

A Five-Year Municipal Art Plan for the City of Olympia

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Prepared by the Olympia Arts
Commission for the Olympia City
Council, July 2015

Campers at Olywahoo deliberate over their vote
for the 2015 Percival Plinth Project People's Choice Award.

The mission of the Olympia Arts Commission is to help enrich the lives of the people of the region by making visual, performing and literary arts vital elements in the life of our community.

The Commission's purpose is to promote and encourage public programs to further development, public awareness, and interest in fine and performing arts and cultural heritage, and to advise City Council in connection with these. The Olympia Arts Commission (OAC) was created to provide expertise regarding the visual and performing arts and cultural heritage, and to reach out within and beyond the community to expand artistic and cultural programs and services for the citizens of Olympia. (Olympia Municipal Code (OMC) 2.100.100, 2.100.110)

Supported by City staff, the OAC pursues this mission through a public art program that includes programming and events, services, outreach, education and networking, and the purchase and placement of works of art in the community.

1. Municipal Art Plan: What and Why

The MAP is the annual budget and spending plan for the Municipal Art Fund, and it provides direction and accountability for the use of public resources in support of the arts.

City Ordinance calls for the OAC to "prepare and recommend to the City Council for approval a plan and guidelines to carry out the City's art program," (OMC 2.100.140) and notes that a municipal arts plan should prescribe the projects to be funded from the municipal arts fund. "*Municipal Arts Plan* means a plan outlining the City expenditures of designated funds for public art projects for a one-year period." (OMC 2.100.160)

Olympia's public art programs and purchases have historically been funded through two sources: a \$1 per Capita allocation from the City's General Fund that was initiated in 1990, and a 1% for Art set-aside for City construction projects over \$500,000 in value. Funds from these sources are deposited in a Municipal Arts Fund (MAF). \$1 per Capita funds have not been allocated to the MAF since 2009, due to the economic recession. In response to a slow economic recovery, the ability to pursue new public art projects has been restored, although the \$1 per Capita funds remain suspended.

The MAP establishes budgets for new public art projects undertaken by the City, whether in conjunction with new capital projects or independent of them. Projects range from small (less than \$15k) to major (over 50k) installations involving design teams, and may include visual, literary and performing arts.

2. Planning for Public Art

The OAC develops an Annual Work Plan that details program initiatives and activities of the City's art program to promote the work of local artists and the arts within our community, and for the purchase of public art (including paid performances) to enhance and enliven the community. These public art purchases are the focus of the MAP.

To develop funding projections for the MAF and budgets for individual projects, City staff reviews the Capital Facility Plan to identify projects that trigger the 1% for Art set-aside. These projects and their locations, impacts, and estimated public art budgets are initially reviewed by the Art in Public Places Committee (APP) of the OAC, and then considered by the full Commission. The Commission generates a complete project list that includes planned capital-funded purchases as well as other projects identified in the Commission's Annual Work Plan. This project list forms the core of the Municipal Art Plan, which the Commission then recommends to City Council for approval.

In developing plans for public art projects, a number of conditions and values are considered to determine the best use of available resources for the benefit of the arts and the community. As a starting point, capital project-generated funds are considered for art projects at or near the site of the construction to enhance the public improvement, or to mitigate for the impact of the improvements.

The funding for art generated by small capital projects is often too small to be very effective. In these cases, funds from multiple projects may be combined, or \$1 per Capita funds added when available, to create a viable public art project budget. Balancing opportunities for multiple small projects versus fewer, more significant projects is an important planning consideration. Combining funds can bring a significant installation of public art to a capital improvement project that is too small to generate funds on its own, but which may be desirable because of location or community access. In selecting projects and works of art, the OAC will consider how proposals accomplish the following:

- **Contribute to broad distribution of public art throughout Olympia.**
Commissioners will consider the relative representation of art among City neighborhoods, and seek to distribute public art broadly throughout the community.
- **Provide for diverse forms of art within the public collection.**
While every piece in the collection may not resonate for every citizen, a wide range of style, media, subjects and viewpoints will offer perspective and interest for everyone.
- **Bring new ideas, innovation, or thinking to the community.**
- **Achieve a balanced city collection that includes a strong local base but also has regional and national reach.**
- **Maintainable and safe.**
- **Well-suited to chosen site or venue.**

3. Project List for 2015

Together, this slate of initiatives will contribute to the creative and cultural arts in Olympia in the following ways: The following slate of projects are diverse in arts disciplines – sculpture, painting/drawing, music - and are located throughout Olympia. These investments in the arts support current and future endeavors, care for the collection we have and offer opportunity for local and

regional artists, from youth through professional, to benefit the community and change the atmosphere of our built environment.

- Supporting several facets of the arts, including music
- Pushing the arts deeper into our neighborhoods and beyond the downtown core
- Investing in the future of the arts and artists in our community
- Continuing with successful programs that are embraced by the community

Traffic Box Wrap - \$11,000 - Working in partnership with Public Works, 10 transit boxes in West Olympia will be wrapped with artwork by local artists of all ages, printed on vinyl. Designs will be made available through OlySpeaks for online voting. In 2015, 10 boxes will also be wrapped downtown, funded by Lodging Tax. Wrapping of 10 boxes on the east side of Olympia is projected in 2016. As vinyl is expected to last 3 years, wraps may be replaced in following years, depending on project evaluation.

Music Out Loud - Artwork - \$22,440 - Honoring past musicians and celebrating today's music, this project pairs artistic elements incorporated into the ground plane of several sidewalks in downtown Olympia, with a summer series of music performances. Completion of artwork is expected in early 2016.

Music Out Loud - Performance - \$6,433 - Funds to be used for three performances per three sites (9 performances total) during the summer months, once artwork is completed. Per Council direction, the first year will be a pilot project.

Percival Plinth Project - \$22,100 - This ongoing project hosts loaned sculpture (up to 15) for an exhibition of one year along Percival Landing. During the month of August the public is invited to vote for the sculpture they wish for the City to purchase.

Harrison/Black Lake Tree Guards - \$23,000 - In 2008, designs for a series of five tree guards along Black Lake Boulevard at Harrison were acquired through a selective process. The structures were never fabricated. Now the formerly vacant lot has been developed into the West Central Park, and the time seems appropriate to pursue this neighborhood-scaled project.

City Gateways - \$50,000 - 2015 will be a planning year for the Arts Commission to work with a consultant to develop a Master Plan to prepare for signature artworks at key city gateways, as called for in the City's Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan calls for gateways that can include welcoming signage, and for the involvement of citizens, neighborhoods, and City departments and officials in shaping a "distinctive special environmental setting" for these civic gateways.

City Hall Rotating Exhibit Support - \$6000 - Install display infrastructure (exhibition stands and picture rails), to support rotating exhibits of visual art and cultural artifacts for public interest and enjoyment, inside City Hall.

(Future years) Eastside/22nd Sidewalk Project - \$43,764 - The third of three public art projects anticipated for sidewalks, this project will build off neighborhood walking experiences to tell the story of the area and encourage pedestrian use. Scheduling of this project is dependent on the Public Works schedule for completion.

4. Five-Year Planning Context

The context for the 2015 project list includes the continued hold on per capita funding since 2009. In the five year period from 2005 - 2009, that fund source provided an average of \$43,000 for the arts every year. This loss of funding and the economic downturn that caused it had a chilling effect on all City spending, including that of the OAC. As we look to 2015, the budget for the arts appears healthy primarily due to the 1% for Art funds made available with the construction of City Hall.

This Municipal Art Plan will utilize all of the available funds in the next four years. If the \$1 per Capita funding is not restored, funding for the arts in Olympia will fall dramatically once the City Hall funds are spent. Restoration of the \$1 per Capita funding is vital to the creative health, vibrancy and economic growth of our City. This community investment affords the possibility to fund small grant programs, the Percival Plinth Project and new initiatives that celebrate what makes Olympia a destination and a regional center for the arts.

5. Summary Spreadsheet

FIVE YEAR MUNICIPAL ART PLAN

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Total
INCOME							
Available balance	298,850						298,850
\$1 per capita	0	50,000	0	0	0	0	50,000
Capital projects % for art	0	180,000	18,000	0	5,000	0	203,000
5-year projected total							551,850
PLANNED EXPENDITURE							
Committed Funds							
West Bay Sidewalk	14,050						14,050
Proposed Projects							
Traffic Box Wrap		11,000	11,000	11,000	11,000	11,000	55,000
Music Out Loud - Artwork		37,800					37,800
Music Out Loud - Performance			6,433	6,433	6,433	6,433	25,732
Percival Plinth Project		22,100	22,100	22,100	22,100	22,100	110,500
Tree Guards		23,000					23,000
Olympia Artspace Alliance			50,000				50,000
City Gateways		50,000	25,000	50,000	60,000	50,000	235,000
City Hall Rotating Exhibit Support		6,000					6,000
Eastside/22nd Sidewalk				43,764			43,764
Subtotal	14,050	149,900	114,533	133,297	99,533	89,533	600,846
Balance							-48,996

Projected 1%: Boulevard/Morse Merriman Roundabout

Projected 1%: Sidewalk Construction

\$700 x 15 plinths + \$600 admin + \$1000 new pedestal + \$10,000 purchase prize

6. Other Activities

Maintenance and conservation efforts are necessary to preserve the integrity of the City's collection for the benefit of the community. Funding for conservation and maintenance is provided from interest drawn on the MAF. Commissioners visit each piece in the collection on a yearly basis, both to get to know the collection and to flag issues for staff review. Interest earned on the MAF will continue to provide a fund source for needed treatment and conservation care.

Public Works Tribute – Estimated \$5,000 - Provide casework and mounting for City-owned artwork to be installed in City Hall. In 1990, as a tribute to his co-workers, former Parks Maintenance employee Charlie Mitchell created a set of painted wood sculptures of Public Works employees in action: emerging from hatch covers, tending to solid waste and sweeping the pathway in a small green space near the city's maintenance buildings. Due to environmental deterioration, the sculptures were removed, stabilized, and readied for interior display. Cases will be fabricated to mount and house them at City Hall near Public Works offices.