



Staff Report
City of Richmond, Virginia
City Planning Commission



Write legislation/ordinance number here.	September 7, 2021
Applicant/Petitioner	Public Art Commission
Project Description	<p>The Bloomberg Project Road Mural is one of three components of a placemaking initiative at a key intersection of Jackson Ward (1 ½ blocks from the Maggie Walker Memorial); the other two components of the project include a parklet and a pedestrian plaza. Funded by a grant from the Bloomberg Asphalt Art Program, the goal of the road mural portion of the project is to engage local residents, artists, and youth that participate in Art 180's programs in designing a road mural that speaks to the historic importance of this key 19th- and 20th-century African-American neighborhood. Extensive community input (through surveys and community group conversations) informed the design focus of the entire Bloomberg Project.</p> <p>The design of the road mural is based on the Sankofa, an Andikra symbol from Ghana meaning "to go back and retrieve/ get." It is a prominent symbol at the Ancestral Burial Grounds in Shockoe and speaks to the intention of the Jackson Ward project to reach back to a rich legacy and make sure it shines as a beacon to others. The colors echo the red, black and green of the Pan-African flag. At the bird's feet are broken chains.</p>
Project Location	
Brook and Marshall	
Jackson Ward	
Council District(s): <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 7 <input type="checkbox"/> 8 <input type="checkbox"/> 9 <input type="checkbox"/> City-Wide	
(Recommending body) Recommendation	Approval, with Conditions
Staff Contact	Susan Glasser, Secretary, Public Art Commission, 804.644. 7319, susan.glasser@richmondgov.com
Conditions for Approval	The petitioners shall be responsible for obtaining and adhering to all necessary permits from DPW and using the non-skid paint required by them.

RATIONAL FOR PLACING ON PUBLIC PROPERTY

This project meets several priorities of both the *Public Art Master Plan, Richmond 300* and the *Richmond Equity Agenda*; see "Justification as Government Speech" below.

ARTIST'S QUALIFICATIONS

Chris Visions has been sketching through the Xavier's School for Gifted Youngsters, the Virginia Governor's School, Virginia Commonwealth University, and finally the Illustration Academy. He has worked in the fields of graphic design, game design, storyboarding, and illustration since 2006, and is currently creating comics with various publishers, including Marvel, DC Comics and Boom Studios, as well as work with Art 180 and Mending Walls, among others.

JUSTIFICATION AS GOVERNMENT SPEECH

The Mayo and CAO have agreed that the message of this mural qualifies as government speech.

Richmond 300 (p. 199): Big Move: Reconnect the City

Placemaking: . . . public art that highlight[s] Jackson Ward's history and also serve[s] as a gateway to Richmond.

Public Art Master Plan (pp. 83-89): Priority Sites and Projects

- Sites that address areas of the City needing attention
- Revealing more of Richmond's history [several topics are specifically mentioned including Jackson Ward on p. 83-84 and 85]
- Historically significant sites and events

Richmond Equity Agenda

- Telling the Real History of Richmond: implement City art installations at City Hall and other City-owned spaces with community input . . .

Finally, this project is being funded as part of the Bloomberg Foundation's Asphalt Art Program. All 16 awarded projects in this program required sponsorship by a municipal government confirming that cities across the country are taking ownership of road mural projects as an acceptable form of government speech.

ATTACHMENT(S)

Application for Installing Temporary Art on City-Owned Property

Mayor's Letter of Support for the Entire Asphalt Art Project

Mayor's Letter of Support for the Messaging of the Mural