



AAPAC

ANN ARBOR PUBLIC ART COMMISSION

Name of Organization:

CITY OF ANN ARBOR

Amount of the Request:

\$40,000

Time for Support of the Project:

12 MONTHS

Project Summary

The Ann Arbor Public Art Commission and the Community Action Network of Southeast Ann Arbor will partner on the administration of a community public art project in the Bryant neighborhood of Ann Arbor. The project will beautify a neighborhood park and involve residents in a participatory creative process. The result will be a lasting art installation. The art installation will be located in Arbor Oaks Park. The park is centrally located, between Bryant Elementary School and the Bryant Community Center. The paths through the park are regularly used to walk to school and to get across the neighborhood.

Population Served

The bordering Bryant, Arbor Oaks & Stoneybrook neighborhoods are some of the few communities in Ann Arbor with low-income housing for working class families. The population is very ethnically diverse. There are over 260 households within the neighborhood.

APPROVED FOR THE CITY OF ANN ARBOR

By: _____
John Hieftje, Mayor

By: _____
Jacqueline Beaudry, City Clerk

What issue is the proposal addressing?

The partners in this project, the Community Action Network (CAN) of Southeast Ann Arbor and the Bryant Neighborhood Association, have a longstanding presence in the area and regularly deal with the problems facing the residents surrounding Arbor Oaks Park. CAN's programs deal with issues of income insecurity, safety, education and civic complacency, in a neighborhood with some of the more affordable family housing in the city. The success of their programs rely on regular engagement with the neighborhood and community building. The proposed art project will explore a new way to employ community building through creative placemaking. Placemaking, outside of the community center, will provide a unique, reflective way for the community to exhibit ownership of their shared space.

What need is being filled by the project?

Renovations to the park have been scheduled for 2014. Arbor Oaks Park is underutilized as a space for recreation, primarily because there are problems with water drainage and space. The renovations will correct the water problems and make some changes to the space. It may not be a prime location for play, however, the park is regularly used as pathway. The project will invigorate the public space. The purpose of placemaking is to create ownership and the increase the use of public spaces.

Project Description

Proposed is a community art project that will engage members of the neighborhood in a creative process of placemaking, a process that will be led by a professional artist. The community artist will guide participants in the design and fabrication of a permanent public artwork. The outcome will be an artwork with shared ownership between the artist and the neighborhood which will beautify the area and serve as a symbol of the neighborhood's diversity and vibrancy.

A group of stakeholders have met to organize the project and discuss their expectations for it. They identified key aspects of the project that they view as important to maintain from start to finish. First, to focus on youth participation, in the creation of the work and as the primary audience of the artwork. Second, to create art that would be widely approachable and is whimsical, colorful, functional and interactive.

Objectives of the Project

The basic objectives of the project are:

- Beautify the park and create a visually compelling improvement;
- Engage the children who play in the park and everyone who walks through it;
- Increase community ties;
- Reflect the diversity of the neighborhood; and,
- Construct a community identity through art.