

**2006 ANNUAL REPORT AND  
2007 ANNUAL PLAN OF THE  
PORTLAND PUBLIC ART PROGRAM**

**I. OVERVIEW**

In April 2000 the City Council established the Portland Public Art Program to preserve, restore and enhance the City's public art collection. The Portland Public Art Program commissions art that engages with the surrounding environment to create, enrich, or reveal a sense of place, and to express the spirit, values, visions and poetry of place that collectively define Portland.

The public art collection currently contains twenty-six pieces that are permanently installed throughout Portland. The collection contains works of historical significance that date from the nineteenth century, as well as contemporary pieces that reflect the diversity and spirit of the city.

The Portland Public Art Committee administers the Portland Public Art Program. The responsibilities of the Art Committee are outlined in Article XI of the City Code (Public Art Program). The Art Committee utilizes the Guidelines for the Public Art Ordinance (Volume 1, Number 1 – adopted May 2001) for direction in administering their responsibilities.

A key element of the Portland Public Art Program was the establishment of a percent-for-art ordinance. This program allocates ½ of 1% of the City's annual Capital Improvement Project (CIP) budget for the restoration, maintenance or acquisition of permanent public art.

The Portland Public Art Committee has the following responsibilities:

- Develop and present an Annual Public Art Plan to the City Council which includes recommendations for allocating the public art percentage of the CIP; administration of the program; conservation of the collection; and initiation of new projects;
- Review potential gifts of art to the City's public art collection, and make recommendations to the City Council on whether to accept or not accept the gifts;
- Seek donations for preserving, restoring and/or expanding the art collection; and
- Recommend appropriate locations for the installation of public art.

The Portland Public Art Committee is chaired by Alice Spencer and vice-chaired by Jack Soley. Lauren Silversen ended her term on the Committee in August. Sara Struever was appointed to the Committee in September. Councilor Karen Geraghty's term ended in December. The Public Art Committee also includes Peggy Golden, Steve Halpert, Richard Renner, David Wade and Jay York. Carrie Marsh is the City staff for the program.

Information about the Portland Public Art Program can be obtained from the Department of Planning and Development, City of Portland, 389 Congress Street, Portland, Maine 04101, 207-874-8721, [publicart@portlandmaine.gov](mailto:publicart@portlandmaine.gov).

**II. ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2006**

**A. Commissions**

The Portland Public Art Committee reviews projects that are commissioned in the following categories: Community Art Works, Expressive Art Works, Art Works of Remembrance, and Functional Art Works. The Committee has also overseen the development of projects that can be categorized as Environmental Art Works, and Temporary Art Works.

***AI. Community Art Works: Art Underfoot in Portland***

The Community Art Works program encourages collaborations between artists and community members to create public art in the neighborhoods of Portland. Community Art Works express the memory, values, traditions, customs, or aspirations of community members, address significant neighborhood sites, and/or respond to the character and history of particular places.

Councilor Jill Duson initiated a community-based art project while serving as Mayor in 2005. Committee members Alice Spencer and Rick Renner worked on the development of the project with artist Natasha Mayers. Art Underfoot in Portland reflects what might be found on the ground such as leaves, flowers, snowflakes, shells, insects, feathers, etc.

One hundred and twenty-five clay tiles were designed by children at Reiche School during Ed Perry's art classes and Andrew Coffin's Portland Recreation Afterschool Program; by teens in a hip-hop group from The Center for Cultural Exchange; by Members of the Portland Coalition and Amistad Center; by staff and clients of Portland West; and by some City Council members.

The tiles were cast in bronze by Patrick O'Brien who is a student at MECA, under the guidance of instructor Anthony Tafuri. The City's Public Works Department and staff of Portland's Downtown District installed the bronze bricks in Longfellow Square at a point that is heavily used by pedestrians. The intent is to create an identifiable landmark which will help foster a sense of place in a culturally and economically diverse neighborhood.



*Photo: Art Underfoot in Portland*

*Credit: David Wade*

**A2. Expressive Art Works: *Tracing the Fore***

Expressive Art Works integrate objects into public spaces with the goal of introducing a sense of artistic vitality, playfulness, spirit, delight, fantasy, joy or wonder in to the daily lives of citizens.

The first piece of Expressive Art to be commissioned is *Tracing the Fore* by Shauna Gillies-Smith. The project was installed in Fall 2006, on Fore Street in Boothby Square in the Old Port. It will be finally completed when landscaping materials are planted in Spring 2007.

The project received approval by the Boothby Square Public Art Selection Committee, the Historic Preservation Board, the Public Art Committee, and the City Council in 2004. The construction documents were prepared in 2005, and funds were accrued from the City's Capital Improvement Program allocation for public art. Private donations were also received from Greenhut Galleries and Terry DeWan and Associates.

*Tracing the Fore* is installed in the existing grassy parcels in the middle of Fore Street, leaving the granite edging intact. Boothby Square is on Fore Street which once bordered the Fore River before development activities changed the waterfront. *Tracing the Fore* is a landscape design with rolling waves designed to reflect the original shoreline of Portland.

*Tracing the Fore* has two types of waves. The first is made from stainless steel plates that are cut in the shapes of waves and layered behind each other at a parallel spacing. The second type of wave is made of rolling landforms and planting materials. The artist has noted that the steel waves and the earth waves intersect and alter each other in a way that creates a perception of depth and reflects the unending cresting of waves.

The Boothby Square Public Art Selection Committee included: Co-chair Peggy Golden, Greenhut Gallery; co-chair Jack Soley, East Brown Cow; Susan Bergier, Amaryliss Clothing Co; Eric Cianchette, Regency Hotel; Denise Clavette, City of Portland Parks and Recreation; Doug Green, Green Design Furniture; Cyrus Hagge; Sarah Marshall, Terry DeWan Landscape Architects; Michael Shaughnessy; and John Turk, Turk, Tracy, Larry Architects.



*Image: Tracing the Fore*

**A3. *Environmental Art Works: Fishermen’s Monument Tidal Park at Ocean Gateway***

The Ocean Gateway site on Portland’s Eastern Waterfront will include a marine terminal and a park-sized environmental art installation designed by artists Mags Harries and Lajos Heder. The project was initiated through the State’s Percent for Art program, which paid for the design.

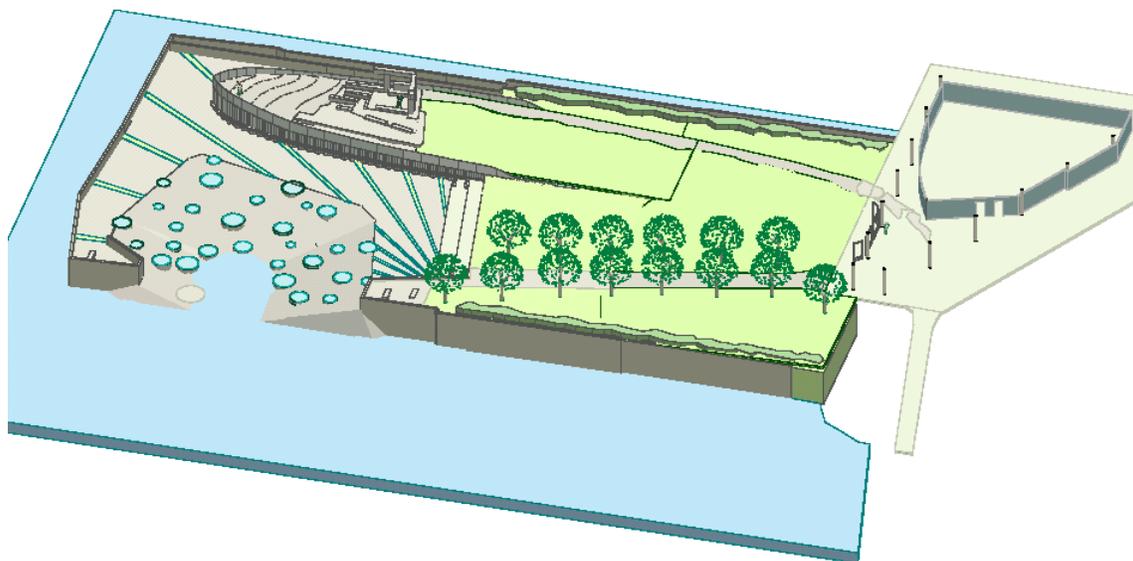
The final conceptual design for the project includes a large boat hull form which faces out to sea. There will be a path of granite paving stones shaped like fish, which can be inscribed with names. The path leads to a monument at the end of the park. A tidal pool is proposed to be constructed at the edge of the park. An anteroom will provide room for displays.

In 2005, the City worked with the State to create two memos which outlined the City’s wishes for a public participation process, and the engineering and technical environmental issues which need to be assessed before the City Council could vote on whether to accept the project. This engineering and environmental assessment is currently being conducted by the State.

As information is received from the State, the City Manager’s office, and staff from Planning and Economic Development, Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Waterfront, Legal, and the Public Art Committee will continue an ongoing evaluation of the proposed design with regards to environmental, engineering, maintenance, safety and liability issues.

The Portland Public Art Committee will evaluate the final project and vote on whether to accept it in to the City’s collection. The City Council will then review the project and vote on it. Following that outcome, fundraising will commence on this significant piece of public art.

A Stakeholder’s Committee was formed in 2005. It was chaired by Jack Soley, and included members from the fishing community, Munjoy Hill Neighborhood Association, city staff, and others. The committee held two public hearings to review the project design. It is expected that the Stakeholder’s Committee will continue to play a role as the project moves forward.



*Image: Fishermen’s Monument Tidal Park*

**A4. *Art Works of Remembrance: Robert B. Ganley Plaza***

Art Works of Remembrance are used to commemorate a specific historical figure or memorialize an event of public importance. A project in this category is the creation of a memorial marker that will commemorate the life and service of former Mayor Robert B. Ganley. This marker was commissioned at the request of City Councilor Cheryl Leeman.

The project consists of a concrete marker with classic bronze lettering. It will be set adjacent to the historic granite paving stones in front of City Hall, at the completion of the renovation of the building and the plaza in Spring of 2007.

**B. *Conservation***

Taggart Objects Conservation has worked for the City for several years to repair and conserve the pieces in the Public Art Collection. This work was mostly completed in 2005, though some routine maintenance was completed on several pieces in order to train staff in the City's Parks and Recreation Department in conservation techniques and routine maintenance of the City's public art. Taggart Object Conservation will install bronze signage at each piece of public art when the signs are cast. Jonathan Taggart is available to the City for vandalism repair as needed.

One issue of concern was the safety of The Little Water Girl which is located at the Portland Public Library. This statue has been vulnerable during construction at the library. Committee members recently worked with library staff and the construction team to protect the statue.

**C. *Administrative and Policy Matters***

The Committee pursued the following administrative and policy matters in 2006.

**C1. *Community Art Works***

The Public Art Committee created the Guidelines for Community Art Works in 2005. The Community Art Works program encourages collaborations between artists and community members to create public art in the neighborhoods of Portland. This document was provided to citizens interested in creating public art in 2006, and will continue to be distributed in 2007.

**D. *Other Public Art in the City of Portland***

The funding for the Portland Public Art Committee is a percentage of the Capital Improvement Program. The public art pieces commissioned by the Committee must be permanent and designed and installed to last at least 20-25 years. Committee members and staff participate in the review of projects such as those described below, in an effort to create greater opportunities for public art that does not have to conform to the restrictions related to the City's CIP funding.

***D1. Temporary Student Art: Libbytown***

The City's Department of Parks and Recreation has a program called *Art in the Park* which allows college students to install temporary art in public spaces. Alice Spencer of the Public Art Committee, and staff Carrie Marsh, participate in the review and approval process. MECA students created a series of temporary public art pieces in the Libbytown neighborhood, as fulfillment of a course in public art taught by instructor Christina Bechstein.

***D2. Temporary Student Art: SUBONE Graffiti Art***

Jan Piribeck, associate professor of art at USM, worked with local renowned graffiti artist Tim Clorius, on the development of a temporary public art project in August 2006. The project involved the creation of a large graffiti style logo "SUBONE" which stands for "Supplying Urban Beautification, Offering New Experiences." Students plotted the points of the graphic using global positioning system technology. The graphic was painted on the grass near Franklin Arterial. The instructors included discussion about graffiti art compared to graffiti vandalism. The group worked with the City's Department of Parks and Recreation on the project.

***D3. Portland's Downtown District - Information Kiosk***

Portland Public Art Committee member, architect Rick Renner, designed the new information kiosk for Portland's Downtown District. This striking addition to the city streetscape is in Tommy's Park on Exchange and Middle Street in the Old Port. Staff from the City's departments of Parks, Public works, Planning, and Historic Preservation Departments assisted in the review process. The Portland Public Art Committee reviewed the design of the kiosk.



*Photo: PDD Information Kiosk Photo Credit: Portland's Downtown District*

***D4. Other Projects***

The staff of the Public Art Program, and members of the Portland Public Art Committee, were involved in the following initiatives related to art and the Creative Economy in 2006:

- Staff coordinates the removal of graffiti and vandalism repair to the City's public art;
- Staff oversaw the installation of drip edge and snow guards of the Jewel Box Bus Shelter;
- Members attend the Creative Conversations Meetings held monthly at SPACE Gallery;
- Members sit on the Board of the Portland Arts and Cultural Alliance. David Wade is Vice President. Carrie Marsh is President. Sara Struever acts as consultant to the organization.
- Alice Spencer participates in the City's temporary public art program titled Art in the Park. This program is run out of the City's Parks and Recreation Department by Ted Musgrave;
- Staff worked with Jessica Tomlinson at MeCA to write the preliminary and final reports on Creative Individuals in the community for the Creative Economy Summit held in June. Committee members David Wade, Jay York and Peggy Golden attend the summit.
- The Portland Public Art Committee reviewed and supported the design of the Freedom Trail markers designed by artist Daniel Minter. These markers will be placed at Underground Railroad and anti-slavery sites around the City.
- The Portland Public Art Committee gave its support to the Maine Center for Creativity and Jean Maginnis in the efforts to create the *Art All Around* project. This project involves an international competition to design murals on the tanks in the South Portland Tank Farm.
- Committee members reviewed the gift of statues to Hadlock Field by owner Dan Burke. The City Council voted to accept this gift to the City in 2006.

### III. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2007

The City allocates ½ of 1% of the annual Capital Improvement Project (CIP) budget for the restoration or acquisition of permanent public art. The 2007 CIP allotment for Art is \$49,150.

The Public Art Committee recommends the following to the City Council for its consideration:

#### A. Commissions

A1. Winslow Park \$35,000

The Milkweed Pod sculpture was destroyed in a wind storm in 2005. This money will be used for a new piece of public art in Winslow Park.

A2. Contingency Fund \$8150

#### B. Conservation/Maintenance

B1. Conservation Fund \$500

B2. Signage – granite bases \$4500

B3. The Jewel Box – glass replacement \$1000

#### C. Administrative Recommendations

C1. Documentation of Collection

There is the potential to work with students at Waynflete to document the public art collection. The goal will be the completion of files on each piece, and the creation of a walking tour

C2. Conservation Assessment of New Commissions

Section II – Guidelines for Selecting Artwork for the Public Art Program should include language that requires artists to collaborate with an art conservation expert to determine issues related to sustainability, to make maintenance recommendations, and to submit a joint report.

C3. Maintenance Program

A maintenance program is essential to the preservation of public art. A program will be developed to provide the simplest, least expensive, safest, and easiest way to preserve sculpture.