


Greenbelt Arts Advisory Board Report 19-1
August 8, 2018

Subject: Recommendation for a City of Greenbelt Public Arts Policy

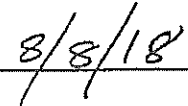
At the August 7, 2018 meeting of the Greenbelt Arts Advisory Board, members reviewed and discussed materials which they had prepared for Council previously concerning a public art policy for Greenbelt. These materials included:

- AAB report 15-2, dated 5/5/15
- The “City of Greenbelt Public Arts Policy” draft, approved by AAB on 5/5/15
- The “Public Art Site Index” approved by AAB in October, 2012

Members re-affirmed these materials by acclamation and approved updates and technical edits as described by staff liaison Nicole DeWald. Members present unanimously agreed that the updated materials would be forwarded with this report to Council as background for the public art worksession on September 26, 2018.



Anna Socrates, Chair Elect, on behalf of AAB



Date

Greenbelt Arts Advisory Board Report 15-2
Recommendation to the Greenbelt City Council
May 5, 2015

Subject: Recommendation for a City of Greenbelt Public Arts Policy

Background

The Greenbelt Arts Advisory Board has consistently supported the City's interest in presenting public art. In 2003, as reflected in report 04-003, the Board approved a Fine Arts Loan and Gift Policy to guide the City's consideration of possible donations of artwork. At the direction of the City Manager, the Board began working on a public arts policy in 2009. A draft was submitted in 2010. A second version incorporating the City Manager's input was submitted in 2012 as Arts Advisory Board report 13-1. This current report reflects additional direction from the City Manager based on the City's ongoing involvement with the commissioning of artwork for the Three Sisters Demonstration Gardens in partnership with the Chesapeake Education, Arts and Research Society (CHEARS) and alight dance theater.

Findings

At the Board's meeting on May 3, 2015 members voted unanimously to endorse the attached draft public arts policy.

Public Art Site Index

The draft public arts policy references a "Public Art Site Index" which is also attached here. The Index is a spreadsheet developed by the Arts Advisory Board in 2012 to provide an overview of recommended sites throughout Greenbelt for the presentation or performance of artistic work. The Index is not intended to be comprehensive in nature nor limiting in scope. It is intended as a starting point for both the artist and the City of Greenbelt to engage in an exploration of an appropriate venue for the display of public art. There may be projects and sites that none of us would have considered until an artist with a vision suggested it and was willing to make that vision a reality. The Arts Advisory Board recommends that the City of Greenbelt recognize that each public art project is unique and should be carefully considered and evaluated on its own merit.

The Arts Advisory Board looks forward to augmenting the Public Art Site Index over time as other desirable sites become available. To help ensure that they do, the Board requests the opportunity to participate in discussions of proposed renovations to indoor and outdoor public facilities, and proposed construction of new public facilities. This will enable Board members to help identify opportunities for public art and other creative uses early in the planning process when the greatest design flexibility exists. **Going forward, the Arts Advisory Board requests that City renovation and construction projects be referred to the AAB for review and input as a matter of standard protocol.**

Additional Guidance

The Arts Advisory Board recognizes that the interpretation of artistic merit and content can at times be subjective. There is no practical and fool-proof approach to the display of public art in which the intent of the artistic expression (performance or static) will be clear and pleasing to the entirety of the viewing public. The Arts Advisory Board recognizes this to be one of the risks in supporting public art and that no amount of regulation will with certainty guarantee complete acceptance of city supported public art. Yet since public space is managed in trust for the public welfare, care must be taken in how, what and where public art is displayed.

The City may acquire art objects and installations through a variety of means such as commissions, donations, loans, gifts or purchases of existing work. Presentations may be either permanent or temporary. While temporary installations may require careful thought and coordination with various City departments, proposals for permanent and long-term works should be vetted more thoroughly. Ideally, the vetting process would involve consultation with various City agencies/departments, members of the Arts Advisory Board and other stakeholders. **The Arts Advisory Board recommends that the following considerations be used to guide the review process for projects involving the long-term display of visual art:**

A. Identification of stakeholders

It is strongly recommended to involve stakeholders at the earliest appropriate stage for public art projects of significant scope and impact. Which city employees, departments, and members of the public will be affected by the artwork? Do specific permits need to be secured? Are there safety concerns related to the installation? Security considerations? Consideration should be given to maintenance staff, engineers, recreation department, police, sanitation, and/or individuals working in or around the artwork.

B. Design criteria

Permanent public art should be of exceptional quality and value worthy of Greenbelt's history and scenic beauty. Is a proposed work authentic and accessible to our community? Will it provide definition and pride for Greenbelters?

C. Funding

What funding mechanisms are in place to secure the shipping, design, and installation of the artwork? Will a specific fund be established to ensure continued maintenance of the artwork? Are there any ongoing costs associated with caring for or protecting the artwork? Examples include cleaning, repairing damage, overtime and/or extra costs to protect the artwork during festivals, extreme weather, etc.?

D. Artist participation

It is strongly recommended to involve artists during the planning, installation, and maintenance stages of the work. The artist's intention for the long term care of their work should be documented, as well as specifics on materials, technique, meaning, and inspiration of their artwork. An agreement addressing warranties and copyright should also be established with the artist.

E. Site location

While the Public Art Site Index focuses on temporary installations, it may be used as a basis for permanent art installations as well. Public art celebrates Greenbelt's identity and cultural community, and thus sites should be selected with an eye toward safety and accessibility to both locals and visitors.

F. Installation

Identification of all permits, fees, materials, and techniques required to install the artwork should be identified and budgeted for as early in the process as feasible. These might include site preparation, contracting with outside riggers/engineers/etc, mountings, pedestals, lighting, drains, barriers, etc.

In addition, consideration should be given to visibility, cohesiveness of the artwork with the site, safety, durability, ADA accessibility, etc. prior to installation. Any conflicts between the artwork and these considerations should be addressed well in advance of installation.

G. Maintenance

A schedule and specifications for regular or annual maintenance should be suggested by the artist based on the function, aesthetics, and materials of the artwork. Regular maintenance includes removal of accumulated dirt, adjustment or lubrication of parts, and vandalism mitigation. Annual maintenance includes reapplication of protective coatings, replacement or reapplication of parts, and paint or patina touch-ups. Consideration should be given for future funding of the repairs, maintenance, or restoration of the artwork.

H. Insurance

Does the artwork require any additional insurance or underwriting?

I. De-accessioning, storage, and disposal

In the event that a permanent work of art becomes damaged, the building is no longer under City control, or other situation requires that a work of art be permanently or temporarily taken off-view, procedures surrounding de-accessioning and storage of the work of art should be considered and agreed upon in advance by all stakeholders.

J. Staffing availability and programmatic priorities

Decisions about collecting and/or presenting public art works will need to be made within the broader context of the City's full scope of cultural arts programming and services. Is sufficient staff time available to support a proposed project in both the short term and the long term? Would undertaking the proposed project require that other arts programs or services be suspended or discontinued? What is the relative priority of the proposed project and other planned programs or existing services that may be affected?

City of Greenbelt Public Arts Policy

*Draft approved by the Greenbelt Arts Advisory Board, May 5, 2015
Re-affirmed by AAB with updates incorporated here: August 7, 2018*

The purpose of this document is to define key terms, articulate core principles, identify necessary resources and articulate important considerations to inform city action in the arena of public art.

Section 1: Definitions

Throughout this document, "**public art**" is understood to include artwork in any medium which is exhibited, performed or otherwise presented for any duration in a public space or in a privately-owned space which is publicly accessible without charge. Public art may be ephemeral or enduring. It may be programmed by the city or another sponsor, or presented independently by artists acting within the scope of applicable laws and regulations.

The **audience** for public art is understood to include all persons who encounter the artwork, intentionally or by happenstance, directly or through documentation. *No work of art can be expected to appeal equally to all those who encounter it;* the audience for public art may include persons who favor a specific work of art, those who dislike it, and those who are indifferent to it.

Section 2: Rationale

Presenting artwork in public spaces can advance Greenbelt's historic cultural legacy, affirm community values and further civic goals.

A. Historic legacy

Public art has been integral to Greenbelt's social and architectural environment since the city's origin. The bas reliefs on the Community Center façade and the Mother and Child statue in Roosevelt Center, both by artist Lenore Thomas Straus, are beloved Greenbelt icons. These artworks help create a meaningful sense of place and a visual identity for the city. This work can be furthered by the presentation of new works of art in public spaces, as the city's legacy, boundaries and demographics continue to evolve.

B. Community values

Public art affirms the **dignity and humanity of the citizen**, in keeping with the city's overall commitment to providing a high quality of life and encouraging active civic participation.

Public art is well-suited to Greenbelt as an **inclusive community**, in that it is provided for the enjoyment of all, free of charge. Public art creates shared reference points, and shared experiences, among diverse citizens.

Public art embodies the creativity of the maker and nourishes the imagination of those who encounter it, making it an especially suitable amenity for Greenbelt as a community founded in **visionary thinking**.

C. Civic goals

Public art contributes to the city's **economic vitality** by making Greenbelt a more attractive place in which to live, work and play.

Public art supports **public safety** goals by promoting awareness of one's surroundings, building civic pride and demonstrating public commitment to the neighborhoods in which artwork is presented.

Section 3: Greenbelt Public Art - Past and Present

Currently and throughout the city's history, Greenbelt has promoted public art through programming, technical services and support for community initiatives. Examples include:

- Coordinating periodic professional conservation of the Lenore Thomas Straus bas reliefs and Mother and Child statue (1999, 2007), original to Greenbelt's construction
- Coordinating the installation of Lenore Thomas Straus' donated, untitled pedestal sculpture at the Community Center (2000)
- Facilitating the creation of painted murals on the Co-op grocery store and pedestrian underpasses (date unknown; murals are no longer present)
- Installing and maintaining artist Richard Zandler's donated deer sculpture in Greenbelt East, (circa 1990)
- Operating an art gallery at the Greenbelt Community Center (circa 1997 to present)
- Extending gallery programming to include temporary, outdoor installations at the Youth Center, a pedestrian underpass and the Community Center front lawn (projects with Jill Romano in 2001 and David Page in 2008)
- Exhibiting community artwork (ongoing) at venues such as the Municipal Building, Youth Center, Community Center, Aquatic and Fitness Center, Springhill Lake Recreation Center and Greenbelt library, as well as student art shows at the Greenbelt Consumer Co-Op (2010) and Beltway Plaza shopping mall (2010).
- Supporting Artists in Residence at the Greenbelt Community Center in the creation of public artwork with community involvement. Examples have included: a Weaving Web at Schrom Hills Park with Elizabeth Morissette for Schromfest, aka Fall Fest (2000); the ceramic "Fly" mural created for the Community Center with Marla McLean (2004); the "Friends and Family" community memory quilt organized by Celestine Ranney-Howes (2008); a lantern display developed by Sherill Gross for the Festival of Lights opening ceremony (2008); art flags created with Russ Little, used on July 4th (2010); the "Faces of Greenbelt" ceramic tile mural dedicated at the Community Center in 2012 at the opening of Greenbelt's 75th Anniversary celebration; a yarn-bomb installation coordinated by Rachel Cross near the Community Center (2016); the "Crazy Quilt" ceramic tile panel series

installed at the Springhill Lake Recreation Center (2017); and the “Birds Gone Wild” portable painting/photo stand-ins designed by Rachel Cross (2018).

- Administering the Arts Emerge program to facilitate community participation in additional public art projects, such as: the dancing figure shaped panel paintings created with Arlette Jassel for Greenbelt New Year (2000); polar bear sculptures created with Alice Sims for Greenbelt New Year (2001); floating sculptures created with Recreation staff for Buddy Attick Park July 4th celebrations (2002, 2005 - 2008); and the creation of "stick people" sculptures with Recreation staff (2004), and panel paintings with Eli Halpin (2009) to identify homes participating in the Greenbelt Homes, Inc. House and Garden Tours.
- Collaborating with the Chesapeake Education, Arts and Research Society (CHEARS) and alight dance theater to commission artwork for the Three Sisters Demonstration Gardens located at the Greenbelt Community Center, Springhill Lake Recreation Center and Schrom Hills Park (2014-2015).
- Presenting community and professional performances at special events, including theater, dance, music and spoken word (ongoing)
- Providing funding and/or in-kind support for community arts organizations such as the Greenbelt Concert Band, Greenbelt Arts Center, Greenbelt Writers Group, alight dance theater, and Friends of Greenbelt Theatre that provide free public programs (ongoing).
- Providing funding and/or in-kind support (ongoing) for community initiatives such as: the Labor Day festival art shows and concerts; performances in Roosevelt Center and art shows organized by the New Deal Café, with support from Friends of New Café Arts; and the Greenbelt Association for Visual Arts/ Greenbelt Access Television animation program.

Section 4: Statement of Policy

"The City of Greenbelt is committed to facilitating a vibrant role for the arts in community life. We recognize the capacity of public art to preserve and expand on the city's historic cultural legacy. We believe that public art can affirm community values such as inclusivity, visionary thinking and the dignity and humanity of the citizen. We believe that public art can help further civic goals including economic vitality and public safety. Therefore, the City of Greenbelt supports the exhibition, performance and other presentation of the arts city-wide in public spaces and in private spaces which are publicly accessible without charge. We recognize the value of both amateur and professional creative work, and both programmed and spontaneous expression, which are consistent with the Greenbelt Community Pledge. Through community planning, direct programming, conservation, and support for artist and arts organization initiatives, the City of Greenbelt will continue to encourage and recognize creativity broadly through public art."

Section 5: Procedural Guidelines

A. General guidelines

1. City of Greenbelt professional arts staff are authorized to develop and implement specific procedures for public presentations in the visual and performing arts and protocols for collection management. These procedures are subject to review by the Greenbelt Arts Advisory Board and approval by the Director of Greenbelt Recreation and by the City Manager. Flexibility should be maintained in order to enable the city to learn from its own

and others' experience over time and to respond to a range of potential opportunities that cannot fully be anticipated in this document.

2. Consideration will be given to the Public Art Site Index developed by the Greenbelt Arts Advisory Board in the selection of sites for the performance or exhibition of public art. The Site Index is intended to be suggestive and not limiting.
3. The City of Greenbelt will notify the Greenbelt Arts Advisory Board and professional arts staff early in the planning process for any renovations to public areas of indoor and outdoor city facilities and public areas within any planned new construction. The Board and staff will report to the City Council and City Manager, respectively, on any opportunities identified for the inclusion of visual art or for the general enhancement of a facility's capacity for presentation of the visual or performing arts. The Greenbelt Arts Advisory Board will update the Public Art Site Index accordingly, as new opportunities are created.

B. Guidelines for the development and management of a collection of enduring visual art works

1. The City of Greenbelt will provide for the responsible stewardship of its current and future holdings of enduring works of visual art. The city will maintain its public art works in good physical condition and present them with appropriate attribution to the artist.
 - a. The City will provide an assigned fund for the cultivation and maintenance of its collection of enduring works of visual art.
 - i. Funds may be used to meet collection management expenses including but not limited to: appraisals and insurance coverage; drainage and other grounds management; signage; lighting; means of public access; measures needed to protect the artwork during festivals and extreme weather events; routine, professional inspection, cleaning and conservation by qualified contractors; vandalism mitigation and other extraordinary repairs; and costs associated with the relocation or removal of art works.
 - ii. Funds may also be used for the acquisition of new works through extended loan, purchase, gift or commission. New project expenses may include but are not limited to: artist's design work and travel; engineering consultations; conservation review; site preparation; fabrication, delivery and installation of the artwork.
 - iii. Collections management will have priority over the acquisition of new work for use of the assigned fund.
 - iv. Individuals, organizations and corporate donors will be able to contribute to the assigned fund.
 - b. The City will provide professional arts staffing at a level sufficient to fulfill the duties of collection management and to implement procedures for new acquisitions as a pre-condition for approval of proposed acquisitions through commission, loan, gift, or purchase of existing work.