

2003 ANNUAL PLAN OF THE PORTLAND PUBLIC ART PROGRAM

I. OVERVIEW

The Portland City Council established the Portland Public Art Program in the spring of 2000 in order to preserve, restore, enhance and expand the City's public art collection. The ordinance requires that the Portland Public Art Committee submit to Council an annual art plan which outlines recommendations for allocating the C.I.P. public art percentage, administration of the program, conservation of the collection, and initiation of new projects.

After the establishment of the Public Art Program in 2000, the Public Art Committee took the first sixteen months of its existence doing background work in preparation of the first annual plan. This initial background work included conducting a conservation assessment of the existing public art collection, establishing a conservation master plan, conducting a search for a conservation consultant, and researching and propagating rules to conduct the public art program. That background work resulted in the *2001 Annual Art Plan* which established the *Guidelines for the Public Art Ordinance*, and initiated a comprehensive conservation program for the collection. By the time that the initial background work had been completed for the City's first ever annual art plan, however, the annual art funding cycle was in its second year. The budget for the *2001 Annual Art Plan*, therefore, used funds from the 2000 C.I.P. public art allocation. This syncopation continued the following year when the *2002 Annual Plan* used 2001 C.I.P. public art funds.

The Public Art Committee, working from a suggestion from Councilor Karen Geraghty who has served this past year as the Council's representative on the Committee, is recommending the past two years of unassigned C.I.P. public art fund (C.I.P. 2002 and 2003) be folded into this year's annual plan. This will synchronize the capital budget cycle with the annual art plan cycle. Henceforth, the 2004 Annual Art Plan will be related to the 2004 C.I.P. budget, the 2005 Plan to the 2005 budget, etc.

The 2001 Annual Art Plan concentrated on initiating the conservation program. The 2002 Annual Art Plan initiated new commissions and a pilot program in community-based arts. The *2003 Annual Art Plan* is building on the successes of these foundation years to complete early work, and to use the lessons learned so far to initiate a new public art commission as well as expand the community-based arts program to off-peninsula neighborhoods.

The Portland Public Art Committee is pleased to present the Portland City Council the *2003 Annual Art Plan*.

II. SUMMARY REPORT

A. 2001 Annual Art Plan

The 2001 Annual Art Plan (associated with the 2000 C.I.P. public art allocation of \$53,000) budgeted money for art conservation, and for the creation of a signage system for the public art collection. Below is a brief update on each of these two project areas:

1. *Art Conservation*

The 2001 Plan allocated \$43,125 for object conservation. To date the City has completed art conservation on the following statues:

- The ***Thomas Brackett Reed*** statue at Western Prom
- ***The Maine Lobsterman*** at Lobsterman Plaza
- ***Temperance*** (aka: The Little Water Girl), or the Lillian M. N. Stevens Memorial Fountain
- ***The Spanish War Veterans Monument*** (or “The Hiker”) in Deering Oaks Park.

Through very competitive bidding, this initial work was completed for far less money than anticipated, and this past summer the City negotiated additional conservation services for the following objects, to be executed in the spring, 2004:

- ***The Soldiers and Sailors Monument*** (aka: Our Lady of Victory) in Monument Square.
- ***Michael*** on Temple Street (note: initial welding repairs were made to this piece this past summer).
- The ***Stanley Pullen Fountain*** on Federal Street
- The ***Lincoln Park Fountain***

The contract with the art conservator includes training of Parks Department personnel in routine maintenance of artwork. Parks Department personnel will accompany the conservator in the summer 2004 for “hands-on training” when he revisits all the above listed work to do a follow-up assessment and cleaning.

The Portland Public Art Committee received a donation this past year of \$6,500 through a grant administered by Greater Portland Landmarks to add to the Portland Public Art Conservation fund. With this donation in hand, and with conservation work completed or contracted for eight of the statues in the collection, the Public Art Committee has an unassigned balance of \$8,760 in the Art Conservation fund. After the art conservator has made follow-up assessments of the collection next spring, the Public Art Committee will assess where to allocate the remaining conservation money.

2. *Signage*

The 2001 Plan allocated \$7,600 to design, fabricate and install a signage system for the public art collection. The City conducted competitive bidding this past year to select a designer, and the Public Art Committee is currently working with an environmental graphic artist to design the

sign system. The graphic artist is having a bronze prototype fabricated for the Committee's review. It is expected that the design development phase of this project will be completed later this fall, and that the bronze signs will be fabricated this winter and installed next summer. The project is on track to be completed in budget.

B. 2002 Annual Art Plan

The 2002 Annual Art Plan (associated with the 2001 C.I.P. public art allocation of \$50,000), which was adopted by Council last fall, turned attention to new initiatives to establish and address four categories of public art: *Art of Remembrance, Community-Based Art, Expressive Art, and Functional Art*. Below is an update on the initiatives in these four categories:

1. *Art of Remembrance* *The Robert B. Ganley Memorial Plaza*

Art of Remembrance projects serve to memorialize important events or people to the life of our community. The '02 Plan allocated \$8,000 for the development, fabrication and installation of a large memorial plaza marker to commemorate the life and service of Robert B. Ganley. This past year Staff completed design development and bid out the three segments of the project: installation, bronze materials, and paver fabrication. The paver fabricator is currently searching to find an aggregate stone to match the existing stone in the plaza sidewalk. Once the fabricator can produce a sample casting that matches the existing sidewalk, work will proceed. It is hoped that the fabricator will be successful in finding a match of the stone, and that the fabrication can be completed this winter, making for a spring installation.

The bidding process yielded savings over the original budget. The three segments of this project are under contract for a total of \$5,385. The Public Art Committee voted to assign the balance of \$2615 to the Community-based arts program.

2. *Community-Based Arts* *The Armenian Marker and the East Bayside Park Mural Project*

This pilot program provides opportunities for community groups and artists/designers to collaborate on creating neighborhood icons to celebrate what makes our neighborhoods unique. Bayside was chosen for this pilot project. The 2002 Annual Art Plan allocated \$12,000 for this program. This past year has seen the emergence of two different projects as a result of this initiative.

2a. *The Armenian Marker*

The city's former urban designer worked with the Portland Armenian Club to design a small plaza and granite marker for a site off Cumberland Avenue between Boyd Street and Franklin Arterial. The granite pillar is loosely based on the Armenian tradition of *katchkars*, or carved stones. The carvings contain text which commemorates the once flourishing and extensive community of Armenians who settled in the Bayside neighborhood early last century as refugees from genocide. Carvings also include text in Armenian as well as traditional iconography from Armenia. The plaza is planned to hold two more community-based markers, possibly honoring the legacy of other immigrant communities who have settled in the Bayside neighborhood.

This project was accomplished with \$2500 donations from the Armenian Club and \$4,700 from the public art fund.



Dedication Day: July 26, 2003



Looking north toward Kennedy Park

2b. The East Bayside Mural Project

The East Bayside Mural Project is the second community-based arts project to be initiated this past year. This project began last summer when the Public Art Committee was approached by a Professor Felicia Fahey from Bates College, and social worker Mark Wheeler, who is working with youth from the Kennedy Park public housing community, most of whom are recent African immigrants. Professor Fahey is teaching a course next spring 2004 on muralism and the production of mural art, and as part of this course, is bringing a renowned mural artist to Maine. The artist, Andrew Schoultz, has successfully conducted several high-profile community-based mural projects in San Francisco's Mission Hill district.

This project will bring the mural artist to the East Bayside neighborhood to work with teenage youth in Kennedy Park to collaboratively design and execute a mural over a two-week period next spring. The Public Art Committee determined that this project met the goals and criteria of the community-based arts program, and voted unanimously to co-sponsor the project with a contribution of \$4,450. The balance of the project's budget is being provided by Bates College and various foundation grants.

The Public Art Committee identified the maintenance building at the Bayside Park on Fox Street as an appropriate location for the mural. Bayside Park, slated for a phased redevelopment with CDGB grants, is scheduled to develop a playground adjacent to the maintenance building. The Friends of the Parks Committee is being asked at its November 18 meeting to grant permission for the southern wall of the maintenance building to be used for this mural project.

The total remaining balance of unassigned money in the pilot program of the community-based arts is \$5465.

3. *Expressive Work of Art* *The Boothby Square Public Art Project*

The 2002 Annual Art Plan allocated seed money of \$15,000 toward the commissioning of a new work of public art for Boothby Square. It was anticipated last year that the total budget for this piece would be fifty-thousand dollars, and that additional funds would be identified once the project was selected. With the adoption of the 2002 Plan, the Public Art Committee initiated the first selection process of an artist for a new commission of an artwork in the City's history. Working according to the *Guidelines for the Public Art Program*, the Public Art Committee appointed a ten-member Selection Panel to oversee the artist selection process.

The Selection Panel conducted an international call for artist's qualifications, and received forty-five responses from across North America and Japan. Five artists were selected as Finalists, and were invited to submit site-specific proposals for the Boothby Square public art project. The five proposals were on display at the Lewis Gallery at the Portland Public Library for the months of September and October, 2003, for public review and comment. The Selection Panel reviewed over one-hundred written submissions from members of the public, and conducted three public meetings to review artist's submissions, conduct telephone and personal interviews, and received public comment.

On October 31, 2003 the Selection Panel, having narrowed the field to two finalists, received personal presentations from the artists (from Boston and Cambridge), and in a unanimous vote, recommended selection of Shauna Gillies-Smith from Boston.



Shauna Gillies-Smith's "Tracing the Fore" approaches the Boothby Square project as a holistic landscape design. This concept image shows rolling lawns, intersected by stainless steel wave forms. These rolling wave forms would be incorporated in both sections of the square, using and unifying the whole space.

With the adoption of the 2003 Annual Art Plan, the Public Art Committee will proceed with realizing the “Tracing the Fore” project. Next steps include contract negotiations with the artist, review of the conceptual design by the Historic Preservation Committee, and design-development meetings between the artist and the Selection Panel. The design-development phase, anticipated to take place during the winter of 2004, will include meetings between the artist and the Selection Panel, staff and the public. Once the design-development phase is completed and has received final review and approval from the Public Art Committee and staff (anticipated to be completed by March 2004), the artist will precede fabrication of components to allow for an installation sometime this summer.

4. *Functional Work of Art* *The Monument Square Public Art Project*

The 2002 Annual Art Plan allocated seed money toward the commissioning of a new work of functional art for Monument Square. This project involves removing the “anodized bronze mushroom” kiosk from Monument Square and replacing it with an artist’s designed, functional streetscape object. The Public Art Committee established a seven member Selection Panel last spring to initiate the artist’s selection process. Early last summer the project was expanded to include the removal of the bus shelter at Center and Congress Streets to be replaced with an accompanying artist’s design bus shelter. The 2003 C.I.P. budget includes an allocation of \$45,000 for this expanded project.

Late last summer the Monument Square Selection Panel initiated a national call for artists for this project and received twenty-one entries. The Panel selected five Finalists this past September and offered honorariums to have them submit site-specific design proposals for the project. The five Finalists include public artists from Seattle, Washington; Portland, Oregon; Providence, Rhode Island; Minneapolis, Minnesota; and Saco, Maine. The design submissions are due November 14.

The Public Art Committee has arranged for the designs to be displayed from November 17 through December 31 in the atrium lobby at One City Center. The first of three public comment and review meetings will be held by the Monument Square Selection Panel on November 18. The Selection Panel is scheduled to make a final selection by the end of this year. It is then anticipated that the contract negotiation and design-development phase will proceed through this winter, with fabrication and installation of the new pieces taking place later in the spring or early summer of 2004.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Administrative Recommendations

Under the provisions of the Public Art Program Ordinance, the Public Art Committee is responsible for establishing guidelines to carry out the purpose of the ordinance. The *Guidelines for the Public Art Program*, adopted as part of the 2001 Annual Art Plan, contain sections on administration of various aspects of the program, including selection of an artist. With the initiation of artist selection over this past year, the Public Art Committee has become aware that some sections of the *Guidelines* should be clarified;

specifically, that the responsibilities of the Selection Panel and the Public Art Committee should be more carefully defined during the design-development phase of an art commission.

The 2003 Annual Art Plan recommends that *Section II – Guidelines for Selecting Artwork for the Public Art Program* include language that specifies the role of the Selection Panel and the Public Art Committee during design-development. A “track changes” draft of the recommended text is attached (See Attachment 1).

B. Projects and Budget Recommendations

As explained in the Introduction and Overview section of this report, this year’s annual art plan incorporates the past two years of unassigned C.I.P. public art fund (C.I.P. 2002 and 2003). This will synchronize the capital budget cycle with the annual art plan cycle. Henceforth, the 2004 Annual Art Plan will be related to the 2004 C.I.P. budget, the 2005 Plan to the 2005 budget, etc. The 2003 Annual Art Plan budget, therefore, is drawn from the C.I.P. 2002 public art fund (\$50,000) and the C.I.P. 2003 public art fund (\$49,675). The project recommendations and budget allocations, listed below, are based, therefore, on a total budget of \$99,675.

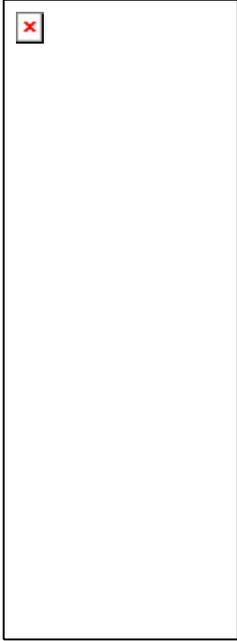
1. Boothby Square Public Art Project \$35,000

The Public Art Committee recommends that \$35,000 from the 2003 Annual Art Plan budget be allocated to the Boothby Square public art project. This will be added to the \$15,000 of previously approved “seed money” to bring the total monies available for the project to \$50,000.

As outlined in the Review section of this report, the Public Art Committee has recently completed work, begun last spring, to make an artist’s selection for Boothby Square. The selected project is designed to be accomplished for \$50,000 as requested in the RFP. With the authorization of this recommendation from the 2003 Annual Art Plan, this project can proceed on schedule for an installation date around the middle of 2004.

2. Chestnut Street Extension Public Art Project \$35,000

The Public Art Committee has followed of the City’s efforts to create a new Chestnut Street extension as part of the overall redevelopment of Bayside, and sees the street extension as an important step in redefining the character, use and access to the parcels on the so-called Guilford lands. The Committee recognizes that public art has historically been used to help redefine district character, mark new thoroughfares and gateways, and activate previously dormant public spaces. The Public Art Committee recommends that a new work of expressive public art be commissioned for placement within the “oval” of Chestnut Street (see sketch below):



Detail of the Chestnut Street extension oval, left

The 2003 Annual Art Plan includes \$35,000 for the commissioning of a new expressive work of art for the Chestnut oval. The artists/artwork selection process will follow the method as outlined in the *Guidelines*. This method involves an Artists Selection Panel, appointed by the Public Art Committee, which would include neighborhood representatives, a public artist, business and property owners, and appropriate staff.

The Public Art Committee believes the that new work of art should identify this new focal point in the district; reflect a deep reading of the natural, cultural, historical, social and urban nature of the site; express the new “spirit of the Bayside Vision;” be of superior artist merit and be well-designed, safe and made of highly permanent materials that require minimal maintenance.

With the adoption of the 2003 Annual Plan, the Public Art Committee will initiate artist’s selection in winter ’04, and if possible, will coordinate the installation of a new piece to coordinate with the construction of the street extension.

3. *Off-Peninsula Community-Based Arts Program* \$15,000

Last year’s annual plan initiated the community-based arts program. The program aims to create collaborations between artists and community members to make works of artistic excellence. Community art works aim to creatively 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.

The Public Art Committee is encouraged with the results of the pilot project of the community-based arts program, initiated last year in the East Bayside neighborhood. The results of that pilot effort were reviewed in more detail earlier in this report. Briefly, the pilot program demonstrated that with relatively small amounts of “seed money,” neighborhood-based arts projects can generate significant in-kind contributions and community enthusiasm.

The Public Art Committee will circulate the guidelines of this program to neighborhood representatives (perhaps using the Sustainable Neighborhoods Forum in December to begin the outreach program) in order to solicit ideas and proposals from the community. As with the pilot program, the off-peninsula community-based art program will provide grants and support for community initiated projects. The Public Art Committee is available to offer guidance to community groups that want to explore initiating projects in their neighborhood.

The Public Art Committee intends to refine the community-based arts program and to provide annual support for this process.

4. *Contingency fund*

\$14,675

The 2003 Annual Art Plan provides a contingency fund which is to be used to help deal with unforeseen circumstances as previously approved public art projects move toward completion. The main intent is to keep all projects on schedule. The fund cannot be used to launch a new initiative or new project.

IV. SUMMARY

2004 promises to be a watershed year for the Portland Public Art Program. Next year we will continue our commitment to the preservation of the historic collection with the conservation of at least four more pieces. The collection will receive proper signage, bringing a sense of cohesion and identity to the public art collection as a whole. We will see the ribbons cut on a major work of art in Boothby Square, demonstrating how the arts express the spirit, history, vision and poetry of an historic place. Ribbons will be cut at Monument Square, showing how the arts can humanizing infrastructure elements, reinforce civic values, and animating public space. We will initiate a project to demonstrate how public art can be a key component in the economic and physical redevelopment of a district. Community groups in East Bayside and off-peninsula will contribute their ideas and energy to build community pride, cohesion and identity for their own neighborhoods.

The Portland Public Art Committee extends our thanks to the Council for your support and vision in helping make Portland an even more beautiful and exciting place to live.

Respectfully Submitted, Alice Spencer, Chair of the Portland Public Art Committee