



Photos by Todd Luck

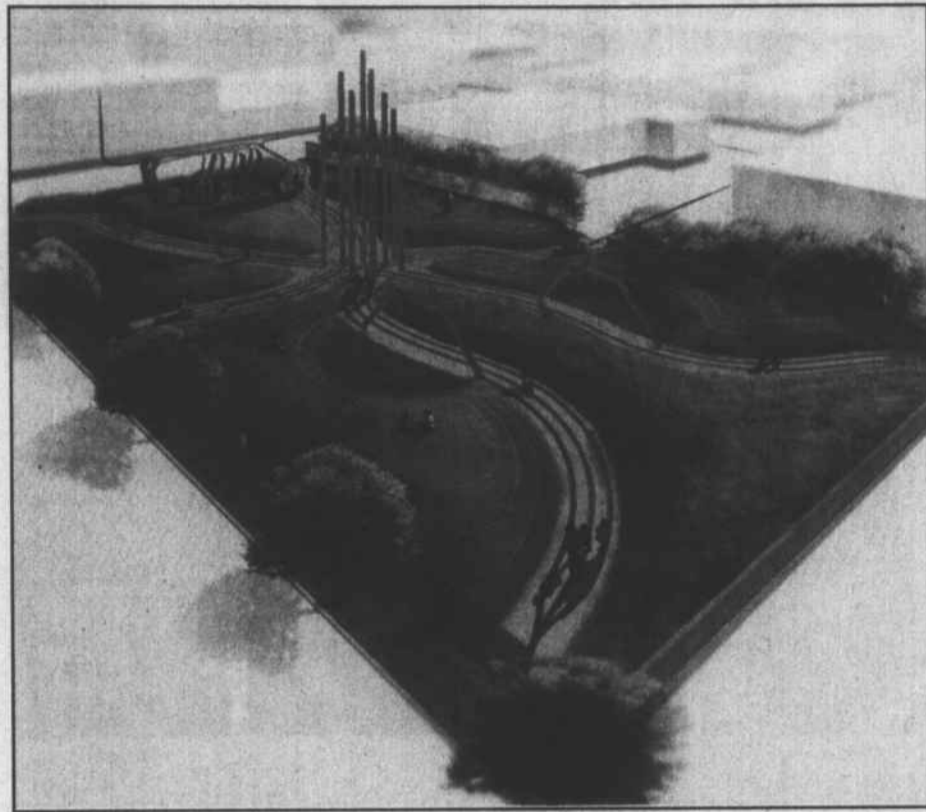
At left, people who visited the traveling Thankful Heritage Museum poured over the black news pages of local newspapers from the 1950s and '60s along with front pages with headlines about Martin Luther King Jr.'s funeral and Malcom X's death. Above are black history posters on display.



Effey Howell owns the Thankful Heritage Museum.

## Traveling museum showcases African-American memorabilia

On Saturday, Feb. 21 from 4 to 6 p.m., Freedom Tree IDR, formerly The Institute for Dismantling Racism, held a Black History Commemoration and fundraising event at Parkway United Church of Christ. The Thankful Heritage Museum was there. Thankful Heritage Inc. (THI) is a 501c3 non-profit organization that features a traveling African-American museum filled with a collection of African-American artifacts dating back to the 1700s. The traveling museum of African-American history was started 21 years ago by Effey Howell (pictured) and has over 1,000 items, some dating as far back as the 1700s. Howell, a 2007 ECHO award winner for building social capital, regularly does exhibits at schools, churches, community centers and the local Juneteenth celebration.



Rendering by STITCH DESIGN

Submitted photo

### Park

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ing there, which in turn will lead to much more happening in the area."

It's designed to create an artful space between the Innovation Quarter and the downtown Arts District. There will be red lines that will lead visitors into the park and rise up to create an option for sculptures to be displayed.

At the center of the park, the red lines will come together into 13 masts that will create fog formations in an effort to recognize the city's past in manufacturing.

"At night it'll be lit up, and when the fog hits the light it will look like it's glowing," Knabb said. "The fog will become animated."

Montgomery said that the masts are bound to attract activity to the area.

"There will be a place to embrace all facets of art in the area," he said. "Art is very much a part of who we are as a community."

This park is continuing to show how we integrate that into the fabric of what we normally see, like parks.

When we infuse our innovation and artistic sense, we have something that is unique to our community and attractive to those near and abroad."

There will also be an art performance shelter made out of silver steel bands and a concrete wall to be used as an evolving canvas for painters.

The shelter will have built-in benches and easels, as well.

"We'll have 10 mural artists painting there in the beginning of May."

We'll leave it up for a year, paint over it and do it again with new artists.

We have some of the best mural artists in the area, so we are real excited about that," Knabb said.

Local and regional businesses are building the park. STITCH Design shop drew up the plans, architecture was done by Stimmel Associates and the construction is being done by Frank L. Blum Construction Co. Knabb said that he feels the park will help to infuse more art into downtown, citing that it doubles the size of the arts district.

He said that he would like to see it used by everyone in the community, whether it's by pet owners, nearby children or the residents who live downtown.

"It's going to bring more range, depth and interest to the area," he said. "It's a gift to the community and the city of Arts and Innovation. I look at it as a giant piece of art."



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