

# Public Art Potential for the Ford Site

**City of Saint Paul, Planning and Economic Development**

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## **[THIS IS JUST THE START...]**

This document serves as a starting point and possible template for a future community-driven Public Art Plan for the Ford Site. Technical details for implementation, sample tables, visions, and public art inspiration are included to provide understanding and to inspire.

**SAMPLE VISION:** *The sample vision will describe the aspirational ideas and focuses supporting public art at the Ford Site, will serve to help guide decisions large and small.*

**PUBLIC ART PRIMER:** Public Art can be categorized into three groups when trying to understand how community interacts with public art: art *in* public space, art *as* public space, and art in the *public interest*. (As defined by Miwon Kwon in *Sitings of Public Art: Integration versus Intervention, 2002.*)



### Art in Public Space

“Art in space” exists in public space, but does not necessarily act as functional nor does it explicitly reflect the public’s desires. These artworks were selected by committees composed of art professionals and donors. An example is Alexander Calder’s *Flamingo* (1974). The free-standing sculpture interacts with the Modernist architecture of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe’s Federal Building in Chicago, Illinois. Occasionally, the public embraces free-standing “art in space”, like the popular *Cloud Gate* (2006) by Anish Kapoor in Chicago’s Millennium Park. Frequently, these works

thrill the art world, but fail to evoke positive public responses because the work is selected by committees of arts professionals and donors without input from people who frequent the space.



### Art as Public Space

“Art as public space” refers to art that encompasses the design of entire public spaces; it transforms the ordinary benches we sit on, the land we walk on, and the bridges we cross. *South Cove* (1988) by Mary Miss for Battery Park City, New York City, resulted from collaborations with an architect and a landscape architect. It features a dramatic entryway, connecting pathways, and a bridge that spirals down into the water, leading the viewer through different landscapes. Locally, an example of

art as public space is the Saint Paul Cultural Garden, a collaborative work involving artists, designers and poets.



### Art in the Public Interest

“Art in the public interest” is designed and sometimes even constructed collaboratively with other artists and/or community participants. The artist invites the community into the process and the resulting work may reflect their interests, desires, and experiences. Artist Mel Chin consulted the Six Nations of the Iroquois and Seneca tribal member Peter Jemison to create *Signal* in a mass transit station in New York City (1993) The base of a beam represents the fires of native populations that used this land as a travel route before it was redeveloped as a modern transit station. Patterned tile work on the floor of the station reflects the tribes that inhabited this land. Local examples include CHS Field, where the community had the opportunity to

vote on two competing proposals submitted by local artists.

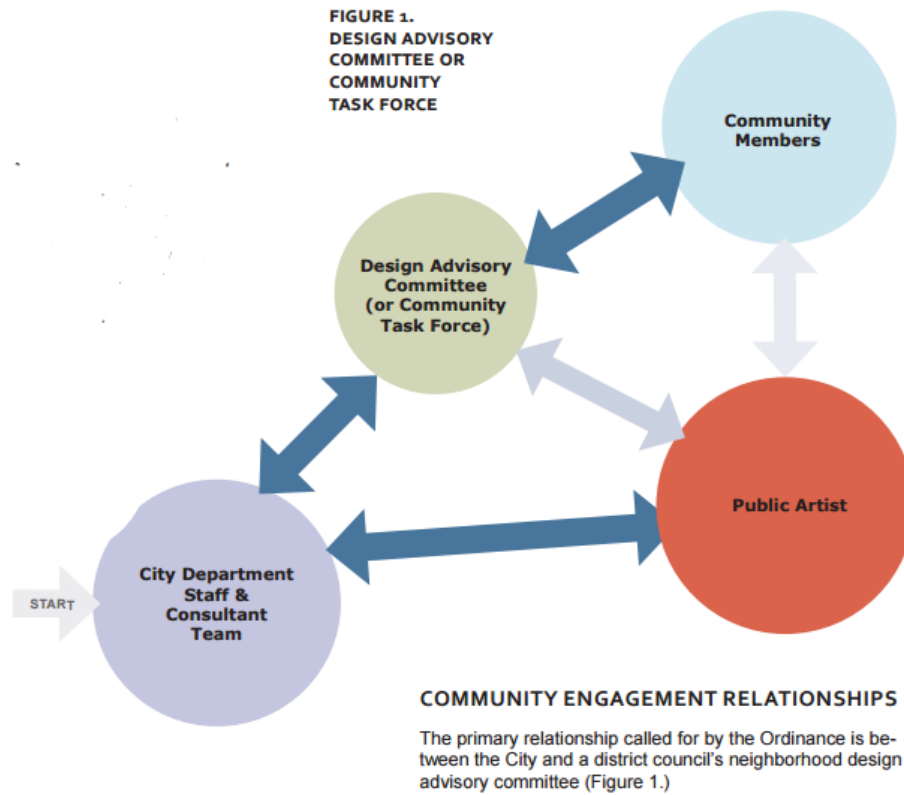
**"Public art is not an art form. It is a principle whereby the involvement and activities of artists contribute to the identity, understanding, appreciation, and enhancement of public places. This is best achieved through collaboration with artists in the conception, design development and implementation of changes to the built and managed environment."**

*– Maggie Bolt, past director of Public Art Southwest and publicartonline.org, a possible definition of public art*

### **COMMUNITY PUBLIC ART FEEDBACK**

At the Ford Site public meeting addressing Water, Waste, Art and Greenery, held on June 23<sup>rd</sup>, City of Saint Paul staff collected public comment about the topic of public art and found a strong desire for a natural feel and a community design element. Some people listed the desire for interactive art, and spaces with art that are accessible to all ages and abilities. A few commenters expressed excitement about honoring history through art and having rotational areas for art. This feedback is helpful, but it isn't comprehensive enough to drive public art decisions at the site. The expressed desire for community design, the limited community feedback on art to date, and existing capacity in the neighborhood drive the decision to pursue a Community Task Force model.

Additional feedback about what the community desires to see in public art can best be achieved by engagement of existing groups within the community, with input and expertise from artists and public art professionals, guided by a public art and community organizing expert. Currently within Highland, there are local movers and shakers like Friends of Highland Arts (FHA), Highland Community Initiative (HCI), and The Highland District Council. Outside of Highland, but local to the Twin Cities, are public art and community engagement experts like Springboard for Public Art, Public Art Saint Paul, Intermedia Arts and Forecast Public Art. FHA is, at the time of this writing, managing a public art project redeveloping Highland Park's bathhouse building into an art and recreation venue. HCI already has experience working with the community on engagement and actively seeking out community assets and artists. Springboard for Public Art has expressed interest in working as a convener, and Public Art Saint Paul currently staffs an art administrator at the City of Saint Paul who specializes in art administration, ordinance interpretation, and regularly serves in an advisory role for public art projects.



The Highland District Council is currently discussing the need for a district-wide art plan. It is important for Highland and the developing neighborhood that the door is open to collaboration between residents, developers and landowners about the selection and placement of public art. Due to the existing community arts social assets in Highland, a Ford Site Art Task Force that represents these groups would best

represent and implement the vision of the community. This Community Task Force model (Figure 1) generally follows the engagement opportunity in the Public Art Ordinance Program Technical Manual (page 29.)

With a Community Task Force focused on art and supported by existing art-focused Highland groups leading the conversation, the community can better articulate a vision for art at the Ford Site through an expanded and more specific Public Art Plan for the Ford Site. This level of community involvement is endorsed in the public art ordinance: Section 12.04, number 5.

During the de-commissioning process at the site, Ford saved significant slabs of building structure from the original showroom façade with the intent of re-incorporating them into the site, in a manner to be determined by the future developer in consultation with the City and the community. Ford also preserved the image of the former giant mural previously inside the training facility in very high resolution digital images that can be used to replicate the mural somewhere on the future site in various sizes or formats. This investment in preserving some elements of Ford’s past can be used to honor the site’s history in future buildings and/or art at the site.

**“The difference between utility and utility plus beauty is the difference between telephone wires and a spider’s web.”**

– Edwin Way Teal, naturalist and author

#### ASSETS AND FUNDING SOURCES

One source of funding for permanent public art at the Ford site is the City’s Public Art Ordinance. The 2009 Ordinance dedicates 1% of funding for capital projects from the City, including roads, bridges, signage, and sidewalks, that “shall dedicate one percent of eligible project funds for art.” The Ordinance has funded sidewalk poetry (titled *Everyday Poems for City Sidewalk*,) integrated cast-concrete ornamentation on the Hamline Street bridge, flora-inspired stop sign posts, and an interactive light work for CHS Field, among others. So far, it has been easiest to use the Capital Project 1% to create artistic twists on infrastructure updates.



**Examples of public art funded by the City’s Public Art Ordinance**



The Ordinance only applies to City-funded capital investments. However, funding for public art at the Ford site does not need to be limited to the City’s Public Art Ordinance. Because the Ford Site is new development we can expect a variety of investors that may, or may not, include the City.

Developers should be encouraged to involve artists in the design process, as endorsed by the City’s Public Art Ordinance which says that “artists should be involved from the earliest stages of conceptual planning, and continue through project design and implementation.” Artists could be members of the multi-disciplinary planning and design teams that address the overall site or parcels. When the City negotiates agreements with developers, they could be required to include public art on their properties. To establish a source of funding in addition to the Ordinance that allows for other types art installations not allowed with Public Art Ordinance funding, developer(/s) could be solicited to chip in some percentage of their project costs toward public art and design; an ask similar to the request that Ford’s artistic slabs and mural be re-used. The 1% match from developers, could be used to meet common design and signage standards, like zone signifiers on the sides of buildings. The Capital Project 1% funding can be used to push the envelope with innovative, collaborative art pieces rather than to bring subtle artistic touches to a bridge, sidewalk, or streetscape.

At the time of this writing, the City is not sure how public infrastructure at the site will be paid for—which affects whether or not the Ordinance applies. If the City uses Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) funding, the Ordinance will be invoked and funds made available for many different types of art. If the City uses Tax Increment Finance (TIF) dollars to pay for infrastructure, the Ordinance will be invoked and public art will be part of the infrastructure. If the TIF is passed through to the master developer, the Ordinance will not be invoked; however, the City could include a public art funding requirement in their development agreement with the developer.

Major Funding Source	Public Art Ordinance	Use of Funding
Capital Improvement Budget	Invoked	Many types of art
TIF through City	Invoked	Only for infrastructure
TIF through Developer	Not Invoked	Unrestricted uses if included in the Contract with the Developer

The newly developed St. Paul Saints CHS Field is an example of public art development shared among public and private parties. Pictured above in the center is *Meander*, an interactive sculpture by Futures North funded through the City’s Public Art Ordinance. The lights atop the stone pillars reflect the course of the upper Mississippi River and change colors with the weather and seasons. Of the two proposals submitted by the artists to the Lowertown Ballpark Art Design Review Committee (a sub-group of Capitol/River District Council), *Meander* was chosen with input from the public through a voting process hosted by Open Saint Paul, an online community feedback portal. “*Meander*” was able to stretch every dollar because the entire complex was being developed at the same time as the installation, so the overall project costs were lower than a rehabilitative project. Today, the St. Paul Saints, recognizing their artist-neighbors in Lowertown, have hired a full-time art director to help schedule events including exhibits by local artists, and participatory art activities at games like knitting in the stands and reading fan poetry after the game. The shared responsibility of art funding among the private and public sector allows for more types of art, and art experiences, at CHS Field.

There are many communities across the country that host public art in private development spaces. Most comparable in size and culture to Saint Paul is Aurora, Colorado, which has a City 1% for Art similar to Saint Paul’s Public Art Ordinance. Additionally, Aurora lies within a metropolitan district that requires developers to place public art in the public spaces of the development. To learn more about Aurora’s art program, see the link in the sources section at the end of this document.

**TIMING**

Timing is a challenge for financing public art, involving artists, and eliciting community engagement. One of the best uses of funding is to inject ideas for art early in the design process. If artists and the

Community Task Force (page 3) are involved early on, infrastructure public art such as bollards, stop sign posts and street furniture can be integrated and maintained in right-of-ways at a lower cost. The design of places at the boundary of public and private space, like utility boxes, internal courtyards, and wayfinding elements, can also benefit from early collaboration with artists—particularly in the early discussions with the master developer.

In addition to early engagement, it is important to leave time for community engagement and have open space for later art installations and activities. Because the most reliable funding sources are restricted to permanent structures, there is an opportunity to create experimental art after development of the site begins as part of an iterative community building process. These later art installations would likely best be achieved between community groups and the project developers.

### **EXISTING RESOURCES**

The City of Saint Paul and Public Art Saint Paul have created documents that are linked directly below and can also be found at this web address: <http://www.stpaul.gov/publicart>

- [Art Ordinance Program Guidelines and Technical Manual](#)  
useful for charting a road map for utilization of the public art ordinance
- [Summary Public Art Eligibility Master List and Status Report](#)  
list of City projects with Public Art Ordinance funding
- [Public Art Ideas List \(PAIL\)](#)  
comprehensive photo collection of inspiration for future public art

**“Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress,  
and working together is success.”**

*– Henry Ford*

## **SUMMARY FINDINGS**

With an opportunity to redesign a large section of urban fabric anew, artists and public art can make a significant contribution to development plans and the character of the Ford site. Public art could be a planned-for highlight and landmark instead of placed after-the-fact within an existing landscape. This approach affords both opportunities and challenges. The creation of this site could be done through an artistic lens. At the Ford site, funds from the City Public Art Ordinance and other sources could motivate a higher standard of public art planning, community engagement and integration. By completing a visioning process and creating a design book of public art inspiration for developers before the site is sold, the community can have a role in determining not only public art, but the overall aesthetics of the Ford site.

To mold long-term development of the site through an artistic lens, it is imperative to empower the community to work with artists to guide the process of visioning. After visioning, the community involvement and partnerships will be established, and the community will be well-positioned for discussions with the master developer. Allowing for ownership and development of art creates a sense of place, which is especially important at the Ford site – a significant redevelopment within the City.

## **NEXT STEPS**

- Go over the Public Art Ideas List (PAIL) with community, encourage them to form their own PAIL if they want to, perhaps create Open Saint Paul photo forum.
- Find someone to lead community through visioning process.



## “Art is not what you see, but what you make others see.”

– Edgar Degas, artist

### SAMPLE INSPIRATION PHOTOS

Sample photos like these can be used as a tool to generate conversation about art at engagement events, and to convey ideas about art preferences to developers.



“Penetrable”

Artist: Jesus Rafael Soto

Dallas, TX, USA

Characteristics of the work - Tactile, interactive, all ages, interesting shape for light and snow in winter.



“Ribbon”

Artist: Virginia Sperry

Eldersburg, Maryland, USA

Characteristics of the work - Playful, touchable, interesting in all seasons, focal point



“Van Gogh-Roosegaarde Bicycle Path”

Artist: Studio Roosegaarde

Nuenen, Netherlands

Characteristics of the work – enjoyable at night, promotes active transportation, interacts with nature, all-ages/ abilities



“Hopscotch Stairs”

Artist: Unknown

Sidney, Australia Vivid Sidney 2011

Characteristics of the work – Appropriate in all seasons, vibrant, increases safety and perceptions of safety

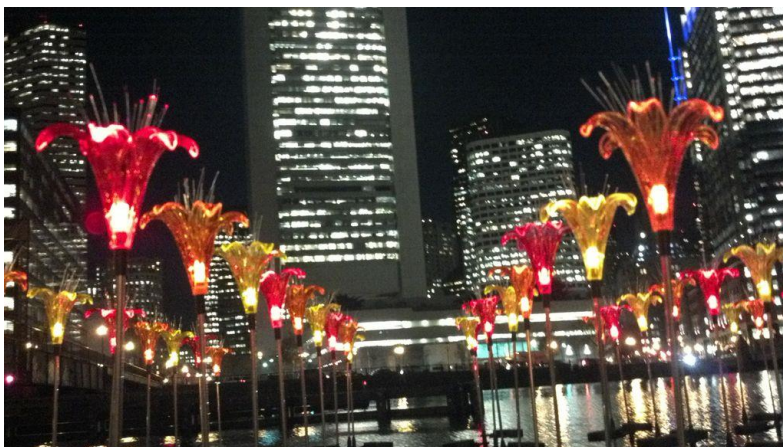


“Garden Hammock”

Artist: Unknown

Paris, Les Berges

Characteristics of the work – Tactile, interactive, restful space, fun for kids, pairs with stormwater management



“Night Blooming Day Lilies”

Artists: Beverly Sky and Mario Kon

Boston, MA, Winter 2012-13

Characteristics of the work – focal point, identifier, temporary exhibition, reacts to conditions, cold weather appropriate



Community Chalkboard  
Siteworks  
Charlottesville, VA

Characteristics of the work –  
Interactive, builds  
community, all-ages



“P.S. Wish You Were Here”  
Myklebust+Sears  
Minneapolis, MN

Characteristics of the work –  
Sculpture in center of plaza,  
marks entrance into new  
place, cultural identifier,  
mixed use development,  
third space, elegant and  
natural.

**APPENDIX A: SOURCES**

Kwon, Miwon. "Sittings of Public Art: Integration versus Intervention." One Place After Another: Site Specificity and Locational Identity. Cambridge: MIT, 2002. Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Web. 24 Mar. 2016. <<http://web.mit.edu/allanmc/www/kwon1.pdf>>.

For more information on the program in Aurora, CO:

<https://www.auroragov.org/ThingsToDo/ArtsandCulture/ArtinPublicPlaces/>

Other Sources:

<http://www.stpaul.gov/index.aspx?NID=3167>

<http://www.pps.org/reference/artfunding/>

[http://www.publicartonline.org.uk/resources/practicaladvice/localauth/public\\_art\\_las.php](http://www.publicartonline.org.uk/resources/practicaladvice/localauth/public_art_las.php)

<http://forecastpublicart.org/forecast/2014/07/case-study-gordon-parks-high-school/>

<http://forecastpublicart.org/toolkit/returnjourney.html>

<http://www.howdesign.com/design-business/design-news/public-art-initiative/>

[http://www.mtc.ca.gov/planning/connectivity/Final\\_Connectivity\\_Study/4.6\\_Estimated\\_Costs.pdf](http://www.mtc.ca.gov/planning/connectivity/Final_Connectivity_Study/4.6_Estimated_Costs.pdf)

<http://www.cityoffallen.org/DocumentCenter/Home/View/166>

[https://www.land-studio.org/images/sample\\_budget.pdf](https://www.land-studio.org/images/sample_budget.pdf)

<http://www.tampagov.net/art-programs/Info/ordinance>

**APPENDIX B: SAMPLE IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX**

Art comes in all types of media, styles and costs. The below matrix is a rough guide to art development that aids in timing, scoping, people who should be involved, and funding sources. Some of the art is indicated in the Public Realm Plan, while others were popular ideas in initial community engagement and are not final, but rather meant to serve as a guide for similar types of installation.

Art	Size	Cost	Possible Funding	Who	When	Goals
Iconic Civic Space (TBD, concrete imprints, artistic seating areas, mobile pieces)	To be determined in the Public Realm Plan	Dependent on size	CPAO	HCI/FHA, Planners, Master Dev., Public Works	Early, soon after completion of public realm plan	Meeting place, third space, performance area?
Wayfinding Signs (largely at civic/park spaces and pedestrian corridor)	50 3'x4' signs	\$1,900 per sign, \$3,500 per multi-directional locator	CPAO	HCI/FHA, Artist in Residence, Public Works	Early, soon after completion of public realm plan	Create neighborhood identity, promote walkability
Ford Tailgate Benches	5 40"x2'x5' benches	<u>\$900 per bench</u> , depending on avail of tailgates	Ford	HCI/FHA, Ford, developer	Can be implemented later	Honor history, provide places to sit.
River Gateway Piece (sculpture or water fountain)	"Large but not behemoth"	Dependent on size	CPAO	HCI/FHA, City Staff,	Early, soon after completion of public realm plan	Mark sign of arrival, create welcoming space, offer strong civic identity
Colorful Night Lights (LEDs)	Scattered throughout development	<u>\$50 a light</u> , could add up quickly!	1% Dev	HCI/FHA, Developer	Soon after completion of public realm plan	Year round amenity, increase perceived safety at night

HCI- Highland Community Initiative

FHA- Friends of Highland Arts

CPAO- City Public Art Ordinance, 2009

1% Dev- Best covered by the master developer

APPENDIX C: HIGHLAND ASSET MAP/FORMATION OF ART COMMUNITY TASK FORCE

Public art requires all types of skills to reach final installation. Below is a preliminary asset map of movers and shakers in Highland, at the City of Saint Paul, and local art organizations that could provide public art leadership. Public Art Saint Paul, organizers and art administrators could serve as advisory to the task force. Existing community groups would serve as the momentum, and community leaders would serve in the leadership role.

## ART COMMUNITY TASK FORCE

