

Gateways Talking Points

Background/Purpose

- The Gateways concept is envisioned in the City's 2015 Comprehensive Plan. The intent is to signal transition moving into and out of Olympia's city center by means of eight gateways and landscaped boulevards at major transition points.
- Although the Gateways were identified by location in the Comprehensive Plan, there was no guiding description about *what* the Gateways themselves were meant to be (size, shape, composition, etc.)
- Implementation of the Gateways concept is not in the current workplan of any City commission or department, seen as a long-term strategy to happen in future years.
- \$180,000 for public art generated by the construction of City Hall (1% for Art) has not been utilized.
- The Arts Commission sees these Gateways as an opportunity to use the City Hall funds in a "placemaking" project in which public art is sited throughout our community. Art selection and placement would occur through an inclusive, coordinated process of public involvement.
- There had originally been a thought to incorporate this project with a signage program, specifically to update the Plum Street entrance sign. That addition would have added or changed locations of some Gateways identified in the Comprehensive Plan and compromised the concept of Gateways as markers of entry into Olympia. The signage effort has been separated from the Gateways project and will move forward independently.
- Following the General Government meeting of January 29, 2016, members of the Arts Commission have met with members of the Planning Commission to review and edit the draft master plan RFQ. Staff and Commission members have also met with the Coalition of Neighborhood Associations as well as the Planning Commission. Arts Commissioners have also met with staff from Community Planning and Development, General Government, and Public Works.

Process

- Defining the Gateways through public art entails 8 projects at very separate locations, realized over a number of years. The Arts Commission and Planning Commission recommend the project proceed thru a master plan. A master plan will maintain a sense of continuity among these projects while allowing each neighborhood to make individual contributions to the nearest Gateway. A master plan will also consider the interface between art elements and civic boulevards (while not specifically planning the boulevards).
- In moving forward, the Arts Commission will take a lead role, and coordinate with the Planning Commission to work together through the RFQ and master plan development.
- The drafting of a master plan by a consultant team based upon contact with many citizens and neighborhood associations, will incorporate community input at the very beginning of the

planning process. A consultant team could include public artists, landscape architects, planners, and public involvement professionals.

Goals/Outcomes

- The master plan will identify themes and opportunities inclusive for all Gateways. This will help to frame the general concept for all 8 gateways for community and Council approval **before** bringing public artists on-board to design and fabricate the individual Gateways.
- A master plan will also help prioritize the sequence of Gateway development, and will coordinate Gateways with planned transportation projects, easements or other property ownership issues, and budgets.
- Once completed, the master plan will act as a framework for each “Call for Artist” that follows for each Gateway. Each of these successive Gateway public art projects will include community outreach, Arts Commission and technical staff review and Council approval.

Funding

- From the \$180,000 from City Hall 1% for Art, the Arts Commission has set aside \$50,000 for master plan development. It does not expect the additional \$130,000 to fund all 8 Gateways. Of recent projects, the budget for **Sky River Trees** at the HOCM by Koryn Rolstad was \$64,000, and **Olympia Carvings** by Steve Jensen at the Log Cabin Roundabout, \$63,000.
- Additional funds to complete the Gateways may be acquired through future transportation projects that meet the threshold for 1% for Art (over \$500,000). Having a community-supported master plan also creates opportunities to apply for grants.
- While it may take time for the Arts Commission to acquire the funding to complete all 8 Gateways, a master plan will help maintain continuity between the first dedicated Gateway and the last.