

**Applicant (GMS): Arts & Science Council Charlotte Mecklenburg**

**Project: North Tryon Street Corridor Public Arts Project**

**Narrative 1**

**Arts & Science Council (ASC) Attachment 2 – Details of the Project Narrative**

**a) Budget:** The Arts & Science Council of Charlotte-Mecklenburg (ASC) requests a \$150,000 grant to support the design and creation of public art for Charlotte's North Tryon Street Corridor. The commissioning of an artwork for the North Tryon Street Corridor exists in the current work plan for ASC and the Public Art Commission, and ASC public art funds of \$95,000 are reserved for the project from the City of Charlotte through its 1% for art ordinance. ASC has managed the City's public art program since 1992 and has successfully completed over 100 projects locally. Additional matching funds have been committed by ASC (\$25,000), the McColl Center for Visual Art (\$18,000) and if funded, ASC will seek additional contributions (\$12,000) to fully fund the public art component of the project. Ownership of all public art works completed by ASC on behalf of the City of Charlotte is transferred to the City which maintains all existing pieces in the collection.

**b) Major Project Activities:** Public Art. The purpose of this grant is to commission public artwork which will revitalize the North Tryon Street Corridor, just northeast of uptown Charlotte, NC. Following extensive research, in conjunction with citizens, the City of Charlotte adopted the North Tryon Area Plan in 2010. The plan calls for building on the mixed-use area's locational strength to improve appearance and livability in creating a thriving neighborhood. To this end, the City is creating a new streetscape plan which will

develop North Tryon into the first designated green road in Charlotte. Vision Ventures, an area developer, has agreed to lease land along North Tryon for the creation of an urban garden and farm being envisioned by Cultivatis and Friendship Gardens. These two projects will serve as stimulus to change the corridor into a model for new green initiatives in Charlotte. This grant will support the selection of an artist who will be given a 3-month environmental artist residency at the McColl Center for Visual Art. The artist will work with citizens and stakeholders to design public art that will give larger community meaning and support to these initiatives. An Invitational Call to Artists will be issued by ASC focused on 8-10 nationally recognized artists whose interests, artistic direction and past body of work ensure their ability to complete such a project and the time to commit to the required residency. Following the initial review of qualifications, three artists will be shortlisted and asked to create proposals for the artwork from which a finalist will be selected. ASC public art staff, in collaboration with the McColl Center staff will actively manage the selected artist's engagement with the community throughout their residency. ASC will manage coordination, including stakeholder meetings, with the streetscape project and urban farm project teams. ASC will manage all artist contract deliverables, from designs through fabrication and installation. Funds from the NEA would be used to identify and select the artist commissioned for the project, support the artist residency at the McColl Center and support the design, fabrication and installation of public art on North Tryon Street.

**c) Outcome(s) and Measurements:** Creation of public art along the North Tryon Street Corridor will directly enhance the NEA outcome of *Livability* for area residents and businesses. The art integrated into the streetscape and urban farm projects will create a more attractive physical appearance and contribute to pedestrian friendliness of the area.

We expect that property values will increase and more business will be attracted to the area. We will use QOL measures tracked by the city of crime rates, property values, net population migration in and out of community, new businesses, and pedestrian friendliness. We will also survey area residents and workshop participants to measure the impact of civic engagement. The project also addresses additional NEA outcomes of *Creation* and *Engagement* through the commissioning of a nationally recognized artist. The project will create high-quality artwork that adds to the city and nation's art collection. This artwork will be innovative by incorporating environmental and sustainability issues. The project will help to bring awareness to neighborhood history and create art which is accessible to underserved populations.

**d) Schedule:** The project period would adhere to the following timeline and tasks: Prior to the project period, public and private stakeholders will be identified to serve on the Artist Selection Committee. September 2012 - 8-10 nationally recognized artists identified to receive Invitational Call to Artists; October 2012 - An Invitational Call to Artists will be issued; December 2012 - Field narrowed to five artists to participate in round 2 of selection; January 2013 - Five artists will be given a thorough orientation to the project prior to the interviews. Three artists will be shortlisted and asked to create proposals for the artwork; March 2013 - A final round of interviews with proposals will take place and a finalist will be selected; Summer 2013 - artist will begin their residency at McColl Center; September 2013- August 2014 - Artwork design finalized, artwork fabricated and installed in coordination with the streetscape and urban farm construction schedule.

**e) Partners:** ASC and the City of Charlotte are the lead partners on the project. ASC

administers the work of the appointed Public Art Commission which approves the public art plans for the City. The partnership will involve coordinating with the City's Engineering and Property Management team planning the streetscape to facilitate artist collaboration on the integrated public art designs. City and community representatives, along with ASC and McColl staff and Public Art commissioners, will be part of the committee selecting the artist to be placed in residency at the McColl Center. The review criteria for artists include creative excellence and versatility as demonstrated by an artist's body of work, response to context and meaning of site, evidence of the ability to work collaboratively with design professionals and community stakeholders and evidence of sound business practices. McColl Center staff will oversee the residency and allow for community engagement experiences with the artist at their studio. Key public art staff for ASC includes Robert Bush, Sr. VP for Cultural and Community Investment and Nicole Bartlett, Program Director – Public Art. Tom Russell is Project Manager with the City on the North Tryon Streetscape project. Key McColl Center staff includes Suzanne Fetscher, Executive Director and President and Devlin McNeil, Chief Operating Officer/Program Director.

**f) Target Community:** The target population is the 13,000 current residents of the center city Charlotte area, within walking distance of the project, in addition to the North Tryon corridor's approximate 2,700 residents, 562 businesses and over 5,500 employees. According to the City of Charlotte's 2010 Quality of Life data, the residential neighborhoods of Tryon Hills and Lockwood within the corridor are considered "challenged" by the City having low to moderate scores on quality of life dimensions, a lower quality of life than other communities in Charlotte and are considered "at risk". Some key data of this underserved area is that pedestrian friendliness is below average, mean housing values are

less than half the Charlotte average, dropout rates are three times the Charlotte average, and percentage of persons on food stamps in the area is over four times the Charlotte average. It is hoped that this project will significantly enhance the area for residents. The target community has been involved in planning of the streetscape and urban farm project. They will continue to be involved throughout the public art process in design workshops.

**g) Promotion:** Charlotte's FY11 Cultural Life Study, conducted by the University of North Carolina Urban Institute, indicates that 60% of residents use print media for their news and 62% use web-based services. Once the artist selection process is concluded, ASC will work with the City of Charlotte and the McColl Center on a public relations plan that provides local and national coverage to publicize the artist and project in print and electronic media. Preferred local sources are *The Charlotte Observer* and [www.charlotteobserver.com](http://www.charlotteobserver.com), and national coverage includes *Art in America*, *Sculpture and Public Art Review*. ASC has a popular print and on-line walking tour podcast and brochure at [www.artsandscience.org](http://www.artsandscience.org), this artwork would be added upon completion.

**h) Documentation/Evaluation:** Indicators from the City of Charlotte's annual Quality of Life Index, which measure both neighborhood and business corridor livability, will be tracked for changes during the project period and beyond. Assessment of artist selection will occur by means of an on-line evaluation questionnaire including Public Art Commissioners, the artist selection committee, and key project and community stakeholders. During the community engagement and design phases, the progress will be documented and tracked by with regular video and site reports completed by the artist. The artist's designs and project milestones will be documented with original renderings, models, and digital photographs by ASC public art staff. Following installation of the artwork, ASC will target a random group of

area residents and employees to evaluate the degrees of success of the artwork within its setting. It is expected that future media coverage of the artwork would assess both popular appeal and the artistic significance of the artwork.

**i) Goals/Impact:** The goals of the project are 1) Creation of a new piece of public art; 2) The art enlivens and grows pride in the North Tryon Corridor area; 3) That an artist has the opportunity to create lasting work that is highly visible and accessible to citizens and visitors to Charlotte; and 4) That the art has relevance and meaning for Charlotte's past and future.

**j) Accessibility:** During their residency, the artist design studio will be accessible and open to the public. All public artwork will be ADA accessible as required by current state and local governing laws and/or specific ordinances set forth for individuals with special needs. Artwork signage will also meet ADA requirements. The process and finished works will be documented on-line to further increase accessibility.

**k) N/A**