

N Line artwork at Commerce City•72nd Station balances concept of resilience with a whimsical, futuristic feel

Standing in the center of the bus roundabout near the N Line commuter rail platform at Commerce City•72nd Station is an impressive 20-foot-tall steel sculpture called “Mid-Century, Mod-Cacti.”

Public artist [Annette Coleman](#) crafted the recent addition to RTD’s Art-n-Transit program along with [JunoWorks](#), a custom metal fabrication studio in Commerce City specializing in art and architectural metal works. As described by Coleman, a Colorado native and lifelong artist, “This standalone sculpture of mid-modern-inspired cacti draws upon the history of the area and offers travelers a wayfinding gift.”

A color palette of blues and magenta greet RTD customers arriving at the north end of the station; from the south, the futuristic cacti feature bright green shades with pink accents.

The design concept, and the element of fun from modernistic trunks and blooms to spines with round orbs on the ends, come from a childhood memory Coleman shares of seeing cacti in her great aunt’s garden that had bright colors with extraordinary blossoms and spines.

The art installation, completed on Nov. 30, was made possible through a partnership involving RTD, Commerce City’s cultural and city councils, and the art selection committee, consisting of community members and local stakeholders.

The art selection committee was drawn to the resilience of the cacti as a fitting metaphor for Commerce City.

Since 1994, the mission of RTD’s [Art-n-Transit](#) program has been to enhance the design, aesthetic quality and user friendliness of transit projects, and to foster transit-oriented community development.

The Art-n-Transit program is based on RTD’s belief that public art helps provide a stronger connection between neighborhoods and transit. Installing artwork at transit facilities creates a sense of community and provides opportunities to celebrate the diverse cultural, ethnic and historical richness of the many communities RTD serves. In addition to enhancing the beauty of the entire transit system, public art also helps discourage vandalism and graffiti.