



DATE: July 24, 2014

AGENDA ITEM # 6

TO: Public Arts Commission

FROM: Jon Maginot, Staff Liaison

SUBJECT: Public Art Project Site and Selection criteria

RECOMMENDATION:

Discuss criteria for selecting and locating public art

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. Attached are drafts for Site and Selection Criteria.

Attachments: Draft Site and Selection Criteria for Public Art

Selection Artist/Artwork

A. Aesthetics

1. In making its selection, the PAC shall bear in mind its purposes, always aiming to achieve the highest aesthetic quality.
2. Enhance and/or enliven the selected public space or downtown street environment
3. Reflect the spirit and character of the community.
4. Be innovative in design
5. Be respectful of view corridors to the bay and ocean
6. Be mindful of the importance of pedestrian scale to the community of Los Altos
7. Integrate well with its surroundings
8. Be durable relative to the elements, theft, and vandalism, with consideration given to short and long-term maintenance
9. Be engineered for safety and technical feasibility
10. Accurately fall within time frame and budget
11. The PAC, in making its selection, shall give due consideration to the appropriateness of the proposed design in terms of its scale, form, content, and design with respect to its immediate and general, social, and physical environment.
12. The PAC shall also give due consideration to the proposed design's materials and construction issues — asking questions regarding durability, maintenance, public access, appropriateness, safety, and security.
13. The above criteria are the minimum criteria on which the PAC shall base its selection. Other criteria may be established by the PAC as dictated by a project's particular requirements. Any additional criteria shall be outlined in the selection panel's written instructions.

B. Artist

* Public Art project applications are open to any professional artist who meets the guidelines set forth in the RFP/RFQ for which he or she is applying. Members of the project consultant's or anyone employed thereby, members of the selection panel, or employees of the City of Los Altos shall be excluded from consideration.

* Artists shall be selected on the basis of the appropriateness of their proposal to the particular project and its probability of successful completion, as indicated by the merit of their past work and with consideration of cost to artistic merit or value. In the case of the design team approach, an artist's willingness to fully participate in a collaborative process shall also be considered criteria for selection.

* Criteria to be used when considering acquisition of artwork by either purchase or commission shall include, but not be limited to the following:

1. **Artistic quality** - Due consideration will be given by members of a PAC selection panel and the strength of the artist's concept, vision, and craftsmanship.
2. **Context** - Consideration should be given to the architectural, historical, geographical, and socio-cultural context of the site.
3. **Media** - All art forms will be considered, including disciplines and media that are of specific duration and which survive only through documentation after the life of the piece has ended.

4. **Permanence** - Due consideration shall be given to structural and surface soundness, and to inherent resistance to theft, vandalism, weathering, and excessive maintenance or repair costs.
5. **Public Safety** - Each work shall be evaluated to ensure that it does not present a hazard to public safety.

C. Design Team Project Considerations

* In addition to the above criteria, additional criteria to be considered for selecting artists for design teams shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Proven ability to work effectively in collaborative situations
2. Experience in architecture or landscape-based projects
3. Experience working with design professionals and integrating artistic concepts into construction documents

Site Criteria for Public Art

- * Ideally Public Art should be located throughout the Los Altos downtown, Public Parks and locations where the greatest number of people gather.
- * The gateways to Los Altos should be aesthetically pleasing, welcoming, and similar in design and style.
- * Upon the identification of a specific project, criteria for constraints on the placed artwork and the location of such art shall be determined in order to create the Call for Entries or Request for Proposals as to general considerations for determining the acceptability of Public Art installations in public spaces.
- * All proposed Public Art projects must respect the primary function of the street and sidewalk, which exist to enable the safe and orderly passage of pedestrians and vehicles. Streets also function as utility corridors, so access must be maintained for present and future services above and below ground.
- * The City of Los Altos Director of Public Services 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.
- * These guidelines outline general considerations for determining the acceptability of Public Art installations on City streets and sidewalks.

Sites for Public Art

1. Traffic Considerations

- Should not be unduly distracting to motorists
- Should not interfere with driver-to-driver, or driver-to pedestrian sightings, and should, therefore, generally avoid corner clearance areas
- Should not unduly obstruct sight of the curb
- Should not obstruct sighting of signal/pedestrian heads, or any traffic control device
- Should not interfere with the entrance or egress areas for transit buses
- Should not unduly disrupt curb use activities, i.e., loading zones, passenger zones
- Should not interfere with the opening of car doors

2. Pedestrian Considerations (if Public Art is set in a walking surface)

- The leading vertical edge should not exceed 1/8" (to avoid trip hazards)
- Interior vertical edges should not exceed 1/4"
- Skid-resistance properties should be equivalent to concrete sidewalks
- Depressions in the surface should not catch the spike heels of women's shoes
- Depressions in the surface should not cause water to pool
- Art must be damage resistant to pedestrian or vehicle traffic
- Maintenance of adjacent elements of the streetscape, including the sidewalk itself, should not be compromised.

3. Public Art should:

- Maintain a minimum sidewalk width on pedestrian volumes
- Minimize the potential for concealment and anti-social activities
- Maintain clearance from above and below ground utilities.
- Be installed in secure, theft-resistant locations

4. Public Art should avoid:

- Sharp edges, points, projections, or pinch-points which may cut, puncture or cause injury by impact, or catch passing pedestrians
- Obstructing the function of benches, bus shelters and crosswalk ramps
- Utility access points or valves
- Obstructing pedestrian access to traffic signal push buttons
- Overhead parts which present a hazard to pedestrian traffic (i.e., it's necessary to follow the minimum sign height requirement)
- Unsafe climbing opportunities for children/adults

5. Electrical and Mechanical Considerations:

- All electrical, mechanical and engineering components must be approved by the Director of Public Services
- All electrical elements and built-up electrical devices must be certified by a professional engineer; upon completion, a sealed as-built drawing may be required from the Director of Public Services
- Any connections to a City street lighting circuit must be approved by the Director of Public Services
- No connection will be permitted to City traffic signal circuits
- The junctions of components moving relative to one another must not create such hazards to people as pinch, crush or shear points