



ART IN THE PUBLIC EYE



“Salmon” by Peter Sedlow

PUBLIC ART MASTER PLAN FOR THE CITY OF GRANTS PASS



ACROSS THE NATION communities both large and small are using Public Art to improve public spaces, enhance the beauty of their community, and provide their city with its own “signature” recognizable to everyone. Grants Pass possesses beautiful and distinctive examples of public art – from the sculpture welcoming visitors to Reinhart Volunteer Park, to the Depression Era murals in our post office.

This Public Art Master Plan is built on the belief that public art can enhance our City's image. Art makes public spaces more welcoming and it creates a deeper interaction with our environment – the places where we work, live, shop and seek recreation. It is our intention that this plan, and the community process by which it was developed, presents the opportunity for an in-depth exchange of insight and information among public art advocates, urban planners and designers, and private development professionals in our community and insures a continuing investment and appreciation of Public Art in Grants Pass.

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SECTION ONE: WHAT IS PUBLIC ART? WHY IS PUBLIC ART IMPORTANT?

WHAT IF there was no *Statue of Liberty*, no *Eiffel Tower*, no *Vietnam Veterans Memorial*, no murals, statues, or monuments? What would it be like without these landmarks enhancing our experience of a place? They produce a sense of community identity. They reach audiences outside museums and galleries, and they add to the beauty of everyday life.

What is public art?

Public Art refers to works of art in any media that have been created or purchased with the specific intention of being placed in public locations. Unlike a work of studio art or art in a museum collection which may be sold or removed, most Public Art is designed to be displayed in one location for a long period of time.

Why is Public Art important?

By its presence alone Public Art can heighten our awareness, question our assumptions, transform a landscape, or express community values. For these reasons it can have the power over time to transform a city's image.

For purposes of the Public Art Master Plan types of public art may include:

- sculpture
- mosaics
- fountains or water elements
- fine art crafts (clay, tapestries, textiles, wood, metal, plastics, stained glass)
- installations
- earthworks and environmental artworks
- ornamental and functional elements designed by artists
- murals
- paintings
- monuments

Public Art enhances a city's quality of life by:

- Making the places where we live, work and play more welcoming and beautiful.
- Increasing the community's assets by creating images that help define a space.
- Allowing the community to express its identity and values.
- Enhancing roadsides, pedestrian corridors and community gateways.
- Beautifying the transportation systems.
- Attracting tourism and its economic benefits.
- Connecting artists with the community.



SECTION TWO: WHAT IS THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ART?

THE CITY OF GRANTS PASS Committee on Public Art (CoPA), originally named The City of Grants Pass Arts Advisory Committee, was chartered in 2002.

CoPA consists of eleven members appointed for three-year terms by the City Council. This Committee acts in an advisory capacity to the Mayor and Council on actions related to the integration of Public Art into the community. The Committee also works as a liaison and in partnership with local, regional, state or national arts organizations as appropriate to foster support for the Public Art; actively determining ways in which art can enhance the quality of life in the city and foster community economic and social growth.

CoPA has the following powers and duties:

- Overseeing the implementation of the Public Art Master Plan.
- Revising and proposing policy concerning Public Art.
- Acting as an advocate for Public Art.
- Reviewing and developing plans for the inventory and maintenance of existing and new Public Art.

CoPA's mission is to:

- Foster the expansion of public art throughout the City.
- Stimulate the appreciation of our Public Art.
- Seek financial support for Public Art.
- Develop a public collection of artwork which has strong aesthetic quality and a wide range of artistic styles and disciplines.
- Encourage collaboration among artists, architects, engineers and property owners for the public display of art.



SECTION THREE: WHY CREATE A PUBLIC ART MASTER PLAN?

THE PURPOSE of the Public Art Master Plan is to put into place a flexible set of goals and objectives that will provide direction and incentive for increasing public art in our city. CoPA, acting as the steering committee, in conjunction with the Mayor and City Council, city staff representatives, members of the business community, and key community members, contributed to the creation of this document/plan. It is adjustable, able to evolve with the development and policy changes of the community, and will guide both day-to-day and long-range public art decision-making.

This Master Plan comes out of the need to examine the role of art in Grants Pass' public spaces and to find effective ways to include the power of art in the discussion of our city's identity. It seeks to ask the key questions of how art relates to place, how it can have an impact on community, and how its administration can be set up in such a way that Public Art becomes part of the entire landscape of the city. This document, approved by the City Council, provides a set of objectives, both as a framework and series of steps for the continued growth of art in Grants Pass' public spaces.

The Public Art Master Plan provides the community with a vehicle to commission new and noteworthy projects, to support artists by providing a system of artistic production outside of the commercial gallery system, and to promote a dialogue through its content and placement that extends through the entire community.

SECTION FOUR: THE PERMANENT COLLECTION

THE CITY HAS several pieces of artwork in its collection; primarily sculptural works produced by local and regional artists. The collection has been built without any clear acquisition or maintenance policies. Given the size of the collection a system should be put into place to map, archive, conserve, and oversee the addition of artworks to the Public Art Permanent Collection.

CoPA has begun working on the following:

- Developing a list of artworks in the permanent collection and researching missing provenance and maintenance information.
- Compiling a photo archive of these artworks.
- Illustrating the location of each artwork on a map that can be distributed to the public.
- Determining urgent conservation issues.



CoPA HAS FOUND IT HELPFUL to delineate four different areas to focus on as prospective Public Art project sites. These areas have been identified for their appropriate locations and their potential for visual impact of Public Art. The boundaries for each are loosely defined and may change over time. The delineation of these areas opens up possibilities for expanding Public Art to various sections of the City.

Public Art project areas:

Area 1: *Downtown Core*

Area 2: *Parks, Trails, Waterfront Areas, and other Recreational Sites*

Area 3: *Gateways & Entry Points*

Area 4: *Public Transportation System*

Area 1: Downtown Core

The Downtown Core is comprised of a mix of retail, restaurant, public, and residential buildings. Irregular in shape, its boundaries stretch from: “A” Street on the north; the Rogue River, south; 3rd Street, west; and, 9th Street, east. The Downtown Core features a large number of both outdoor and indoor sculptures and murals. CoPA produces a Public Art brochure for both tourists and residents mapping out the locations of these works in an easy walking tour format.

The Downtown Core has tremendous opportunities for the installation of additional Public Art. The integration of small-scale works into building facades or sidewalks can provide visual surprises, humor, and/or historical references to the area. Murals, mosaics, and freestanding sculptures are among the many approaches that could be used successfully in this environment. Unique, artist-designed, architectural elements (e.g. artist-designed ceramic tiles, benches, or planters) can also be used to enhance the area’s special character. Because of the pedestrian nature of this area, artwork can be of human scale.

A large potential for Downtown Core enhancement and Public Art display is 5th Street between “G” and “H” streets. The west half of 5th Street, privately owned, is part of the former Palace Hotel as well as the old Cheese Factory properties and the east half of 5th belongs to the City. A proposal has been made to create a “Heritage Park”; closing 5th between “G” and “H” to traffic and making it a pedestrian area with outdoor restaurant seating and public art. Research into accessibility requirements for emergency vehicles, gathering support from surrounding business, and receiving City approval is required before this project can move forward. CoPA recommends finding ways to implement this project.



Area 2: Parks, Trails, Waterfront Areas, and other Recreational Sites

There are currently seventeen public parks in Grants Pass, a total of 140.45 acres of land set aside for the public's enjoyment. Public parks are natural gathering points for the community, and Public Art in these settings can enrich people's experiences in a variety of ways.

Gilbert Creek, 8.8 acres

Ogle Park, 1/4 acre

Lawnridge Park, 1.4 acres

Hillside Park, 1.9 acres

Debo Park, 1/2 acre

Westholm Park, 3/4 acre

Tussing Park, 7.2 acres

Redwood Park, 8.8 acres

Riverside Park, 27.7 acres

Baker Park, 2.3 acres

Morrison Centennial Park, 8.4 acres

Fruitdale Park, 6.3 acres

Eckstein Park, 6.9 acres

Grants Pass Skate Park, 2.2 acres

Kesterson Park, 1/4 acre

Croxton Memorial Park, 1.8 acres

Reinhart Volunteer Park, 55 acres

In addition to CoPA's plans for art in the parks, the Grants Pass Parks Committee has future projects slated for the parks such as: a moving/kinetic art work in Baker Park; a possible meditation garden in conjunction with Hospice, at Reinhart Park; and placement of the "Playful Otter" sculpture at Tussing Park. Public Art can also be included in the initial development of The River Road Reserve which is comprised of 250 acres on Lower River Road.

Involving artists on park project design teams is a way to ensure thoughtful, creative, and innovative Public Art is integrated into the City's park system.

Ideas that represent new and creative Public Art projects in the parks are:

- Enhancing sidewalks by including colored inlays and tiles as artistic designs or as signage indicating information or directions, for example, to the river or to trails.
- Adding artistic signage on buildings and/or shelters.
- Installing interactive and playful art as well as other, more traditional, types of art.
- Designing a sculptural art work that becomes a recurring thematic element located in each of the City's major parks.



Area 3: Gateways & Entry Points

Entry points into and around the city of Grants Pass can create a positive first impression as well as foster a sense of place and identity that we can be proud of. Gateways or major roadways entering our city can provide the public with highly visible signage combined with aesthetically pleasing works of art. Because motorists and passengers are in motion when traveling through the intersections, entrances and exits, special considerations need to be factored into the scale and visibility of the art.

At this time we have identified seven different possible sites that may be suitable for future art installations. CoPA is researching accessibility and gathering information for each of these locations. Sculpture, artistic signs, public monuments, water features, and landscaping are all considerations for these areas; they can link downtown to the neighborhoods, river, hillsides, as well as the art world beyond and can establish a strong sense of uniqueness and vitality.

There are four major areas which should be considered for large scale art pieces:

1. I-5 to the north at 6th and 7th streets (Exit 58).
2. I-5 entrance to the south at Grants Pass Expressway (Exit 55).
3. “The Y” where 6th Street, 7th Street, Rogue River Highway (99), Williams Highway (238), Redwood highway (199) and the Grants Pass Expressway merge.
4. The bridges at 6th and 7th streets (given separate considerations or linked as part of the “Y” area).

Area 4: Public Transportation System

The experience that residents and visitors have with many areas of the City is defined by its network of streets, parkways, and public transit system. Artist-designed benches, shelters, light fixtures and light post banners, murals or mosaics can be strategically placed along transportation routes, and painted metal images can replace barriers on pedestrian bridges and overpasses.



Area 4: Public Transportation System continued

The Josephine Community Transit (JCT) bus system offers unique opportunities for impacting the visual experience of the City's travelers through Public Art.

- Stops – there are ninety-six stops in the system (county-wide). Stops are typically located every 1100 – 1300 feet in an urban area.
- Ridership – total boardings within the City for the past year is approximately 63,000.
- Twenty-four stops have Simme-Seats (two-seat poles).
- Two shelters have been installed within the city limits with six more to be installed by 2012 through an ODOT grant (see below). After the conclusion of the grant project, JCT plans on adding one new shelter per year as their budget allows.

Through CoPA, the City is currently involved with two active Public Art projects in partnership with JCT.

Art in Motion started in June, 2010. This Public Art project is essentially a gallery on wheels. Images of art work are displayed as signs on the side or back advertising panels of three JCT buses. A local business sponsor covers the costs of the exhibition. The art is there to engage people, expand public art visibility, and create opportunities for the community to experience art in everyday life.

The Bus Stops Here project is part of an ODOT grant Grants Pass has received for the installation of six bus shelters within the city limits. Included in the grant are monies for the installation of pieces of original art at each of the new shelters. The art work can range from free-standing three-dimensional sculptures, artist-designed seating, or decoration of the ground surface within the shelter with mosaics, inlays, or stamped concrete designs. Like *Art in Motion*, *The Bus Stops Here* project expands Public Art visibility and creates opportunities for public interaction with art in everyday activities. This project is scheduled for completion in 2012.

It is the recommendation of CoPA that both the *Art in Motion* and *The Bus Stops Here* projects continue and the means is found to expand each.



THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUBLIC ART in Grants Pass are almost limitless, potential sites for Public Art projects have been identified throughout the entire city. The objective in site selection is to maximize the potential for new planning and development initiatives for the successful implementation of high quality Public Art.

The significance of a site is described in terms of characteristics and considerations that make the location unique. These criteria are intended to act as an evaluation tool to prioritize current sites but also to function as a set of guidelines for evaluating potential future sites.

Site Selection Principles

- Maximizing the potential visibility of the art piece through site selection and placement.
- Maximizing the public's experience.
- Securing the longevity of the work.
- Considering the capacity and accessibility of the site.

Public Art Site Opportunities

CoPA strongly recommends focusing Public Art in parks, in the Downtown Core, and encourages its inclusion in new public/private projects. Once a more active and visible Public Art program is established in Grants Pass, we recommend the focus to include all key public facilities.

Categories that sort and further describe the recommended locations for Public Art include: gateways, parks, roadways, public buildings both interior and exterior, and natural areas. Some locations may be described in terms of more than one category.

Scale and Examples of Art

Recommended types of Public Art are described in terms of the proportion/impact of the artwork using the terms *large-scale*, *medium-scale* and *small-scale*. *Large-scale* art is prominent, has a significant impact due to its size and has the ability to change a location. Large-scale art works are easily viewed from a distance and impact the surrounding area. A large-scale work can be an independent sculpture, it may include several components, or it may be an artwork integrated into a large building, open space, or park. *Medium-scale* is on a "human-size" scale. Medium-scale art may be visible from a distance although it has greater impact and is better viewed at the pedestrian level. The art could be a focal point or a built-in feature. *Small-scale* art requires close proximity on the part of the viewer in order to have an impact. Some examples of small-scale public art include surface treatments, sidewalk inlays or functional pieces such as benches and planters.



TO ESTABLISH A LONG-TERM PROGRAM of art in public spaces, there needs to be the means for adequate funding. Securing funding is the cornerstone of any public art program. Aside from donations from private individuals and corporations, there are a number of approaches through which to obtain financial support for art. These ways can be broken into four broad areas: public/private sector collaborations; percent-for-art programs; developer participation; and alternate funding sources.

Public/Private Sector Collaborations

Opportunities for public art can be nurtured as part of existing continuing local programs. The City or a business could partner with local organizations such as Artworks, the Grants Pass Museum of Art and involve artists in:

- Creating art enhanced destinations in green spaces, along paths, anchoring spaces for rest, recreation and play areas, and gathering places.
- Installing art exhibits in vacant storefronts to improve a building's — and an area's — overall image.
- Encouraging local artists and museums to loan out works of art for temporary placement in public areas.
- Hosting exhibits in publicly accessible places, including municipal, state, and federal buildings.

Percent-for-Art Programs

Percent-for-art programs guarantee a funding stream for public art projects independent of city budgets. CoPA is continuing to research the feasibility of a percent-for-art plan and is investigating the structuring of various percentage plans and how they are utilized by other communities.

Benefits of a percent-for-art program:

- It can provide a mechanism for obtaining funds from a broad range of city agencies and departments.
- It can provide an opportunity to work with and introduce public art to many city agencies, in many different types of projects, and in many locations city-wide.
- It allows for the placement of art in more diverse locations in the city.



Soliciting Participation by Developers

In cities around the country, private developers are realizing that commissioning works of art for their projects benefits more than their bottom line. They can:

- Improve employee and tenant working environments.
- Create a unique look or landmark feature for the project.
- Demonstrate a larger civic commitment.
- Translate into higher rents and a more desirable office location.

For city agencies, expenditures on public art projects can:

- Highlight and publicize agency initiatives, missions and objectives.
- Communicate important information or instructions to the public (public service messages such as the importance of recycling are natural subjects for public art works).
- Contribute to the community's acceptance of a plant or facility in which art will be located.

Alternate Sources of Funding

Funding for public art can also come from:

- Grants from National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), the Oregon Cultural Trust and the Josephine County Cultural Coalition.
- Local and regional arts councils and arts advisory boards.
- Private endowments and commissions.
- Local organizations and businesses.
- Funds pooled between the county, state and city governments.
- A percentage of hotel/motel taxes.



SECTION EIGHT: ACCOMPLISHMENTS & GOALS

The city of Grants Pass has already recognized the importance of Public Art by establishing the Arts Advisory Committee (now CoPA) in 2002.

Between 2002 and the present, CoPA has been working to incorporate art into the public eye.

- **Public Art Brochure**
- **Grasshopper sculpture**
- ***Art in Motion* project**
- ***Bus Stops Here* project**
- **Public Art Master Plan**
- **Grants for Public Art projects**

This Master Plan is a working document created as a guide for both short-term and long-range activities. The following action stages should be viewed as outlines for proposed projects and suggests the role CoPA will play in laying the groundwork for establishing timelines and setting priorities.

2-year Plan, 2011-2012

- Update CoPA's website to reflect our new focus and add new links.
- Create a Public Art in Grants Pass website.
- Collaborate on a proposed mural project in the Downtown Core.
- Organize a multi-location summer mural painting event.
- Become involved with the placement of a new kinetic sculpture at Baker Park.
- Reassess the 5-year plan.

5-year Plan, 2011-2016

- Expand the *Art in Motion* project and the *Bus Stops Here* project.
- Build community partnerships.
- Establish fund gathering plans.
- Develop a communications and marketing plan for CoPA.
- Create a 3-year calendar featuring a major Public Art project every one or two years.
- Identify projects that need to be acted on to prevent the potential loss of a resource.
- Reevaluate and update the Public Art Master Plan.



THIS PUBLIC ART MASTER PLAN for the City of Grants Pass was developed through extensive research and consultation over the course a year's time. These information gathering strategies helped develop a layered picture of the City's visual form and character, its planning and development objectives, and the interests of its residents and civic leaders. The process has resulted in recommendations that reflect the sense of place that Grants Pass can create.

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