



# News Release

For Immediate Release: November 9, 2020

## **Durham Seeks Community Input on New Crosswalk Art to Transform West Club Boulevard Pedestrian Safety**

*Artist Finalists Selected to Submit Preliminary Designs for Community Vote;  
Online Survey to Inform Club Crossing Project Design Open Until November 30*

DURHAM, N.C. – Five local and regional artists have been selected as finalists to submit their preliminary designs for new crosswalk art to make it safer for pedestrians along West Club Boulevard, and they need input now to inform their design work for the community's vote this winter.

The new [Club Crossing Project](#) will help transform the intersection of West Club Boulevard and Glendale Avenue with new crosswalk art. This location was selected because the site has a well-documented vehicle speeding problem, and it attracts many pedestrians and cyclists including students at Club Boulevard Elementary, visitors to Northgate Park, and users of the Ellerbe Creek Trail.

The City's Transportation Department, Cultural and Public Art Program in collaboration with an Artist Selection Panel of community members, and the Durham Parks Foundation have selected [Claire Alexandre](#), [Candy Carver](#), [Jai Martin](#), [Renzo Ortega](#), and [Cassandra Rowe](#) to develop initial designs individually for this project.

To help inform the designs of these five artist finalists, community members and stakeholders are now encouraged to provide their input about the project through an initial [online community survey](#) by November 30. The survey, available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#), includes questions to inform the artwork location and designs in addition to assessing how residents and visitors use the space.

Based on the input received through this online survey, the five artist finalists will each be compensated \$750 to develop their designs for a community vote later this winter. Once the community selects the finalist in January 2021, that artist will then be compensated an additional \$5,000 to continue to host, facilitate, and participate in community engagement activities before finalizing their design and installing the crosswalk art in late spring 2021 with a budget of \$10,500 for the installation process and materials.

Once the project is completed next year, the new crosswalk will help to improve street and pedestrian safety by activating the intersection and travel lanes through artwork in the crosswalk in front of Club Boulevard Elementary, reducing speeding on West Club Boulevard, and increasing yielding to pedestrians crossing West Club Boulevard and Glendale Avenue near the school. It will also help to tie distinct elements of this corridor together: Club Boulevard Elementary, Northgate Park, Ellerbe Creek Trail, and the East Coast Greenway.

The project is funded in part by Bloomberg Philanthropies' [Asphalt Art Initiative](#) grant program, which assists small and medium-sized cities looking to use art and design to improve street safety, revitalize public spaces, and engage their communities. In July 2020, the City of Durham was [one of 16 U.S. cities selected](#) to receive \$25,000 from the program to help fund this crosswalk public art project. Additional City funds contributing to this project are from the Cultural & Public Art Program as well as matching in-kind costs for staff time and physical resources.

For questions or more information about the Club Crossing Project, visit the [project webpage](#) or contact Cultural and Public Art Program Manager Rebecca Brown with the City's General Services Department at (912) 398-8075 or by [email](#).

### **About the Artist Finalists**

[Claire Alexandre](#) is an intersectional artist and storyteller who weaves autobiographical reflections with ancestral wisdom while exploring larger themes of environmental, gender, and racial justice. Through mixed-media painting, street art and botanical knowledge, she uses her skills to create modern-day mythologies and heroes honoring the resilience, power, and complexities of Black diasporic identity, with a particular focus on women.

[Candy Carver](#) is a Durham native who spent her formative years in Indiana, where she developed her abstract creativity. As a self-taught artist, she has been painting for over 20 years. Her artwork is inspired by her personal journey to experience and share positive and encouraging emotions. Her goal is for the viewer to be engulfed by the tangibility of strength, power, boldness, and resilience of her art.

[Jai Martin](#) is a painter, illustrator, and designer based in Durham. Upon graduating from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University with a Bachelor of Science in Graphic Communications, Martin began working as a designer. In 2012, he created the brand Contrare, where he works as an artist and illustrator.

[Renzo Ortega](#), born in Lima, Perú, is an artist based in Carrboro. Renzo received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in painting from the Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes del Perú, studied at the Art Students League of New York, and has a Master of Fine Arts in painting from Hunter College. He exhibited his artwork in solo and group shows in the United States and Perú. Ortega's influences range from pre-Hispanic patterns to folk-art to expressionism to abstraction. He uses colors and shapes to metaphorically embrace the ideal that diverse populations can share the same spaces generating positive dynamics.

[Cassandra Rowe](#) is an artist with many creative pursuits in addition to being a domestic violence advocate and program manager at the N.C. Coalition Against Domestic Violence. She is a founding member of the artist collective Brainchild, a group in residency at North Star Church of the Arts in early 2020. Her inspirations include her community and close friends, love and heartbreak, queerness, the extraterrestrial, and the horror genre. Rowe's background is in sociology and public health, and has only considered herself an artist since 2018.

### **About the City of Durham Public Art Committee**

The [Public Art Committee](#) serves as an advisory body to the Durham City Council and the City Manager, and its functions include assisting the City's General Services Department on matters relating to public art; implementation of the Public Art Policy; and reviewing proposals for public art projects brought to it by the City administration; and making recommendations to the Durham [Cultural Advisory Board](#) regarding project approvals. To further help artists connect with opportunities, the City has also launched a [Durham Calls for Artists](#) page on its website, which lists a number of upcoming opportunities for artists in and around Durham. Artists and other stakeholders who would like to be notified of current and future art-related opportunities and news can now sign up for alerts through the [Cultural and Public Arts Calls for Art mailing list](#). For more information about the City's Cultural and Public Arts Program, visit the City's [cultural and public arts page](#).

### **About the City of Durham General Services Department**

The [General Services Department](#) builds and maintains City properties to make Durham a great place for people to live, work, and play. Guided by the City's [Strategic Plan](#), the department's core functions include the acquisition and sale of properties, design and management of new construction and renovation projects, building maintenance, landscaping and urban forestry services, cemeteries management, sustainability and energy management, and supporting the nonprofit [Keep Durham Beautiful](#).

### **About the City of Durham Transportation Department**

The [Transportation Department](#) remains steadfast in its commitment to providing and maintaining quality, multimodal infrastructure to improve mobility, promote environmental sustainability, and enhance the quality

of life for current and future Durham residents, businesses, and visitors. To learn more, follow the department on [Twitter](#).

### **About the Durham Parks Foundation**

The [Durham Parks Foundation](#) exists to preserve, strengthen and expand parks, trails, open space and recreational opportunities in Durham through diverse community involvement, fundraising, partnerships and education. Founded in 2015 to facilitate public/private partnerships for the benefit of all in Durham, the foundation assists groups with fundraising, providing information about future projects in parks, and advocating for the expansion and improvement of parks, trails, and open space in Durham. For more information, follow on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

### **About Bloomberg Philanthropies**

[Bloomberg Philanthropies](#) invests in more than 570 cities and over 160 countries around the world to ensure better, longer lives for the greatest number of people. The organization focuses on five key areas for creating lasting change: Arts, Education, Environment, Government Innovation, and Public Health. Bloomberg Philanthropies encompasses all of Michael R. Bloomberg's giving, including his foundation and personal philanthropy as well as Bloomberg Associates, a pro bono consultancy that works in cities around the world. In 2019, Bloomberg Philanthropies distributed \$3.3 billion. For more information, follow on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), [Twitter](#), [Snapchat](#), and [Flickr](#).

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