

Suwanee's approach to **ARTS & CULTURE**



The City of Suwanee's arts and culture strategy is rooted in its economic and community development approach, which centers on developing a place and vibe that will attract the creative mind, in turn, setting the stage for a **stronger creative economy**. It is a quality of life initiative and can include a variety of elements. Suwanee's approach includes a **robust event program** (outlined in a separate approach sheet) as well as a **visual arts initiative**.

PUBLIC ART

According to **95% of residents** who were surveyed in 2022, Suwanee is an "excellent" or "good" place to live. A key factor in taking Suwanee to the next level is a **commitment to the arts**, with a focus on public art. Public art not only **enhances and defines public spaces**, but also creates a **sense of identity**, sparks conversations, and is accessible to everyone.

Believing that public art plays a significant role in helping to create a well-rounded, vibrant community, and serves the common good, Suwanee established the **Public Arts Commission (PAC)** in 2008. The PAC was charged with **enhancing the quality of life** in Suwanee through public art. Its purpose is to encourage and facilitate creation and placement of art within the city, both in public spaces and within private developments.

A Public Art Master Plan was completed in 2015 in order to set a vision and develop a ten-year strategy that would help take an already robust public art program to the next level. The plan introduces three key ideas about the types of public art that make the most sense for Suwanee:

ART + PLAY: Art projects should reflect and celebrate Suwanee's active and playful spirit.

ART + CITY IMAGE: Art projects should reinforce the major urban design connections in downtown Suwanee and the major activity centers of the city.

ART + TEMPORARY: Suwanee's art can create a dynamic, ever-changing, engaging cityscape by creating a wider variety of short-term projects, rather than investing all resources in permanent projects.

CITY'S FOCUS AREAS (EXISTING PUBLIC ART PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES):

SCULPTOUR: Suwanee Sculptour is an exhibit of original outdoor sculptures displayed downtown with the intent to rotate the art every two years, provided private funding is available; the program is totally funded through sponsorships and donations.

DEVELOPER/PRIVATE SECTOR FOCUS: The city encourages developers to commit 1% of their new projects' cost to fund public art on their property or support public art in other locations throughout the city. A developer guide is in place and all development projects within the city must come before the PAC. As a result, 25+ pieces of public art have been added throughout the city.

CITY PROJECTS: The city leads by example and commits 1% of construction costs of public projects/buildings to public art; Shimmering Echoes in City Hall was the first permanent installation followed by Instinctual Center (at the Police Training Center) and Transformation (mural on the municipal court building).

SUWANEE ARTS CENTER: In 2016 the North Gwinnett Arts Association (NGAA), in partnership with the city, opened a center for the arts, providing art classes that cover various mediums, as well as studio and gallery space for its member artists. The Suwanee Arts Center houses the Suwanee Welcome Center, and partners with the city on art-related events and initiatives such as the annual Suwanee Arts Festival.

UNIQUE PIECES: A section of the Berlin Wall and "Remembrance," a World Trade Center display, were installed by the city in Town Center Park in 2013. Suwanee also owns a two-ton remnant of steel from one of the iconic twin water towers located near Jimmy Carter Boulevard, visible from I-85 for 35 years before being torn down. The city has incorporated this piece of Gwinnett County's history into a public art display at Town Center on Main.