



# Land Forge: A Collective Future - Concept Design Proposal

Submission:

JSAAHC Swords Into Plowshares Charlottesville Request For Proposal

Design Team:

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# Concept Design Statement

## Land Forge: A Collective Future

The story of land in Charlottesville and the Virginia region is inseparable from the story of freedom, belonging, and survival. From the promise of Reconstruction to the destruction of Vinegar Hill, from the resilience of families like Catherine “Kitty” Foster and John West to today’s struggles with gentrification and rising housing costs, Black land ownership has carried both hope and hardship. Land has always meant more than property—it has meant stability, independence, and the possibility of passing on dignity and wealth to future generations.

Understanding that after the Civil War, owning land meant everything for newly freed Black families in Charlottesville. Despite the challenges of Reconstruction, land gave stability, independence, and a way to build a future. Catherine “Kitty” Foster, a laundress and seamstress, became the first free Charlottesville Black woman to own property just south of the Academical Village. A generation later, John West—son of Isabella Gibbons—expanded that legacy. By the late 1800s, he was one of the city’s most successful Black landowners, holding farms, storefronts, and dozens of properties. One property became Vinegar Hill, a thriving Black neighborhood of homes, shops, and community pride. Yet progress was repeatedly undermined. Racist laws, unfair taxation, and segregation chipped away at what Black families built. In 1963, “urban renewal” bulldozed Vinegar Hill, erasing hundreds of Black-owned homes and businesses. Today, inequitable zoning, soaring property taxes, and escalating housing prices continue to threaten the dream of home and belonging for Black and Brown families.

**Land Forge** responds to this history with an act of renewal. It reimagines Charlottesville’s public parks as living networks of solidarity, creativity, and healing—a new kind of Underground Railroad built not from tracks but from relationships. Through art, memory, and community connection, **Land Forge** transforms spaces once overshadowed by monuments to white supremacy into counter-narratives of justice, dignity, and belonging. Bronze becomes story, grief becomes resilience, and parks become places where communities gather to reflect, learn, and forge joyful new histories together. This initiative is not only about art—it is about weaving together the social and ecological fabric of Charlottesville. Each of the six neighborhood parks will serve as a center for storytelling, where the community members, artist, and professional consultants collaborate as a unified team. Anchored by the Jefferson School of African American Heritage Center and guided by collective stewardship, **Land Forge** builds a Community Network that honors Black and Brown histories while empowering local voices.

The vision is clear: to create spaces that heal wounds, celebrate resilience, and invite all people into the ongoing work of equity and belonging. **Land Forge** is both a reminder of what has been lost and a call to action for what can still be forged together. It is a living tapestry—stitched from grief and joy, memory and imagination—that sustains itself beyond this artistic endeavor.

In reclaiming land as a site of justice and creativity, **Land Forge** envisions a collective future where equity, home, and belonging are not dreams deferred but realities shared.



***Land Forge begins with the land itself.  
Land that over generations has carried both grief and joy,  
loss and persistence.***

# Land Ownership Timeline

## 1865–1877 — Reconstruction and early land purchases

Freed people across Virginia sought land, legal rights, and citizenship during Reconstruction; many purchased small parcels and formed Black farming communities that anchored postwar life and labor transitions

## Late 1800s–early 1900s — Thriving Black farming and trade communities in Albemarle County

Families formed sustained agricultural enterprises and local trade networks. River View Farm and other examples illustrate multi-generation Black landholding and agricultural success in Albemarle County and the Charlottesville region

## 1964 — Urban removal: demolition of Vinegar Hill and loss of Black-owned property

A city redevelopment program led to the demolition of Vinegar Hill in 1964, displacing residents and businesses and dramatically reducing Black private property ownership and local wealth concentration in Charlottesville

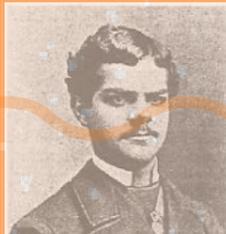
1850



1860



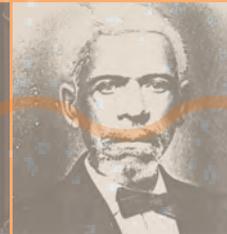
1870



1880



1910



1950



1960



1970



## 1867 — Early documented Black land purchases in the Piedmont region

Records show freed people acquiring parcels in the Piedmont (including parcels later associated with neighborhoods such as Little Petersburg), establishing Black-owned homes and farms that persisted into the 20th century

## Early–mid 1900s — Growth of Black commercial and residential neighborhoods.

Vinegar Hill emerged as a concentrated Black neighborhood and commercial district in Charlottesville, home to dozens of Black-owned businesses and many family homes; it became a cultural and economic center for the city's Black residents

**Late 20th century — Local resilience and notable landowners**

Despite systemic pressures, families and individuals maintained significant holdings; local stories (for example, the Cobbs family's multi-generation farm in Albemarle) document endurance, land stewardship, and community leadership that preserved Black land legacies into recent decades

**2010s–present — Rising housing-pressure, gentrification, and erosion of Black homeownership**

Charlottesville and statewide trends show accelerating housing pressures, market-driven displacement, and contested redevelopment. Studies and local reporting link gentrification and redevelopment patterns to the displacement of longstanding Black communities and shrinking affordability for Black and Brown households

1980

1990

2000

2010

2020

2025



**Mid–20th century — Decline of Black landholdings and structural barriers**

Across Virginia, discriminatory practices—redlining, exclusionary zoning, limited lending, and eminent domain—constrained Black homeownership and farm retention, contributing to loss and fragmentation of historic Black landownership

**2000s–2010s — Renewed attention to history, property, and institutional accountability**

Research, exhibits, and institutional studies (including work on the University of Virginia's history of race, property, and power) documented how development and institutional expansion reshaped property patterns and often advantaged non-Black interests, prompting calls for reparative actions and preservation of Black sites and narratives

**Present — New struggle: lack of affordable housing and threats to Black and Brown families**

Today Black and Brown individuals and families in Charlottesville face renewed displacement risk tied to rising housing costs, limited affordable inventory, and ongoing redevelopment—continuing a long arc from post-Civil War land gains to 20th-century dispossession and 21st-century affordability crises

# Concept Design Process

## Overview

**Land Forge**, evolving through **Art-in-Action and Community-Led Visioning**, steps into Charlottesville, the region, and national history as both a reminder and a response. Art-in-Action and Community-Led Visioning serve as bridges that celebrate the stories of land and home from the past, while opening space for meaningful conversations about our present. While this process of ‘connection’ is specific to Black and Brown communities relative to home and land, the process is democratic and acknowledges the needs of all Charlottesville. Successful design requires partnership with local and regional civic groups, nonprofits, schools, faith-based organizations, and community service providers. Stewardship is secured through this element of the overall design process. Buy-in is guaranteed when all have a voice in the design process. Thus, the team can effectively blend art, and memory, crafting a **Land Forge** that continues the healing process and builds new pathways toward equity - new places to call home.

## Art-in-Action

Art-in-Action combines creative expression with community dialogue, inviting residents to participate directly in shaping the sculptural design in each park. Central to this approach are rammed earth forms, which embody the “**Land Forge**” concept. The act of placing and forming earth in each of the artist sculpture facilitates interactions by community members. This is the regenerative land sculpture approach practiced by the team artist. The regenerative approach emphasizes healing, renewal, and positive contributions to ecosystems, neighborhoods and requires community participation in the ‘making’ of the art or ‘art-in-action.’

In addition to rammed earth, each of the regenerative sculptures within the six Charlottesville parks will incorporate a reconfiguration of the bronze ingots and the granite piece from the former Robert E Lee Monument. Lighting will reinforce the power of these three materials for night effect. The abstracted sculpture will reference layers of land, home, displacement, rebirth, and joy.

## Community-Led Visioning

Community participation is at the heart of the regenerative land sculpture approach. This approach restores and revitalizes the natural environment through art, while ensuring that residents shape the meaning and form of each work. Regenerative sculpture not only minimizes harm but actively contributes to ecological healing and preservation. By weaving local voices into design and making, each park's sculpture becomes a living expression of renewal, belonging, and stewardship.

## Community Land Trust

As stewards to the community through the sculptures, **Land Forge** plans to collaborate with the Piedmont Community Land Trust (PCLT). Founded in 2008, PCLT is Virginia's first community land trust and a 501(c)(3) nonprofit serving Charlottesville and surrounding counties. PCLT creates affordable homeownership opportunities for low-to-moderate-income families earning 80% or less of the Area Median Income by using the community land trust model; **reinforcing the commitment to equity, sustainability, and community empowerment beyond the parks themselves.**

## Reveal, Inspire, and Shape

**Reveal The Site Attributes:** First, we conducted archival and field investigations at each of the six park sites to document their historical context and physical characteristics. This site-based research identified key attributes and narratives that directly informed the artistic approach for each park.

**Inspire Participation through site specific design narratives:** Second, we will use the unique historical and physical attributes revealed at each site to invite stakeholders to co-create design narratives that inform the artist's work. These site-specific narratives will be developed through accessible engagement activities—workshops, interviews, and hands-on design labs—so stakeholders can contribute memories, priorities, and ideas that shape the final sculpture and landscape. The result will be clear, locally grounded design stories—visual sketches,

interpretive texts, and prototype elements—that are integrated into the artist’s overall expression for each park and that directly connect to the project’s goals for inclusion, interpretation, and public use.

**Shape The Open Space and Regenerative Art Feature:** Third, building on the Reveal and Inspire steps, the team begins shaping a physical and spatial art expression for each park. This shaping creates a coordinated system of way-finding, historical interpretation, and future-oriented expression that supports the longevity of a regenerative, art-based framework for Charlottesville. The final designs form a cohesive, legible sculptural system that embodies the **Land Forge** narrative. This physical narrative reinterprets and repurpose bronze and granite from the original Robert E. Lee sculpture and introduces new land-based elements, including rammed earth.

## The Sites

Our work begins with a careful study of each site’s land history, along with the community’s concerns and aspirations, ensuring that the design process is grounded in both place and people. The approach uses the lens of **reveal, inspire shape** to act as a bridge for the team to connect to the community and all stakeholders surrounding each park site.

The team acknowledges the unique role each park site plays in shaping the identity of Black Charlottesville. In recognition of this, all six sites will be woven together to form a new **Black Narrative Network**.



# Revealing the Site Attributes



- Booker T. Washington Park:**
- Former Plantation Land
  - Former City Dump
  - **Cornerstone of African American Cultural Heritage**



- Market Street Park:**
- Systemic Racism
  - Exclusion
  - **Reclaiming the Black Narrative**

Black Spaces of joy and Persistence

Black Spaces of Grief and Exclusion



- Forest Hills Park:**
- Former Plantation Land
  - Refuge
  - **Black Community Safe Space**



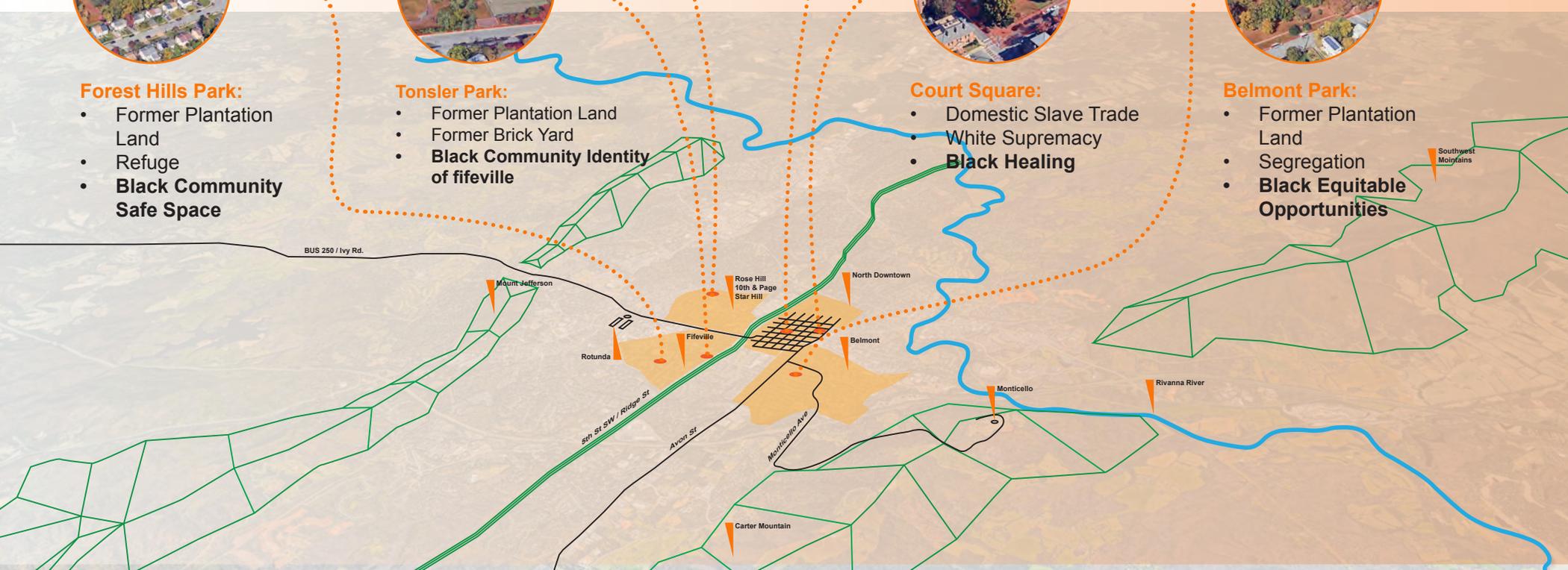
- Tonsler Park:**
- Former Plantation Land
  - Former Brick Yard
  - **Black Community Identity of fifeville**



- Court Square:**
- Domestic Slave Trade
  - White Supremacy
  - **Black Healing**



- Belmont Park:**
- Former Plantation Land
  - Segregation
  - **Black Equitable Opportunities**



BUS 250 / Ivy Rd.

Rotunda

Fifeville

Rose Hill 10th & Page Star Hill

North Downtown

Belmont

Monticello

Rivanna River

Carter Mountain

Southwest Molyfains

6th St SW / Ridge St

Avon St

Monticello Ave

## Site Attributes

Each park sits within a living cultural geography: places of worship, schools, businesses, and social life that have defined Black and Brown identity in Charlottesville. The team have highlighted key attributes and Black narratives for each of the six park sites that has provided a preliminary approach to the **Black Narrative Network**

### **Booker T. Washington Park: Plantation / City Dump / Cornerstone of African American Cultural Heritage**

Located off Preston Avenue near the Rose Hill neighborhood, Washington Park is a historically significant public space in Charlottesville. Originally part of the **Rose Hill plantation**, the land later served as an **informal city dump** before philanthropist Paul Goodloe McIntire purchased 9 acres and donated it in 1926 as a park specifically for African Americans during the era of segregation. Headlines at the time read “One for White and One for Colored,” reflecting the racial divide in public amenities. The Black community transformed the site into a vibrant recreation hub, hosting picnics, concerts, sports tournaments, and cultural events. Key milestones include the addition of a swimming pool in 1968, marking a breakthrough in integration, and a major renovation in the late 1990s with new facilities and landscaping. In 2001, during the 12th Annual African-American Cultural Arts Festival, the park was rededicated as Booker T. Washington Park in honor of the influential educator and leader. Today, the park spans about 9.25 acres and features basketball courts, a playground, picnic shelters, and a lighted outdoor pool. It remains one of Charlottesville’s most heavily used parks and a **cornerstone of African-American cultural heritage**.

**Tonsler Park: Plantation / Brick Yard / Black Community Identity of Fifeville** Tonsler Park, located at the corner of Cherry Avenue and Ridge Street in the historically Black neighborhood of Fifeville, is one of Charlottesville’s most significant African-American heritage sites. The land itself was part of the original 394-acre **Oak Lawn Plantation** owned by Nimrod Bramham and later James Fife. Established in 1946, the park was originally designated for African Americans during segregation and named in honor of Benjamin Tonsler,

a prominent Black educator and principal of Jefferson School who championed education for African-American students despite systemic barriers.

Once a 1.9-acre industrial site operated by Old Colonial Brick Inc. (1925–1945), the land was transformed into Tonsler Park and expanded to 7.4 acres in 1978. Over the decades, it has become a vital recreational and cultural hub for Fifeville’s Black community, alive with sports, festivals, and gatherings. It symbolized resilience and pride during an era of racial segregation and limited public investment. Today, Tonsler Park remains a cornerstone of community life, featuring a recreation center, playgrounds, basketball courts, a splash pad, and spaces for cultural events. Its historical significance lies in its role as a safe and affirming space for African Americans during segregation and its continued importance in preserving community identity amid gentrification pressures in Fifeville.

### **Forest Hills Park: Plantation / Refuge / Black Community Safe Space**

Forest Hills Park, formerly known as Forest Park, is a 7.35-acre neighborhood park located on Forest Hills Avenue in the Fifeville neighborhood, a historically African-American community in Charlottesville. The land was also part of the original **Oak Lawn Plantation**. The city acquired the property in 1955, and over the decades, it has served as a vital recreational space for Fifeville residents.

Historically, Fifeville developed as a predominantly Black neighborhood during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, providing a refuge for African-American families amid segregation and systemic exclusion from other parts of the city. Parks like Forest Hills became essential for community life—offering safe spaces for gatherings, play, and cultural events when access to other public amenities was restricted.

Forest Hills Park underwent a major renovation in 2010, adding a sprayground, new playground, picnic pavilion, and walking trails. Today, it features basketball courts, open recreation fields, and family-friendly amenities. While modernized, the park retains its role as a cornerstone of community identity and resilience, especially as Fifeville faces gentrification pressures that threaten long-standing Black homeownership and cultural continuity.

Forest Hills Park is more than a green space—it is a living symbol of community persistence and joy, anchoring Fifeville’s heritage while serving as a gathering place for generations.

### **Belmont Park: Plantation / Segregation / Black Equitable Opportunities**

Belmont Park is located in the Belmont neighborhood, one of Charlottesville’s oldest residential areas, originally developed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries on land that was once part of the **Belle-Mont plantation**. The neighborhood grew as a working-class community, shaped by proximity to railroads and industrial sites. Belmont Park itself serves as a small but important green space within this historically diverse neighborhood.

While Belmont was not historically a majority-Black neighborhood like Vinegar Hill or Fifeville, its development intersected with broader patterns of **racial segregation and housing discrimination** in Charlottesville. During the 20th century, Black families faced systemic barriers to homeownership in Belmont due to racially restrictive covenants, discriminatory lending, and zoning practices. These policies limited Black residents’ ability to purchase property in Belmont, forcing many into overcrowded or under-resourced neighborhoods. Later, urban renewal projects and gentrification pressures displaced Black families citywide, including those who had begun to settle in Belmont as housing patterns shifted.

Today, Belmont Park stands as a community space in a neighborhood experiencing rapid gentrification and rising property values. While the park itself was not a central hub for Black cultural life like Tonsler Park or Washington Park, its surrounding neighborhood reflects the ongoing struggle for equitable access to housing and public amenities. Belmont’s transformation underscores the need for initiatives—such as community land trusts—that protect affordability and preserve cultural diversity amid economic change.

### **Court Square: Domestic Slave Trade / White Supremacy / Black Healing**

Court Square is a small green space adjacent to the Albemarle County Courthouse in downtown Charlottesville, but its historical significance is profound. From 1762 to 1865, Court Square was a central site for the **sale and auction of enslaved African men, women, and children**. These transactions occurred monthly on “Court Day” and were recorded in courthouse archives that remain preserved today. Enslaved families were separated

here, and the square became a symbol of the systemic oppression that shaped Charlottesville's early economy and society. In 1918, the demolition of McKee's Row erased a thriving block of Black businesses and homes, replacing it with the present-day Court Square.

In recent years, the city has taken steps to acknowledge this painful history. A state historical marker, unveiled in March 2025, now stands in Court Square to educate the public about the domestic slave trade that operated there for over a century. This marker represents a commitment to truth-telling and historical justice, ensuring that the suffering and resilience of Black communities are not forgotten.

For Charlottesville's Black community, Court Square Park is both a site of memory and a call to action. It embodies the legacy of slavery, racial injustice, and generational trauma, while serving as a focal point for dialogue, education, and healing. Its interpretation is essential for understanding the roots of systemic inequities—including land loss and barriers to homeownership—that continue to affect Black and Brown families today.

### **Market Street Park: Systemic Racism / Exclusion / Reclaiming the Black Narrative**

Market Street Park is a small urban park in downtown Charlottesville. The land was property and home of Lt Col. Charles S. Venable, a mathematics professor at the University of Virginia. He had served as an aide-de-camp to General Robert E. Lee during the Civil War. The park was originally established in 1917 when philanthropist Paul Goodloe McIntire purchased the land, demolished the house to install a bronze equestrian statue of Confederate General Robert E. Lee. The statue was unveiled in 1924, during an era when Lost Cause monuments were erected across the South to reinforce white supremacy. Days before its unveiling, the Ku Klux Klan marched in Charlottesville, signaling the park's symbolic role in intimidating the Black community and **asserting racial dominance**. For decades, the park stood as a public space overshadowed by this monument, which represented **systemic racism and exclusion**. Its presence reinforced segregation-era policies and contributed to the marginalization of Black residents, particularly as nearby neighborhoods like Vinegar Hill were later destroyed under "urban renewal."

In 2017, Charlottesville's City Council voted to remove the Lee statue and renamed the park Emancipation Park, sparking national controversy and culminating in the violent Unite the Right rally, which targeted racial justice advocates and resulted in tragic loss of life. In 2018, the park was renamed Market Street Park, and the statue was finally removed in 2021 and melted down in 2023. Today, Market Street Park is a simple green space, free from Confederate iconography, but its history remains deeply tied to racial trauma and the struggle for equity. For the Black community, the park's transformation symbolizes a step toward healing and reclaiming public spaces once weaponized against them. It serves as a reminder of the need for continued efforts to address systemic racism and create inclusive, affirming environments in Charlottesville.

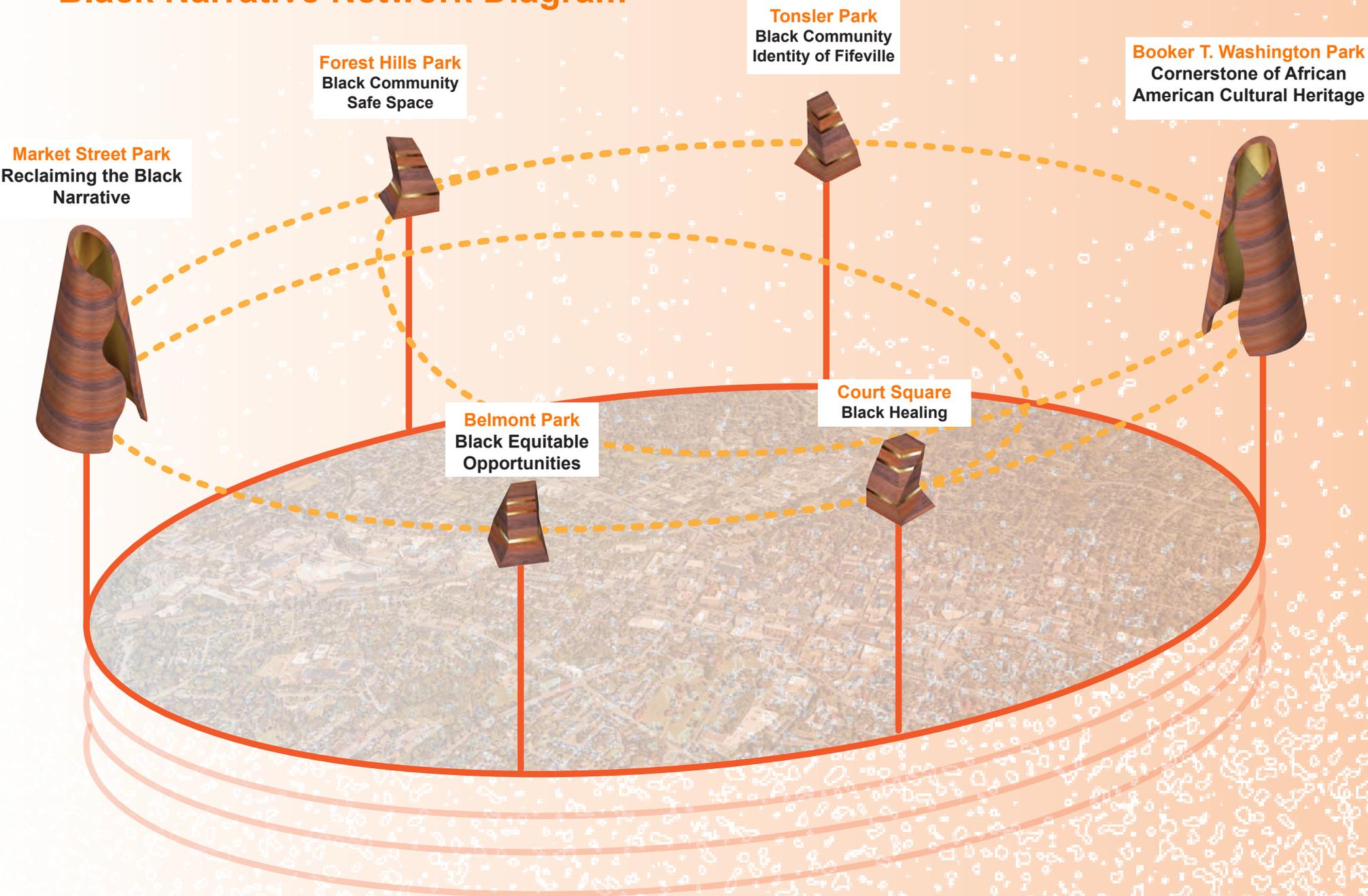
## Black Narrative Network

The Network organizes six Charlottesville parks into a shared system of storytelling art interventions. Each site contributes a distinct voice to the collective narrative:

- **Booker T. Washington Park** celebrates the joy and successes of Charlottesville's Black community, building on its well-recognized history.
  - **Forest Hills Park and Tonsler Park** serve as pillars of community life, highlighting everyday resilience and celebrating local identity within their neighborhoods.
- **Market Street Park** reclaims Black narratives by embedding community stories and historical events into a space long marked by contest and conflict.
  - **Court Square and Belmont Park** act as counter-narrative sites, emphasizing the need for equitable opportunities and healing in their immediate surroundings.

Together, these six parks form a united network that tells a story of Black grief, healing, and joy. Through regenerative art and community participation, the network transforms public spaces into places of remembrance, resilience, and renewal.

# Black Narrative Network Diagram



# Regenerative Art Form

## Towers and Pillars

The proposed regenerative sculptures are designed to **evolve** through community participation and to reflect the histories and aspirations of Charlottesville's Black and Brown communities.

**The Towers (Booker T. Washington Park and Market Street Park)** reinterpret the traditional monument.

Built layer by layer in rammed earth, each stratum represents a story from Charlottesville and the surrounding region. Inside, a bronze surface embossed with community-selected images and narratives contrasts with conventional bronze sculpture. The tower's south-facing opening allows sunlight to illuminate the interior, symbolizing warmth and renewal.

**The Pillars (Tonsler Park, Forest Hills Park, Court Square, and Belmont Park)** use the same rammed earth technique. Each layer reflects stories from the immediate neighborhood, while embedded bronze elements highlight calls to action and imagery chosen by local stakeholders.

Together, these forms create a living network of art that embodies resilience, memory, and collective voice, evolving as community engagement continues.

## Materials

The three materials used in the art installations include **Earth (soil), Bronze, and Granite**. Our team creates a synthesis and connectivity to all materials, forming a new sculptural narrative.

### Earth (soil)

Soil as an expression of land is the primary material utilized for all six site art installations. Forging the soil into Rammed Earth reflects enslaved peoples' ties to the land throughout a contested history that continues today. The rammed earth reframes the narrative of land into a positive and joyful expression of celebration. Soil will arrive from Charlottesville as well as contested sites throughout Virginia.



### The Towers

- **Locations:** Booker T. Washington Park and Market Street Park
- **Dimensions:** Base Diameter: 12' - 0" Height: 25'-0"
- **Material / Construction:** Rammed Earth Exterior skin and an Interior bronze skin

The two tower sites serve as deliberate counterpoints, embodying the city's contrasting historical narratives while converging toward a shared collective future. Their 25-foot height recalls the height of the former Robert E. Lee statue, evoking a dialogue between past symbolism and contemporary vision.



### The Pillars

- **Locations:** Tonsler Park, Forest Hills Park, Court Square, and Belmont Park
- **Dimensions:** Length: 4'-0" Width: 4'-0" Height: 6'-0"
- **Material / Construction:** Rammed Earth w/ embedded stratas of bronze

The four pillar sites are interwoven with the city's fabric, creating a stepping-stone journey between the towers.

### Earth (soil) continued

Consistent with the project's community participation central focus, citizens will have an opportunity to provide soil from their properties and other important sites within and outside the community. In this way there is direct and meaningful community physical engagement with the works of art. The strata of soil layers for each rammed earth installation will yield a colorful hues and textures based on the variety of soil offerings. In some cases, the soil layers will receive integral color to enhance the effect of layering and artistic symbolism. Aggregate will also be added to the soil mixture when necessary to highlight symbolic textures, forms, and text.

Each rammed earth installation will be structurally supported by a traditional concrete footing to help avoid excessive water penetration from the ground surface. While rammed earth is a sustainable material, small amounts of cement will be added to the soil layers to add stability. To add even more stability to the sculptures, geosynthetic grid materials will be added to the soil layers. Clear solvent non-toxic sealants will be applied to all rammed earth to protect against water penetration and vandalism. The sealants will allow air penetration, which is important to maintain fire and insect resistance. A 'Maintenance Manuel' will be provided, outlining periodic maintenance procedures and schedules.

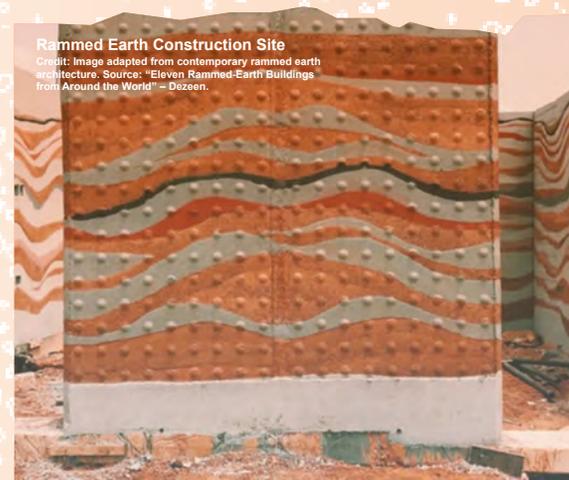
### Bronze

The 'Recast / Reclaim' focus of the Swords into Plowshares project requires that the bronze be re-envisioned as a new narrative spatial expression. The Bronze will be utilized to create a framework within each rammed earth expression, housing new symbols that represent the community-driven participation. The community participation in developing intrinsic symbolism is important to ensure respect, longevity, ownership, and stewardship into the future. In the tradition of the historic West African Benin bronzes, each sculpture will visualize bronze reliefs that embody history, healing, and joy. These reliefs will require the smelting of bronze

ingots to recast new symbols and text. The bronze will not only be recast into new symbolism, but the existing bronze ingots will be reused as stacked or supporting structures for each of the new sculptures. This gesture of ingot use gives reference to the Jefferson School African American Heritage Center process, while forging a new use for the ingots integral to the sculptures.

### Granite

The Granite from the existing Robert E. Lee sculpture will also be utilized in the new sculptures. This material is foundational not only as a support for the original sculpture, but also to illustrate a sustainability in utilizing all aspects of the Robert E. Lee sculpture. The rammed earth sculptures will benefit from the granite above and below ground level to ensure structural integrity as well as visual connectivity and sculptural interest. The granite will be reconfigured in many forms and textures will give expression as polished, honed, or matte finishes. Granite may also serve as places for etched or carved figures and text relevant to the project theme – **Land Forge.**





**Booker T. Washington Park:** Guided by the 2025 City of Charlottesville Parks & Recreation Master Plan concept design for the lower area, the Tower is placed at the meeting point of the grand stairs and the central walkway.



**Market Street Park** : Guided by the 2025 City of Charlottesville Parks & Recreation Master Plan concept design for Market Street Park, the Tower is positioned at the Northern Edge of the central plaza. The main opening faces directly south.



Market Street Park : The cross section illustrates the exterior rammed earth surface and interior bronze surface of the tower.

## **Installation and Fabrication**

The installation portion of the project will be based on the construction documentation phase of the project. After selection of a fully bonded contractor to install the majority of the project, the artist and other design team members will act as on-site supervisors of the work. This will ensure that the project installation(s) are properly following the construction documents and specifications. The specialized nature of the rammed earth sculptures will require careful attention to details and specific soil types from a variety of Virginia locations.

The artist will coordinate with fabrication firms to smelt and remold the bronze into forms and shapes that will become the underside of two of the sculptures. The designers will request that the bronze fabricators translate the professional design team's vision into Shop Drawings for accuracy and to provide clarity for the project general

contractor. When granite from the deconstructed Robert E. Lee sculpture base and other granite elements are or carved text and images. The shop drawings will provide accuracy that will assist the general contractor during installation. In addition to the artist, Jordan Weber, PUSH studio will assign a project manager to supervise all installations at each of the six park sites.

## **Maintenance**

Because of the specialized nature of the sculptures, Rammed Earth, maintenance and security are important. However, the other materials utilized in the sculptures, bronze and granite, are also important to protect from weather damage and vandalism. The professional design team will provide a 'Maintenance Manual,' defining the periodic maintenance as well as mitigation evaluations for each sculpture. The manual will suggest timelines for checking on the integrity of each sculpture component and remedies for repair or replacement. It is anticipated that if the manual guidelines are followed, the six sculptures should have a long lifespan.

# Public Engagement Plan

## Overview

The Regenerative art process ensures that the community will be engaged with the sculptural projects distributed across the six park sites, guaranteeing that they will live on into the future.

The five-phase Community Engagement plan starts in August 2026 through October 2027. The plan starts with team setup, artistic development, intensive public input, design finalization, and a celebratory approval step. The structure aligns with best practice guidance that engagement plans should define goals, roles, and a timeline for each phase to guide collaborative work and outreach efforts. Each phase summary provides the purpose and outcome for each phase.

## Phase Purpose and Outcome Description

### Phase 1: Public Engagement and Outreach Strategy Organizing / August 2026-September 2026

**Purpose:** This initial phase allows the design team to meet with officials from the Jefferson School African American Heritage Center (JSAAHC) and other relevant stakeholders to review the Community Participation Framework. The discussions will focus on realigning the plan based on input from JSAAHC, identifying key local leaders and nonprofits, and reviewing any additional reports or guidelines.

The design team will collaborate with the community to select 8 'Neighborhood Ambassadors.' These Ambassadors will serve as a link between the community and stakeholders, helping the design team recruit participants for engagement and providing strategic insights to help refine the process as needed.

This two-month ramp-up period will be led by PEA's three principals each playing intersecting roles: Engagement Project Management, Engagement Design and Facilitation, and Outreach and Recruitment Management. PEA will hire a local outreach manager and an outreach assistant, and recruit eight neighborhood ambassadors who will receive a monthly stipend of \$200. A PEA project assistant will be responsible for launching and managing engagement web pages, support social media coordination, materials development and building local stakeholder lists.

**Outcome:** The engagement team is fully ready to launch and engage with all the relevant constituencies.

## **Phase 2.A: Community Collaboration with the Artist-in-Residence / October 2026-November 2026**

**Purpose:** The Team Artist is key to this phase. He will be in residence for about three to four weeks to build relationships and trust with key stakeholders and constituencies who have long been involved in the Plowshares and related processes. He will then conduct a series of three Regenerative Art design meetings with the Plowshares Design Consultation Group (a core group of 25-30, close-in stakeholders) to refine the main artistic features and dimensions of the sculpture on the two primary sites (Washington Park and Market Square), as well as on the other four sites.

The goal is to work closely with key stakeholders on the project concept, 'Land Forge.'

During this two-month period, PEA will support and attend the artist's three meetings with the consultation group, launch regular meetings with the JSAAHC/city team and ambassadors, organize and facilitate a youth focus group, and continue to develop web pages for the project. Our local outreach team will conduct outreach to the community, both at local meetings and through one-on-one interactions.

## **Phase 2.B: Follow-up & Preparation / December 2026**

**Purpose:** During this one-month phase, the PUSH team will consolidate changes to the art installation and develop Open Space designs for presentation during Phase 3.

The engagement team will keep holding its monthly meetings, start securing and finalizing locations for phase 3, continue outreach to the community and promote the three Open Houses, provide website updates on the project, and continue building relationships with stakeholders, and managing the contact lists.

**Outcome:** A comprehensive rendering and vision for the art installations across the six sites.

### **Phase 3: Community-wide input on Open Space designs for all six parks / January 2027-April 2027**

**Purpose:** The project design team will use these meetings to thoroughly explain the team design process, artistic concepts and expressions, and gather input from the community on the open space designs for the six sites. This four-month period will be the most intensive outreach and engagement phase of the year-long process. All key personnel will work to ensure successful Open Houses and Popups. A central focus will be engaging Charlottesville residents in a community-wide survey about the landscape and art designs. We will continue our regular monthly meetings with key groups and expand outreach into the community. We will conclude this phase with a Summary Analysis report highlighting survey results and findings from various in-person engagements.

**Outcome:** Sufficient input for the design team to begin developing conceptual open space designs and placement of the artistic feature for each of the sites based on community input and the design team's renderings and vision for the six sites.

### **Phase 4.A: Community Feedback on Final Design / May 2027-July 2027**

**Purpose:** This phase allows the community to review the design teams' realignment of the design process and artistic concepts based on the comprehensive feedback from Phase 3. In addition to posting near-final designs on the project website for feedback, the public engagement team will host pop-up stations in the community for direct review of drawings and other materials.

#### **Phase 4.B: Community Feedback on Final Design / August – September 2027**

**Purpose:** During this 60-day phase, the PUSH team will finalize changes to the overall design based on feedback from Phase 4.

The engagement team will continue to convene its monthly meetings, continue outreach to the community and promote the Celebratory Open House in October, finalize web and list-management work, preparing it for handoff to JSAAHC.

**Outcome:** Sufficient input for the design team to finalize the landscape designs and the intricate connections across the six sites.

#### **Phase 5: From Vision to Reality: Celebration & Adoption / October 2027**

**Purpose:** Phase five engages the community in a lively review of previous phases as a joyful art-in-action celebration. A series of meetings gives the community a chance to celebrate all the work that has been accomplished together and to make necessary process adjustments. In particular, this phase allows the design team to highlight how the community will be involved during the construction of the approved artistic expressions within each park. This reflects our team's definition of art-in-action, which involves active citizen participation. The design team will work with JSAAHC and City Officials to ensure proper procedures are followed for final approval of the sculptures. The project website will remain active as a communication tool throughout all phases of constructing the art projects in each park.

As needed, the Neighborhood Ambassadors will play a larger role in helping the design team communicate the next steps throughout the design and construction process.

**Outcomes:** The Jefferson School for African American Heritage and Culture and the City of Charlottesville are well-positioned to secure all final approvals for the project and will establish a framework for community involvement as the project progresses toward final approvals, installation of the art, and landscapes.

# Phased Activities Outline

## Phase 1: Public Engagement and Outreach Strategy Organizing / August 2026-September 2026

- August 2026 - Feedback from March-May Exhibit used to tweak initial design (1 month)
- August-September 2026 - Outreach Prep
  - Generate and grow a key stakeholder list
  - Hire 2 part-time, local outreach staff
  - Identify key local leaders to interview and begin conducting interviews
  - Meet with the existing national Plowshares Advisory Board
  - Recruit a **Neighborhood Engagement Advisory Group** of eight ambassadors to finalize the engagement plan and support outreach, recruitment, and engagement throughout the process
  - Begin identifying and recruiting up to **25-person Plowshares Design Consultation Group (PDCG)** for intensive October collaborations with the artist-in-residence, and ongoing consultation and advice. The PDCG members will be drawn from the descendant community, long-time activists on this issue, long-time residents of African American neighborhoods, and other essential stakeholders to the process.
  - Review of other relevant plans (Charlottesville Parks & Recreation, etc.)
  - Fine-tune engagement plan for October 2026-October 2027
  - Starting in September, Launch initial monthly meetings with: (a) JSAAHC team and key city, parks, and historic preservation staff; (b) Neighborhood Engagement Advisory Group

## Phase 2.A: Community Collaboration with the Artist-in-Residence / October 2026-November 2026

- **A Month-long Artist in Residency Program** to further develop the creation of the six unique, connected art installations across different parks around the rammed earth technique. The October Artist in Residency program will focus primarily, but not exclusively, on the major sculptures in Booker T. Washington Park and Market Square.
  - **Week 1:** Artist attends meetings with several community groups, has informal conversations with relevant stakeholders, and solidifies membership of the Consultation Group
  - **Week 2:** Artist holds the first of three Regenerative Art design meetings with the Plowshares Design Consultation Group; he takes that input and works on an initial concept
  - **Week 3:** Artist holds the second of three Regenerative Art design meetings with the Consultation Group; he takes input to update and refine the initial concept
  - **Week 4:** Artist holds the final of three Regenerative Art design meetings with the Consultation Group; he receives the final round of input to work on a penultimate design of the art
- **October-November:** Hold monthly meetings with: (a) JSAAHC team and key city, parks, and historic preservation staff; (b) Neighborhood Engagement Advisory Group
  - Continue interviewing other important stakeholders not yet involved in the process.
  - Once the artist has codified the design of the two primary park sites and concept designs for the other four installations:
    - The Project Design team will determine the presentations and display boards needed for Phase 3 engagement activities and will work with the engagement team to coordinate how those will be rolled out and utilized from December through February.

- **November:** Hold a focus group for youth regarding the October activities in November
  - This same group will meet in Phases 3 and 4 as well. We will draw high school-age and post-secondary age youth and young adults for this group. It is essential we keep youth voice as an important focus for this initiative.
  - Continue to grow a key stakeholder list
  - Add project web pages as part of the existing Plowshares website

### **Phase 2.B: Follow-up & Preparation / December 2026**

- During this one-month phase, the PUSH team will consolidate changes to the art installation and develop Open Space designs for presentation during Phase 3.
- The engagement team will keep holding its monthly meetings, start securing and finalizing locations for phase 3, continue outreach to the community and promote the three Open Houses, provide website updates on the project, and continue building relationships with stakeholders, and managing the contact lists.

### **Phase 3: Community-wide input on Open Space designs for all six parks / January 2027-April 2027**

- The Interactive Website will also be established at the beginning of this phase of work as a primary platform for community voice, ideation, and feedback.
- **January:** we will hold three **community-wide Open House meetings**, each focused on Open Space design at two sites:
  - Booker T. Washington Park and Market Square Park
  - Forest Hill Park and Tonsler Park
  - Court Square Park and Belmont Park
- The Open Houses will include a presentation, Q&A, discussion, and participants visiting graphical boards and engagement activities.

- **February-March:** This phase will also launch a **public input period (via a community survey platform) for the broader community** to share feedback and insights on the penultimate draft of the 6-part art installation.
  - Organize 4-5 pop-ups in high-traffic locations and community events promoting the work of Phase 3. Popups consist of a booth with promotional material, staffed by 2 or 3 people, that are either stand-alone or part of events lasting 2-4 hours.
  - Attend 4-5 existing community meetings/events with groups who perform work relevant to this project to share about the project and solicit input.
  - Continue to conduct engagement on the website
  - Hold a focus group for the same youth as in October, re: open space designs
- **April:** Partner with JSAAHC on their relevant Walking Tours to share knowledge about this process and impact on selected parks
  - Check-in meeting with the Plowshares Design Consultation Group (PDCG)
  - Hold monthly meetings with a) JSAAHC team and key city, parks, and historic preservation staff; (b) Neighborhood Engagement Advisory Group
  - Make changes to the design based on feedback throughout Phase 3 to get ready for Phase 4 (3 weeks)

#### **Phase 4.A: Community Feedback on Final Design / May 2027-July 2027**

- **Early to mid-May:** Make changes to design based on feedback from Phase 2 (2-3 weeks)
- **Late May-July:** We will hold **three community-wide Open House meetings**, each focused on Open Space design at two sites:
  - Booker T. Washington Park and Market Square Park
  - Forest Hill Park and Tonsler Park
  - Court Square Park and Belmont Park

- The Open Houses will include a presentation, Q&A, discussion, and participants visiting graphical boards.
- **June-July:** Organize 4-5 pop-ups in high-traffic locations and community events promoting the work of Phase 4
  - Attend 4-5 existing community meetings with groups who perform work related to this project
  - Hold focus group for the same youth as in October & February re: open space designs
  - Continue to conduct engagement on the website
  - Organize 3 Stakeholder meetings / focus groups with
    - One with Descendent's and a two meetings with range of Community Organizations in targeted neighborhoods
    - Check-in meeting with the Plowshares Design Consultation Group (PDCG)
    - Hold monthly meetings with: a) JSAAHC team and key city, parks, and historic preservation staff; (b) Neighborhood Engagement Advisory Group
    - Continue to conduct engagement on website

#### **Phase 4.B: Community Feedback on Final Design / August - September 2027**

- During this 60-day phase, the **PUSH** team will finalize changes to the overall design based on feedback from Phase 4.
- The engagement team will continue to convene its monthly meetings, continue outreach to the community and promote the Celebratory Open House in October, finalize web and list-management work, preparing it for handoff to JSAAHC.

## Phase 5: From Vision to Reality: Celebration & Adoption / October 2027

- **October:** Final Meeting with JSAAHC team and key city, parks, and historic preservation staff
  - Final Meeting with Engagement Advisory Group/Ambassadors
  - Final Meeting with the Plowshares Design Consultation Group (PDCG)
  - Final meeting with existing Community Advisory Committee
  - Panel Discussion with Jefferson School, Artists, African American historians, and UVA Architecture School
  - Open House & Celebration
  - Update Website
- Fabrication and Installation 2027-2028
  - In this final phase, the engagement team will continue to hold its monthly meetings, conduct final outreach efforts to promote the Celebratory Open House, finalize web and list-management tasks, and prepare for the handoff to JSAAHC.



# Concept Project Schedule

2026

Jan - Mar

Apr - Jun

Jul - Sep

Oct

## Phase 1 - Public Engagement and Outreach Evaluation & Finalization

- Exhibition Feedback
- Outreach Prep
- Start of Monthly Check-In Meetings

## Phase 2.A - 2.B - Community Collaboration with the Artist-in-Residence's on Central Artistic Features

- Artist Residency - Stakeholder, Community Group, PDCG Participation Events & Meetings
- Monthly Check-In Meetings
- Artist/Design Team Revision of Concept
- Launch of Web Page on SIP website

## Phase 3 - Community-wide input on Open Space designs for all six parks

- Open Space - Community Open House Meetings
- Public Input Period
- Revisions to design based on Feedback

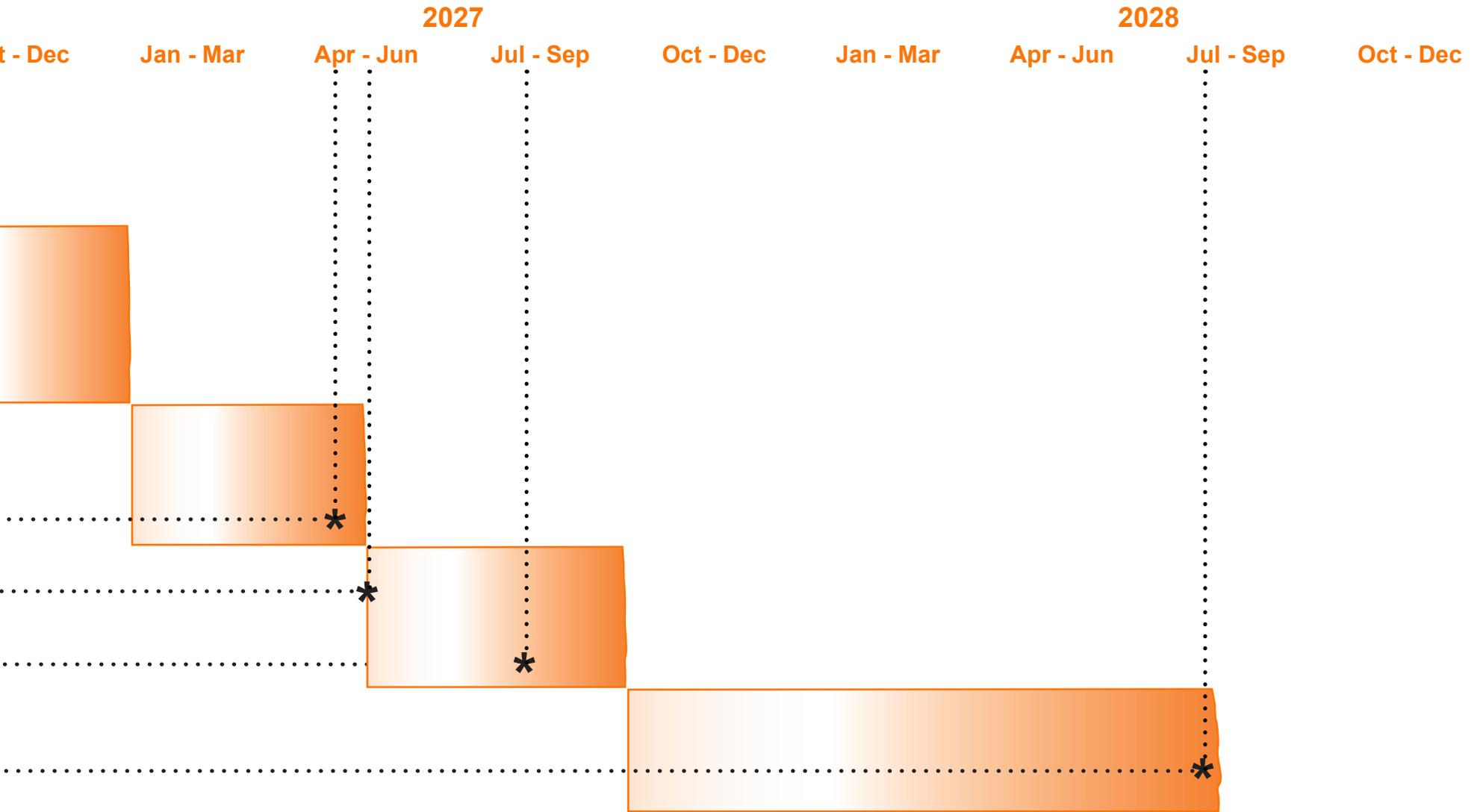
## Phase 4.A - 4.B - Community Feedback on Final Design

- Final Design - Community-wide Open House Meeting
- Monthly Check-In meetings
- Revisions to design based on Feedback

## Phase 5 - From Vision to Reality: Celebration & Adoption

- Community Events
- Fabrication/Installation





\* **KEY MILESTONES** - The project schedule documents milestones for the overall project. The project schedule will be updated monthly to ensure that the team is meeting all target dates and key milestones. Reports will be the vehicle by which the team communicates all work phases and maintains communication with the client.

# Concept Project Management Plan

## Overview

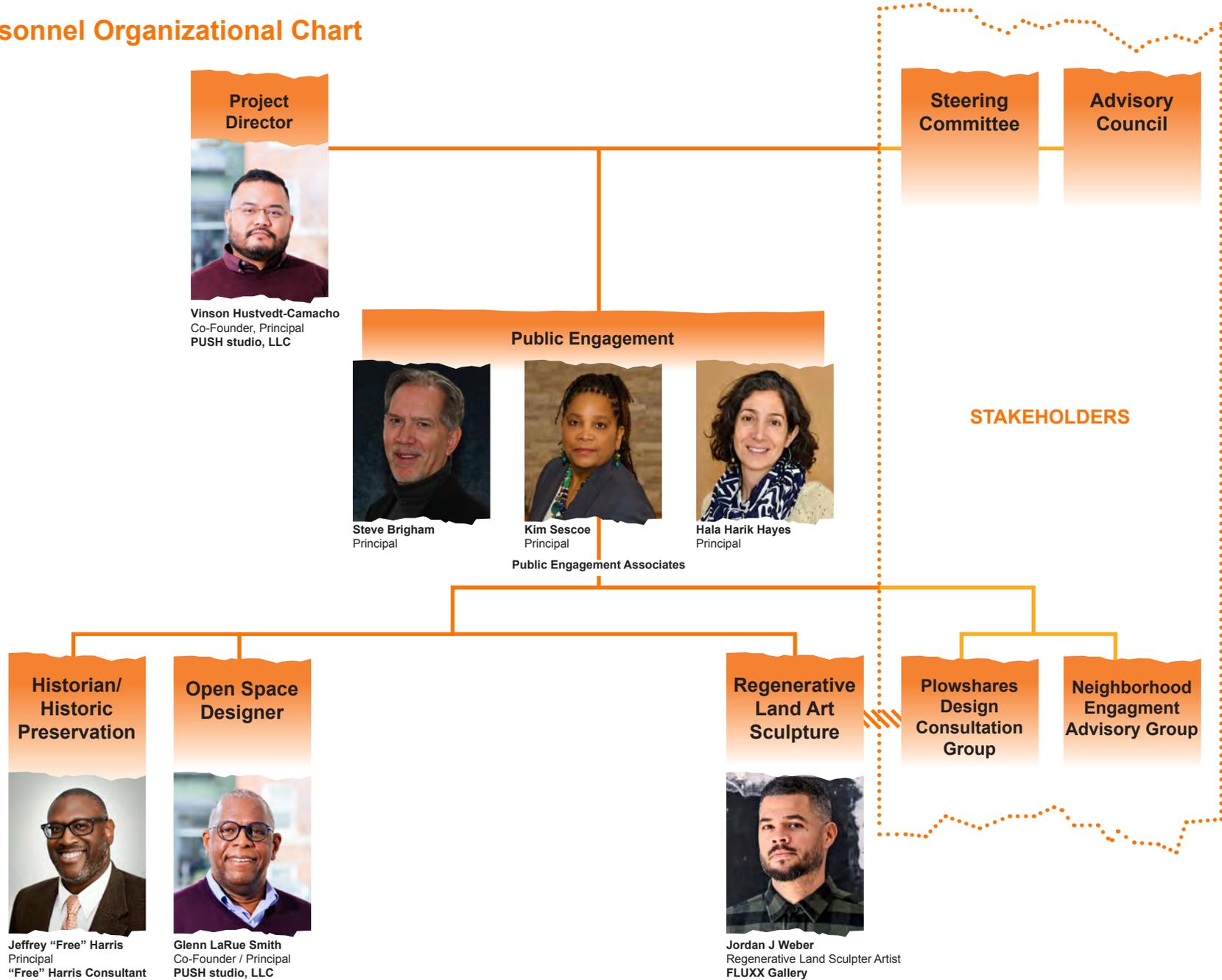
The Swords into Plowshares initiative requires a management structure... that balances both artistic excellence and community accountability.

## Key Personnel and Role

The key team personnel and their roles are strategically defined to maximize individual and collective efforts through the life of the project – concept to construction. The PUSH studio project director will be the central point of contact, resolving all schedule changes and unexpected changes to the workload. The client will be continuously updated as to all project progress and changes.

Role / Name	Affiliation	Responsibilities
Steering Committee	SIP	Provides overall project guidance
Advisory Council	JSAAHC	Offers cultural, historical, and community insight
Neighborhood Engagement Advisory Group	TBD	Individuals who represent the neighborhoods, non-profit organizations, education institutions to finalize the engagement plan and support outreach, recruitment and engagement process.
Plowshares Design Consultation Group (PDCG)	TBD	Individuals who are drawn from the descendant community; long time activists, long time residents of African American neighborhoods, and other essential stakeholders who will collaborate directly with the artist during his residency
Community-Led Visioning Lead	PEA	Lead community engagement plan
Open Space Design Lead / Glenn Smith	PUSH studio	Lead schematic and detailed design development, oversee artist collaboration, fabrication coordination, and installation
Artist / Jordan Weber	FLUXX studios	Translate concept into artistic form; co-create with PEA the PDCG and other relevant stakeholders. Collaborate through meetings, informal conversations and workshops
Local Outreach Partners	TBD	Lead all on-the ground engagement activities, community recruitment, and feedback synthesis
Project Director / Vinson Hustvedt-Camacho	PUSH studio	Manage day-to-day operations, schedules, and serves as the point of Support scheduling, communications, and inter-team logistics Contact for the design team and engagement partners.
Historian & Preservationist / Jeffrey “Free” Harris	Free Harris Consultant	Pair historical and cultural accuracy with community insights
Photographer / Videographer / Website	JSAAHC	Provide imagery throughout lifespan of the project

# Key Personnel Organizational Chart



# Concept Risk Management Plan

## Overview

The Organization Chart defines the professional team members and their respective roles. It is this chart that grounds the team in a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities. This roadmap is the Risk Management plan that the project manager will utilize to maintain constant checks and balances for all work produced. The risk management plan and process will identify tools used to assess work and prioritize work related to community engagement, artistic representation, and organization and construction of the final sculptures works. Within the Community Participation component of the work there are multiple types of activities that can be easily altered, decreased, or increased to improve efficiency. As well, the sculpture process is phased to help realize a completed and constructed project that has multiple layers of work (concept design, schematic design, site design, design development, construction documentation, and construction supervision). These layers of work will allow for unexpected changes without disruption to the total project process. Past projects have indicated that maintaining a consistent bi-weekly flow of project progress notes and schedules ensures that failures do not occur. These reports provide the opportunity for all team members to spot potential issues before they become a problem or a failure.

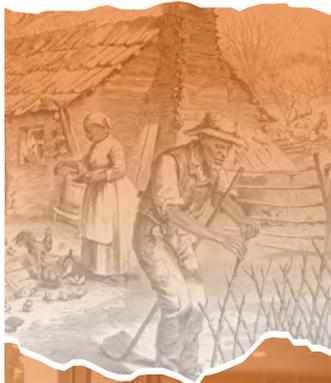
## Risk Mitigation Procedures

Whenever the team determines there is a risk of failure during any part of the project planning process, the project manager will immediately call a team meeting to discuss a risk mitigation strategy to resolve any adverse issue or to avoid an adverse issue. The implementation of any risk mitigation plan will always be documented and shared with the client to guarantee efficiency. The team realizes that this is particularly important during the community participation element of the project work. If meetings are needed with the client, specific community groups or stakeholders, the project manager and lead community participation lead will structure a meeting to determine risk mitigation procedures. Again, the prescribed schedule of project reports for both community participation and sculpture phases will help to spot and determine mitigation procedures. During the concept design through construction process reports and schedules will also be key to risk mitigation. When needed, schedules will be revised and reasons for the revisions submitted to the client and all other necessary parties.

The Risk Management Plan will always be the central document of reference to ensure the team is on track and meeting all key time schedules and commitments. The project schedule will also set strategic times to review the efficiency of all team members, setting mitigation measures where needed.

# Concept Fee Estimate Chart

Phase	Consultant	Consultant Subtotal	Phase Subtotal Total	Phase Total	
<b>Phase 1:</b> Public Engagement and Outreach Strategy Organizing / August 2026-September 2026	PUSH studio	\$ 41,250.00		<b>\$92,028.50</b>	
	PEA	\$ 24,528.50			
	FLUXX studio	\$ 21,000.00			
	Free Harris	\$ 5,250.00			
<b>Phase 2.A:</b> Community Collaboration with the Artist-in-Residence / October 2026-November 2026	PUSH studio	\$ 13,750.00	\$58,123.50		
	PEA	\$ 26,873.50			
	FLUXX studio	\$ 14,000.00			
	Free Harris	\$ 3,500.00			
<b>Phase 2.B:</b> Follow-up & Preparation / December 2026	PUSH studio	\$ 41,250.00	\$76,060.90		
	PEA	\$ 17,310.90			
	FLUXX studio	\$ 14,000.00			
	Free Harris	\$ 3,500.00			
<b>Phase 2.A / 2.B</b>				<b>\$134,184.40</b>	
<b>Phase 3:</b> Community-wide input on Open Space designs for all six parks / January 2027-April 2027	PUSH studio	\$ 68,750.00		<b>\$191,035.00</b>	
	PEA	\$ 78,535.00			
	FLUXX studio	\$ 35,000.00			
	Free Harris	\$ 8,750.00			
<b>Phase 4.A:</b> Community Feedback on Final Design / May 2027-July 2027	PUSH studio	\$ 18,150.00	\$98,335.86		
	PEA	\$ 64,751.40			
	FLUXX studio	\$ 10,184.46			
	Free Harris	\$ 5,250.00			
<b>Phase 4.B:</b> Community Feedback on Final Design / August - September 2027	PUSH studio	\$ 18,150.00	\$60,503.44		
	PEA	\$ 16,425.90			
	FLUXX studio	\$ 20,677.54			
	Free Harris	\$ 5,250.00			
<b>Phase 4.A / 4.B</b>				<b>\$158,839.30</b>	
<b>Phase 5:</b> From Vision to Reality: Celebration & Adoption / October 2027	PUSH studio	\$ 73,700.00		<b>\$125,132.80</b>	
	PEA	\$ 22,732.80			
	FLUXX studio	\$ 25,138.00			
	Free Harris	\$ 3,562.00			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Project Direct Cost:</b> Expenses directly tied to a specific project, like labor, materials, or equipment.</li> <li><b>Project Per Diem and Travel Costs:</b> Projected expenses for transportation, lodging, meals, and daily allowances required to support project-related travel.</li> <li>Subtotal inclusive of site survey, engineering, and permit documents as needed.</li> </ul>			Project Direct Cost	\$54,819.72	
				Project Per Diem and Travel Cost	\$43,503.10
				Subtotal	<b>\$799,542.82</b>
				Project Material, Fabrication and Installation	\$3,200,457.18
			<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$4,000,000.00</b>	



READING COLORED F  
CTOR & UNDERTAK  
Charlottesville, Va.



A SOLID AND RELIABLE  
Known as  
CUS & KELS

