

DDA City Council Update  
November 18, 2024

# Elevate: Public Art and Placemaking Program



Ann Arbor Downtown Development Authority

## PUBLIC ART & PLACEMAKING PROGRAM

This document outlines the purpose, goals, and processes for the Ann Arbor DDA's *Elevate* Program.

Prepared Spring 2024



# OVERVIEW

1. Elevate Projects Underway
2. New Project Opportunity

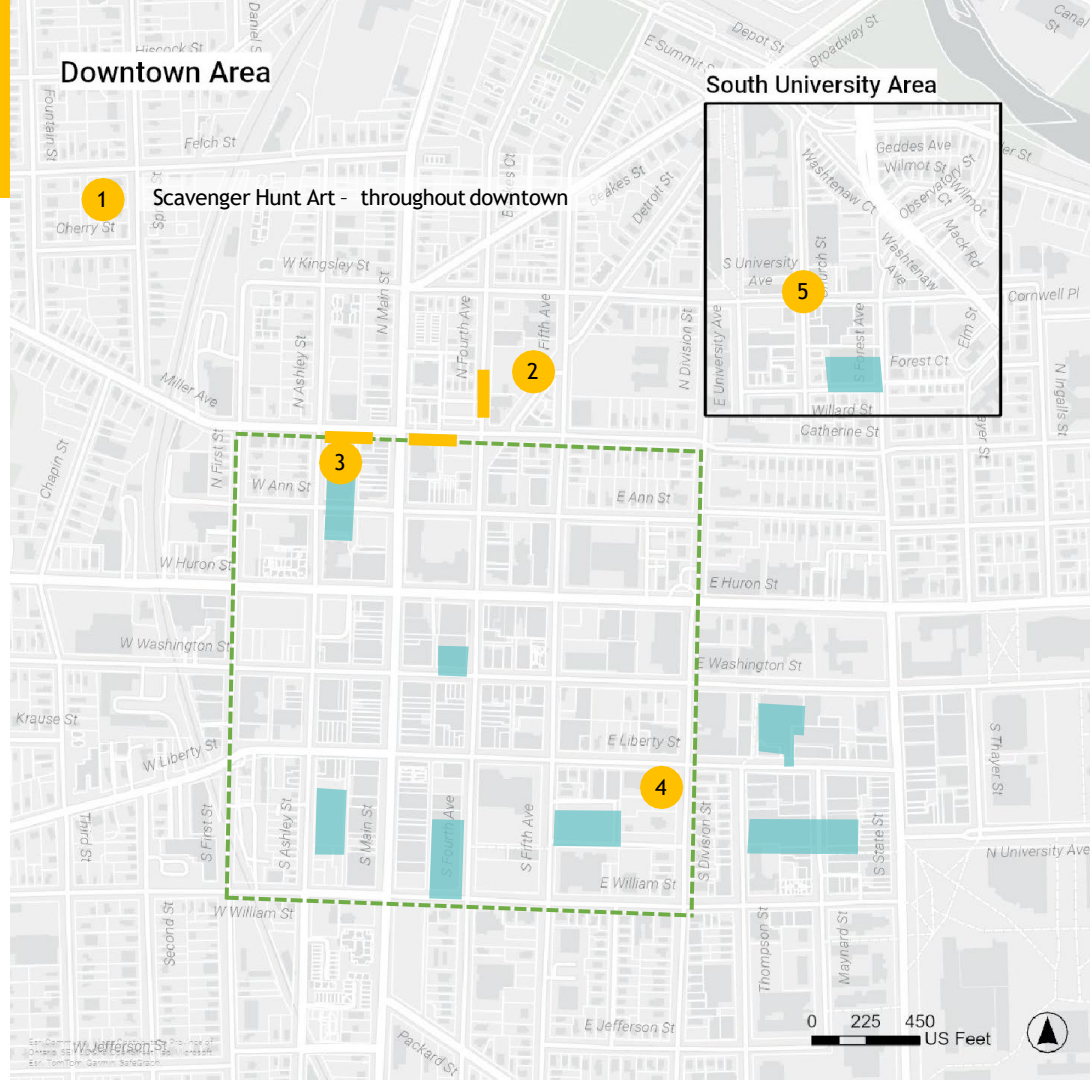
# ELEVATE INSTALLATIONS

## Round 1

1. Scavenger Hunt Art - Throughout downtown
2. Sunshade - Farmer's Market Plaza
3. Wayfinding - Ann/Ashley to Kerrytown/Farmer's Market
4. Mural & Temporary Installation - Liberty Plaza
5. Interactive art TBD - South University

 Parking Structures

 Bikeway Corridors



**NEW PROJECT OPPORTUNITY**

**ANN STREET – HONORING THE  
HISTORIC BLACK BUSINESS DISTRICT  
AND SOCIAL HUB OF DOWNTOWN ANN  
ARBOR**

# LIVING ORAL HISTORY TOUR

Build on the work of the AACHM & AADL to provide visual art along Ann Street as a companion to the Living Oral History Project Walking Tour.

## 1 BLACK BUSINESS DISTRICT 109-121 E. Ann Street

From the 1930s to the 1970s, Ann Street was a hub for Black-owned businesses in downtown Ann Arbor. Barber shops, shoe shine parlors, dry cleaners, restaurants, blues bars, and pool rooms formed the backbone of Black social life. Longtime establishments such as Sanford's Shoe Repair and Easley's Barber Shop opened in the 1930s. Black Ann Arbor residents who grew up in the 1940s and 50s remember visiting Midway Lunch and a pool hall run by David and Mozelle Keaton. Johnnie Rush ran his barber shop for almost 16 years.

During the 1960s, police officers referred to Ann Street as "the Block." A rising crime rate centered around the bars and pool rooms, leading to the closure of many Black-owned businesses on Ann Street in the 1970s. By June 1977, all the storefronts were closed and boarded up. In the 1980s, a new wave of small businesses with little connection to Ann Street's history as the Black business district signaled the end of an era.

READ MORE:



Johnnie Rush in Barber Shop, November 1960. *The Ann Arbor News*

## LIVING ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

*Walking tour of an historically Black neighborhood in Ann Arbor*

PRESENTED IN PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURAL & HISTORICAL MUSEUM OF WASHTENAW COUNTY AND THE ANN ARBOR DISTRICT LIBRARY



### Walking Tour Points of Interest

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>1</b> Black Business District<br>109-121 E. Ann Street   | <b>5</b> The Seeleys' House<br>203 Beakes Street              |
| <b>2</b> Colored Welfare League<br>209-211 N. Fourth Avenue | <b>6</b> Second Baptist Church<br>216 Beakes Street           |
| <b>3</b> Jones Elementary School<br>401 N. Division Street  | <b>7</b> Bethel AME Church<br>632 N. Fourth Avenue            |
| <b>4</b> Dunbar Community Center<br>420 N. Fourth Avenue    | <b>8</b> Historically Black Neighborhood<br>See map on page 2 |



Note: Maps are not to scale



To access this resource online, please visit <http://aadl.org/AACHMwalkingtour>

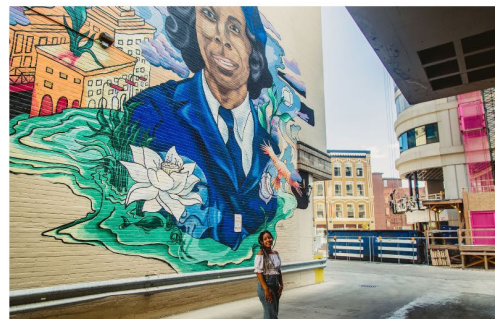
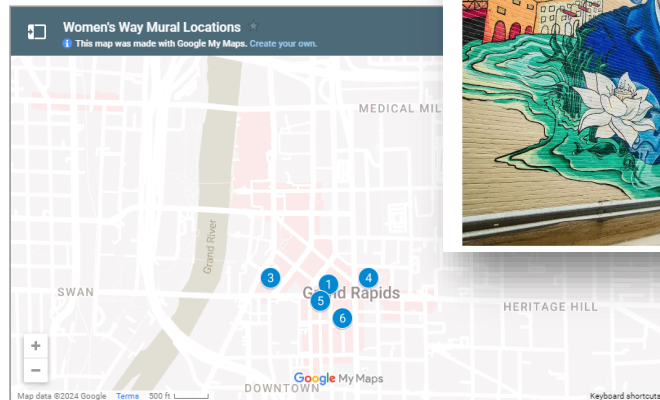
# EXAMPLE PROJECT – WOMEN’S WAY IN GRAND RAPIDS

*The Women’s Way Initiative aspires to elevate the historical narratives of exceptional local leaders while adding new energy and creative interest to often-overlooked public places. The initiative also boldly endeavors to acknowledge the complicated history of women in alleyways and help claim positive ownership of these spaces.*

*Organized by Downtown Grand Rapids Inc., the Greater Grand Rapids Women’s History Council, the City of Grand Rapids, Lions and Rabbits and numerous community partners.*

## Alley Locations

1. **Harriet Woods Hill Way** | Grand Rapids Police Department  
1 Monroe Center St NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503
2. **Grand Rapids Chicks Way** | Auto Fixit Shop  
805 Ottawa Ave NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503
3. **Ethel Coe Way** | 20 Monroe Live  
11 Ottawa Ave NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503
4. **Angelina Kelsey “Naw Kay o Say” Yob Way** | Children’s Museum  
33 Sheldon Ave NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503
5. **Maurilia Ortiz Blakely Way** | San Chez  
38 Fulton St W, Grand Rapids, MI 49503
6. **Dr. Ella Mary Sims Way** | Weston Apartments  
21 Weston St SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503



## Harriet Woods Hill Way

*Located in the alley off Louis St. NW at the northwest corner of GRPD headquarters.*

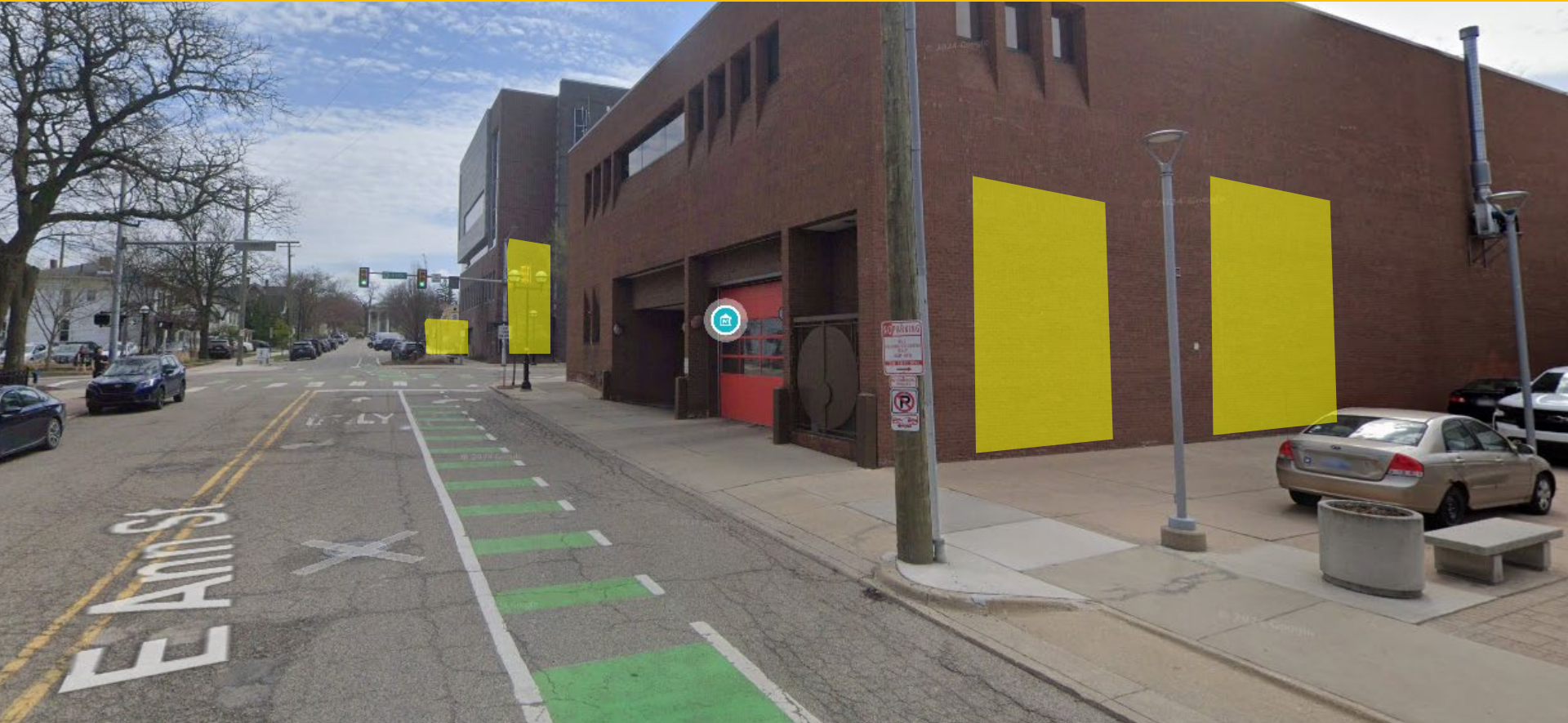
### Harriet Woods Hill 1922-2006

Harriet Woods Hill in 1955 became the first African American female officer in the Grand Rapids Police Department. Her career began in the Juvenile Division, and she later trained new recruits about the challenges faced by children. Hill, in 1977, was named the first female detective in the department's 106-year history. "I came there to do a job, and I wasn't going to allow [anyone] to force me to quit working because [of their] prejudices," she said. "Once the door was opened, I never allowed it to become closed."

Statement by Artist Jasmine Bruce

Harriet Woods-Hill was resilient and humble. Symbolism flows through this piece as waves pay ode to Harriet's hometown leading to the old-time Grand Rapids cityscape. Lotus flowers symbolize her growth out of muddy waters, all the while soaring above.

# ANN STREET — FOURTH AVE LOOKING EAST ON ANN STREET



# ANN STREET — FOURTH AVE LOOKING WEST ON ANN STREET

