

Ross Avenue Gateway/Underpass

The CityDesign Studio partnered with the Office of Cultural affairs in a community based project to raise awareness about public space and to help improve safety at the Ross Avenue Gateway Supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts through the Mayors' Institute on CityDesign 25th Anniversary Initiative, the Ross Ave gateway is located at the threshold to the Dallas Arts District and serves as a key access point between the Arts District and the vibrant community of East Dallas. Over the past decade, the number of walkers and cyclist traveling through the underpass has substantially increased. With new developments taking shape in the area, pedestrian and cyclist activity is expected to increase even more. However, the configuration of the Ross Avenue below I75 creates a long, dark and void tunnel effect. The tunnel effect coupled with the poor lighting has created a variety of public safety concerns.

Over the years, the local community has devoted time and resources to reduce the amount of graffiti and make the area feel safer, including hiring an artist to create a mural. However, there was also a need to provide lighting to give pedestrians an added sense of security which required working with TxDOT and the City of Dallas.

The City of Dallas' Office of Cultural Affairs and CityDesign Studio worked with artists, local residents and agency representatives in an RFP/RFQ process with the goal of finding an artist/artist team to design a visually welcoming environment for drivers, pedestrians and cyclist that encourage pedestrian and cyclist usage by creating a sense of safety, use material and methods that reflect the best sustainable practices and reflect the robust cultural environment of the Arts District and/or historical references to the City of Dallas.

In early 2010, a call for artists/artist teams qualifications generated over 60 entries. The best three candidates based on the capacity and experience to professionally undertake the project were selected, and on Thursday, March 3, 2010, their qualifications were shown in a public meeting to get the community's input and feedback.

These teams were awarded a stipend to create a conceptual idea. On April 15, 2010, their ideas were presented a public meeting and the finalist was selected. The concept will next go to the public arts commission for acceptance. If it is accepted, a public workshop will be held to get additional input from the community to further refine the concept.

Final three concepts

Joe O'Connell and Blessing Hancock [{link to Ross Ave Joe}](#) - Winning concept

Koryn Rolstad [{link to Ross Ave Koryn}](#)

Bill FitzGibons [{link to Ross Ave – Bill}](#)

Pictures for right side in FTP file labeled Ross Ave 1,2,3