



PLANS & STRATEGIES FOR PUBLIC ART



ABOUT THE SOLUTION CENTER

The Main Street Solution Center is a free access portal to resources for communities and organizations working to revitalize and strengthen their local economies. The Solution Center's curated resources are designed to help guide and inspire local leaders and advocates as they navigate the complexities of downtown and neighborhood business district revitalization and economic growth.

ABOUT THE PARTNERSHIP

This Main Street Solution Center publication was underwritten by Michigan Main Street and Main Street Iowa. Their generous support demonstrates a shared vision and ongoing commitment to freely share knowledge, experience, tools, and best practices to fuel revitalization and economic growth in their own communities, and in locales spanning the nation.



ABOUT THE CREATORS

Leigh Young, AICP is Senior Main Street Specialist with Michigan Main Street and a driving force behind the creation of the Main Street Solution Center. Her deep passion for planning, placemaking, community engagement, and sustainable urban development is evident in her work to advance the cause for revitalization and economic development in downtown and neighborhood business districts across Michigan.

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Ben Muldrow is a partner at Arnett Muldrow & Associates, a consultancy renowned for its creative approach to economic development, branding, and marketing strategies for small towns and cities across the nation. He brings an innovative mindset and a deep understanding of the unique dynamics of community branding to each engagement, blending traditional community values with modern marketing techniques to help communities and districts unlock their potential.

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Public art encompasses a wide range of artistic expressions displayed in public spaces, often intended to be accessible and engaging to a broad audience. Here are some of the different types of public art:

Sculptures and Statues: These are three-dimensional works of art that can be made from various materials like metal, stone, or wood. They are often placed in parks, plazas, or on sidewalks.

Murals and Wall Paintings: Large-scale paintings or images on walls or sides of buildings. These are very common in urban settings and can dramatically alter the visual landscape of an area. Murals and paintings, including those created using a paint-by-numbers scheme or similar approach - can also be a great way to engage the community in efforts to improve the district.

Installations: Art installations are often temporary and can include any medium. They are designed to transform the perception of a space, and can be interactive or simply visual. Kids-oriented fairy gardens, fairy doors, and painted rock gardens and animals are popular examples. Chalk art and Rainworks (art that is only visible when it rains) on sidewalks, and painted murals and designs in pedestrian crossings and parking spaces are examples of low cost, high impact approaches for enlivening spaces.

Land Art: This involves creating art from the landscape itself, using natural materials like rocks, sticks, soil, and water. It can be large-scale and requires viewing from a distance to appreciate fully.

Light Installations: Using light as a medium, these artworks can range from projections on buildings to intricate designs using LEDs or other light sources.

Digital Art: Incorporating technology, digital art can include projections, digital screens, and interactive elements that often invite viewer participation.

Performance Art: This type of art involves live performances in public spaces, which can include dance, theater, music, or performance art.

Mosaic and Tile Art: Using small pieces of colored glass, stone, or other materials to create images or patterns, often found in public spaces like subway stations or sidewalks.

Kinetic Sculptures: Artworks that move, either by mechanical means or through interaction with natural elements like wind or water.

Functional Art: This includes artistically designed benches, light posts, bike racks, and other functional elements of a streetscape.

Each type of public art offers unique ways to enhance the visual and cultural landscape of a community, contributing to its identity and vibrancy.





SCULPTURES & STATUES



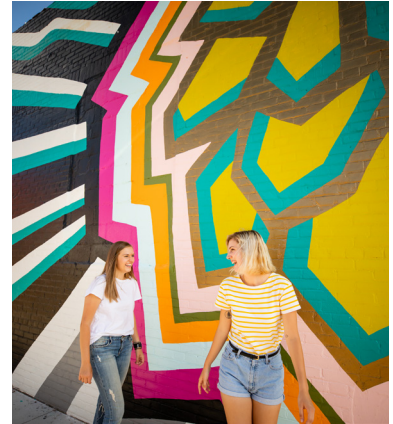


THE FEAST

Created by Joel T. Dugan
Commissioned by the City of Fairmont, Main Street Fairmont,
and the Marion County Commission
in partnership with Allegory Image Factory
April 2021

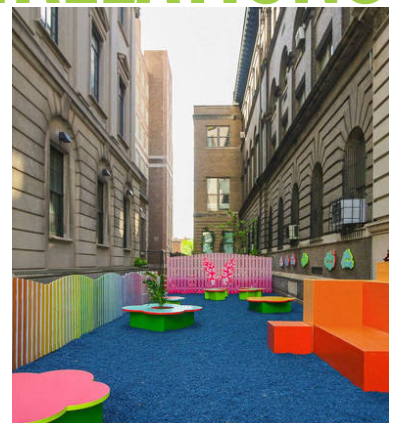
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MURALS & WALL PAINTINGS



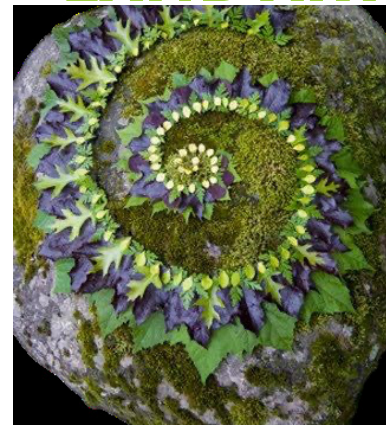


INSTALLATIONS



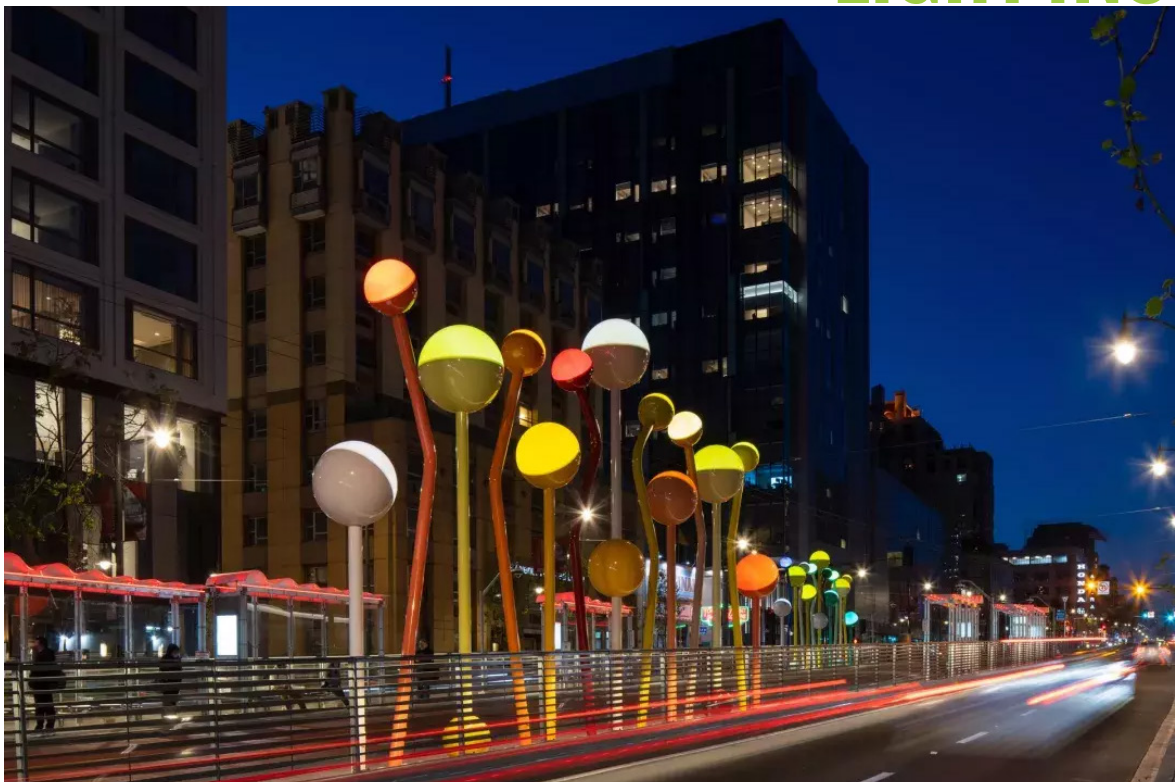


LAND ART





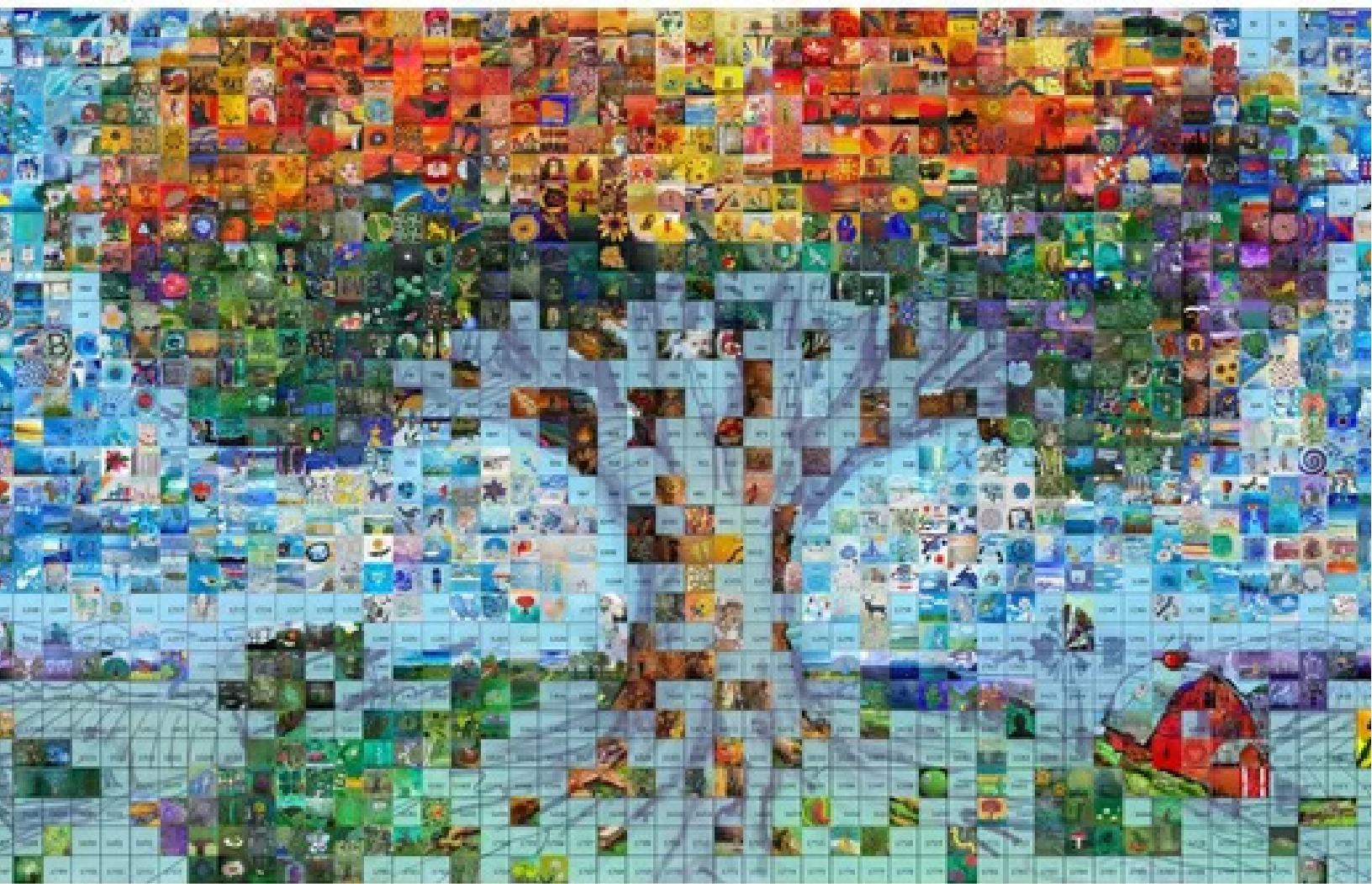
LIGHT INSTALLATIONS





PERFORMANCE ART



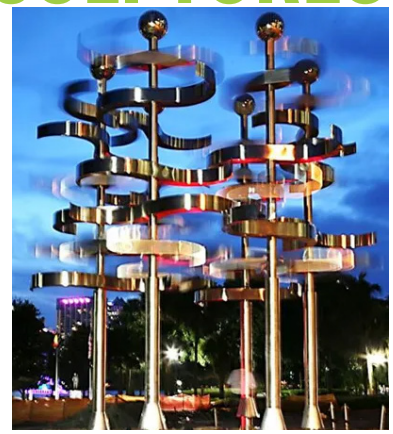


MOSAIC & TILE ART





KINETIC SCULPTURES





FUNCTIONAL ART



PUBLIC ART PLANS AND STRATEGIES

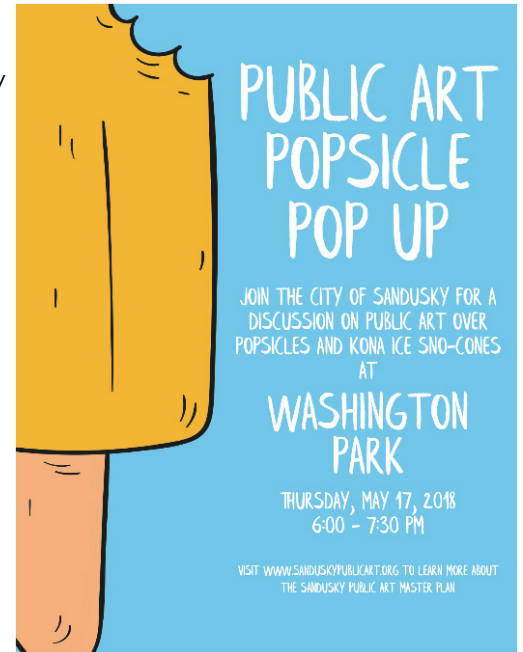
A cohesive and sustainable public art initiative requires engagement, planning, and attention to detail. While the precise steps and plan components are likely to look different from community to community, common elements include:

Stakeholder Engagement. Activities performed to best understand the desires of residents and key stakeholders can include community surveys, stakeholder interviews, and public meetings designed to discuss the importance of public art, gather ideas, and explore possibilities. Input collected should provide a strong foundation for the planning process and for the resulting vision, goals, and directions for public art.

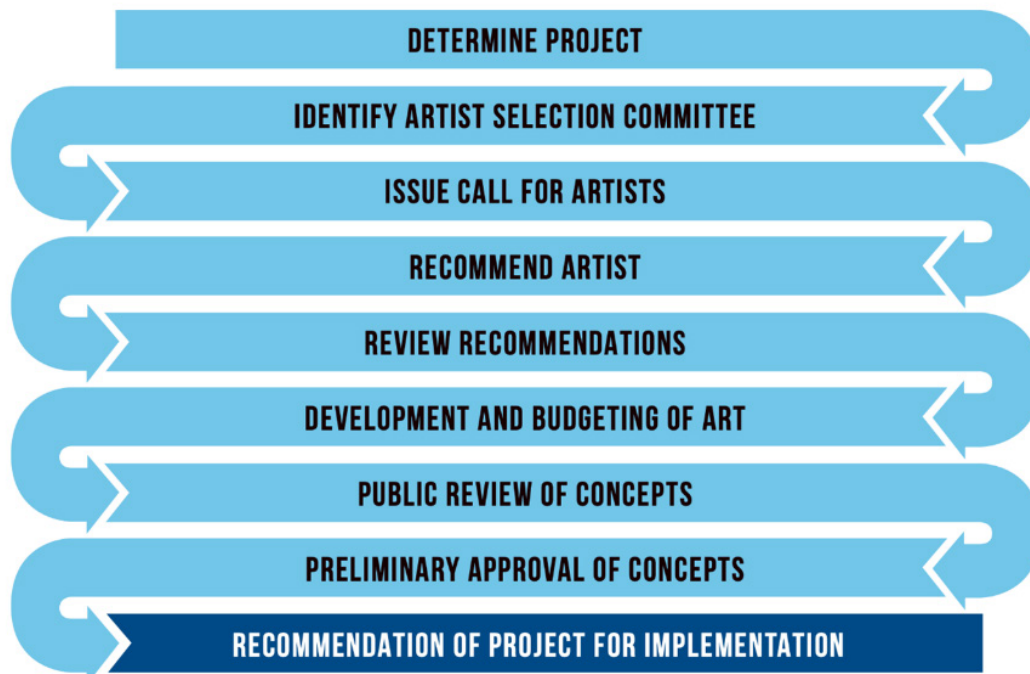
Inventory of Existing Art and Identification of Opportunities. Information gathered from stakeholders and an inventory of the public art already in a district can inform opportunities for the types of preferred artworks and projects that are missing. The public art plan should include a list of the types of artworks that could be installed in the community or district.

Mapping and Geographic Strategies. Different types of artworks and projects will likely be better suited to different areas of the community or district. Community input showing preferences for different styles of art often leads, somewhat naturally, to the identification and mapping of areas for possible placements and activities, and geographic-specific recommendations to be considered when commissioning art.

Administrative Guide. The public art plan's administrative guide typically outlines the roles and responsibilities for funding and implementing the art initiative, along with guidelines and requirements for developing a work plan, funding and acquiring public art, selecting artists and artwork, and the maintenance and conservation of the public art collection.

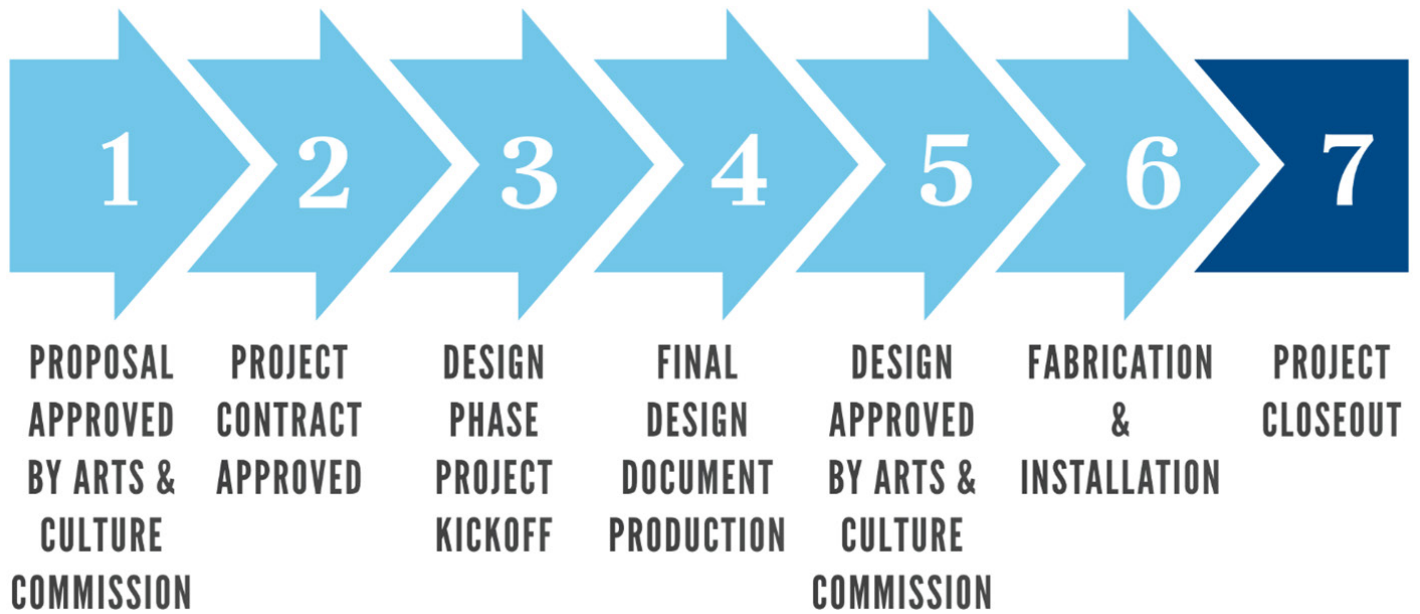


PROCESS FOR SELECTING AN ARTIST OR ARTIST TEAM



Sandusky (OH) Public Art and Placemaking Plan





Sandusky (OH) Public Art and Placemaking Plan

Review Guidelines. Reviews conducted by the entity (e.g. commission, committee) responsible for evaluating and approving the design and the technical feasibility of proposals for permanent public artworks require criteria. Determining if the artwork can be built and installed as proposed is among the most important considerations. Examples of other criteria to consider include:

- Relevance of the piece to the community, district, or site and its values, history, culture, and people
- Suitability of the work for outdoor display, including its maintenance and conservation requirements
- Relationship of the work to the site and the host district or neighborhood, especially how it serves to activate or enhance public space
- Appropriateness of the artwork's scale
- How closely the proposed artwork aligns with the community's or district's expressed vision, goals, and preferences for public art

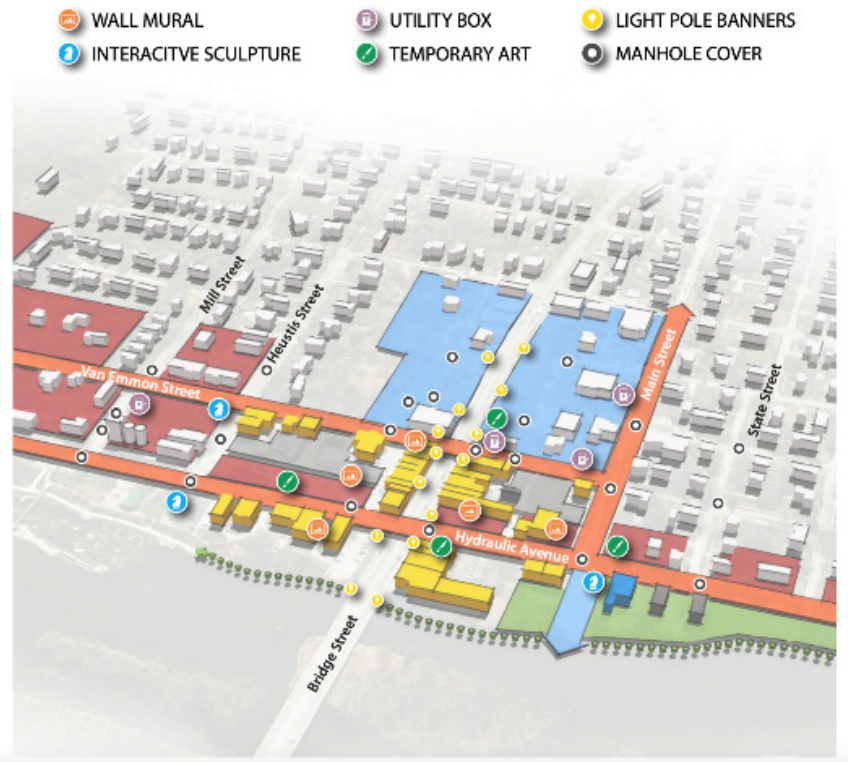


Site Selection. Ensuring public art is fairly and equitably distributed throughout the community or district, and that it is sited in a way that enhances and activates public spaces, are worthy plan goals. Other examples of criteria to guide or prioritize the placement of public art might point to sites:

- Currently or expected to generate higher levels of pedestrian traffic and that are important to pedestrian flow and circulation routes
- Readily visible and accessible by the public
- Where people gather and community happens
- Identified with or establishing landmarks, and marking district gateways

SITE SELECTION PROCESS & PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES.

The Yorkville Downtown Overlay District's Streetscape Masterplan identifies several locations for potential public art installations, as illustrated in the map below. The city may select public art based upon either (1) identifying the **location** where art work would be a valuable addition to the community and soliciting proposals from artist for that specific site, or (2) receiving **artwork** proposals from qualified artists and then determining the most suitable location for the installment.



Yorkville (IL) Public Art Program

Work Plan. Short, medium, and long-term goals and strategies that address funding, processes, timelines, and policies supporting and guiding implementation are defined in a work plan. The work plan should also include a robust task list highlighting every task and responsible party related to the implementation of permanent public art. The previously described administrative guide might set forth the guidelines and requirements for developing, evaluating, and updating the work plan.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND EXAMPLES

For a more in-depth look at public art plans and strategies, see the following resources and examples.

[Forecast Public Art | Resources for Public Art](#)

[Design and Review Criteria for Public Art | Project for Public Spaces](#)

[Public Art Archive | Project for Public Spaces](#)

[Braselton Public Art Master Plan | Braselton, GA](#)

[A Public Art Plan for Downtown Elgin | Elgin, TX](#)

[Sandusky Public Art and Placemaking Plan | Sandusky, OH](#)

[Downtown Public Art Program | Yorkville, IL](#)

