

## ARTIST STATEMENT BY JULIA DITTO

My design highlights different habitats and Dena'ina subsistence within the Anchorage area. The Anchorage bus system helps people move through areas of town, and my design reflects the ways and reasons the Dena'ina people moved through the land prior to the city. By tying these concepts together, the design encourages people to consider the natural history and significance of the land they are traveling through.

The different areas of Anchorage provide a variety of food, resources, and animal habitats. With an array of greenbelts, trails, waterways, and natural spaces, Anchorage's habitats and original landscape are still visible around the city today.

My design highlights the following, from top to bottom (alpine to sea level):

1. **The Chugach Mountains** were a place for hunting mountain goats and caribou and are a familiar sight for Anchorage residents (I have also included a raven).
2. **Valleys and hill slopes** grow berries of many kinds; blueberries are highlighted here.
3. **Mixed boreal forests** provide spruce wood and sap, birch bark, and moose hunting
4. **Lakes and wetlands** are home to many birds (a sandhill crane is highlighted here).
5. **Creeks** are home to salmon runs (sockeye salmon are highlighted here).
6. **The Turnagain Arm** is home to beluga whales and hooligan.

My design displays these areas as colorful layers with a selection of plants and animals. My color palette uses the fall colors of Anchorage (i.e. yellow birch leaves and purple-red blueberry bushes) to create a bright design and correspond with fall harvest.

The "stacked" design of this piece is inspired by quilt patterns I enjoyed as a child. My parents have a number of quilts that stacked habitats and animals in order of elevation, and even though they were simple designs, they still inspired me to think about habitats and ecology when I was young.

**When people look at my design, I want them to consider the land they are crossing, the history of its people, and the value it still holds today.**

