

## **JXTA - UHT Park Public Art Concepts - 5/21/20**

### **Script**

#### **A. Intro:**

Hello my name is Sam Ero-Phillips. I work at JXTA as one of the instructors in the Community Design Studio. We've been working with the Minneapolis Park Board and the Design Team on a Public Art master plan for the Upper Harbor Terminal park for the last couple of years. We've done in person meetings with the community and we shared our results for the CAC as well. Now we're going to share some of our concepts that we've developed with the youth in the program and from feedback from the community.

#### **B. Typologies:**

Hi I'm Qadiym Washington, I work at Juxtaposition Arts in the Environmental Design Lab I want to go through this slide with you.

We are thinking about art at the Upper Harbor Terminal in a really broad way. We're not only thinking about murals and sculpture, but art that is integrated into the park's spaces and infrastructure. Public art can even include events led by or featuring artists. Here are icons that show how we can categorize and organize the different types of art.

#### **C. Interviews/Process:**

Hi, my name is Bird Coulter and I have worked at Juxtaposition Arts for three years. We have named five storylines for art in the Upper Harbor Terminal Park. These themes act as inspiration for the art, and will connect to what people learn about and experience in the park.

The five storylines are:

- *Histories of ecological harm and disconnection from this place*
- *Environmental justice work and vision*
- *Appropriation and reappropriation of this place*
- *Settlement history of the Northside*
- *Food sovereignty in Black, Native and POC communities*

Over the past couple of months, we've been interviewing experts and community leaders about these themes. We have several more interviews to complete and we will be continuing to refine these ideas. The public art themes in this presentation are inspired by our research and these interviews.

#### **#1: History & Resilience**

Hi, my name is Rashaunea Ambers-Winston. Something we heard in several of the interviews we did was the need to show the Northside's history and resilience. We need to acknowledge

the disparities and trauma that have led us to where we are, and also our resilience and successes.

The mural lifts up the resilience of the Northside. It visually tells us the stories of important events and leaders in the Northside's history. The mural could lead us to deeper connections. We may not know these stories and it could bring us to a better understanding of different cultural perspectives.

A mural is a good way to bring the public's attention to the Northside's history and it will start conversations.

## **#2: Stage**

A stage is another artistic tool we want to present for Upper Harbor Terminal. We think this stage could be installed before the park is fully constructed, to open more space for Northsiders to connect as a community and get familiar with the Upper Harbor Terminal. The stage could be the addition of a low platform and benches, along with simple lighting and other basic elements. We also think a stage could be a long term part of the park. The stage can present music and other performances that highlight different talents and cultures in the community.

## **#3: Stories up and down the river**

This river has so many stories to tell... There are areas of the Mississippi that were used for housing such as the Bohemian flat over by the U of M and areas of Nicollet Island that were kind of in decrepit condition a generation ago. In this once forgotten section of the river, there used to be a prominent Black establishment called the Riverview Supper Club which served as a communal gathering space. Locations such as St Anthony falls was sacred land for the native Americans who lived here but was dramatically altered with the creation of the water Mills. The lock and dam that was constructed adjacent to the falls was created to help this site serve as an industrial corridor up until 2015. Now the UHT is creating a new history rooted in the desire to connect the surrounding community to the site around a new story.

## **#4: Gathering**

This idea is about creating an intentional space for teaching and gathering, and for Native communities to connect to culture and tradition. Creating connection to Dakota language & to honor it on Dakota land is special since the land has been exploited for years for money and capital instead of using it as a community resource. Dakota people in the area need a public space that's more specific to Native communities' traditions and needs, especially on Dakota land next to such a big source of water for so many living beings. This is a much needed outdoor space that honors the water, land, Native & Northside community & includes stories of the importance of the river and connections that were made with this river even though it wasn't as accessible as it will be now.

## **#5: Communing with the River**

Hi, my name is Preston - I am an apprentice in the Environmental Design Lab.

This idea is about trying to create a calm space, contrasting with the more active areas in the park. It would be situated near the water with plenty of plantings and shady places to rest. During our engagements we noticed a theme of water being described as reflective, calming and sacred. We're thinking about how to use plantings, artist-designed seating or other artistic elements to appreciate those qualities.

#### **#6: Sensory & Ecology Path**

This idea is about holistically heightening the senses, and highlighting the subtle textures, sounds, scents and sights of the park. It is important to realize how our senses are interconnected and what role they play in the way we enjoy our space. We would integrate artist designed sensory focused infrastructure to deepen peoples connection to the park.

#### **#7: Self-Guided Tour**

Hi my name is Emily Tucker. I am an apprentice at Juxtaposition Arts. I work in the Tactical department.

Today I am going to be talking about the Self-Guided Tour. This idea is about helping people make their way through the park and learn the history of the site and the Northside, to understand the significance of the park and the people who live over North. It could feel like a scavenger hunt or game with clues, while telling the history of the park. We could use materials that are already on the site, like these concrete blocks. We could also connect to more information online.

The guideposts could be placed around the site before the park is even finished to say what's coming or ask people questions. Or they could be placed in other locations around the Northside to help people find the park.

#### **#8: People-Power Music and Light**

The idea of People-Powered Music & Light is about making it clear that the park is about people--not industry, as it is now. It's about the future.

Art could be lit up by pedaling, or interactive sculptures could light up or play music when you move. Or people's movement can do other things like generate electricity to charge phones.

This artwork lets people interact with each other and have fun while they move their bodies and get their blood pumping.

#### **#9: Rotating Mural + Free Wall**

As Sam said before, "public art can tell stories. Graffiti plays an important role in the reappropriation process of the UHT site. North Minneapolis has been disconnected from the river for many years, and the community is finally getting the opportunity to interact and connect with the river. This is due to the artists coming here and seeing an opportunity. That opportunity has raised awareness and now the site is a point of attraction. The fact that we are here now shows that their hard work has paid off and we want to keep that energy going. The

reappropriation energy and giving back to the community that has been left out for so long. We want to do murals that talk about the river and that tell tell of stories, and let you know that this is a space that welcomes all people -- a space that is for the community that is here and has been here.

#### **#10: Industrial Play Structures**

Hi, my name is Kristen Murray - I teach with Sam at Juxtaposition Arts. When people go to Upper Harbor Terminal, many people are amazed by the industrial structures. For some people, they make them think of a playground, for other people, they are things that need to go to make way for a new kind of space.

Instead of sending everything to the landfill or scrapyard, pieces of the relics could be incorporated into artist-designed play structures, seating, bike racks or other elements. These new elements could include plaques that tell the story of the industry and work that happened here during the industrial chapter of Upper Harbor's history.

#### **#11: "We're Watching You"**

The Northside community--which includes one Minneapolis's two Green Zones--has done a huge amount of organizing to reduce the pollution that the community is exposed to, and to open the riverfront for people to come to.

Public art at Upper Harbor could include a monument that acknowledges this organizing, and tells people in the park about the work that's still underway. It could also be a reminder to nearby industry that the community is paying attention.

#### **D. The Value of Art at UHT**

The story of the Mississippi river and the story of Minnesota are one in the same. The Mississippi is the largest tributary in the Midwest and one of the largest rivers in the entire world. The story of the river and the story of our culture is always in flux because like the banks of the Mississippi, our culture moves. It affects our economy, the natural landscape and our society.

Public art helps to tell stories and helps to connect people to these histories. Art makes spaces more enjoyable and helps to reflect the voices of the people who live nearby.

Thank you very much - we're looking forward to hearing feedback from the Community Advisory Committee and the broader community on these ideas and storylines.