

City of Roanoke
PUBLIC ART SITE PLAN
Adopted by City Council on April 2, 2007

Introduction:

Pursuant to the Percent for Art policy adopted by City Council, city staff is directed to develop an annual proposal for public art by identifying an amount equivalent to one percent of the construction cost of each new project in the Capital Improvement Program. The Roanoke Arts Commission (RAC) will use this Public Art Site Plan as a framework to guide its recommendations to City Council on specific locations for public art projects.

According to the Public Art Policy adopted by City Council on Dec. 4, 2006 sites for public art should be “prominent and highly visible locations in the City which are identified as suitable for public art projects and are physically and/or visually accessible to and by the public.”

The policy also lists eligible public art projects as:

- The commissioning of permanent works designed for specific public sites in the City;
- The loan, purchase or donation of art works deemed appropriate for public sites;
- Artists contracted to work as integral members of architectural, infrastructure, and urban design teams; and
- Installations, artist-in-residence programs, and other short-term projects or planning activities that result in the creation of temporary or permanent public art.

The long range goal of the Roanoke Arts Commission (RAC) is to develop a wide range of projects of the types listed above at diverse sites throughout the city.

I. Locations to be considered for public art should include:

1. City owned public buildings or privately owned buildings where City staff is housed
2. Landscapes and open space such as public squares, parks and greenways
3. City owned infrastructure such as transportation facilities, parking structures, bridges, lighting, sidewalks, benches, bus shelters and accessory structures in parks such as comfort stations and playgrounds.
4. Downtown service district
5. Neighborhoods, village centers and gathering places

6. Gateways into the City of Roanoke

II. Factors impacting the selection of public art projects and sites include:

1. Projects that offer high visibility and broad public access
2. Projects in locations that offer multiple uses or activities
3. Projects where the artwork can have the greatest positive impact on the site or surrounding community
4. Projects with pledges of strong community and/or private partnership and willing partners such as neighborhood groups and facility managers
5. Projects in the early phases of design that will allow the artwork to be fully integrated with the project
6. Logistical considerations that affect the administrative capacity of the Roanoke Arts Commission to handle the project effectively such as the size, scope and timing of project
7. Ensuring widespread distribution of projects throughout the City
8. The need to diversify public art offerings in the City of Roanoke
9. The desire to include specific projects such as temporary exhibits, student projects and the proposed employee art contest

III. Determining Specific Locations and Themes

To determine specific locations and/or themes for public art projects, guidance is derived from the statement on page 11 of the City of Roanoke's Comprehensive Plan "...a unifying theme to implement Roanoke's vision of a sustainable and livable city is that of city design – increasing the beauty of Roanoke's gateways and streetscapes, neighborhood and housing development, village commercial centers, and new economic and industrial growth."

Other key themes stressed in the plan that will guide the site selection process and content of public art include:

- Providing a balance of preservation and development
- Stress excellent design
- The importance of environmental, cultural and historic resources
- Support facilities and locations that attract family activity
- Support child and adult education facilities
- Provide for ongoing technology advancements

Key locations identified in comprehensive plan to be given top priority are:

- Downtown
- Neighborhoods and Village Centers
- Streetscapes
- River and flood reduction project

- Parks, recreation and greenways
- Regional Linkages (gateways)
- New economic and industrial growth
- Historic districts

Based on review of the comprehensive plan, the CIP and the City Market District Plan the following is a list of specific projects and locations that the RAC should explore immediately for public art opportunities:

- Riverside Center and Carilion Biomed
- Campbell Avenue Parking Garage
- Library master plan process
- Special events center at Civic Center and future Civic Center improvements
- Proposed Williamson Road fire station

Downtown market district opportunities – the market plan notes that “plop art” and art to disguise “mistakes like blank walls and ugly vistas” should be avoided, therefore art integrated into new structures, parks or landscaping or art integrated into infrastructure improvements is preferred for downtown. After reviewing the City Market District Plan, these possible sites for public art in the downtown area were identified:

- Enhanced pedestrian bridge area
- Remodel of Market building
- Franklin Rd. Corridor
- Jefferson Street improvements
- Walkway between Elmwood Park and Market Street
- Market Parking Garage
- Infrastructure such as plaques (at farmer stalls and on fire station no. one), seating, bike racks, kiosks, canopies, pavers, banners, lighting, planters and directional signage

IV. Other possible locations for public art will be identified through:

1. A review of city owned properties and buildings
2. A review of city owned open spaces, greenways and parks
3. Recommendations from department heads on locations within their specific areas of responsibility.
4. Input from Neighborhood Groups – the RAC will hold periodic open houses for neighborhood association members to inform them about the Public Art Program and seek ideas for locations and types of art in their neighborhoods. Additionally, the Public Art Coordinator will meet with both the Presidents Council and the Roanoke neighborhood Advocates and will also be available to address neighborhood associations upon request
5. A survey of Downtown Roanoke Inc. members to gain suggestions for locations for public art in downtown Roanoke

6. Citizen input solicited via press releases and a web site

V. Ways for Community Groups and Artists to Initiate Projects

The Public Art Policy also outlines opportunities for Community Initiated Projects stating “A City community group or neighborhood association may propose a public art project for a site that may or may not be on the Public Art Site Plan and apply for City funds to implement the project.”

As resources permit, a lump sum may be allocated from the Public Art Fund for such projects and a process for groups/artists to initiate projects will be implemented. Given the limited program staff and funds, this initiative will not begin until subsequent years of the program.

To encourage projects initiated by artists or community groups, and to ensure fair and uniform procedures for review and support of such projects, the RAC will administer a call for "Open Proposals" on an annual or biannual basis. The RAC will circulate a call for proposals detailing the theme for each funding round, the budgets available and the criteria for selection. Proposals may be for either temporary or permanent projects. Potential themes for this program could encompass a wide range. Examples include collaborations between artists and community groups or artists addressing a particular portion of the City, street furniture for a certain district, or temporary projects to provide opportunities to new artists.

VI. Private Projects

In committing to a Public Art Program the City of Roanoke believes that the private sector can also participate in enhancing and enriching the cityscape and making intriguing cultural and aesthetic experiences available to citizens and visitors. Private developers may approach the RAC or the RAC may approach a developer about siting a public art project on their property.

The Public Art Policy states “A site for the inclusion of public art amenities in conjunction with a development project may be identified. The Public Art Site Plan will provide guidelines for this siting process. If public art is a component of proposed site plan, then the Commission shall review the public art proposal and may make recommendations to the developer and the City concerning the appropriateness of the public art proposal as part of the site plan.”

Private property owners should follow these steps:

1. If the developer chooses to include art, he/she presents a proposal to the RAC including art budget, method for selecting artists (Selection Committee, Public Art Consultant, or paid assistance by

public art staff). This plan must be approved by the Commission prior to artist selection.

2. Developer presents the selected artist and design for approval by the RAC or may ask the RAC to head up the selection process.
3. The RAC will use the same priorities for site selection outlined in sections II and III and will either recommend adoption or that the proposal be declined. The RAC may also decide to hold the project until such time as sufficient funds are available.
4. All artists' fees will come out of the Percent for Art budget.
5. The property owner will be responsible for site preparation and installation.
6. Ownership of the artwork will be retained by the City of Roanoke. Maintenance of the artwork will remain the responsibility of the City of Roanoke.

VII. Actions:

The Public Art Coordinator will submit a Public Art Action Plan to the RAC annually. This plan will be based on the status of the Percent for Art fund as allocated through the capital budget. The Public Art Action Plan shall identify:

- Future projects that require art selection panels during the coming year
- Budgets for prospective projects
- Non-City projects to be administered by the program--either private development or projects selected through a proposal process
- Status of any ongoing projects.

The RAC will review the Public Art Action Plan to select new projects for the coming year. The selection will be based on the priorities as listed in sections II and III above. Once approved by the RAC, the Public Art Action Plan shall be submitted to the City Manager for review and then to City Council for approval.

Appendix

Map of The City of Roanoke showing current and potential public art locations.