

April 7, 2017

To: Ann Arbor City Council

From: Ann Arbor Public Art Commission

Re: Evaluation Criteria for Public Art Enhancement Recommendations, for Capital Improvement Projects

Per Chapter 24 of the City Code, the Ann Arbor Public Art Commission is tasked with making recommendations to City Council for evaluation criteria that can be used by staff or others to suggest capital investment projects which may be suitable for enhancement with public art. Our recommendations are as follows; they take the form of progressive steps to narrow down the long CIP list to a more manageable list that can be evaluated in more detail.

We have tried to make the criteria as objective as possible. However we hasten to note that this is still a subjective process, and evaluators should be open to other suggestions. Examples would be input from staff who know the projects better than we do and may have ideas about how art can fit into designs and funding models, or from efforts to distribute public art widely across the city or to serve other goals. These criteria guided our recent effort to suggest enhancements to the 2018-2023 CIP, but were not completely determinative.

Written criteria to evaluate City of Ann Arbor Capital Improvements Projects for enhancement with public art:

FIRST PASS:

Projects which are to occur in the first two years of the CIP should be omitted, unless there are special circumstances suggesting inclusion. Projects scheduled in the first two years are already into the budgeting and planning phases, and inclusion of enhancements would be unlikely.

SECOND PASS:

The following will generally not be considered for enhancement:

1. Projects which are primarily studies, assessments, master plans, or similar documents (although the documents should be prepared with any eye to inclusion of public art in whatever potential project is being studied).
2. Minor building renovations and maintenance.
3. Street and/or sidewalk repair or replacement, except for any extensive retaining walls, guardrails, and/or street lighting as described above.
4. Utility work, including replacement of water, sanitary sewer, and storm sewer piping, but not including water towers.
5. Projects which are primarily replacements of building systems (mechanical, electrical, elevators, generators, etc.).
6. Projects which are purely purchases of land, buildings, or capital equipment, but do not yet include development or renovation of those assets.

THIRD PASS:

Projects shall be large enough (at least \$500,000, probably \$1 million+) to support an enhancement for selection and purchase of artwork. Exceptions would be when the artwork can be incorporated at minimal extra expense, and/or when it serves an important need such as allowing public art to reach underserved neighborhoods, or acting as a strong community-building project. Also consider funding sources: projects mostly funded by federal or state grants (utility work, etc.) probably have little opportunity for enhancement, while projects funded by dedicated city millages (streets, parks) are more likely candidates.

The remaining projects shall be reviewed in more detail, and the following shall be strongly considered for enhancement:

1. New building construction, additions, and substantial renovations, except where the work will have minimal public exposure.
 - a. Examples of projects having minimal public exposure would include city maintenance facilities, water and sewer processing facilities, and jails.
 - b. Fire station projects could be considered candidates for enhancement, especially on the building exterior or site, due to occasional public events and civic prominence.
2. Park construction and substantial renovations, such as to play areas, picnic shelters, and/or groupings of five or more picnic tables.
3. Streetscape projects.
4. Water tower construction and/or repainting.
5. Bridge replacement and/or substantial renovation.
6. Street and/or sidewalk repair or replacement, specifically related to any extensive retaining walls (30' or longer of at least 3' high), guardrails (30' or longer), and/or street lighting (10 or more poles).
7. Pedestrian trails, bridges, underpasses, and similar projects.
8. Publicly visible aspects of projects that would not otherwise be considered, may be considered where enhancement of already-included work can be accomplished for no more than 10% additional cost per item; an example would be manhole covers which can be cast in a city-specific (but repetitively used) design.
9. Storm sewer projects, to the extent that they include extensive visible landscape enhancement (ponds, berms, etc.).

Priority will be given to projects (and specific artwork locations within projects) which meet one or more of the following criteria:

1. Are visible and accessible to the public.
2. Are located in areas with heavy pedestrian or other non-motorized transportation traffic, or...
3. Are located in areas of the city which are relatively underserved by existing public art pieces, or...
4. Are located such that the artwork would create or enhance a gateway into the City.
5. Are funded or are reasonably anticipated to be funded in the near future.

6. Are not yet fully designed so that art can be integrated into the design.
7. The potential artwork will contribute to placemaking (making an otherwise nondescript space more interesting and/or memorable), and/or...
8. The potential artwork will contribute to wayfinding (provides direction to another site, service, or feature). Wayfinding may also be enhanced through placemaking that provides landmarks along the way to other destinations.