Provide way-finding features such as special pavements, signs, or art, to facilitate pedestrian movement between Junction Place, Rail Plaza, the rail platform and under/overpass, the bus station, Goose Creek Greenway, Pearl, Valmont, 30th Street and Wilderness Place.

Transit Facility Guidelines:

Facility identity:

Create a distinctive identity for the transit facility that resonates with the identity of the larger community. Select a theme that will be universally valued by a diversity of users. For example, an identity may be cultivated by incorporating art and/or an existing natural or man-made feature unique to the area into the facility. Consider carrying them into the way-finding features discussed in the Junction Place and Rail Plaza Design Guidelines.

Rail Plaza Guidelines:

Consider including active art and water features, especially for children.

Look for opportunities to incorporate art into built elements, such as paving, railings, signage, seating, or overhead structures.

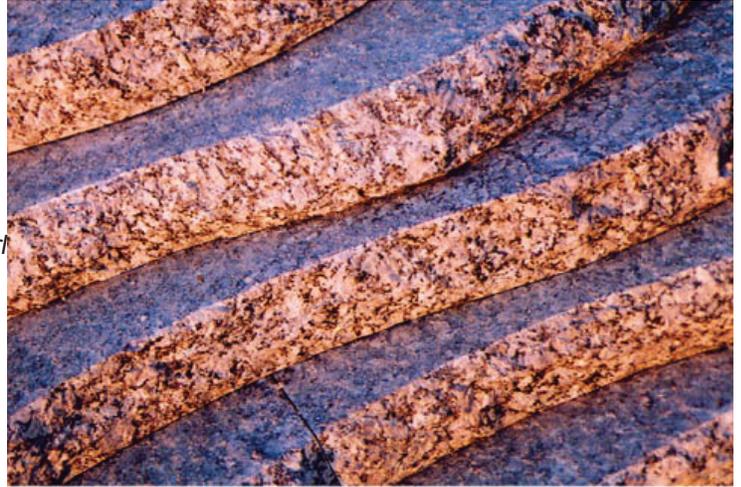
Provide way-finding features, such as signage, special pavement and art, to direct people to the plaza from 30th Street, Bluff Street, Valmont Road, Junction Place and Pearl Parkway.

30th Street Corridor District Guidelines:

Provide street furnishings, such as benches, planters, cafe seating, art, and pedestrian lighting.

Additional information about the plan can be found at: www.bouldertransitvillage.net.

Parks and Recreation Department policies regarding public art accession (acceptance), deaccession (removal) and maintenance will apply to art on Parks and Recreation Department property.



“Art exists that one may recover the sensation of life; it exists to make one feel things, to make the stone stoney.”¹

Purpose of this Art Master Plan

The purpose of this Art Master Plan is to identify opportunities for public art in the transit village area, and to describe the function and role that public art can provide. This is intended to be an open ended document; it is expected that further opportunities for public art will arise as the project evolves, and that these will be incorporated into this master plan.

The Art Master Plan does not attempt to prescribe what the nature of any public art work within the transit village area should be. This would be arrived at through a process involving the artist responsible for an individual work, working corroboratively with other relevant bodies.

The Art Master Plan does not address standardized street furniture items. A thematic Design Guideline would have specific suggestions about items such as lighting, seating, trash receptacles etc. Beyond this, a Design Guideline, developed in conjunction with the Art Master Plan, could extend ideas derived from the public art process throughout the site, as suggestions for material combinations, treatments, textures, colors and so on.

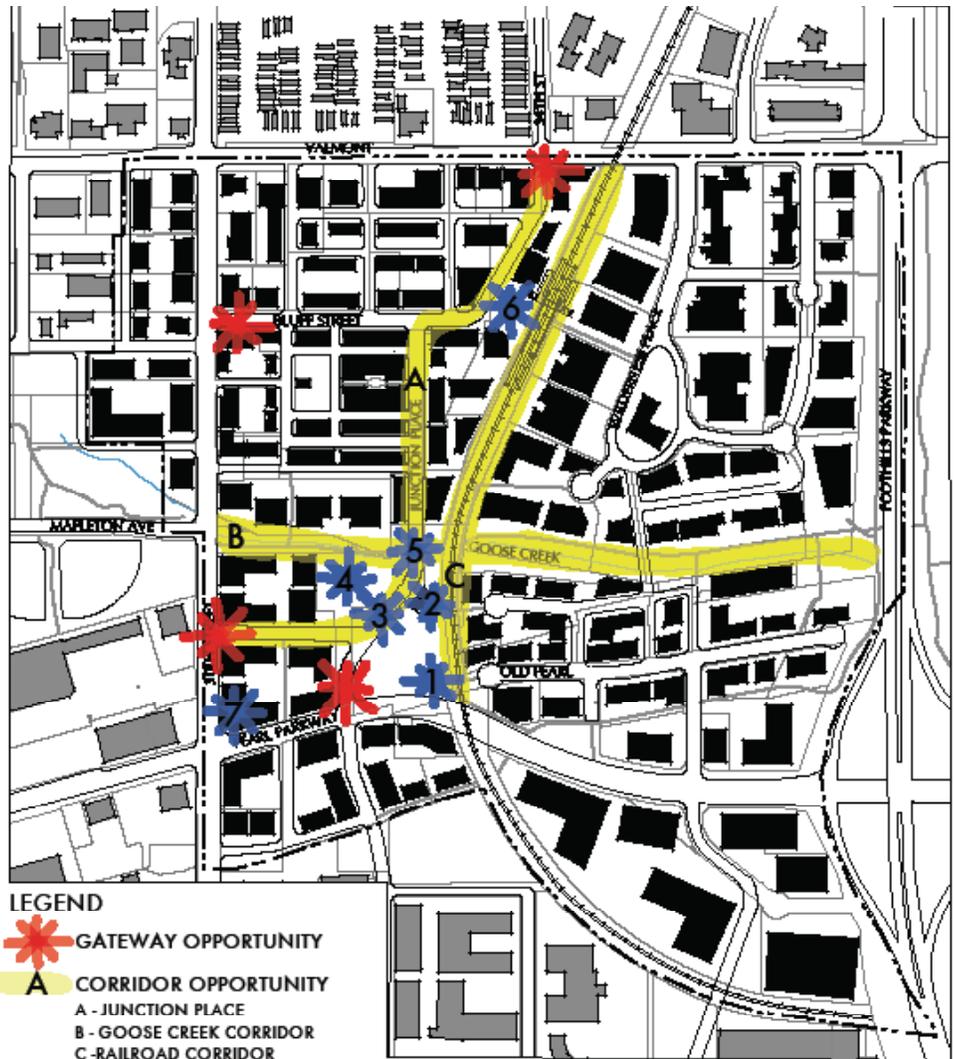
Public Art Diagram

The transit village area Plan Guidelines, presents a clear set of character areas, with distinct identities. Public art can be used to strengthen these character areas, while reinforcing their interconnectedness. The Art Master Plan recognizes the need for walking, cycling, gathering and other passive recreational activities, which overlap one another, and sees these needs as tools for integrating distinct character areas, as well as opportunities for art.

The diagram opposite illustrates key potential locations for public art within the transit village area.

Opportunities for public art tend to be clustered around nodes; highly used public places along converging routes of movement. Gateway opportunities exist at the experiential edge of character areas, while the densest groupings of art opportunities occur where the environment is most urban.

"Usually we think of art as an object - something that hangs in a gallery- or as an event that takes place on a stage. Yet places can be works of art, too. They can satisfy our desire for beauty, stir our deepest feelings, link us to our history"¹².



PUBLIC ART DIAGRAM
Boulder Transit Village
 OCTOBER 2009

NOTE:
 None of the illustrations in this document are intended as suggestions for actual works of art. They are suggestive of a type of work only.

Gateway Opportunities

These occur at a node through which people move into the central Transit Village. To be effective, they read both at a scale that relates to vehicles and pedestrians, and are visually effective at vehicle speed and walking pace.

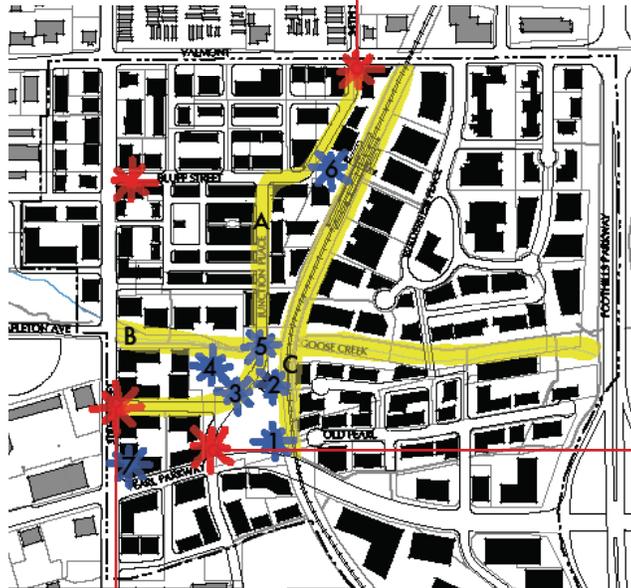
Gateways do not necessarily have to be gate-like, or comprised of post like structures. They do though, create a sense of passing through a threshold into a different place. They define an edge, a start of a distinct place.

Changes in materiality, texture, proportions and scale of space and enclosure can all contribute to a gateway experience.

Images below illustrate public art that creates a sense of a threshold or gateway.



Wind Tunnel, George Peters and Melanie Walker. Clearly evoking entrance, as well as a distinct sense of place.



Sister City columns, Christian Muller
Paired columns, with lighted panels, provide a sense of entry day and night.



Leon Ven Den Eijkel
These pillars are activated directly by the immediate environment - wind energy. In a windy city, they form a place specific gateway feature.

NOTE: None of the illustrations in this document are intended as suggestions for actual works of art. They are suggestive of a type of work only.

Corridor Opportunity A:

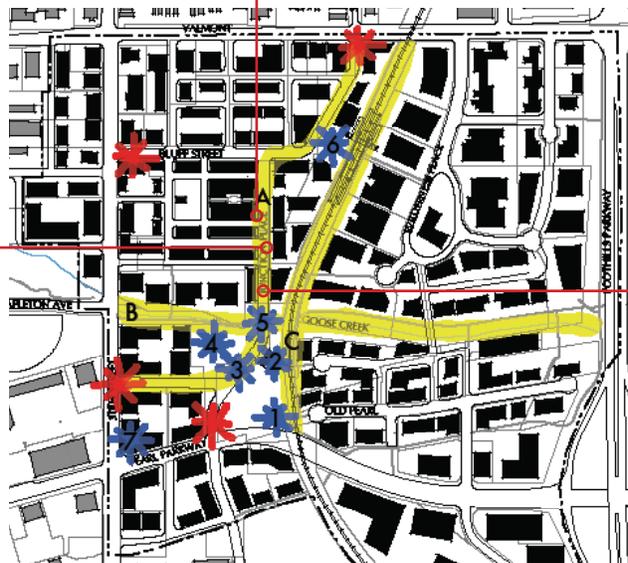
Junction Place

Corridors will require street furniture, and though most of this will be stock items, there will also be opportunities for artistic interpretations of conventional items.

Junction Place will have a strong urban character, with many opportunities for pieces that are both 'useful' and 'interesting.'



Niemi Cava Bench



Flour Power, Regan Gentry
Based on local agricultural forms, these light standards serve as sculpture and as an orientation device.



NOTE: None of the illustrations in this document are intended as suggestions for actual works of art. They are suggestive of a type of work only.

Fern Bollards, Wellington
Making the most ordinary street furniture artistic and placeful.



Corridor Opportunity B: Goose Creek Corridor

Reinstating the natural forms of Goose Creek would create a pleasing contrast with surrounding urban forms. Art works could provide people with opportunities to relate to the creek, and to interact with the water. The corridor would benefit from rest areas and associated facilities, which also have public art potential.

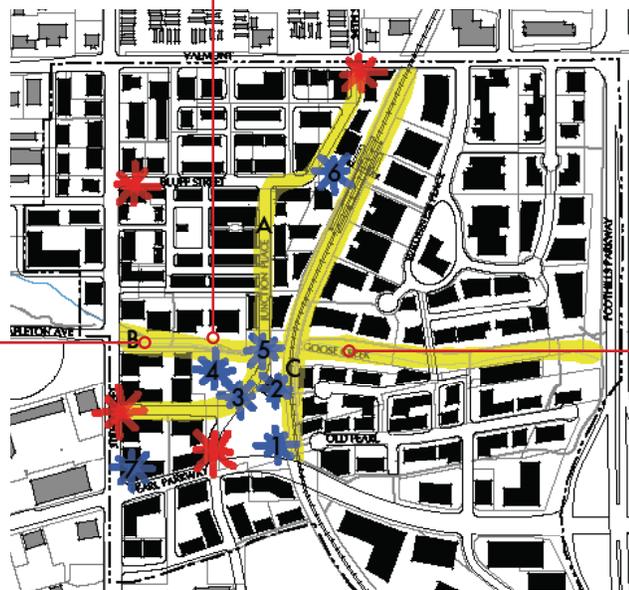


Opportunities for direct contact with natural features.



IBM Campus, Peter Walker

Although the scale of this project is different, this image demonstrates strong geometry and organic forms interacting. The rail aspect of the Transit Village has innately strong geometry, while Goose Creek could be a naturalized riparian corridor.



NOTE: None of the illustrations in this document are intended as suggestions for actual works of art. They are suggestive of a type of work only.



Goose Creek Corridor can be both a stormwater detention area/constructed wetland AND an opportunity for public art.

**Corridor Opportunity C:
Railroad Corridor**

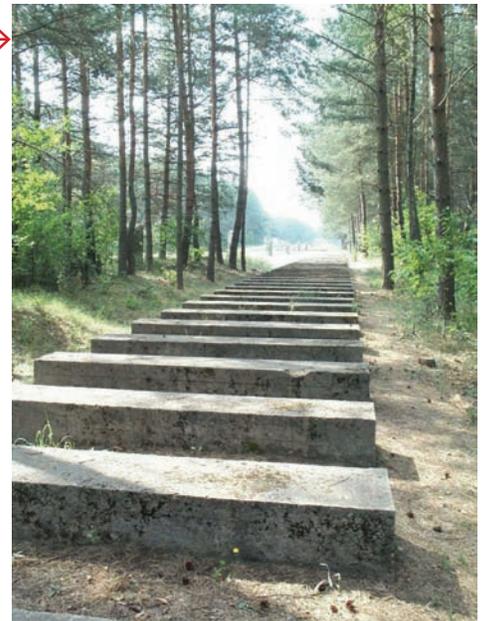
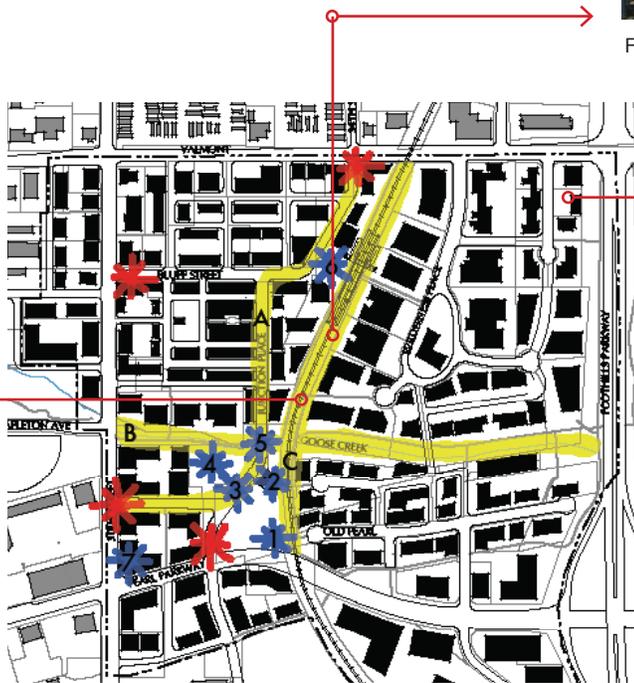
The railway Corridor would have a different pedestrian appeal from the more urban walking experience within the Transit Village. This would be more recreational and exercise oriented, as opposed to shorter, destination based movement.

The strong linear gestures integral to railway corridors, along with the monumental shifts in ground plane associated with railway infrastructure, elicit a vocabulary of forms that could be referred to as 'tectonic.' Railways are comprised of forms which suggest transition, and connection between 'here' and 'there.'

Abstracted and re-interpreted, these ideas are a potent basis for artistic connections between places, and forms within places. Such strong linear forms could connect character areas such as the Depot Plaza, the Depot/ Park Connection, and Transit Station, while generating artistic opportunities that are particular to these areas.



Fencing along the tracks is another opportunity for public art.



railway memorial
Strong, uncompromising lines typical of railways, reconfigured and exaggerated to powerful effect.



Santa Fe Railyard Park

NOTE: None of the illustrations in this document are intended as suggestions for actual works of art. They are suggestive of a type of work only.

Site Opportunity No.1: Bus Rapid Transit

To make the most of this major focal point along Old Pearl Parkway line of site, the structure which terminates the view would visually communicate the function of Bus Rapid Transit.

This will be a major passenger amenity zone. By making functionally related places such as the railroad corridor, depot, and Bus Rapid Transit visually complimentary, a sense of place associated with movement, transition and relocation could be developed.

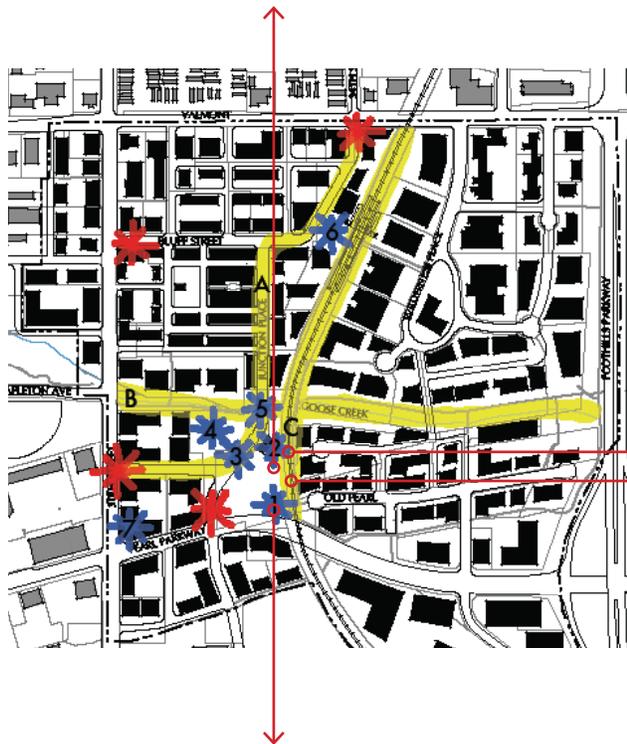
Water features could provide an opportunity for a conceptual link to Goose Creek Corridor.



This structure clearly communicates function.



Santa Fe Railyard Park



Canopies, Martha Shwartz



There is an opportunity to provide a view terminus from Pearl Parkway to Old Pearl.

NOTE: None of the illustrations in this document are intended as suggestions for actual works of art. They are suggestive of a type of work only.

Site Opportunity No.2: Historic Depot

The Depot will be an important central feature of the Transit Village.

The building's character will influence form and materiality of surrounding features and infrastructure, including patios and other exterior public spaces, as well as inspiring art work.

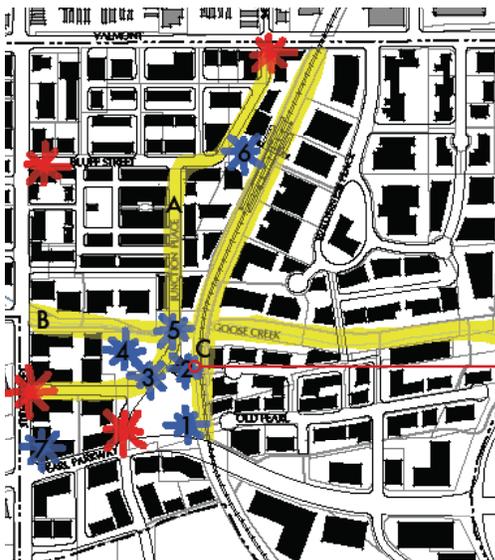
The Depot location makes it highly visible along several view corridors.

Any art works associated with the Depot should acknowledge the historic building, and not compete with it visually, but strengthen its presence.

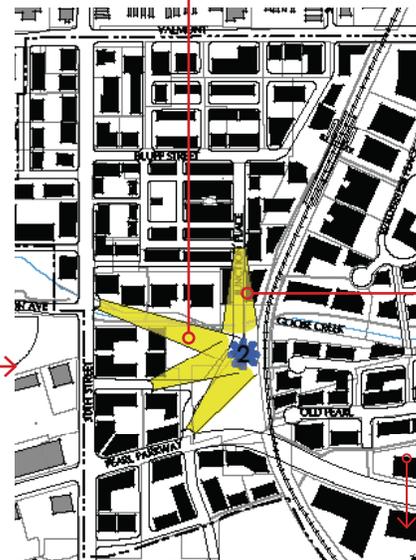
The existing Baggage Pavilion has potential as a vernacular architectural influence.



The Depot in its' historical context



2 = Historic Depot location



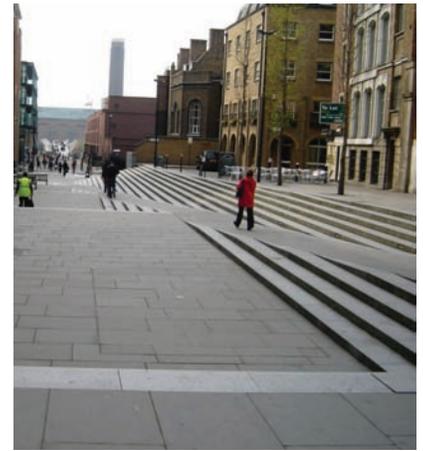
Views to the Historic Depot location



The Depot in its' historical context

Site Opportunity No.3: Depot/Park Connection

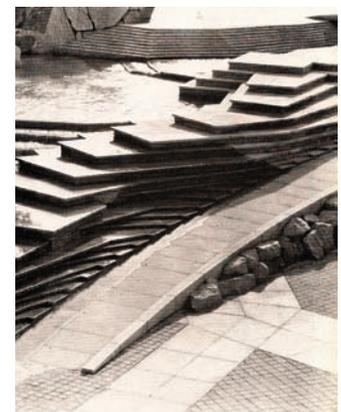
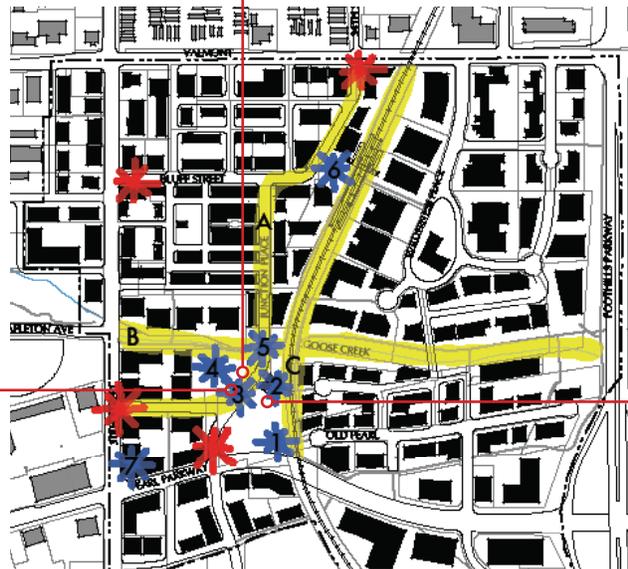
Legible and user friendly connections are key aspects of successful urban design. In creating a link between the depot and the park, there is potential to use the strong linear gestures associated with transit, to form a highly visible, aesthetically pleasing pedestrian connection with the park. This gesture could be the basis of form generation within the park itself.



Linear Park, London



Park, Sydney



Tsukuba Civic Center

NOTE: None of the illustrations in this document are intended as suggestions for actual works of art. They are suggestive of a type of work only.

Site Opportunity No.4:

Pocket Park

A self-contained space as a respite from surrounding activity.

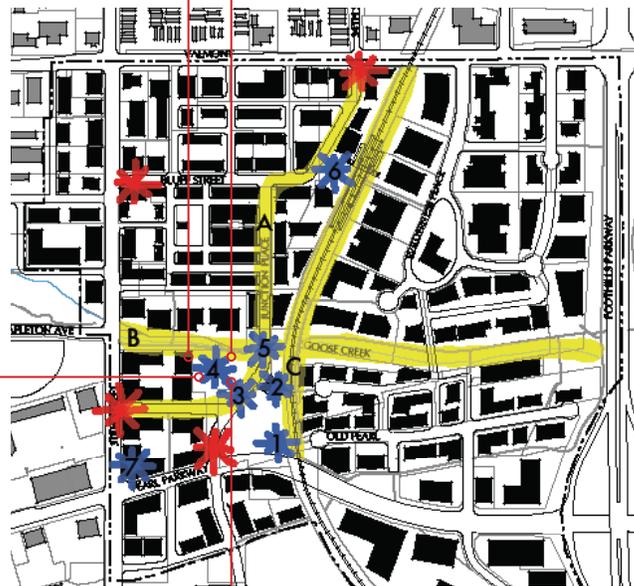
Art pieces in the pocket park could be used to spatially define interesting people-friendly spaces. Art pieces could act as focal points, drawing people into the park, and could be part of the park's infrastructure.



Sky Canopy, Artscapes



Land sculpting in the park can help make the transition down to Goose Creek.



Hoodoos, Nuszer Kopatz, Artscapes
Textures, patinas and rugged forms relate to the natural environment, while the vertical built forms relate to an urban context. This piece provides a spatial interactive experience, with layers of discovery provided through carvings among the stones.



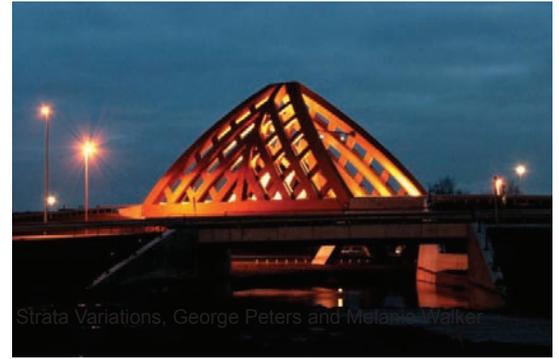
Granite bench, Artscapes

NOTE: None of the illustrations in this document are intended as suggestions for actual works of art. They are suggestive of a type of work only.

Site Opportunity No.5 Goose Creek Bridge

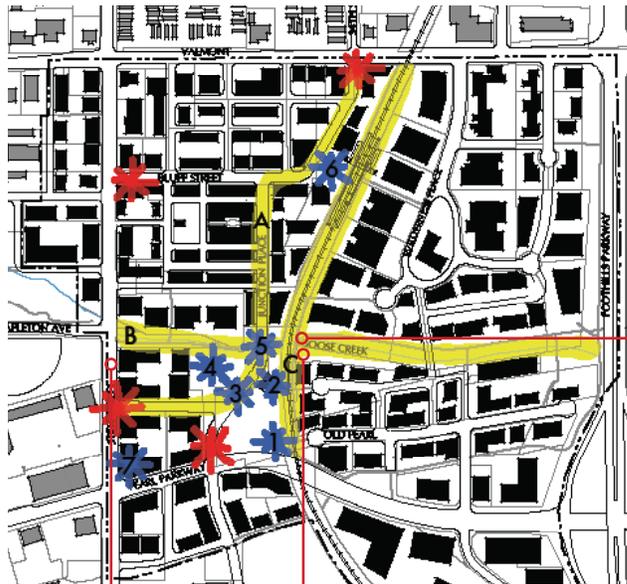
This is an opportunity to integrate infrastructure with artistry. The bridge design could be derived from the Depot building, reinforcing a cohesive sense of place, while fulfilling an important infrastructure role.

Architectural details and materials from the Depot could be adapted, altered and re-interpreted to suit the bridge structure. The Depot would have the stronger visual 'character', supported by the comparable, and complimentary bridge. To achieve this goal, the bridge and depot would need to be considered together, as two parts of a larger composition.



Strata Variations, George Peters and Melissa Walker

Road Bridge, Onix and Achterbosch Architecture.



Pijoan Fence
Natural light used to extend effect beyond the actual built work.

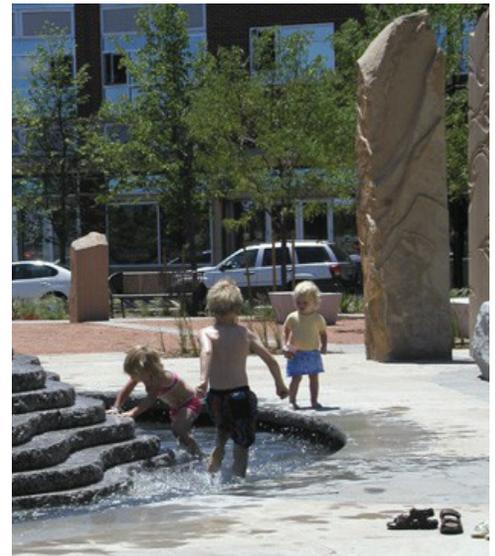
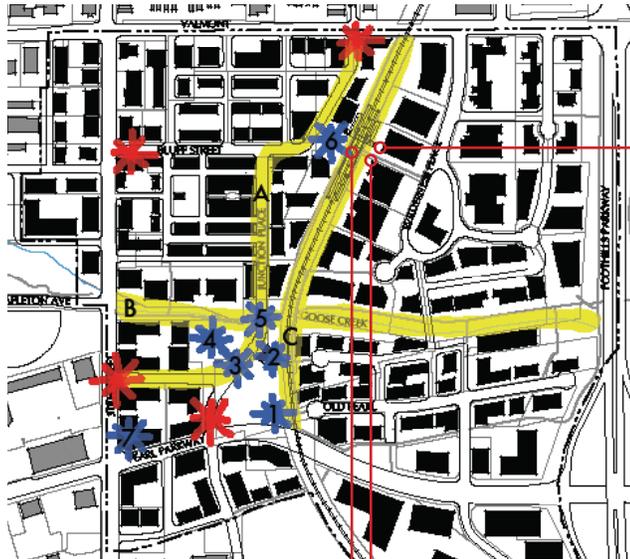


Bridge, Stockholm
Quality modern materials, restrained design.

NOTE: None of the illustrations in this document are intended as suggestions for actual works of art. They are suggestive of a type of work only.

Site Opportunity No.6 Rail Plaza

This public space is likely to be among the most urban parts of the Transit Village. This presents an opportunity to use art to create and reinforce a unique sense of location and place, adding layers of interest that reinforce successful functional space.



West Crescent, Nuszer Kopatz, Artscapes



Invisible city, Anton Parsons



Rail car, Martha Shwartz

NOTE: None of the illustrations in this document are intended as suggestions for actual works of art. They are suggestive of a type of work only.

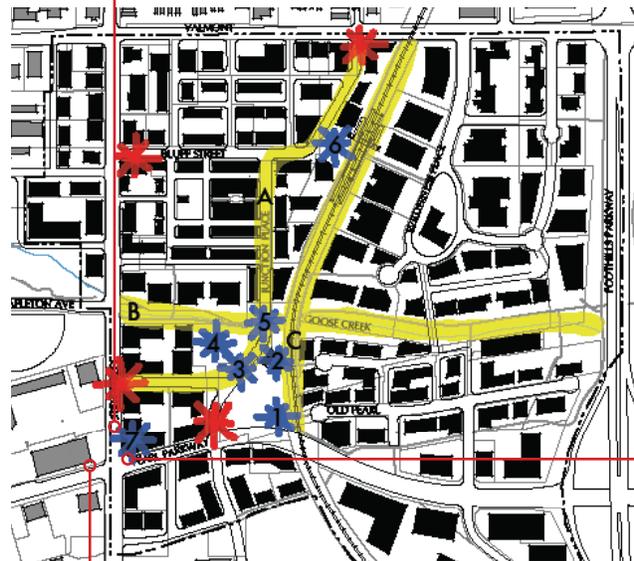
**Site Opportunity No.7
Corner of 30th and Pearl**

On one of the best view corridors, this highly visible intersection will be an important node for both pedestrians and drivers.

For foot traffic, this could be a meeting place and way device at the edge of the dense, pedestrian friendly part of the transit village. This node could be an important way finding device for drivers also.



Chalice, Neil Dawson



Skyblues, Bill Culbert
This installation has a strong spatial quality, while it's scale contributes to way finding and sense of location.



Ferns, Niel Dawson

NOTE: None of the illustrations in this document are intended as suggestions for actual works of art. They are suggestive of a type of work only.

Materiality

Connections to locality in a larger sense (such as the Front Range), can be made through choices of local materials.

Material choices can be made which have functional associations (steel with trains perhaps).

At the same time, connections between places within the Transit Village can be made by selective and repetitive use of materials.



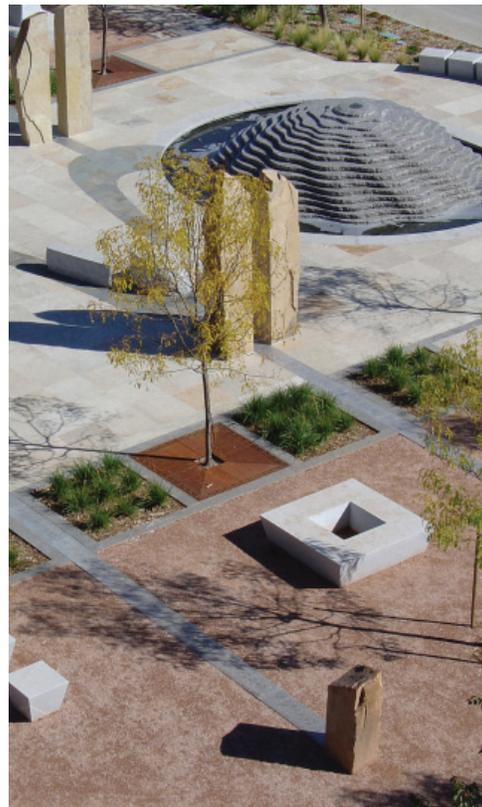
This paving suggests its' ocean side setting. Roberto Burle Marx.



Railway ties, with their distinct texture expressed.



Mt Victoria Lookout, Wellington, Boffa Miskel LTD



West Crescent Stapleton. Nuszer Kopatz, Artsapes

“The concept of places as art is an acknowledgement that color, form, texture, balance, and composition merit equal consideration with the economic and social demands that guide planning and development.”²



Steel, with areas polished by use, others with a weathered patina.

NOTE: None of the illustrations in this document are intended as suggestions for actual works of art. They are suggestive of a type of work only.

Next Steps or What Now?...

The following steps are recommended:

- The public art master plan should be adopted as an element of the Transit Village Area Plan;
- This Art Plan can provide the context for public art in the transit village area including at the RTD bus facility site, the bridge over Goose Creek, and the site plan for the Depot;
- The Art Plan could also provide the framework for more detailed design guidelines to address the more conventional aspects of urban design and landscape architecture such as street furniture, lighting, trash receptacles, and signage.

Notes:

¹ Schkolsky, Victor. "Art as Technique" *Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader*. ED. Lodge, David (1988). Longman, New York. pp.15-30

². Chatfield-Taylor, Adele, Forward in Lipske, Mike (1985) *Places as Art*. Publishing Center for Cultural Resources, New York.

³ Lipske, Mike (1985) *Places as Art*. Publishing Center for Cultural Resources, New York. P.19