

BLUEPRINT



INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGENCY

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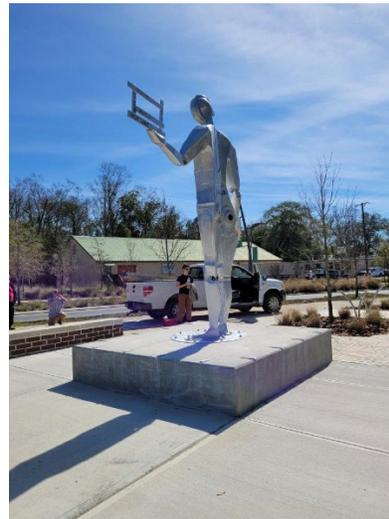
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Blueprint History and Culture Trail Art Installation

~ One of the single largest infusions of outdoor public art in Tallahassee's history. ~



Tallahassee, Fla. – The first sculpture along the growing History and Culture Trail was installed today. A project of Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency, the City of Tallahassee and Leon County Government, the History and Culture Trail includes a variety of public artworks that honor the resilient neighborhoods, civil rights advocates and economic engines of the communities located adjacent to Cascades Trail and FAMU Way. Once complete, new pieces of public art will have been installed through the project, representing the single largest infusion of outdoor public art in Tallahassee history.

Since its kickoff last October, three murals and now one sculpture have been completed as part of project. The artists, works and locations are:

- Mark Dickson (Tallahassee) - "In Honor of the Worker" sculpture, located at the St. Marks Trailhead off FAMU Way
- Yasaman Mehrsa (Toronto, Canada) - "We Are All One" murals, located at Anita R. Favors Plaza
- Joseph Cowdrey (New Jersey) - "A Stroll Down Seaboard" mural, located at the market area near the FAMU Way playground

"It's exciting to see the elements of the History and Culture Trail coming to fruition. The timing could not be better as we are celebrating Black History Month. The trail represents a \$1.1 million investment that adds to the existing vibrancy of the Southside, growing it as a destination and economic hub," Blueprint IA Board Chair and Tallahassee City Commissioner Curtis Richardson said. "This work complements the roughly \$315 million in public infrastructure investments we've recently made in the Southside."

The 1.5-mile History and Culture Trail, located between South Adams Street and North Lake Bradford Road, is part of Blueprint's Capital Cascades Trail Segment 3 project, which began construction in 2013. Once complete, the History and Culture Trail will join a host of amenities along FAMU Way, including the Skateable Art Park, Coal Chute Pond Trail, the community gathering space at Lake Anita, a playground and more.

In addition to the public art, history monuments will be installed along trail. They will include images and information, which was gathered through years of extensive research, about the neighborhoods, businesses and individuals who lived and worked in the area. The trail's public artworks serve to further enhance and interpret these historical accounts, while offering additional opportunities for engagement.

"The Trail truly reflects the rich history and culture of the Southside and the African American neighborhoods that continue to shape Tallahassee-Leon County," said IA Board Vice Chair and Leon County At-Large Commissioner Carolyn Cummings. "We are eager to unveil all of the works by the end of 2023 at a large community celebration."

"The History and Culture Trail is the last amenity to be completed for the Capital Cascades Trail Segment 3 Project," Blueprint Director Autumn Calder said. "The trail represents Blueprint's dedication to going above and beyond by incorporating history and arts in infrastructure projects around the community."

Mark Dickson, a resident of Tallahassee, is one of the seven selected artists for the History and Culture Trail. Dickson created "In Honor of the Worker," a 15-foot tall aluminum sculpture. It pays tribute to the workers of the Elberta Crate & Box Company, which opened a factory in Tallahassee in 1922. The factory offered steady employment to many African American men and women, processing hundreds of trees daily to manufacture crates. The sculpture is located at the St. Mark's Trailhead.

"I'm honored and humbled to have my work be part of the History and Culture Trail," Dickson said. "To be part of this community and to have the support for over 20 years as an artist is a big deal to me that I don't take for granted."

Yasaman Mehrsa is a Toronto-based visual artist who works in both digital and traditional media. Selected for the History and Culture Trail, Mehrsa completed two 20-foot tall murals, collectively titled "We Are All One." The murals are filled with color and symbolism to capture the spirit of the Allen Subdivision. The Allen Subdivision boasted more than 80 Black-owned businesses and a vibrant, tight-knit community life. The murals can be found at Anita R. Favors Plaza off of FAMU Way.

"The Allen Subdivision community is really bonded. Residents celebrated, gathered and felt they had to be together. You don't see that in every neighborhood. I believe it's rare," Mehrsa said.

Joseph Cowdrey, raised in Tallahassee, is another selected artist for the History and Culture Trail. Cowdrey completed a 200-foot long mural titled, "A Stroll Down Seaboard." It commemorates the Seaboard and Stearns-Moseley neighborhoods. Residents of these African American neighborhoods

worshiped at the Pilgrim's Rest Primitive Baptist Church, enjoyed entertainment at The Harrison Inn and played at Coal Chute Park. The mural can be found at the market area located near the FAMU Way playground.

“If there’s a greater meaning behind this mural, it’s about remembering the importance of community. That’s something everyone can relate to and something that can help us get through the darkest of times,” Cowdrey said.

More sculptures and history monuments will be installed throughout the year. The grand celebration of the History and Culture Trail is anticipated for late 2023.



For more information about the project’s history and other Blueprint projects, visit blueprintia.org.



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About Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency

The Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency (IA) is a joint City-County agency within the Department of Planning, Land Management, and Community Enhancement (PLACE). The City of Tallahassee and Leon County created the joint Department of PLACE, which emphasizes the desire to create a livable, sustainable, and economically vibrant community through the coordinated efforts of the Planning Department, Blueprint IA, and the Office of Economic Vitality.