



Genesis Park Neighborhood Unveils Art Honoring Community

Genesis Park Neighborhood Association commission local artist to celebrate the neighborhood with public installation

September 18, 2021 (Charlotte, NC) – Genesis Park Neighborhood Association today unveiled the community’s first public art installation by local artist Sala Faruq celebrating the Genesis Park Neighborhood and memorializing community advocate, Pastor Barbara Brewton. The project was envisioned and commissioned through a public-private partnership between the Genesis Park Neighborhood Association, I-77 Mobility Partners, the City of Charlotte, and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT).

“In addition to I-77 Mobility Partners, I would like to thank our other partners, the City of Charlotte Housing and Neighborhood Services Team and NCDOT, for their hard work to make this art project happen,” said Genesis Park Neighborhood Association President Sharon Young. “We are very excited to be gathered here by the community garden to unveil a wonderful piece of art from the talented Sala Faruq for the neighborhood to enjoy. When the neighbors were deciding on a theme for the artwork, the history of Genesis Park was the highest priority for our community, and I believe Ms. Faruq’s art captured that beautifully.”

During a conversation with I-77 Mobility Partners, Charlotte City Councilman Braxton Winston asked whether any public art was planned along the corridor, catalyzing a multi-year initiative led by I-77 Mobility Partners to incorporate art into the I-77 Express project. Representatives from I-77 Mobility Partners alongside Genesis Park Neighborhood Association President Sharon Young and other neighborhood leaders, worked closely with the City of Charlotte Housing & Neighborhood Services Department and NCDOT to determine where and how the installation would be displayed. They also engaged neighbors to develop a vision and commissioned a local artist with creative inspiration that reflected the community.

“Community art projects are the most visible focal points of hope and pride in neighborhoods like Genesis Park,” said Charlotte Mayor Vi Lyles. “Our city’s newest public art display will provide beauty and inspiration for visitors and all those who make this area their home.”

Faruq, a Charlotte artist, worked with a group of representatives from I-77 Mobility Partners and Charlotte Housing & Neighborhood Services on the project. The group held community meetings to receive input on the design of the exhibit. Genesis Park neighbors voted on themes that Faruq worked from to create several mock-ups. The theme selected was the history of Genesis Park. Neighbors then voted on the mock-ups, ultimately selecting to produce the two pieces that are now available to be exhibited on a rotating basis. The display, which was fabricated and mounted by local manufacturer Conder Flags, allows for the pieces to be interchanged. It is the first art installation on a NCDOT noise wall in the region.

“Today’s event is a perfect example of partnership and collaboration between NCDOT and the communities we serve,” said Jeff Littlefield, Deputy Division Engineer. “It’s a privilege to be part of something this neighborhood will enjoy for years to come.”

Genesis Park Neighborhood Association has worked collaboratively with its transportation partners since the beginning of the highway redevelopment. Half of the neighborhood garden was relocated at the outset of construction to accommodate an improved noise wall along the corridor. In partnership with I-77 Mobility Partners, the garden was expanded to better serve the community's needs.

"I-77 Mobility Partners is invested in the vibrancy of communities that we serve as part of our long-term commitment to the Charlotte region. This latest public-private partnership is one of the most exciting among the several community benefit projects we have embarked on since being awarded the I-77 contract by NCDOT," said I-77 Mobility Partners CEO Jose Espinosa. "Our team is dedicated to delivering the best customer service to motorists traveling I-77, while also engaging the communities along the corridor between Charlotte and Mooresville, where we live, work, and play. We appreciate NCDOT and the City of Charlotte for their partnership and shared vision of public art for the Genesis Park neighborhood."

###

Press may contact:

Jean Leier
Director of Corporate Affairs
I-77 Mobility Partners
jleier@i77partners.com

Jen Thompson
Communications Officer
North Carolina Department of Transportation
jenthompson@ncdot.gov

Cory Burkarth
Media Relations
City of Charlotte
Cory.Burkarth@charlottenc.gov