Art in Public Places
West Lafayette Public Art Charrette Team

July 2011
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Introduction
The City of West Lafayette completed a comprehensive strategic planning process in 2010. The following passage was part of the resulting plan and laid the ground work for this report:

3.2.9 Create an Art in Public Places site map and implementation strategy

The Department of Development should convene a partnership group that includes the Tippecanoe Arts Federation, representatives from Purdue University, City Parks and Recreation Department, and others to hold a two to three-day design process to develop an Art in Public Places plan. The purpose of the plan would be to create a succinct report that identifies locations throughout West Lafayette where public visual art installations could occur and considers a variety of techniques to implement a public art program in the community. As new projects are implemented, they can be incorporated into the Lafayette/West Lafayette Convention and Visitors Bureau’s Guide to Outdoor Art, which shows locations of sculpture, fountains, and other public art throughout the community. The list can be viewed at www.homeofpurdue.com/outdoorart.html.

With this mandate, the Mayor called for a Public Art Charrette Team (PACT), comprised of local artists, arts administrators, city planners, and residents, to meet and discuss the possibilities for public art in West Lafayette.

Benefits of Public Art
Considerations for the inclusion of public art in a community are numerous. Drawn from various sources, these include:

• Urban Design – through planned public art and wayfinding displays, a community can plan and orchestrate the look of its spaces and thoroughfares for efficiency and beauty

• Quality of Life/Economic Advantage – interesting public spaces are more likely to attract individuals to live, work and establish businesses

• Cultural Tourism – interesting public spaces are more likely to attract visitors and increase sales activity for local business owners

• Civic Engagement – local residents are more likely to involve themselves in activities and take pride in the community

• Graffiti Control – artistic murals cut down on graffiti/tagging in public spaces, as there is a seeming “honor among artists” and they will respect those images

• Increased understanding and appreciation for art – at a time when art experiences and activities are being reduced or eliminated in public schools across the country due to budget restrictions, communities can augment these opportunities with public art

Art in Public Places Report 2011 3
Review of Public Art Plans and Varieties of Public Projects
The PACT facilitator made an initial review of public art plans from communities across the U.S. (the list of representative public art plans is included as Appendix A at end of report), with these findings:

• There are a wide array of possibilities for public art, ranging from traditional painted murals and outdoor sculptures to landscaped spaces, interactive displays, sound installations, etc.

• Many cities have public art programs funded by the city government and overseen by a “Cultural Affairs Commission” or “Public Art Committee”

• Most public art planning processes are developed over months or even years, with large committees, interviews with ‘stakeholders’ and residents, and numerous public meetings. (In comparison, we concentrated our efforts for the City of West Lafayette into a single day long session with stakeholders and knowledgeable individuals.)

• Most resulting public art plans recommend a standing 5 – 11 member panel and a full-time staff position funded by the city

• Most plans recommend establishing a City Public Art Collection to document and maintain public works of art owned by the city. This allows certain “controls” such as protection from relocation of objects, maintenance and even review and selection of appropriate pieces.

• Public art plans are sometimes organized in specific project themes (i.e. Federal Arlington, Historic Arlington, Global Arlington in Arlington, VA) and are sometimes earmarked for specific areas/corridors (i.e. river districts, downtown districts, run/walk paths, etc.)

• Public art plans include a variety of options, including murals, sculpture rentals, art in the windows programs and billboard projects
Review of Public Art currently in West Lafayette

The committee reviewed images of public art currently found in the City and, focusing on artworks in the city as opposed to the Purdue University campus, explored the question, “Which of these current public artworks contributes the most to the area? And why?”

Committee members’ responses included the “Mythic Wabash” mural behind Spurlock’s West, “Fishtail Dance” sculpture on River Road, and “Seagulls” sculpture at Wabash Landing. The advantages expressed were visibility, as it was noted that some artworks in the area are not readily visible to car or pedestrian traffic, and accessibility, as some artworks are not positioned where they can be approached and studied.

Public Art Projects: a Sampling

The committee reviewed images of public art around the country and explored the question, “Should public art be just “art in public” or rather “art about place” (as in the historic murals at and about Portsmouth, Ohio)? The general feeling was that this would be dependent on location – “art about place” would likely be more successful in areas of larger public access – “art in public” has its place and can be anywhere, but both are necessary.
Public Art Projects from around the web:


Fremont Troll - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fremont_Troll


Murals DC - http://muralsdc.wordpress.com/

Graffiti artist ROA - http://www.flickr.com/photos/roagraffiti/

Play Me, I’m Yours - http://www.streetpianos.com/

The Fields Project - http://www.fieldsproject.com/

Turtle Park - http://stlouis.missouri.org/citygov//parks/forestpark/turtle.html

Blue Tree Project - http://plentyofcolour.com/2011/04/07/blue-tree-project/

Waterfire Providence - http://www.waterfire.org/about-waterfire/welcome


Yarn Bombing - http://yarnbombing.com/
Review of possible sites in West Lafayette for public art

It should be noted that the committee felt strongly that performances should be included as “public art” and should be given equal consideration to visual art opportunities. The following represent the committee’s selections culled from numerous options presented:

- **Level I**: Advantages seen in addressing major city approaches and thoroughfares – high visibility of public art would reflect city’s commitment to the arts. These major projects would require a larger financial commitment and planning – and many will rely upon Indiana Department of Transportation properties along State Route 231 being turned over to the city as a perimeter parkway is built.

1. **State Street Bridge Approach** – potentially an archway or decorative sculptural marker indicating entrance to the city

2. **Fowler Street Approach** – archway/decorative sculptural marker or low-level paving and landscape design

3. **443 & 52 Approach** (primarily Westbound into Sagamore West district) – decorative sculptural marker or low-level paving and landscape design

4. **US 52 & Northwestern** – archway or decorative sculptural marker

5. **State & Tapawingo** – large area currently being backfilled; potential for major piece

6. **State St./River Rd./Brown** – active junction for both car and pedestrian traffic; potential for decorative sculptural marker

7. **Lindbergh & Northwestern** – situated upon a very active walkway/bike path; potential for park area to connect current Lindbergh pathway to planned continuance along Northwestern; decorative artwork, social gathering space and plantings possible

8. **Cumberland Avenue Renovation** – currently in progress; potential for numerous artworks or low-level paving incorporated into naturalistic swale design
• **Level II:** Additional large-scale projects would highlight community assets and social spaces.

1. **Sagamore West Farmers Market** – major social gathering site; should be marked or signified with an archway or decorative sculptural marker to draw and steer visitors

2. **Myers pedestrian bridge** – visual or light & sound artwork under the bridge (like the Fremont Troll) or artwork to draw pedestrians down from the fountain plaza to the trail walkway

3. **Chauncey** –
   a. South Street from Greyhouse to Noodles – provision to better enable social gatherings such as the *Starry Night Festival*; overhead lighting, stage area, etc.
   b. Chauncey between West Lafayette Public Library & Morton Community Center – provision to allow for social gatherings and performances connecting the library and Morton; overhead lighting or bannerway, stage area, etc.

4. **Morton Community Center** – possibilities suggested by framed areas on building facade (though it is unclear whether these are protected under historic property statutes); also two large wall spaces on the back of the building – either mural paintings, removable mural panels attached to the walls or even digital projections during public festivals

5. **Nighthawk Trail** – public walkway/bike path in front of Aldi’s – connecting Sagamore to Clayton Street in Barberry Heights; possible sculpture trail to accompany natural plantings; would be visible along Sagamore Parkway

6. **Burtsfield Elementary site** – as the site is developed, consideration should be given for
inclusion of a public gathering space, suitable for performing and visual art; a key impact location for a large number of city residents

7. **Purdue Research Park** – large open spaces present numerous possibilities for park areas, decorative sculpture, social gathering spaces and plantings; great potential for business collaboration

8. **Public performance spaces** – Community spaces enhanced by the installation of pianos as in the “Play Me – I’m Yours” project, featuring pianos installed in gathering spaces in New York for passersby to utilize

- **Level III**: *Projects that could potentially be accomplished with less effort and cost and provide appreciable and immediate impact – essentially “low-hanging fruit.”*

1. **“Gumball Alley”** – current topic of concern for the city; eyesore could become intriguing walkway and point of interest through artistic murals and/or decorative overhead lighting display

2. **Happy Hollow Public Performances** – facilitated with portable staging from Fiddlers Gathering, this could become a low cost performance venue for musical or theatrical activities, capitalizing on this natural setting social gathering site

3. **WL Public Library & Library Garage** – mural project is currently being planned for the outdoor amphitheater wall – additional performance programming would help this space live up to its potential as a public gathering site; additional mural displays could be added to the exterior parking garage facings

4. **Wiggins Street ‘Chute’** – potential for murals running along roadway walls to River Road

5. **Park entrances** - Wabash Heritage Trail at River Road, Happy Hollow Park at Grant and Salisbury and on Indian Trail, Lilly Nature Center and the Celery Bog on Lindberg Road etc. – could be marked with notable and unified artistic signage

6. **Wabash Landing Parking Garage Tower** – potential for art, light effects and marketing in the upper windows of this tower; high visibility in very active location
• Additional options

  Post Office
  Tapawingo Park
  Ice Skating Rink surface (pursued at one time but unresolved)
  Boiler Market Façade
  Blank walls on south side of Campus Inn & Campus Inn facing 9 Irish Brothers
  River Road locations (Adopt-a-spot; Mascouten Park: Catherwood Gardens)
  US 52 at Walgreen’s
  Neighborhood Parks (University Farm, Garden Road sidewalk from Northwestern to Summit, Lommel Park, Peck-Trachtman Park)

  Public Transit Shelters

  Augmented Realities – possibilities exist for interactive “e-art” presentations designed for smart phone users, including artificial realities designed for cyber viewing only; local art tours led by digital programming; smart mapping that creates a pattern of art sites superimposed over a West Lafayette street map, etc.
Funding options –
As identified by PPS, Project for Public Spaces, http://www.pps.org/articles/artfunding/
Note: the Public Art Charrette Team reports these as options while making no judgment as to their effectiveness or political viability.

Public/Private Sector Collaborations
On the non-development side, opportunities for public art can be nurtured as part of ongoing, existing local programs. A city or business could partner with these organizations to involve artists in:

- Designing gardens and plantings;
- Creating destinations in green spaces, along paths and at nodes, anchoring spaces for rest, recreation, play, and gathering;
- Installing art exhibits in vacant storefronts to improve a building’s — and neighborhood’s — overall image;
- Encouraging local museums to loan out works of public art for temporary placement throughout the downtown; and
- Hosting exhibits in publicly accessible places, including municipal, state, and federal buildings.

Percent-for-Art Programs
Passing percent-for-art legislation encumbers a percentage (usually .5 to 2) of CIP (publicly funded capital improvement projects) per year for the commissioning of public artworks, which will usually be sited in, on, or adjacent to the building or project being constructed.

- Percent-for-art ordinances guarantee a funding stream for public art projects regardless of what happens to city budgets or arts funding.
- The policy also guarantees that public art projects will be planned each year, as long as CIPs are underway and municipal construction continues.
- Even when a percent-for-art ordinance is in place, however, additional funds for art projects may be required

Non-Percent-for-Art Programs
Several examples of well-known, successful, non-percent-for-art-funded programs exist in the following cities:
Houston, TX: The Cultural Arts Council of Houston also receives a percentage on the hotel/motel tax for art. In addition, the Council contracts with a variety of city agencies, as well as with Harris County.

New Orleans, LA: The Arts Council of New Orleans funds public-art projects through a joint partnership between public/private sectors in order to create more stable funding basis. City of New Orleans, local and state governmental agencies, as well as other non-profit arts organizations, are funding sources for the public-art program.

Phoenix, AZ: Phoenix’s public-art program is funded through the city’s general-purpose funds, public-art funds, state lottery revenue, and regional and federal grants.

San Antonio, TX: The San Antonio Design Enhancement Program (DEP) is operated through the city’s Public Works Department’s City Architects’ Office. The DEP program is maintained by art allowances and budgets that are identified and developed by each project-design team.

San Diego, CA: The public art program in San Diego is a department of the San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture. A portion of the city’s Transient Occupancy or Hotel/Motel Room Tax, which helps to fund the operating and personnel expenses of nearly 90 arts and cultural organizations cover administrative costs.

Soliciting Participation from Developers

Even if a city does not have a percent-for-art ordinance in place, nor a significant number of city-funded CIP projects (both of which would guarantee a certain number of public art projects per year), it may still be possible to get funding from capital projects for public art, by working with the private sector.

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; and
- 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 they are to be sited; and

• Increase the public’s recognition of the important work provided by that agency or city department

There are a number of ways of encouraging the development community in funding public art projects:

• Include art in the incentive package given to developers. For example, developers are often requested or required by cities to provide parking, a certain number or amount of coverage by street trees, curbs and sidewalks, etc. Public Art could be added to this list, or developers given the opportunity to include public art in a project as a way of meeting the requirement for providing these kinds of on-site amenities. Fees paid by developers, or requirements that developers provide more affordable housing or a park as part of a project, also could be set aside to fund works of public art. In Portland, OR, public art is acceptable as an alternative to meeting the city’s requirements for ground floor windows (no blank walls at street level).

• In instances where a Nexus or Environmental Impact Study has been ordered to determine the potential negative impacts of a project, a percentage of the fees paid by a developer as part of this mitigation could be set aside for a public art project, where the art would be considered a mitigation tool.

• Have the “plaza bonuses” or floor-area ratio bonuses, given to developers who set aside a certain amount of ground floor as public space, also be awarded for including public art. In Portland, OR, development projects where one percent of total construction costs are committed to public art receive a floor-area ratio bonus of 1:1. All or at least 25% of these funds are deposited in the Public Art Trust Fund for use on projects in other sites around the city. The City of Tampa, FL, encourages “any private developer/owner who applies to the city for building permits to construct or reconstruct a commercial or municipal structure to commit one percent of construction costs up to $200,000 to the provision of fine art in conjunction with such commercial structure” or to elect instead to donate to the city an amount equivalent to the one percent.

Alternate Funding Sources
• TIF (Tax increment financing) of vacant buildings for use by artists for housing and studios (Memphis, TN);

• Foundation grants, including those from National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH);
• Neighborhood appeals;
• Parking meter revenue;
• Hotel/motel taxes (Transient Occupancy Tax);
• Sales tax revenue;
• Proceeds from the sale of city land;
• Funds pooled with the county;
• State and city governments;
• Historical societies and commissions;
• Local companies (including locally based branches of national corporations);
• Utilities;
• Arts councils and advisory boards;
• Museums and Art centers

Potential strategies to raise funds for a public-art policy could be to:
• Tie funding of public art to a possible (foundation) endowment for the care and management of downtown parks and public spaces. The endowment could pay for art selection, commissioning, and maintenance.
• Tax large-scale events and festivals to pay for art. For example, a Motel/Hotel tax can be dedicated to public art during the event. This funding can be put toward art projects that would occur before and after the event.
• See if your project would make you eligible for a state tax credit for historic renovation
• Have City Council members fund public art projects in communities within their districts.
• Use the public art policy as a marketing tool to funders.
• Have a 501(c)(3) administer the public art program, so that donated monies could be used tax-free and would represent taxable deductions for donors.
Challenges to Public Art

• Copyright/reproduction rights – Anish Kapoor’s “Cloud Gate” or “The Bean” was donated by SBC Communications, which got an enormous tax break while the Chicago taxpayer inherited the upkeep bill. The park’s management then used this prominent public sculpture as a moneymaker, setting ruinous rates for professional photographers, wedding photos, and videographers, and using the publicly funded security staff to enforce this ban. The security guards removed anyone who looked like they may be a “professional” photographer, which meant anyone with a nice camera and/or a tripod. The park claimed that the copyright in the sculpture was vested with the artist and they were required to police the unauthorized photographing of this copyrighted work on his behalf. In truth, there is an exemption in copyright law for public sculpture, but even if there wasn’t, the city (Chicago) should never have acquired a sculpture without acquiring the right for its residents to photograph themselves with it.

• Unsolicited/unauthorized public art – artists like Banksy and ROA have created international reputations for their “street art” painted on public buildings, sometimes abandoned properties – sometimes not. In some cases, the building owner or the city government has painted over the artwork immediately. But in some cases local residents have petitioned for the artwork to be saved. Many times humorous and at least thought-provoking, the debate exists over whether these are “works of art” or “graffiti.” Either way, local governments should be prepared to deal with these issues in an informed way and to have a policy in place for gauging the relative merit of, and dealing with challenges of, unsolicited public art.

Similarly, the case of the “Surfing Madonna” emerged this April (2011) in Encinitas, California. Erected under an overpass anonymously and without approval from the city, this piece was met with enthusiasm by local residents. Though comprised of 4 large stained glass panels, the work fell under graffiti statues of the city. “Good art or bad art, it’s still defacing,” Encinitas Planning Director Patrick Murphy said. After the city declared they were unaware of how to remove the piece without destroying it, but that it would be removed nonetheless, artist Mark Patterson finally came forward and agreed to take it down. He was fined by the city.

• Public Art Permits – in Los Angeles homeowners paid for the artist Phillip Lumbang to paint a mural on the wall on their property. Referred to as the “Happy Mural,” there is even a YouTube time-lapse video documenting its creation. But a neighbor complained and said it was ugly, so the city decided it needed to be removed. The homeowner says, “Apparently you need a permit to paint a mural on private property in LA, but there is currently no governing body issuing permits.” Murals are lumped into illegal advertising and the city has yet to resolve the issue. In the meantime, the mural was apparently painted over.
• Donations – without presenting specific examples, there are cases in which artwork is offered to cities as a donation. And while “free art” can certainly be attractive to the efforts to obtain art for the public domain, it can also be problematic if the donation happens to be of questionable quality or subject matter.

• Public Perception – In challenging economic times, the perception that public funds are being spent inappropriately is a ready and probably expected accusation. A firm statement of intent – a mission statement of the intent of public art and the means by which the City will pursue and fund it – would go a long way toward alleviating these suspicions.

• Lastly, with tongue firmly in cheek, we present the issue of group public activities like “Yarn-Bombing.” These insidious gangs of ne’er-do-well knitters arrive at a preordained location and create a public work of art through the act of covering objects with knitted panels. It is meant as playful, decorative, communal fun – however, it is not hard to imagine that someone might be annoyed by this activity and question who will be responsible for cleaning it up; what the yarn dye will do to the objects in the rain, etc.
Recommendations of the PACT

1. **Create a Public Art Committee for the City of West Lafayette**
   Moving forward, the City will need an informed and involved group of citizens, advocates and planners to help formulate its policies and plans for public art.

2. **Develop a Public Art Policy**
   to organize the goals and policies of the City and the development of a City “Collection,” recommend policies for donations and unsolicited art, permits, procedures for selecting future artists and public artworks, etc.

3. **Develop a Public Art Plan**
   to formalize and make public the City’s intentions and policies regarding public art and to establish a prioritized schedule of public art projects and determine a continued path for these plans into the future.

4. **Begin a discussion of funding options**
   The City government will need to establish what avenues of funding it is interested or is not interested in pursuing (i.e. percent-for-art, developer incentives, etc.). Once these parameters have been determined, the City (in coordination with the Public Art Committee) should begin talks with developers, grants funders, CityBus, local businesses, etc. to establish viable funding sources, which will inevitably and necessarily be tied to specific public art proposals.
Members of the Public Art Charrette Team –

John David Collier, Director of Campus Planning, Office of the Architect, Purdue University

Scott Frankenberger, local artist and member of Artists Own collaborative

Tom Gall, Program Management Specialist, T.J. Gall & Associates

Steven Koehler, Managing Director, Civic Theatre of Greater Lafayette

Shelley Lowenberg-DeBoer, retired director, Tippecanoe Arts Federation; owner Café Lumos

Lilly Marsh, local artist, Purdue Doctoral Student American Studies (History)

Jon Munn, Engineering, City of West Lafayette

Joe Payne, Superintendent of Parks & Recreation, City of West Lafayette

Dave Raymer, Chief Financial Officer and public art facilitator, Tippecanoe Arts Federation

Nick Schenkel, Director, West Lafayette Public Library

Jason Tennenhouse, owner/operator, Greyhouse Coffee

Jo Wade, Director, Greater Lafayette Convention and Visitors Bureau

Craig Martin, Facilitator, local artist, and director of Purdue University Galleries

Beverly Shaw, City of West Lafayette Development Office
Appendix A – Representative Public Art Plans:

Arlington, Virginia

Beaverton, Oregon
http://www.beavertonarts.org/Progress/docs/BeavertonMasterPlan.pdf

Chattanooga, Tennessee
http://www.chattanooga.gov/Public_Artplan.pdf

Clearwater, Florida

Dallas, Texas

Hickory, North Carolina

Huntington, New York
http://town.huntington.ny.us/permit_pics/332.pdf

Lancaster, Pennsylvania

Lloyd, Oregon
http://www.pdc.us/pdf/ura/lloyd_district/wayfinding_public_art.pdf

Louisville, Kentucky
http://creativetime.org/programs/archive/2010/louisville/

Minneapolis, Minnesota
http://www.midtowncommunityworks.org/planningpublicart.html

Roanoke, Virginia

Walnut Creek, California

Westlake, Texas
POTENTIAL SITES FOR PUBLIC ART (1)

Public Art Legend

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<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>- Highlight Community Assets and Social Spaces</td>
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<td>- Potential Low Hanging Fruit</td>
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<td>- Additional Options</td>
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Path: Y:\GIS\Departments\2011\Community\CommunityArt\PublicArt_I-311_Frames-1.mxd
Plot Date: 8/3/2011
Public Art Legend

Level | Level Description
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I | Major City Approaches and Throughfares
II | Highlight Community Assets and Social Spaces
III | Potential Low Hanging Fruit
AO | Additional Options

POTENTIAL SITES FOR PUBLIC ART (2)

Plot Date: 8/3/2011