



DATE: February 26, 2015

AGENDA ITEM # 5

**TO:** Public Arts Commission  
**FROM:** Jon Maginot, Staff Liaison  
**SUBJECT:** Public Art Site and Selection criteria

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Discuss criteria for selecting and locating public art

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**BACKGROUND**

The Public Arts Commission (PAC) 2014/15 Work Plan includes an assignment to “develop and recommend selection and site criteria for public art.”

**DISCUSSION**

Commissioners Chapman and Ellickson have been assigned to a subcommittee to begin working on developing such criteria. Staff worked with the subcommittee to revise previous drafts. The revised draft is attached.

Attachment: Draft Artwork and Artist Selection Policy

## *Artwork and Artist Selection Policy*

### **Public Art Site and Selection Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to provide a process through which the City of Los Altos can accept art work on loan or as a donation as part of a Public Art Program. The policy also provides guidance to the Public Art Commission and Los Altos City Council purchasing existing art work and for commissioning artists to create new art work.

In selecting a piece of art, the PAC will consider its mission and always aim to achieve the highest aesthetic quality in enhancing and/or enlivening a public space. The PAC will determine the appropriateness of the proposed artwork in regard to scale, form, innovation and design. Due consideration will be given to the materials, maintenance and installation of an artwork. The following will be key factors in the selection process:

- a. Pedestrian scale;
- b. Public access;
- c. Safety and security;
- d. Technical feasibility
- e. Durability in regard to the elements;
- f. Theft, and vandalism;
- g. Short and long-term maintenance.

The above are the minimum criteria on which the PAC shall base its selection of artwork. Other criteria may be established by the PAC as dictated by the particular requirements of the art piece; this will be outlined in the selection panel's written instructions.

### **Site Selection**

The site must be public property, situated so that the art is visible and accessible to all members of the community. Additionally, the artwork must not seriously disrupt the flow of pedestrian or vehicular traffic or adversely alter the environmental conditions of the selected site. Structural and maintenance issues of the prospective artwork will also be considered when selecting a site. A work installed must be structurally sound to ensure the safety of the community as well as the longevity of the work.

Criteria for constraints on the placed artwork and the location of such art shall be determined in order to create the Call for Art. The City of Los Altos Public Works Director is responsible for making decisions regarding the placement of Public Art on public streets and rights-of-way. Final site approval is made by the City Council upon recommendation by the Public Art Commission.

### **Artwork Selection Criteria**

Artwork proposals will be reviewed by the Public Art Commission for recommendation to the Los Altos City Council. The Public Art Commission will evaluate the works of art based on the following criteria:

1. **Artistic quality** - Due consideration will be given to the artist's concept, vision, and craftsmanship.
2. **Media** - All art forms will be considered, including:
  - Sculpture: Free-standing, wall supported or suspended; kinetic, electronic; in any appropriate material or combination of materials.
  - Murals or portable paintings: In any appropriate material or variety of materials, with or without collage or the addition of non-traditional materials or means.
  - Photography, original works of graphic art, limited edition prints, works on/of paper, original paintings
  - Earthworks, fiberworks, waterworks, neon, glass, mosaics, or any combination of forms of media including sound, literary elements, holographic images, or hybrids of media and new genre
  - Furnishings or fixtures, including but not limited to gates, railings, streetlights or seating, if created by artists as unique elements
  - Artistic or aesthetic elements of the overall architecture or landscape design if created by a professional artist or a design team that includes a professional visual artist.
3. **Public Safety** - Each work shall be evaluated to ensure that it is free of sharp edges, points, projections, or pinch-points which may cut, puncture or cause injury by impact, or catch passing pedestrians and does not provide unsafe climbing opportunities for children/adults