

# Memo

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DATE: October 18, 2016  
TO: Mayor and City Council  
FROM: Sandy Friend, Chair Public Art Commission  
CC: Public Art Commission Members  
Ann Seltzer, staff liaison, Greg Lemhouse, council liaison  
RE: Annual Report to the Mayor and City Council

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Mayor and City Council,

The Public Art Commission is pleased to report our work over the past year and our focus in the months ahead.

### Gateway Island Project

Following the Council's selection of Susan Zoccola's concept, 'Threshold', the City entered into a contract with the artist scheduling installation of the piece in September, 2017.

### Theatre Corridor

As you know, Council approved the Call for Artists/Request for Qualification for public art to be installed along the walkway leading to the Thomas Theater from East Main Street at its June 7 meeting. The Call was posted on the city website July 1 and widely noticed to the Commission's extensive Artist Contact List. As of the October 3 submission due date, the Commission had received 28 submissions from local, regional and national artists. The Commission established a time line for the RFQ review period which began Oct. 4 and is scheduled throughout October and November culminating in notification of the selected artist prior to December 15.

The next step will be to collect responses from the public to questions about the Ashland community and the Theater Corridor site. These response will be provided to the artist. Beginning in January, we are planning opportunities at the library for the community to respond to the questions, and will hold a listening session on the February First Friday at the Ashland Art Center. The selected artist will be in town and will attend this event. The timeline for this project requires the selected artist to submit two design concepts which must include digital or physical models, a description of the integrated lighting components, specifications and samples of all materials, installation requirements, and a budget by August 1, 2017. Public presentations and concept selection by a community Selection Panel will be scheduled, and a recommendation to the Council is tentatively planned for September 2017.

### City Entry Signs

The Commission has received very positive comments on the City entry signs that were installed in May at the three entrances to the City.

### Calle Guanajuato Mural

The process to approve and create/install the Calle mural is testimony to the amazing cooperation between the mural sponsor, City staff, the artist and her mentor, Denise Baxter, the Public Art Commission, various city departments and other commissions. The completed mural has received universal

praise, and serves as an example of public art that captures the heart of the community. The time and effort for City staff and the cost to the project donor to work through the process as outlined in the current Land Use Code 18.5.2.020 requiring Site Design Review for installation of public art has led staff to propose modifications that remove Public Art installations from the Land Use Code and Appeal process.

#### Proposed changes to City Ordinances that affect the Public Art Commission

Changes to AMC 2.29.165 are proposed that preserve the current practice of the Historic Commission to review public art design concepts using the design standards established in AMC 18.4.2, ensure that the Historic Commission has input on the Call for Artists prior to publication (2.24.060) and affords all City commissions the opportunity to review proposed public art design concepts.

#### Public Art Murals, Guidelines and Process

The Commission has finalized the Mural Guidelines and Process for executing/installing murals on public or private property within the City. The Guidelines describe the criteria for approval and outline the process for an applicant and for the Public Art Commission. Once Council-recommended modifications to the Guidelines are complete, we would anticipate that the Council will approve the completed document by Resolution in the near future.

#### Art in the watershed

In April, the PAC reviewed the artist concepts for a second watershed sculpture and recommended an artist and her proposed concept to be fabricated and installed on Bandersnatch.

#### 2017-2020 PAC Strategic Plan

The Commission met on October 11 to review our 2013 completed goals and to identify new goals and to develop a Work Plan to implement those goals over the next three years. Our prioritized goals include:

- Successful completion of current and ongoing projects,
- Expanding public awareness of public art including a strategy to develop a visual presentation on *The What and Why of Public Art!*,
- Strengthening relationships with other commissions and organizations,
- Reviewing and updating the Commission processes to include developing guidelines for accepting donated art into the City collection as well as re-formatting the RFQ application based upon lessons learned with the Gateway and Theatre Corridor projects, and
- Identifying possible sites for public art both downtown and out of downtown.

Like you, we are volunteers with a deep commitment to Ashland. Thank you for the opportunity to serve our community and thank you for your work on behalf of all of us.