

City of Evanston

Community Public Art Program

CONTEXT

Evanston is recognized for the complexity of its makeup as exemplified by the subtlety with which it blends into remarkably different communities to the north, west, and south. It possesses a cultural vitality that many cities only hope to attain. Evanston is home to many artists, galleries, and performing venues, including the respected Evanston Art Center, Noyes Cultural Arts Center, and the Music Institute of Chicago.

In 2006, the Evanston Public Art Committee (PAC) recommended the creation of a Community Public Art program with the intent and capacity to create public art projects in a variety of neighborhood settings. This program is in addition to the current Percent for Art program.

The intent of the new Community Public Art program is to expand the ability of Evanston neighborhoods and wards to participate in the creation of artistic expressions – such as murals, sculpture, mosaics, etc. – that enhance the local environment and encourage active citizen engagement in its beautification.

The City of Evanston already has the essential capacities that will enhance the strength, success, and outcome of the Community Public Art program. These capacities include:

- Planning and budgetary processes for public improvement infrastructure projects at parks, playgrounds, and streetscapes
- Ward aldermen and alderwomen knowledgeable of their constituents' developing interests and capacities
- Formal and informal public and private partnerships that seek to enhance public perception of a locale or expression of a common goal

Without unduly burdening municipal agencies, the PAC already encourages architects, developers, planners, administrators, and project managers to look for opportunities to coordinate their plans and projects with public art opportunities.

OBJECTIVES OF A COMMUNITY PUBLIC ART PROGRAM

- Affirm public art as a means to create pride and identity in neighborhood settings.
- Create public art that engages the imagination and participation of Evanston residents.
- Increase opportunities for positive dialogue about the role of public art.
- Build the expectation and anticipation that public art will be an integral part of Evanston's civic life and environment.

BENEFITS OF A COMMUNITY PUBLIC ART PROGRAM

- Allow for the expression and reaffirmation of collective community histories and values through public art projects.
- Increase participation in the arts by Evanston residents.
- Expand appreciation of the pleasure and value of public art.
- Increase opportunities for local and area artists to explore, develop and showcase their public art capabilities.
- Increase awareness of and funding for public art projects.

IMPLEMENTATION

Effective partnerships between artists and communities require a commitment to working together in ways that may not be fully anticipated when the process is begun. Therefore, organizational partners and artists must meet high standards of communication and professionalism while reasonably expecting that their best efforts will be welcomed as part of an evolving democratic dialogue.

1. Project Awards

Funding for this program is contingent upon the Evanston City Council authorizing budgeted funds. Community Public Art projects are anticipated to be in the range of \$15,000 - \$25,000. It will be considered an asset to an application if it identifies available supplementary funding by other parties.

Equitable distribution of resources does not necessarily mean that equal dollars will be allocated to each project. Projects vary in complexity, scale, and their capacity to attract additional funding through community efforts. These factors will be considered when resources are allocated.

Guidelines for allocating funding should be flexible enough to allow funds to be shifted among approved projects in order to match the resources available to the need. In addition, different communities will vary in their own internal ability to participate in and/or provide supplementary funding for specific projects.

After a ward is chosen as the site of a project, that ward will rotate to the bottom of a list for subsequent funding cycles in order to offer other wards the opportunity to participate in the Community Public Art program. A ward will move up from the bottom of the list as other wards are awarded projects. If there are no applications submitted by wards that have not received projects for a longer period of time, that ward will then qualify for an additional project. Position on the list is determined by project award date not project completion date, though unanticipated delays in the completion of a previous project may impact future project requests by the same applicant.

2. Attributes of a Successful Project

- a. High aesthetic quality that reflects well on the city, the local neighborhood, and the PAC
- b. A design that is supported by the neighborhood
- c. Organized volunteer participation in the development and/or implementation of the project
- d. Working relationships between the artist(s) and non-artists that are characterized by each as cordial, professional, and mutually supportive
- e. All expenses covered by funding awarded through the Community Public Art program, supplemented by already identified outside (excluding city) funding, if needed
- f. Final reports and documentation to be made part of an archive of projects
- g. Project offers opportunities for public relations efforts
- h. Maintenance requirements of the project are reasonable, documented, and funded, if necessary

3. Artist Selection

The Community Public Art program requires the identification of artists with the specialized skills necessary to produce high-quality public art projects that engage the community. The PAC has begun to develop an Eligible Artists Database (EAD) through a request for submission of qualifications. This artist database will be available for review by neighborhood groups that want to initiate a Community Public Art project.

Artists selected by a neighborhood group who are not in the EAD may apply to the PAC. Applicants must present a resume and supporting images with identifying text that detail the artist's experience as lead or co-lead artist on public art projects. A statement of intent or approach to community engagement will strengthen the application. The PAC will review artist applications for appropriate professional skills and experience.

Because of its awareness of needs and opportunities within Evanston, the PAC may recommend that an approved artist contact a specific community group to prepare a joint application for funding.

4. Dispersal of Funding

All projects require pairing a neighborhood group with an artist. The responsibility for managing the project, purchasing materials, and making payments to the artist will be set forth in a contract between the artist and the City of Evanston, with PAC oversight.

Dispersal of funds will be as follows:

- 15% - at signing of contract
- 50% - at mid-point of project, if all mid-point benchmarks have been met
- 35% - at project completion, including the completion and submission of all reports and documentation

5. General Liability

The City of Evanston and the PAC will require that public art projects be covered by general liability insurance. Coverage is typically required when a municipal agency funds a project. Standard coverage is \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$2,000,000 annual aggregate.

Because community art projects are not typically commissioned by municipal agencies, even very skilled community artists seldom carry general liability insurance for their own projects. If a contracted artist needs to purchase liability insurance, the cost may materially affect the scale and scope of the project. Therefore, if general liability insurance must be purchased for a project, the project budget should include the cost of that insurance.

6. Workers Compensation Insurance

Workers Compensation is a requirement of subcontractors in the State of Illinois. In fact, few artists maintain Workers Compensation policies because of the cost and the burden of reporting and maintenance.

Artist shall, at the City's request, provide other insurance in types and limits deemed appropriate to the project by the City and including, but not limited to unemployment compensation, workers compensation, and valuable papers insurance.

APPLICATION AND SELECTION FOR FUNDING

Applications for Community Public Art funding may be submitted to the PAC by an Artist¹, an Organization², or by an Artist and Organization in partnership. Applications must be signed by appropriate authorized representatives of the party or parties responsible for completion of the project.

The application will be available online or, upon request, by mail. The following information must be included for an application to be considered complete:

1. Signature with date of signing
2. Name and address of Artist(s) and/or Organization(s) involved
3. Name, address, and phone number of primary contact person for the project
4. Anticipated site for public art project
5. Artist statement of intent/purpose for the project
6. Description of successful outcomes
7. For artist applicants, evidence of capacity to lead a large-scale public art project, i.e., images from projects similar in size/scope/site in which the artist was the leader and resume/statement
8. For organizational applicants, evidence of capacity for community engagement, i.e., annual reports or other evidence of organizing capacity
9. Work plan with timeline and measurable benchmarks
10. Reporting/accountability statement for communications and conflict resolution
11. Materials list
12. Maintenance statement
13. Budget
14. Identification of potential sources of funding

The Public Art Committee will review all applications in a timely manner, reporting to each applicant the result of that review. The following considerations will guide the selection of successful applicants:

- Experienced artistic leadership (30%)
- Potential for significant community involvement (30%)
- Realistic work plan and measurable benchmarks (15%)
- Budget that anticipates full costs for the success of the project (15%)
- Additional partners in support of the project, if necessary (10%)

The PAC will be prepared to give comments to unsuccessful applicants to help them understand how future applications might be more successful.

¹ For purposes of clarity and simplicity in this document, an “artist” may refer to one artist or more than one artist working as equal members of a team.

² The term *organization* is inclusive, meant to encourage applications by wards, not-for-profit agencies, churches, professional associations, and other groups with formal or informal structures.

2008 IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

Solicitation of Proposals – Mid-November, 2007

Applications forms and guidelines made available to the public.

Applications Due – February 1, 2008

Application Completeness Review – Feb. 15, 2008

Applications are received and reviewed for completeness and professionalism.

Review, Selection, Notification – March 15, 2008

PAC reviews the applications and selects applications that are approved for funding. Letters will be sent to each application's primary contact announcing the decision of the PAC. Projects recommended for funding that involve amounts of \$20,000 or above will be referred to the City Council for review and approval. Once this review is completed, applicants will be notified of the results by letter.

Contract Preparation – May 1, 2008

The City of Evanston provides responsible party with contract. Once contract is executed, initial disbursement of funds (15%) is made.

Projects May Begin – June 1, 2008

PAC monitors benchmarks. Additional payments released as benchmarks are confirmed complete.

Please submit completed applications to:

Public Art Committee

Attn. Jeff Cory

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Evanston, Illinois 60201

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