



CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS

# PUBLIC ART MASTER PLAN

**ABSTRACT**

This Public Art Master Plan for the City of Colorado Springs outlines a vision and mission for a new public art program along with goals and strategies for implementation.

**SEPTEMBER 1, 2020**

**SUBMITTED BY**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In March 2018, the City of Colorado Springs selected Art Management & Planning Associates, Inc. (AMPA) to create a community-driven Public Art Master Plan. The endeavor, while not unique to large metropolitan cities like Colorado Springs, is the first of its kind for the City. Previously completed planning efforts in Colorado Springs paved the way, including PlanCOS 2019, which describes the importance of culture: “Our architecture, public art, parks, wide boulevards, museums, performance and educational institutions, historic areas, and public gathering places all help define the collective sense of place for our growing and diversifying citizenry” (PlanCOS, Chapter 6: Renowned Culture). PlanCOS recommends two strategies for public art: 1) to complete, update and implement public art plans and 2) to consider arts and culture in other City plans (Chapter 6: Renowned Culture). Furthermore, PlanCOS asserts that arts and culture in Colorado Springs not only has intrinsic value, but also contributes to the city’s economic vitality in that it “directly benefits our tourism industry and attracts businesses and residents to the city” (PlanCOS Chapter 6: Renowned Culture).

As envisioned in PlanCOS, AMPA’s master plan team followed the ethos, “It is our imperative to provide a climate, places, and opportunities for the continued flourishing of our renowned

culture in cooperation with the for-profit and non-profit sectors” (PlanCOS, Chapter 6: Renowned Culture). The building blocks of the planning process for the City of Colorado Springs Public Art Master Plan project were four-fold: 1) bringing together the community to share their hopes, dreams and aspirations, 2) understanding current City policies and procedures that may affect public art programming, 3) evaluating the existing public art collection for gaps and opportunities and 4) providing examples of public art industry best practices and case studies.

## **AMPA focused on the following objectives as outlined by the City-led master plan Steering Committee:**

- Review of the status of the City’s existing public art procedures, ordinances and activities.
- Identify key action items for the near- and long-term to get City programs better aligned with best practices.
- Identify community and/or neighborhood projects that might serve as near-term priorities for new public art.
- Develop a tool kit that neighborhoods could utilize to help spread more public art around the community.
- Define an “Aspirational Vision” for public art in Colorado Springs.

AMPA’s team spent several months engaging the community in dialogue to learn the unique Colorado Springs story of place and its residents’ vision for the future. Through interviews, focus groups, an online questionnaire and hosting playful, unique outdoor activities, the team gathered information that helped to uncover the community’s perceived needs and interests and we gained insight into the community’s attitudes and behaviors toward public art. This phase was critical in crafting the vision, goals and strategies of the Public Art Plan.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, CONTINUED

The final Public Art Master Plan, endorsed by the Mayor's Office, Steering Committee and the Public Art Commission, establishes and shapes the direction of a new public art program for the City of Colorado Springs. The scope of this public art program extends to public art that is funded, owned, maintained and/or borrowed by the City of Colorado Springs. The newly formed public art program encourages developers to provide opportunities for art in private developments. For the purposes of this document, public art is defined as artwork in any medium, including sculpture, monuments, murals/paintings, mosaics/ceramics, fiber art, film/video, digital, web-based, projections, performance, light installations, photography, stained glass, text-based, sound art, architecture or landscape integrated (environmental art) and/or mixed-media. The definition of public art does not include reproductions of unlimited editions or original artwork, objects that are mass produced or architectural rehabilitation or historic preservation, signage (except when designed by an artist) or works that are decorative, ornamental or functional (except when designed by an artist).

The Public Art Plan identifies a clear vision and mission for the City to implement public art initiatives, and it recommends seven goals and accompanying strategies to define a clear path for implementation.

## VISION

The City of Colorado Springs public art program reinforces Colorado Springs' reputation as a special cultural destination and state leader in the creative economy.

The City's public art collection is a legacy that will remain in place for future generations to enjoy and celebrate.

The public process and resulting artwork will be a valuable catalyst to build community by enriching more neighborhoods and public spaces throughout the city, creating a sense of place and celebrating our collective history.

Public art will be integrated into all City initiatives, developments and planning projects as standard practice.

## MISSION

To build a robust, impactful and more widely accessible public art program funded and staffed by the City of Colorado Springs while leveraging private-public partnerships, collaborating with City departments and engaging local talent.

# SUMMARY OF PUBLIC ART GOALS

## GOAL 1: BEGIN BOLDLY AND SUSTAIN MOMENTUM



Colorado's "Olympic City USA" is booming with a thriving community, affordable housing, great schools and friendly neighborhoods ([www.coloradosprings.gov](http://www.coloradosprings.gov)). Nationally known for its grassroots arts and cultural life, it is a time of excitement and the energy is palpable within the arts community. Colorado Springs can capitalize on this energy by quickly moving on a highly visible public art project to celebrate Colorado Springs' Sesquicentennial. This project will set the tone and help facilitate the ambitious yet-to-be-realized public art program, thereby inspiring more support for its creation.

## GOAL 2: DEMONSTRATE DEDICATION TO PUBLIC ART



Public art in Colorado Springs needs champions. The City's various, recent planning documents state very clearly that the City recognizes and values arts and culture in Colorado Springs and desires more public art in and around the city. This desire was echoed by community input received during the master planning survey process. AMPA recommends designating a public art expert who can shape a public art program, its policies, as well as guide future public art projects. Such a designated position can begin collaborating to develop policies and procedures and creating connections and a supportive network for the new public art program. Such a position can also be a resource for various City departments, which have identified public art in their master plans, goals and initiatives.

## GOAL 3: ENCOURAGE AND INCENTIVIZE PLACEMAKING FOR DEVELOPERS



Collaborating with developers can allow the City to extend its presence into new areas that may not have any public artworks present now. A designated public art expert will work with the Planning and Community Development Department, Economic Development and other appropriate City departments to evaluate current incentives and where possible, add incentives to further encourage the inclusion of art assets in private developments. The existing University Village development was identified in the community survey as an important place where people experience public art. Major developments that are in progress around the city represent an opportunity for collaboration and leveraging funds to support public artworks.

## GOAL 4: PLACE ART THROUGHOUT THE CITY



The City of Colorado Springs currently owns 99 public artworks. The vast majority of these are located in the downtown area. The longstanding collaboration with the Downtown Partnership has led to the significant growth of the City's public art collection and has also been indirectly responsible for the high

concentration of the artworks downtown. This has resulted in a high concentration of artworks Downtown and a higher appetite for public art citywide, even as some neighborhoods remain devoid of public art. The locations without art are important opportunities for the City to demonstrate a new dedication to providing a publicly accessible experience of art to its constituents.

### **GOAL 5: PROMOTE AND FOSTER LOCAL CREATIVE ECONOMY THROUGH PUBLIC ART**



The creative community is alive and well in Colorado Springs and creative professionals contribute significantly to the local and regional economy. The Downtown Colorado Springs Creative District reports a Creative Vitality Index of 5.91 in 2015, more than five times the national average (United States CVI = 1.0). Artists don't just pocket the entirety of their project budgets; they hire staff and subcontractors, buy materials and supplies, procure insurance, pay sales and property tax and pay rent or own property. In addition, young people and businesses want to be located in a place where there are cultural amenities as well as creative opportunities for work. A city-recognized funded public art program and a dedication to supporting local creatives will highlight, attract and retain the talent that exists in the area and demonstrate the City's involvement (and commitment) in supporting the growth of the whole economy by circulating the funding through the creative economy.

### **GOAL 6: CREATE A UNIFIED, OLYMPIC-LEVEL PUBLIC ART COLLECTION**



Colorado Springs has declared itself the Olympic City, USA. As such, it should aspire to a world-class, Olympic-level public art collection. Public art is a means to tell a compelling and authentic story about Colorado Springs, so thought and intention on how and which public artworks are acquired is necessary. The designated public art expert can develop a collection strategy, art selection policies and procedures and help plan for the growth of the collection. The community will be engaged in the selection process so that the public art collection can grow to reflect the community and to become a source of civic pride and connection.

### **GOAL 7: MAINTAIN, PRESERVE AND CHERISH THE PUBLIC ART COLLECTION**



The existing public art collection is a valuable City asset. Just like other City assets, the public art collection deserves to be maintained and celebrated. The City must create a more robust and proactive maintenance and deaccession plan for the existing collection. This will ensure the integrity of the collection, grow civic pride and enable the value of the artwork to increase.

In the report "Beyond Accumulation: Understanding and Envisioning Public Art in Albuquerque," the author Joni Palmer, PhD analyzed ways in which the City of Albuquerque public art program could "move forward, away from simply accumulating artworks, towards envisioning a more dynamic role for public art within the city." Similarly, the AMPA team views the Colorado Springs Public Art Master Plan as a step-by-step framework to help the City of Colorado Springs and the community identify ways to build a dynamic, robust public art program.

# INTRODUCTION

“

One cannot be pessimistic about the West. This is the native home of hope. When it fully learns that cooperation, not rugged individualism, is the quality that most characterizes and preserves it, then it will have achieved itself and outlived its origins. Then it has a chance to create a society to match its scenery.

- WALLACE STEGNER, "THE SOUND OF MOUNTAIN WATER

”

“

Our responsibility as the current citizens of this great city is very clear. We must continue to create a city that matches our scenery. A shining at the foot of great mountain.

- MAYOR JOHN SUTHERS - STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS, 2019

”

# VISION

The City of Colorado Springs public art program reinforces Colorado Springs' reputation as a special cultural destination and state leader in the creative economy.

The City's public art collection is a legacy that will remain in place for future generations to enjoy and celebrate.

The public process and resulting artwork will be a valuable catalyst to build community by enriching more neighborhoods and public spaces throughout the city, creating a sense of place and celebrating our collective history.

Public art will be integrated into all City initiatives, developments and planning projects as standard practice.

# MISSION

To build a robust, impactful and more widely accessible public art program funded and staffed by the City of Colorado Springs while leveraging private-public partnerships, collaborating with City departments and engaging local talent.





# WHY PUBLIC ART MATTERS

**ART IN PUBLIC SPACES PLAYS A DISTINGUISHING ROLE IN OUR COUNTRY'S HISTORY AND CULTURE. IT REFLECTS AND REVEALS OUR SOCIETY, ENHANCES MEANING IN OUR CIVIC SPACES AND ADDS UNIQUENESS TO OUR COMMUNITIES. PUBLIC ART HUMANIZES THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT. IT PROVIDES AN INTERSECTION BETWEEN PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE BETWEEN DISCIPLINES AND IDEAS. PUBLIC ART MATTERS BECAUSE OUR COMMUNITIES GAIN CULTURAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC VALUE THROUGH PUBLIC ART.**

*("Why Public Art Matters," 2018, Americans for the Arts)*

**NEARLY HALF OF PEOPLE WITH COLLEGE DEGREES AND A MAJORITY OF MILLENNIALS SAY THEY WOULD STRONGLY CONSIDER WHETHER A COMMUNITY IS "RICH IN THE ARTS" WHEN DECIDING WHERE TO LOCATE FOR A JOB.**

*("Speak Out Art," 2016, Americans for the Arts)*

Colorado Springs has firmly established its strong commitment to its “Renowned Culture” through the adoption of its recent comprehensive plan, *PlanCOS*. This document describes the building blocks of City founders as: “culture as the cornerstone of the community and where creative energy generates new possibilities, interpersonal connections and unprecedented philanthropy,” (*PlanCOS*, Chapter 6: Renowned Culture). Public art is a significant and impactful part of this commitment. Public art enhances public spaces, anchors tourist destinations and local gathering places offering one-of-a-kind experiences specific to the location. Public art that is accessible to everyone in the community enhances the quality of life for all citizens, increases access to art experiences and educates citizens on a variety of topics from history to modern social issues. Americans for the Arts reports that public art can be a powerful economic tool, attracting new businesses to the City, drawing and engaging a new workforce and inspiring creativity leading to innovation (Americans for the Arts, “Why Public Art Matters,” 2018).

Public art is generally selected in an open and competitive public process and has the opportunity to tell pivotal community stories. It can commemorate historical events, honor special citizens, diverse heritages and mark places that inspire memory. Giving people access to art in public places, all people have the opportunity to discover the layers of meaning, enjoy the vibrancy of enhanced spaces and witness the history of our community. Public Art is an essential component of a thriving city.

## A THREE-PHASE PLANNING PROCESS

The activities of this planning process were broken up into three phases with activities planned and outcomes expected for each. Those three phases were as follows:

- 1** PHASE ONE was focused on developing a project strategy that fits the specific needs and challenges of Colorado Springs. This first phase included input from the Steering Committee, which was made up of local artists, arts administrators, Public Art Commission representatives and other stakeholders, such as City Council, community leaders, developers and the broader public. Industry best practices were considered in tandem with the input from stakeholders to develop a timeline, work plan and a contact list for the project.
- 2** PHASE TWO was all about community input and research. In this phase, the planning team hosted a kick-off meeting with the Steering Committee, conducted an online community questionnaire, engaged in one-on-one interviews and facilitated focus groups. A web page within the City’s website was created to provide information about the project and related activities. This phase also included a deep dive into other master plans within the City that might affect public art programming. An audit and analysis were undertaken of the existing public art collection, policies, procedures and oversight structure. Research into benchmark programs, including funding sources was performed.
- 3** PHASE THREE focused on research analysis and identification of master plan alternatives. This phase combined all the sources of input including local feedback and national best practices, into an executable plan for Colorado Springs.

# INFORMING DOCUMENTS

The Public Art Master Plan for the City of Colorado Springs has been developed in accordance with the recommendations set forth in the following informing documents for Colorado Springs and the region. Based on the AMPA team's review of these documents, there are several sections that could be interpreted to give support for and specifically call for the creation of a Public Art Master Plan..

## PlanCOS

This Public Art Master Plan is a direct result of several recommendations called out in the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan for Colorado Springs, *PlanCOS*, which devotes Chapter 6 to the City's "Renowned Culture." The first strategy in this section of the plan recommends that Colorado Springs "complete, update, and implement public art plans." In addition, *PlanCOS* envisions a community that "promotes and embraces the arts, culture, and education as essential parts of our lives and our identity. This builds on the efforts of General Palmer and many others that envisioned culture as the cornerstone of the community and where creative energy generates new possibilities, interpersonal connections and unprecedented philanthropy."

## PlanCOS KEY STRATEGIES

- Complete, update, and implement public art plans
- Consider arts and culture in other city plans
- Support centers of education, arts, and culture
- Identify and preserve our rich and diverse history

Furthermore, *PlanCOS* stipulates that all "public and privately initiated master plans may also provide important direction for renowned culture, depending on their content and areas of focus. Going forward, the expectation is that publicly initiated master plans, such as corridor and small area plans, should address this Renowned Culture theme as appropriate and pertinent. Privately initiated master plans are encouraged to address this theme within the context of their anticipated physical development. As existing plans are updated and new plans created, these plans should support the themes of *PlanCOS*." (*PlanCOS*, Chapter 4, "Thriving Economy")

# INFORMING DOCUMENTS

## **CULTURAL OFFICE OF THE PIKES PEAK REGION (COPPeR), CULTURAL MASTER PLAN 2010-2020 AND STRATEGIC PLAN.**

This City of Colorado Springs Public Art Master Plan has been developed in accordance with Goals 1 and 2 of the COPPeR Cultural Master Plan and Strategic Plan.

### **CULTURAL MASTER PLAN**

[www.culturaloffice.org/resources/cultural-plan](http://www.culturaloffice.org/resources/cultural-plan):

*GOAL 1: Increase engagement, access and participation in the cultural life of the region*  
*Objective 1: Expand community and neighborhood cultural development. Ensure residential and commercial developments include public spaces that can be used for arts and cultural activities, e.g. concerts in parks, public art.*

*GOAL 2: Integrate the arts into the social, economic and political fabric of the community*  
*Objective 2: Affirm culture, identity and heritage. Expand placement of public art and murals to areas beyond the central downtown Colorado Springs core. Grow resources for maintenance of public art.*

### **COPPER STRATEGIC PLAN**

[https://www.culturaloffice.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/COPPeR\\_2016-2020\\_StrategicPlan\\_FNL2017.pdf](https://www.culturaloffice.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/COPPeR_2016-2020_StrategicPlan_FNL2017.pdf)

One of the five-year priorities listed in the COPPeR Strategic Plan is to: "Steward a public sector funding mechanism that supports the broader arts & cultural community."

## **CITY OF COLORADO SPRINGS PARK SYSTEM MASTER PLAN (2014)**

[https://coloradosprings.gov/sites/default/files/parks\\_recreation\\_and\\_cultural\\_services/cos\\_masterplandocument\\_140923-view.pdf](https://coloradosprings.gov/sites/default/files/parks_recreation_and_cultural_services/cos_masterplandocument_140923-view.pdf)

The City adopted a new Park System Master Plan in 2014 and in the Vision Summary the plan states: "Recognize the value and purpose of the arts, history and civic pride," and "Promote and enhance tourism opportunities in parks and recreational areas. Key Recommendations: Provide education and interpretation of the cultural significance of Colorado Springs' geologic, natural and heritage features. Create new funding sources to maintain and enhance public art, and historic and cultural assets. Align parks, recreation, trail amenities and cultural facilities with opportunities to enhance and expand tourism and special event offerings."

# INFORMING DOCUMENTS

## **DOWNTOWN COLORADO SPRINGS FORM-BASED CODE (REV. 2012)**

[https://coloradosprings.gov/sites/default/files/planning/form\\_based\\_design\\_code\\_5-11-121.pdf](https://coloradosprings.gov/sites/default/files/planning/form_based_design_code_5-11-121.pdf)

The revised Form-Based Code document outlines several incentives for siting public art in private developments:

### *Section 3.1.2 Public art and cultural amenities*

*Although public art is provided throughout Downtown through the Art on the Streets program, additional art and cultural amenities will benefit the Downtown community as a whole by improving the pedestrian experience and potentially serving as an additional attraction to bring more people Downtown. To qualify for density bonus points a project must include 1% art or cultural amenities into the project itself. The amenity must be within a plaza or entryway feature. It can also be incorporated into the structure itself as a mural or relief. A museum, art gallery or other cultural facility within the structure will also qualify the project for incentive points. This type of facility must be open to the public on a regular basis and no less than 3,000 square feet. All public proposals must be approved by the Art Commission of the Pikes Peak Region.*

*Section 4.2.6.8 Features that attract users, such as fountains, public display areas, or interactive sculpture are encouraged in all areas.*

### *Section 4.2.7. Public Art*

*Private and public projects are encouraged to integrate art into the design and implementation process for buildings and public spaces. Public art may be defined as works of art in any media that have been planned and executed with the specific intention of being sited or staged in the public domain, usually outside and accessible to all. Site specificity, community involvement and collaboration are components of public art. A work of "art" may be defined as a physical manifestation of an idea, concept, theory, statement or philosophy that communicates and reaches beyond the basic fulfillment of function.*

*Section 4.2.7.3 The Art Commission of the Pikes Peak Region may assist with identifying appropriate artists and/or advise on design and selection processes for projects. All proposed public art projects must also be reviewed and recommended by the ACPPR prior to installation.*

# INFORMING DOCUMENTS

## **EXPERIENCE DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN (2016)**

<https://coloradosprings.gov/planning-and-development/page/downtown-master-plan>

Experience Downtown suggests several strategies for activating the Downtown area, and the plan recognizes the importance of art and culture:

*Goal 8: Incentives to discover Downtown are inspired by enriched relics of the past, including adaptively reusing celebrated architecture and repurposing historic streets to safely support multiple transportation modes. Arts, culture and a thriving culinary and craft brew scene thrive.*

*Action Step (3): Incorporate public art into planning processes and utilize creative and artist-centered approaches to utilitarian forms such as benches, signage, bike racks and other street and park elements.*

## **COLORADO SPRINGS URBAN RENEWAL AUTHORITY (CSURA)**

<https://www.csura.org/mission-goals.html>

<https://www.csura.org/public-art-goal.html>

It is one of the goals for CSURA to “promote public art” and it is a policy for Urban Renewal Projects in the Colorado Springs area to recommend inclusion of public art: “The CSURA supports projects that supply public benefit, provide quality sustainable places, create jobs, promote public art, offer affordable housing and raise the standard of development in Colorado Springs through tax increment financing tools.”

# ASSESSMENT METHODS

## STEERING COMMITTEE

In collaboration with the City's Cultural Services Manager, the AMPA team recruited an 11-member Steering Committee. The Master Plan team met with the Steering Committee eight times in person and via conference call. The Steering Committee was asked to engage in the following ways: 1) Inform and guide the master planning process by connecting the AMPA team to stakeholder groups for interviews and outreach activities, 2) Continually provide context and background for the current situation in Colorado Springs and 3) Review the Master Plan recommendations, with an eye for realistic expectations and aspirational language.

## ONLINE COMMUNITY INPUT QUESTIONNAIRE

The Master Plan Community Input Questionnaire was created, managed and distributed via the SpeakUp platform, which is used by the City of Colorado Springs' Citizen Engagement Office. A link to the 18-question questionnaire was posted to the City's Public Art Plan website, <https://coloradosprings.gov/publicartcos>, on June 20 and was up through the summer. There were 929 responses collected and the results and analysis can be found in the "Plan Outreach" section and raw data in [Appendix](#).

## IN-PERSON INTERVIEWS/ FOCUS GROUPS

- The Master Plan team conducted 32 one-on-one and small group interviews with stakeholders and community members by phone or in person. Sample questions can

be found in [Appendix](#). The transcripts from these meetings are detailed in [Appendix](#).

- 3 City Council members
- 9 Developers
- 8 Council of Neighbors and Organizations (CONO) representatives
- 8 Art/Culture leadership/board members
- 1 Public Art Commission (PAC) member
- 2 Planning staff members
- 1 Park Planning staff member

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

The AMPA Public Art Master Planning process included several unique projects to engage the community, including a kick-off meeting, playful games, role playing exercises, art-making, creative signage and a text-based-input exercise. Each of these activities were developed to create a buzz and excitement, to test out ideas for community engagement and to provide real examples of the power of public art. The outcomes and insights can be found in the [Appendix](#).

## KICK-OFF MEETING

On April 22, 2019, the Master Planning team hosted a kick-off event at the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum. Members of the PAC and Steering Committee were invited to attend as well as relevant City staff. The goal of the meeting was to collect ideas, aspirations and opinions about public art in Colorado Springs and to learn about

# ASSESSMENT METHODS

people's attitudes towards the role and benefits of public art in the City's neighborhoods. The following three activities were deployed with the group to elicit their input at this beginning phase:

- Well-Rounded: A Playful & Thought-Provoking Discussion
- ARTS&: Uncovering Possibilities & Partnerships through Creative Placemaking
- With Each Other: Decision Making & Community Engagement

## SUMMER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY

On July 5, 2019, the AMPA team facilitated the Drawn Together: Community Art Making and Input Activity at Acacia Park to coincide with the First Friday summer gallery walk. Select members of the Steering Committee also implemented this activity at the July 23 Food Truck Tuesday at the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum and at the "What If?" festival on September 14. Drawn Together reimagines the "exquisite corpse" drawing game, a method by which a collection of words and/or images are collectively assembled. The game asks participants to draw their vision for public art, insert their contribution (into a three-tiered movable box format) and then spin the boxes to align the images giving the community the ability to mix and match the various drawings and ideas contributed. The design of this public engagement product also allows for an alternative use: Public Art Game Show. This game has multiple quiz questions based on facts about the public art collection. Participants select a question, guess and the answer is then revealed by unfolding the document.

## WINTER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY

The AMPA team developed a special event for its final outreach activity, deployed on December 7, 2019 to coincide with the Parade of Lights. Public Notice 2.0 redesigned the public notice as a communications platform for important community messaging while using it as an opportunity to display public art. This project, in collaboration with FIXER Brand Design Studio showcased the work of local illustrator Ryan Putnam, as a projection on the Hilton Garden Inn wall and continued throughout the month of December as poster notices alerting and inviting the community to comment on the suggested recommendations for the City's first Public Art Master Plan. The project was shared with the public via multiple social media platforms. It offered up a real-time example of how public art can be used as an asset across City departments; in this case, it showcases how public art can be used to bring attention to important City issues/notices, adds a layer of vibrancy to our shared public experience and supports the local creative workforce.

The community was asked to use their cell phones to text responses to the projections and posters:

*Public Art Notice: Colorado Springs just launched the recommendations for its Public Art Master Plan! We need your feedback! Please text "ART" to 719.###.#### by Dec. 30th to comment and learn more! #PublicArtCOS*





# EXISTING CONDITIONS & KEY FINDINGS

## **INTRODUCTION**

The existing public art program in Colorado Springs is essentially run as a programmatic activity of the City's Pioneers Museum. It is not a stand-alone, directly funded City initiative or department, as are many traditional public art programs. With this Public Art Master Plan, the City will be able to create a new, robust public art program, essentially from the ground up. While this might have seemed a difficult endeavor a decade ago, our research has shown that there is a recent groundswell of support for a public art program, not just within the planning community (as demonstrated in the last chapter), but from the community at large.

# EXISTING PUBLIC ART COLLECTION ANALYSIS AND BACKGROUND

The following information was gathered from the records held by the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum (CSPM), the entity responsible for managing and maintaining the publicly accessible, outdoor sculpture collection owned by the City of Colorado Springs.

## ROLE OF COLORADO SPRINGS PIONEERS MUSEUM

Since 2001, the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum has been charged with the management and maintenance of the public art pieces donated to the City's permanent collection. Museum staff are involved in evaluating and recommending new acquisitions. This evaluation process focuses primarily on issues of safety and long-term preservation, and less on aesthetics. Newly acquired pieces are tracked as part of the museum's "outdoor sculpture" collection. Museum staff members have expertise in the handling and preservation of artifacts. Unlike traditional museum artifacts, public art items present unique challenges as they are usually sited entirely outdoors and are subject to the wind, hail, chemical exposure, accidents and vandalism. The museum staff oversees sculpture maintenance funding from various sources, which are described on page 19. The museum's permanent and seasonal staff members conduct routine maintenance and repairs. Independent contractors are used to address more complex preservation issues.

The City's official public art program is essentially a policy developed to handle donated artwork in outdoor locations. It does not include a funding mechanism for commissioning new artwork or acquisitions, nor does it provide for a dedicated staff with expertise in the field. This type of staff position would be charged with, among other things, knowing best practices for collecting, documenting and maintaining the public art collection.

The current public art collection is comprised of mostly artworks that were either "adopted" within the City's property or were donated to the City. The role that the CSPM plays in the acquisition of new artworks is to review potential donations for safety and maintenance concerns and to make a recommendation to accept or decline the donation into the collection. The decision to approve the donated artwork then moves to Colorado Springs Public Art Commission (PAC). (For more information on the PAC, see following section). Once accepted, the CSPM performs annual condition reports and manages all maintenance tasks as necessary along with all their other duties and programming.

## THE MAKEUP OF A DONATED COLLECTION

The full list of public artworks owned by the City of Colorado Springs numbers 99. Of those, 38 are a series of individually carved American Indian keystones located over the second story windows at the CSPM. This series is made of the same material and were all created and accepted into the collection at the same time. For the remainder of this report, these 38 keystones will be considered as one artwork series, making the total collection size 63 pieces. Only five artworks were purchased with donated funds by the CSPM.

While a donated collection demonstrates the community's desire and ability to privately fund artworks for public spaces, there is no thematic connection between the style or material of artworks. The materials used in the artworks tend toward traditional sculpture materials of metal

and stone. In addition, because the placement of each artwork is recommended as part of its individual accession process, there is a high concentration of artworks in one part of the city. The placement of artworks seems concentrated in highly visible Downtown locations, rather than broadly distributed throughout the city.

## COLLABORATION AND LEADERSHIP

There have been 27 artworks (43%) donated to the City of Colorado Springs by one local non-profit organization, Downtown Ventures. This speaks volumes about the community's desire and willingness to fund public artworks. Colorado Springs is in an unusual position to benefit from the labor of an allied organization without investing or participating directly in its activities. While this current situation is clearly very beneficial to the City, if the City wishes to be seen as a center for cultural tourism and driver of the creative economy, it must participate in the public art acquisition process in a more direct and intentional way.

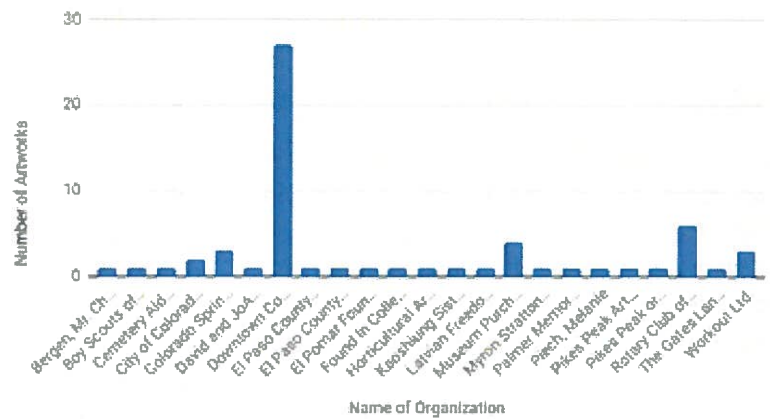
## MATERIALS

There are 12 artworks made of steel, 18 are bronze, five are concrete and the remaining 10 are made of a variety of materials, such as wood, rock or stone. For outdoor sculptures, these materials are very durable and don't generally require a large amount of maintenance, but they don't offer much variety in the collection. In addition, permanent artworks like these require ongoing administrative costs in the way of condition reporting and maintenance. The section below, "An Aging Collection" goes into further detail about these costs.

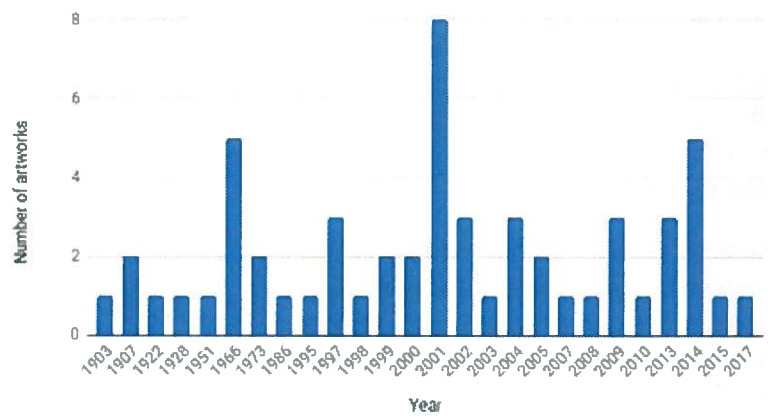
## A HIGHLY CONCENTRATED COLLECTION

The majority of City-owned public artworks are located in downtown. Furthermore, in downtown, there are eight artworks on the grounds of the CSPM, 12 on Pikes Peak Avenue in the two blocks between South Cascade Avenue and South Nevada Avenue and five are in Acacia Park.

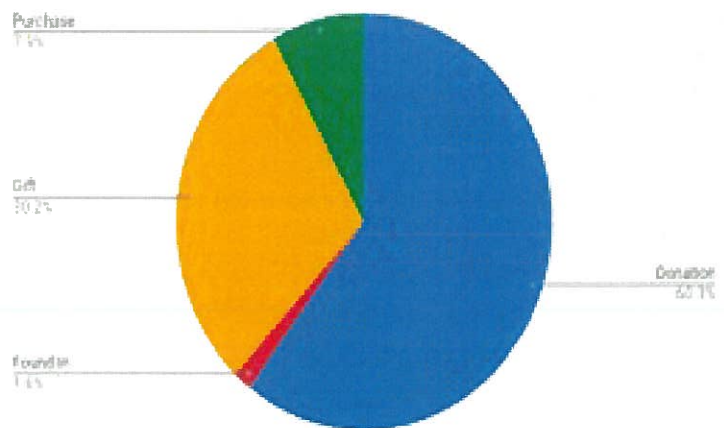
## Donating Organizations



## Artwork Creation Dates



## Accessions Sources



## **ACCESS TO COLLECTION INFORMATION**

In addition to managing the collection itself, the CSPM manages access to information about the collection on a separate website from the City, (<https://www.cspm.org>) (<https://coloradosprings.gov>). Information about the public art collection is only accessible through the Collections section of that museum-managed website. Each artwork record begins with an accession number which is generally irrelevant to the public, and the location of each artwork is minimal and difficult to find.

## **AN AGING COLLECTION**

An aging collection means that maintenance costs go up as the materials weather. The average age of an artwork from the permanent collection is 29 years old.

The 38 stone keystone profiles on the facade of the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum are the oldest artworks in the Colorado Springs Public Art Collection, created in 1903.

Currently, the funds for maintenance are limited and come from two sources: 1) since 2001, when a new artwork is adopted by the City, donors are required to provide a maintenance fund of 10% of the value of that artwork. These funds are not renewable and can only be used on the specific pieces with which they are associated, 2) the Conservation Trust Fund (CTF), currently allots \$15,000 annually to the maintenance of the City's permanent sculpture collection. This amount has been consistent for many years but is slated to increase to \$20,000 in 2021. These funds do roll over and can be combined with funds from insurance monies to cover more expensive repairs and maintenance projects. These funds are derived from the Colorado Lottery program and have a number of restrictions.

A sustained funding source, along with dedicated staff to keep the existing artworks in a stable condition, will secure the integrity of the collection, enable the value of the collection to grow and reduce the liability of artworks. Poorly maintained artworks become a hazard and an eyesore instead of source of civic pride. If the City continues to adopt new artworks, the maintenance funds should be at a level to keep pace with the growing, aging collection. A growing collection will ultimately require a permanent and properly trained maintenance staff. Further research should be conducted on the current annual maintenance costs and staff hours to determine the sufficient level of funding.

The use of temporary public art installations is one way of mitigating the ever-increasing cost of maintaining a permanent collection of public artworks. These artworks have a shorter lifespan; often one to five years. The mediums for temporary works of art offer an array of choices since there is an expected "end date." These include murals; more fleeting sculpture media, such as dirt and grass; more ephemeral media, such as performances, pop-up events and/or multimedia presentations. Colorado Springs already has a successful model in the Downtown Partnership's annual Art on the Streets Program. Few other areas of town have the resources to manage an independent, self-sustaining program such as this. Here again, funding for staff oversight, artist fees, and a collection-growth strategy would be imperative to the long-term success of such an effort.

# AUDIT OF EXISTING PROCESSES AND POLICIES

## STAFF STRUCTURE

At present, there is no dedicated staff to build or manage a public art program. However, the Manager of the Cultural Services Division serves as the staff liaison for the Public Art Commission (PAC) and advises the PAC on the maintenance of the collection. Currently, the Manager oversees 22 full-time employees. The staff is responsible for a number of operations, including the CSPM, Garden of the Gods Park, North Cheyenne Canon Park programs and archaeology and cultural resource management. One employee, the Museum Registrar, has responsibility for sculpture maintenance and can hire contractors or part-time staff to help with maintenance tasks.

## EXISTING PUBLIC ART POLICIES

Beginning in 2001, the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum became the official caretaker of the existing collection of public art in the City. There are no policies currently in place for the funding or acquisition of new art for the City. There are policies around acquisition of

donated artwork into the existing collection, and the Public Art Commission retains the right to accept, deny new donated artwork into the collection, as well as remove artwork from the collection. More information is available in the “Public Art Commission Audit” section below.

## EXISTING PUBLIC ART BUDGET

Currently, there is no dedicated or permanent funding source for public art acquisition in Colorado Springs. As previously stated, an overwhelming majority of the existing collection has been donated to the City, and the City recommends 10% of the value of the sculpture be given to a maintenance fund to take care of that sculpture, solely. Again, it is unclear if the existing funding source for this maintenance is sufficient to maintain the current collection.

## EXISTING MAINTENANCE POLICIES AND BUDGET

See section “An Aging Collection” section.

## AUDIT OF PUBLIC ART COMMISSION AND POLICIES

The PAC is governed by the Rules and Procedures passed in Resolution No. 140-16 from 2016. This Resolution states that the purpose of the commission is to “make recommendations to the City Council regarding the acceptance of permanent pieces of outdoor art” in accordance with the Commission’s donation acceptance policy (see below). Other duties of the PAC are to:

- Encourage regional collaboration with respect to public art;
- Take efforts to make the City beautiful; and
- Raise awareness of the Commission and public art opportunities

Colorado Springs City Council Resolution No. 141-16 outlined the donation acceptance procedures and policies for the PAC as well as policies for removal of artwork from the collection. The PAC is the sole group who can act as “curators” of the donated collection of City’s artwork. City staff may make recommendations on safety and maintenance concerns, but the PAC is the group charged with decisions based on the following criteria:

1. Artistic excellence and technical competence;
2. Creation of a balanced inventory of art in public places (including but not limited to a variety of artistic styles, designs, medium, and cultural diversity);
3. Suitability of the work to proposed site and environment (including but not limited to form, content, scale, materials and maintenance) and relationship of work to existing artworks in site vicinity;
4. Evaluation of materials in regard to structural and surface integrity, and protection against theft, vandalism and weather;
5. Safety and maintenance considerations;
6. Environmental impact such as noise, sound, light and/or odor;

“The Public Art Commission of the Pikes Peak Region was established in 1982 by the City of Colorado Springs and El Paso County. An 11-member all volunteer board, including two elected officials serving as liaisons from Colorado Springs City Council and El Paso County’s Board of Commissioners, the Commission is charged with acting in an advisory capacity to evaluate and accept permanent pieces of outdoor art on behalf of the City Council in accord with a City Council-approved donation acceptance policy to be included in the Outdoor Sculpture Collection of the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum.”

[coloradosprings.gov/city-council/  
page/public-art-commission?](https://coloradosprings.gov/city-council/page/public-art-commission?)

7. Accessibility of/to the artwork;
8. Conditions of the donation (including financial considerations); and
9. Significance of the work to the community.

Criteria for removal of an artwork from the collection (once accepted) are fairly standard. Damages, deterioration and maintenance burden, public safety, changes to the site and a written request of the artist.

“The Public Art Commission of the Pikes Peak Region was established in 1982 by the City of Colorado Springs and El Paso County. An 11-member all volunteer board, including two elected officials serving as liaisons from Colorado Springs City Council and El Paso County’s Board of Commissioners, the Commission is charged with acting in an advisory capacity to evaluate and accept permanent pieces of outdoor art on behalf of the City Council in accord with a City Council-approved donation acceptance policy to be included in the Outdoor Sculpture Collection of the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum.”

[coloradosprings.gov/city-council/  
page/public-art-commission?](https://coloradosprings.gov/city-council/page/public-art-commission?)

## **ANALYSIS OF PAC ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Based on these two resolutions above, the PAC meets once monthly as an advisory board reacting to the proposed donation of artwork rather than identifying opportunities for art to be integrated into the community in a meaningful way. This situation is not ideal for the creation of a robust public art program in Colorado Springs. As it is currently constructed, the PAC is not set up to be a proactive, effective leadership group for the arts and culture community in Colorado Springs, nor is it set up to go beyond being an advisory group for a donated collection of public art. If Colorado Springs is to implement the steps in the Public Art Master Plan, a new resolution is needed to guide the PAC's duties to include setting up the rules and regulations around funding and commissioning new works of art and by the City agency.

Additionally, The Colorado Springs PAC is not currently tasked with standard public art program guidance responsibilities. While all public art commissions (or some other advisory body such as a cultural commission) throughout Colorado and the country function in an advisory capacity to the elected officials rather than making final decisions, they generally have additional responsibilities beyond reviewing donation offers. Responsibilities of these advisory groups can include setting public art selection processes, guidelines and policies, overseeing the art selection process for new commissions and purchases, and recommending funding mechanisms and annual budget allocations. They can be the stewards of short-term and long-term strategic plans as well as ambassadors for the program to the public.

## **PAC QUESTIONNAIRE SYNOPSIS**

The PAC members who participated in the anonymous questionnaire to gather their input on the functionality of the group provided insightful information about the duties of the PAC, its effectiveness and potential growth of the PAC. This information furthers the

analysis that the PAC is constrained in its ability to guide the development of a robust public art program for Colorado Springs.

When asked if the PAC is an effective leadership group for the arts and culture in Colorado Springs, 66% stated the PAC was "not an effective leadership group" and 55% stated that the group is not "united in its interest in arts and culture. The comments included:

- "PAC has no power...only advisory..."
- "in order to be truly effective, we would need some sort of funding or financial backing..."
- "currently operating under limited guidelines."
- "PAC is a review board, though I know it wants to be more..."

One of the comments collected sums up the hopes for evolving the PAC into a more effective leadership group for the City of Colorado Springs:

"I would like to see the PAC be a true leader and influencer in the arts community. I would like to see it as an organization that community members can come to when they have ideas for art events, organization, or gripes. I would like the PAC to be a place where real estate developers come to work in collaborate with the PAC (representing the people of the community) on project they are working on. I would like business-owners to come ask us for support and help. As representatives of the city and community we should be working with schools, students and educators. It would be excellent to have additional collaboration between different departments in the city. I would like to see the PAC be more action-oriented with sub-committees and projects that we are working on."

## PLAN OUTREACH

# WHAT DID PEOPLE SAY THEY WANT?

### KICK-OFF MEETING

The half-day convening of members of the Steering Committee, the Public Art Commission and relevant City staff was facilitated by the AMPA team. Three games and activities were deployed strategically as a fun format for the group to approach the topic of public art in Colorado Springs. A strengths, opportunities, aspirations and results (SOAR) exercise helped to focus the input of the group into areas for additional research. Lively and broad discussions about the current state of public art in Colorado Springs led to the following conclusions.

- The current collaboration between the Downtown Partnership and the City is unique to Colorado Springs, is highly cherished and should be built upon as a model of success. Additional collaborations and partnerships should be explored.
- “Olympic City, USA” as a brand identity for the City should extend to its cultural sphere.
- Now is the right time for the City to support a financially sustained public art program, which is encouraged by the City-wide comprehensive plan, PlanCOS. More work is needed to identify sources of funding.

- Colorado Springs has not historically identified itself as place that is attractive to the creative sector. The city has all the elements of being a “hot spot” that attracts, retains and supports a vibrant creative community, and it should market itself as such.
- Public art has the potential to increase the quality of life for the residents of Colorado Springs and impact the ability of the City to attract and retain skilled labor.

### SUMMER OUTREACH EVENTS

During the daytime community outreach events the team employed the Drawn Together public art product and we hosted 1,000 participants. Deployed initially in Acacia Park, in tandem with the summer art walk and First Friday gallery openings, the focus of this outreach was arts patrons in the City. This prompted art-making activity, combined with the Textizen platform, which is used by the City of Colorado Springs’ Citizen Engagement Office, participants engaged by using their cell phones to text their input to a phone number. Dozens of responses were collected via the Textizen platform. The Drawn Together project was deployed twice more by members of the Steering Committee at local events, Porchfest and the “What If...” festival.



The most commonly heard sentiment was that the public's experience of public artworks is limited only to the downtown area. There was little to no awareness of how the artworks in the public realm came to be there or that the City hadn't placed them there directly.

## PUBLIC QUESTIONNAIRE OVERVIEW

The 18-question Master Plan Community Input Questionnaire was managed and distributed via the SpeakUp platform, which is used by the City of Colorado Springs Citizen Engagement Office. The questionnaire was available online and was distributed via various local arts and culture newsletters, City announcements, the personal networks of the Steering Committee, the Public Art Committee and the AMPA team. A direct link to the questionnaire was placed on City's webpage for the Public Art Master Plan, [www.coloradosprings.gov/publicartcos](http://www.coloradosprings.gov/publicartcos). The questionnaire survey was open for seven weeks and was completed by 929 respondents.

## FINAL OUTREACH EVENT

The AMPA team estimates that over 1,000 people saw the projection on the side of the hotel on December 7. The projection and printed posters all included a phone number (and language in both English and Spanish) asking viewers to text in order to offer their feedback on a few short questions. While some of those questions were edited slightly between 12/7 and 12/13, there were interesting responses to note.

- 24 (86%) respondents replied "yes" to the question, "do you want (more) art in your neighborhood?"
- Of respondents, those with zip codes 80904 (29%) and 80903 (29%) requested more art in these locations.

### RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS:

**Gender:** 573 (69%) female, 250 (28%) male and 52 (.06%) preferred not to answer.

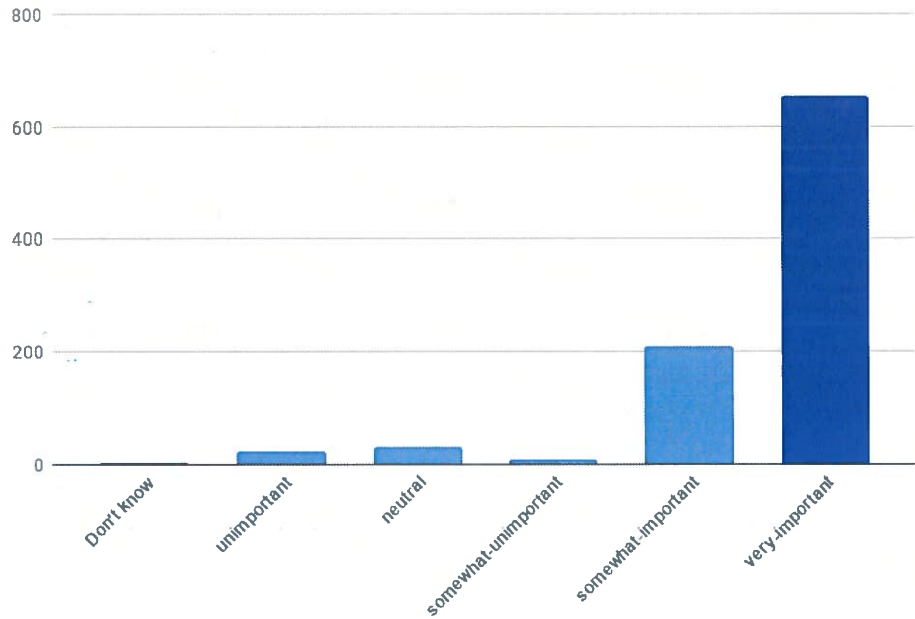
**Age:** 111 (13%) between 18-29, 211 (24%) between 30-39, 200 (23%) between 40-49, 144 (16%) between 50-59 and 201 (23%) older than 60.

**Location:** Of the 53 unique zip codes reported for home address, the five most frequently reported were: 80903 (107), 80909 (87), 80906 (86), 80907 (72) and 80904 (61)

**Work Location:** Of the 786 people who replied with a zip code for their work address, 207 said 80903.

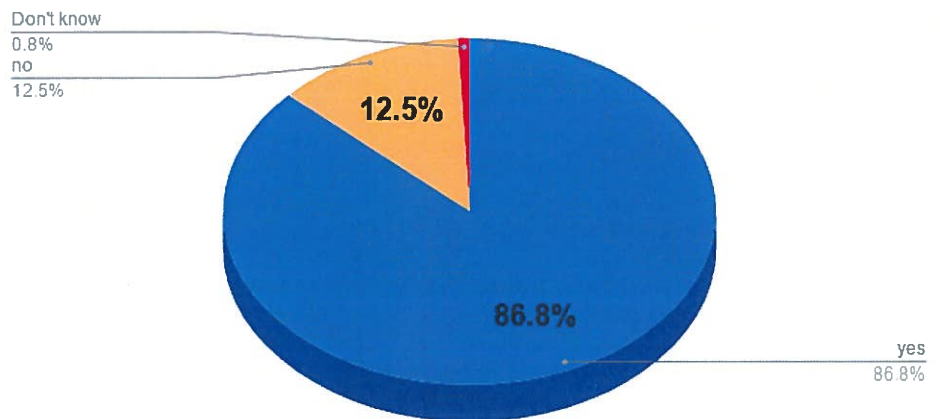
### How important is it to you and your family to experience the arts?

When asked how important it is for respondents and their families to experience the arts, more than half, 653 or 70%, responded “very important”.

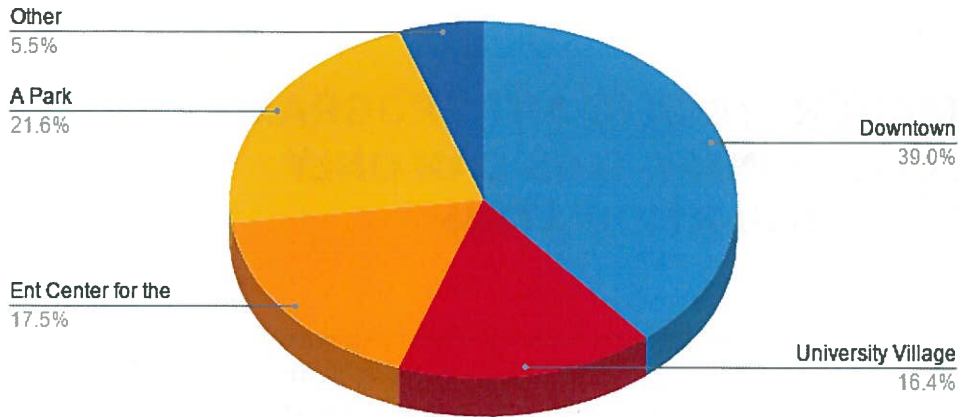


### Do you think public art adds value to your community?

A majority of respondents, 806 or 87%, said public art adds value to their community.

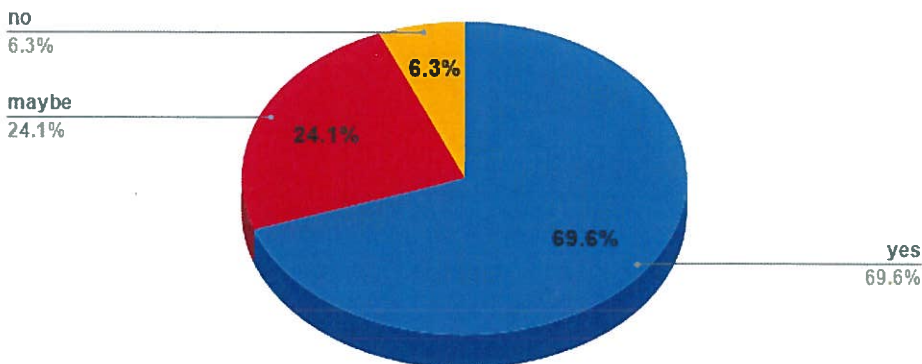


### Where do you find public art?



An overwhelming majority of respondents, 887 or 95%, have experienced public art in Colorado Springs. Nearly all respondents experienced public art in Downtown, 836 or 90% and half experienced art in a park, 464 or 50%.

### Would you support the creation of a sustainable source of funding for public art in Colorado Springs?



Over half of respondents support creating a sustainable source of funding for public art in Colorado Spring, 616 or 70%.

# KEY FINDING 1

## **A SUSTAINED, PERMANENT PUBLIC ART PROGRAM IS DESIRED BY THE COMMUNITY. THIS CAN ONLY HAPPEN WITH THE CITY'S PARTICIPATION.**

A majority of questionnaire respondents (68.9%) support the creation of a sustainable source of funding for public art in Colorado Springs and 87% believe that public art adds value to their community.

Colorado Springs citizenry is deeply committed to and proud of its arts and culture. It is called out in PlanCOS and from the Master Plan team analysis, the community widely supports the arts. An overwhelming majority, 96%, of respondents believe that arts experiences are important to their families.

While the public might think public art is important, private and non-profit funding for a public art program may not be a reliable source of funding. Those surveyed believe a permanent funding stream from a public source is more likely to fully achieve the goal to establish a cohesive, sustainable public art program.

There are many outdoor art and mural projects popping up around Colorado Springs, but most are not City-funded—for example, Concrete Couch's mosaic "pumpkin" located on S. Nevada and murals painted on the sides of downtown commercial buildings. After decades of privately-funded or non-profit-funded public art projects speckling the landscape, and now that there is a strong commitment at the City planning level (see "Assessment Methods Section"), a majority of those surveyed believe it is time for the City of Colorado Springs to formalize its commitment to public art programming. Now is the time to capture and grow the synergy that private efforts have created. With the City's help, a truly cohesive, city-wide, robust cultural climate is possible in Colorado Springs.

# KEY FINDING 2

## PUBLIC ART IS UNEQUALLY DISTRIBUTED AROUND THE CITY.

More equal distribution is desired by the community. Creating a goal to thoughtfully and widely place art must come from the City at a policy level.

Much of the City's public art collection is not equally distributed among the various areas and neighborhoods. Rather, it is concentrated in downtown locations.

Data gathered from the public shows there is a desire to have artwork in more neighborhoods and parks. Only the City can provide that guidance, along with consistent funding support and policies.

Additional research is needed to identify which neighborhoods desire and presently lack public art. Funding and a means by which these communities could engage through art projects would be well-received. A shorter-term work plan could help identify priority areas for art.

By creating public/private partnerships, the City can leverage its dollars to fund public art initiatives and the staff needed in the short-term until a longer-term, more sustainable public art program can be instituted. (Examples of public-private partnerships are listed in the Toolkit section.)

# KEY FINDING 3

## THE COLORADO SPRINGS COMMUNITY WOULD BENEFIT FROM HAVING A “PUBLIC ART EXPERT” ON CITY STAFF.

Currently, there is no designated person, whether a City employee or otherwise, who is specifically tasked with creating and leading a public art program and facilitating public art processes for other City departments. Many City departments already have identified public art as a useful and effective community engagement tool, yet lack the internal competencies to utilize this powerful tool to its full potential. Members of the Public Art Master Plan Steering Committee and other creative community members recommended a City staff person, embedded in an existing City department but available as a resource to all departments, who can establish a public art program, answer questions, and provide skills, guidance and recommendations on best practices that are currently much-desired among City personnel and residents. “We just want someone who can pick up a phone and answer our questions,” stated a Steering Committee member and local artist.

At least one full-time (FTE) designated staff person, could act as a spokesperson and subject-matter expert to coordinate all the partnerships and manage the projects for a public art program. No such position exists presently.

A designated public art expert would be a person who understands and has experience in arts policy and planning, can advocate for and promote public art across all City departments and who also understands how municipal government functions. The designated public art expert should be someone who can champion public art and help the City navigate its first steps toward a formal public art program. This person will be fundamental to overcoming the internal skepticism that the City cannot or will not support a public art program.

Ideally, such a position would be housed within a City department where they will not be isolated and where public art can be integrated into vast strategic decisions and planning. It is imperative that this person have a finger

on the pulse of the developments, re-developments and community planning efforts within the City. This role would be best housed outside of the CSPM because that facility is isolated from other City departments. Perhaps this FTE is a “special appointee” that serves all City departments until the public art program is better established. If a publicly-funded FTE is not feasible at first, the City could consider partnering with a non-profit for matching funds to make it possible.

Their recommended public art expert would manage and maintain all aspects of public art programming including:

- Management and maintenance of existing assets;
- Marketing the collection;
- Act as spokesperson for the program;
- Educate community and City leadership on the value of the program;
- Shepherd new policies and funding requests through the City;
- Identify and facilitate community and public resources for public art projects;
- Provide advice and guidance for community projects and answer questions about funding, creating, installing and maintaining artwork and murals in the public realm;
- Connect with the creative community and negotiate public/private partnerships moving forward; and
- Work with developers to fulfill expectation/requirements
- Connect with the creative community and negotiate public/private partnerships moving forward; and
- Work with developers to fulfill expectation/requirements.

# KEY FINDING 4

## ***PlanCOS* AND OTHER GUIDING DOCUMENTS RECOMMEND THAT WE “INTEGRATE ARTS, CULTURE AND EDUCATION AS PART OF THE PLANNING PROCESS.”**

Currently, there is no one tasked to actively consult on new developments with an eye to encouraging developers to include public art in major private developments.

The City would benefit from having an internal expert to assign to review and advise on City planning efforts. This specialist would be a resource to provide guidance to all City staff and private developers on how to best incorporate public art into their projects and in the pre-planning phases before construction begins.

A designated public art expert can help explain how public art can contribute to private developments placemaking efforts on all types of projects, including public spaces that will become gathering places and major areas for public interaction, including recreation centers, libraries, parks, bridges, trails and streetscape projects, sensitive to community character and needs.

By adding a line-item to developer checklists, City staff and the development community could be compelled to collaborate with the public arts expert. If included on a checklist, the public art expert could be included in planning meetings to advise on opportunities for placemaking and siting artwork, best practices and budgets rather than relying solely upon the planners or landscape architects/architects themselves.

# KEY FINDING 5

## DEVELOPERS HAVE A POSITIVE VIEW OF PUBLIC ART AND WANT A SMOOTH, ENTICING PROCESS TO INCLUDE MORE OF IT IN THEIR PROJECTS.

During the Master Plan team’s Developer Forum, one developer expressed that he “love(s) public art,” while others were less enthusiastic but still positive. Another developer mentioned that art and great design and architecture was something that they strive for in all their projects. Yet another developer showed images of a hotel he is building in the downtown area and showed the group the large stainless-steel sculpture that is planned for the right-of-way area at the project’s corner. No one expressed dislike of art in public places.

The group seemed wary of specific developer requirements for art in their private developments. The consensus was additional developer incentives would be welcomed, but more “red tape” or requirements would not.

Developers claimed generally to understand the benefits of placemaking in their projects. City guidance in placemaking and planning for public art in their developments would be welcomed and is needed.

Developer incentives currently only affect developments in the downtown area where there is a Form-Based Code.

Most of the artwork in private developments has not been selected through a competitive public process. Many times, the artwork is commissioned or purchased with little consultation with the City and the artist selection criteria is unknown.

By creating guidelines and a local artist roster for developers, the City would help developers find the best local artists/craftspeople for their projects, ensuring that these projects integrate authentically with the community and they are meant to serve, and ensuring dollars invested in creative placemaking stay in the community.

Currently, there are no guidelines for private developments or parks that include artwork and then the project is turned over to the City for ownership. There should be, at a minimum, a City review for maintenance before the artwork is installed and accepted for turn-over. Maintenance concerns are raised only if an artwork comes before the PAC for approval to be included into the City’s permanent collection.



# KEY FINDING 6

## **PUBLIC ART NEEDS STRONGER SUPPORT AT A POLICY LEVEL. THIS WILL REQUIRE MORE EDUCATION, POLITICAL SUPPORT AND ADVOCACY.**

Based on interviews, City Council members generally recognize the importance of a strong creative community and supporting a vibrant public art program. But they are split on whether the latter is possible in Colorado Springs. One Council Member recognized that a robust public art program could be an economic development tool and supports a budget-request for program funding. Another Council person doubted whether funding a full-time employee would be possible. Additional education and advocacy are needed to create a common understanding among City Council and the Mayor of how a program and staff person can be funded and what the benefits would be to the community.

Several interviewees suggested that the time is right for a Lodging and Rental Tax (LART) increase. One Council of Neighborhood Organizations (CONO) representative stated it was a LART ask “no brainer”. A LART tax increase would be one tool for funding public art administration and maintenance.

# KEY FINDING 7

## THE TIME IS RIGHT TO JUMP-START A PUBLIC ART PROGRAM.

Public art is mentioned numerous times in planning documents from Colorado Springs and the region (see Chapter 2); however, the City still has no formal public art program. Through the publication and promotion of this Public Art Master Plan, leaders will have the opportunity to discuss and debate the importance of funding a public art program.

Two City Council members were interviewed and echoed the thought that the “time is right” to push for funding a public art program.

Colorado Springs’ Sesquicentennial is approaching in 2021, which offers a good opportunity to use public art as a tool for branding and placemaking for the City. Creating a Sesquicentennial public art project would be a meaningful story and a visible, high-profile quick win for a fledgling public art program. If this project is promoted as a kick-off project for a more sustained, community-driven public art program, it will help garner public support and build trust with people who are skeptical about the need for public art.

If feasible, a LART grant request would be a means for beginning this temporary or permanent Sesquicentennial project. More research and staff guidance is needed to move forward with the grant application in time for a fully-funded public process and timely installation.

## KEY FINDING 8

### **PUBLIC ART COMMISSION HAS A PASSIVE ROLE THAT DOESN'T ALLOW FOR EFFECTIVENESS.**

The PAC is set up to provide reactive decision-making, rather than proactive public art support and implementation. This is due partly to the lack of public art policies or funding for new projects. Strong leadership at a staff level, e.g. public art expert, would help guide the group to

be more effective. The group should develop an annual work plan that sets three to five goals they could accomplish with little to no staff assistance. More analysis and work on the PAC's purpose is needed and forthcoming.

## KEY FINDING 9

### **A REGIONAL CULTURAL PLAN IS ON THE HORIZON.**

The 10-year regional Cultural Plan by the Cultural Office of the Pikes Peak Region (COPPeR) is beginning in 2020. The Public Art Master Plan for the City should be used as a stepping-stone to a greater cultural future. Without supporting the greater creative community and working to make the region a place where creatives of all kinds flourish and thrive, there will be no public art program.

While the Cultural Plan is regional and will be developed by another agency, there is no need to be at cross-purposes with the rest of the cultural community by asking for funding too soon and creating arts funding exhaustion. The City's participation in the Cultural Plan will be vital to ensuring that the Public Art Master Plan dovetails with the larger, broader Cultural Plan of COPPeR.

# GOALS AND STRATEGIES

## INTRODUCTION

The following recommendations are key stepping-stones for the Colorado Springs creative community and City leadership to build a public art program from the ground up, garner acceptance and excitement for the program and make public art planning the norm.

The order of the goals below is important. The first three goals can be seen as more urgent and needing immediate attention, while the final four goals might be less urgent or more easily accomplished once the public and City leadership have seen the benefits and value of the public art program through earlier accomplishments. Each one of these will take leadership and passion from the Colorado Springs community, driven with an absolute confidence that it can and must be done.

# GOAL 1

## BEGIN BOLDLY AND SUSTAIN MOMENTUM



Colorado's "Olympic City USA" is booming with a thriving community, affordable housing, great schools and friendly neighborhoods ([www.coloradosprings.gov](http://www.coloradosprings.gov)). Nationally known for its grassroots arts and cultural life, it is a time of excitement and the energy is palpable within the arts community. Colorado Springs can capitalize on this energy by quickly moving on a highly visible public art project to celebrate Colorado Springs' Sesquicentennial. This project will set the tone for the ambitious yet-to-be-realized public art program and inspire more support for its creation.

### **STRATEGY 1: COMMISSION A SPECIAL SESQUICENTENNIAL PROJECT**

2021 is the Sesquicentennial for Colorado Springs, a time of public celebration and looking back at the history and legacy of the City of Colorado Springs. The Sesquicentennial is the perfect opportunity for a broad-impact, highly visible public art project. The project will raise community awareness about the potential of public art and provide a permanent legacy for the City. If marketed properly, this type of project can educate and excite the public about future projects by including public input into the artist

selection process. The project would be the start of a robust and continued public art program for the City.

- Collaborate with other organizations who support the project and use it as a proof-of-concept for the all stakeholders to begin learning how to work together toward a common goal. This will also demonstrate the City's dedication to public art with this being an exciting first step.
- Request a combination of Lodgers and Automobile Rental Tax (LART) grant funds and private funding, which will make a larger-scale project feasible.
- It is recommended that the City should include in its budget request to fund a public art consultant to execute the project because it is not likely to have a full-time employee on board in time.
- Determine if several smaller projects would be better suited and/or more feasible for connecting public art to the Sesquicentennial, such as placing smaller artwork in historic parks or plazas undergoing a planning effort in 2020 that could serve as a "first project" of the new public art program



# GOAL 2

## DEMONSTRATE DEDICATION TO PUBLIC ART

Public art in Colorado Springs needs champions. The City's various recent planning documents state very clearly that the City recognizes and values arts and culture in Colorado Springs, and more public art in and around the City is desirable. This was echoed in the Master Plan Community Input Questionnaire community survey data and in the *PlanCOS*. A staff-person is recommended who can shape the new program, its policies as well as guide future public art projects. This public art expert can begin collaborating to develop policies and procedures and creating connections and a supportive network for the new public art program. This position will also be a resource for other City departments, which have identified public art in their master plans, goals and initiatives..

### **STRATEGY 1: DESIGNATE A PUBLIC ART EXPERT**

The Public Art Master Plan will need support staff to launch and to maintain a positive trajectory. At a minimum, one full-time employee who will serve as a public art resource at the City is recommended. This role will be a critical support person, resource.

### **BENCHMARK PROGRAM**

The City Artist program in Saint Paul, MN, is recommended as a model for this type of integration. Public Art Saint Paul (PASP) is a private, non-profit organization working in partnership with the City of Saint Paul to imagine and create a more just, sustainable, and beautiful city. By placing artists in leading roles, we help shape public spaces, improve city systems, and deepen civic engagement.

<http://publicartstpaul.org/about/>

and advocate for City initiatives and departments, specializing in public art and community engagement.

Investigate the position as a special appointment within the Office of the Mayor so that their expertise is leveraged easier and more seamlessly. Another option is in the Office of Innovation and Sustainability. The public art expert should be viewed as a resource for all City departments, from Community Development to Planning and Development to Public Works.

Investigate funding this position through a combination of public and private funding to leverage the City's contribution to guiding community art projects.

## **STRATEGY 2: EVALUATE AND REDEFINE THE ROLE OF THE PUBLIC ART COMMISSION**

Audit the mission, purpose and authority of the existing Public Art Commission (PAC). Align the mission and purpose of the group with the existing requested duties. Once a sustainable source of funding for public art is found, the PAC mission, purpose and authority should be re-audited and shifted to ensure that the body is effective and clearly defined. As the public art program is established and grows, the PAC should create yearly work plans for staff, guiding priorities and activities from year to year.

## **STRATEGY 3: STRUCTURE THE PUBLIC ART PROGRAM**

Set up the program for success and better align it with best practices around the country.

- Create a public art selection policy that dovetails with the strategy set forth by the stakeholder group that includes policies beyond accepting donated artworks. See Toolbox for sample selection processes.
- Establish a mural policy that will encourage the creation of outdoor murals and distinguish them from other types of signage. Collaborate with Safety Department to make sure mural policy can be useful as a graffiti deterrent. See Toolbox section for sample Mural Policy.

## **STRATEGY 4: LEAD AND COLLABORATE WITH ORGANIZATIONS CREATING PUBLIC ART**

Colorado Springs has various, robust non-profit arts organizations working to create art in neighborhoods outside the Downtown area. Develop a common understanding with non-profits about public art industry best practices. Investigate adopting policies at the City that can better support and connect artists in the community and non-profit arts groups, such as qualified artist rosters.

## **STRATEGY 5: COLLABORATE WITH CITY DEPARTMENTS**

Work collaboratively with other City departments to develop policies that are mutually beneficial and follow industry best practices. In order for this collaboration to be ongoing and organic, the public art expert should be housed in a department that is easily accessible to other City staff. Some options include: Mayor's Office of Innovation or the Departments of Planning and Development, Community Development or Neighborhood Services. Most often, public art programs are housed in the Cultural Services division; however, that division is focused on facilities and may not be the best fit.

## **STRATEGY 6: ADVOCATE FOR SUSTAINABLE FUNDING FOR PUBLIC ART**

Create a small and internal stakeholder group that understands the value and impact of public art as well as the City funding structure. This group will have the specific goal of creating strategies for longer-term public art funding. This could be a small subcommittee of the Public Art Commission partnered with staff from Planning, Economic Development and Finance. The group should investigate different funding strategies and structures for public art similar to other successful public art programs nation-wide.

# GOAL 3

## ENCOURAGE AND INCENTIVIZE PLACEMAKING BY DEVELOPERS



Collaborating with developers will allow the City to extend its presence into new areas that may not have any public artworks present now. For example, the existing University Village development was identified in the Master Plan Community Input Questionnaire as an important place where people experience public art. Major developments that are in progress around the city represent an opportunity for collaboration and leveraging funds to support public artworks.

### STRATEGY 1: PROVIDE INCENTIVES

The designated public art expert may work with Development Services to evaluate current incentives, and if needed, make revisions or additions to the incentives to further encourage the inclusion of art assets in private developments. Areas of opportunity include: streetscape, shade structures, gathering spaces, signage and seating. For example: Incentives for choosing local artisans from the newly developed Artist Roster for artistic components like metalwork, art glass or other enhancements.

### BENCHMARK PROGRAM

Mass Cultural Council created a website where you can post job opportunities for artists and performers.

<https://artsake.massculturalcouncil.org/category/call-to-artists/>



## **STRATEGY 2: CREATE INCENTIVES FOR PUBLIC ART IN ESTABLISHED AND DEVELOPING ARTS DISTRICTS**

These incentives might encourage more artwork through permit waivers for works of art in the right-of-way, more relaxed codes for signage versus murals in arts districts.

## **STRATEGY 3: MAKE IT EASIER TO INCLUDE ART IN NEW DEVELOPMENTS**

Develop a "Public Art Toolbox" for implementing art in developments, and new capital improvement projects. This is a major project of the aforementioned stakeholder group and the new City public art expert. The toolbox would include:

- Art selection policies and selection guidelines
- List/roster of qualified artists in multiple mediums and trades
- Review plans and make suggestions for art projects, budgets, etc.
- Mural guidelines
- Siting guidelines for artwork in the right-of-way
- Potential waivers
- Offer staffing assistance to take the perceived "burden" of doing public art from developers, planners and others

## **STRATEGY 4: ADVOCATE FOR A PUBLIC ART PROCESS IN NEW URBAN RENEWAL DEVELOPMENTS**

Any high-profile, high-budget urban renewal projects, such as the new U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Museum or the new stadium, will be highly visible locations where international tourists will flock. They will be the crown jewels of the city as sources of civic pride and warrant high-profile, placemaking assets, such as public artwork. Potential placement includes, but is not limited to: the entrance(s), the public plazas and interior spaces. These could be funded through a combination of mechanisms.

### **BENCHMARK PROGRAM**

Phoenix has a zoning overlay to encourage adaptive reuse and allow work/live spaces in arts districts.

<https://www.phoenix.gov/pdd/planning-zoning/pzstudies/arts-culture-and-small-business-overlay>

### **BENCHMARK PROGRAM**

Many cities have Artist Rosters where developers, collectors, and the general public can find and hire artists directly.

<https://www.hireculture.org/>  
<https://boulderarts.org/mural-artist-roster/>

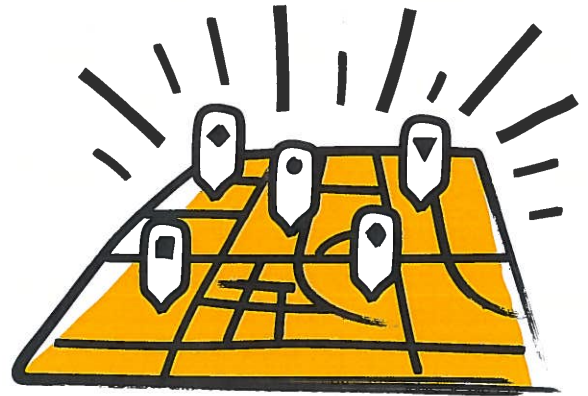
### **BENCHMARK PROGRAM**

Denver's Urban Renewal Authority has required public art in all its TIF funded projects since 2006.

<https://renewdenver.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/DURA-Project-Art-Policy-Revised-Feb-2-2006-1.pdf>

# GOAL 4

## PLACE ART THROUGHOUT THE CITY



The City of Colorado Springs owns 99 public artworks, the vast majority of which are placed in the downtown area. The longstanding collaboration with the Downtown Partnership, managing organization of the State Certified Creative District, has led to the significant growth of the City's public art collection and has also been indirectly responsible for the high concentration of the artworks downtown; however, there are neighborhoods that still remain devoid of public art. The locations without art are important opportunities for the City to demonstrate a new dedication to providing a publicly accessible experience of art to its constituents.

### **STRATEGY 1: FOCUS ON OPPORTUNITY AREAS**

Map the areas and neighborhoods with the least amount of public art to focus

attention on these under-served populations. Encourage and collaborate with neighborhood stakeholders to produce projects in these areas. Work with Registered Neighborhood Organizations (RNOs), Council of Neighbors and Organizations (CONO), City Council, the Neighborhood Planning Program and other master plans to seek out these opportunities.

### **STRATEGY 2: DEVELOP A NEIGHBORHOOD GRANT PROGRAM**

Investigate how to create a grant program for neighborhood-serving art projects. Provide grants to artists and RNOs as incentives to create art projects in places identified by the City public art expert and Public Art Commission as areas of opportunity. Grants can range from \$500-\$1,000 to be effective.



# GOAL 5

## PROMOTE AND FOSTER LOCAL CREATIVE ECONOMY THROUGH PUBLIC ART

The creative community is alive and well in Colorado Springs and creative professionals contribute significantly to the local and regional economy. The Colorado Springs Creative District reports a Creative Vitality Index of 5.91 in 2015, more than five times the national rate (United States CVI = 1.0). Young people and businesses want to be located in a place where there are cultural amenities as well as creative opportunities for work. A City-supported public art program and a dedication to supporting local creatives attracts, retains and highlights the talent that exists in the area and demonstrates the City's involvement in supporting the growth of the economy by circulating the funding through the economy. Artists don't just pocket their project budgets; they hire staff and subcontractors, buy materials and supplies, procure insurance, pay sales and property tax and pay rent or own property.

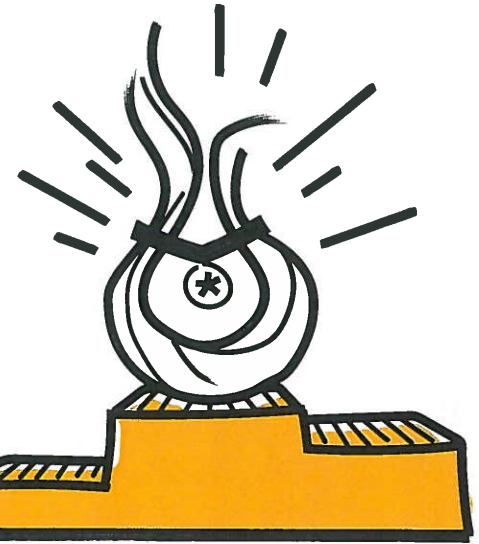
## **STRATEGY 1: SUPPORT THE LOCAL WORKFORCE BY MAKING IT EASY TO HIRE LOCAL ARTISTS**

Create an artist and artisan roster so that anyone interested in producing public art can connect with and hire local talent. The process of building the roster will be managed by the designated City public art expert with input on requirements and parameters recommended by the Public Art Commission. The roster will be updated periodically in order to add new artists, review the appropriateness of the requirements as well as validity of existing entries.

- Where appropriate skill sets exist, offer public art commissions and public art maintenance/conservation opportunities to local artists.
- Set goals for hiring local talent based on budget threshold or an annual percentage of total contracts.
- Require non-local contractors to work with a local business.
- Foster education about public art as a business opportunity by hosting workshops and tutorials for artists interested in applying for public art opportunities.
- Build a collaboration with the local small business development center to offer special trainings for artists/creatives.
- Connect with recent graduates of local arts programs to educate them about the public art program.
- Provide free presentations to art students on the business of public art.

## **STRATEGY 2: MARKET AND PROMOTE ARTISTS AND THE COLLECTION**

- Create a comprehensive, visually compelling and user-friendly website, and consider purchasing a mobile app service to promote the collection.
- Contact information for the designated City public art expert should be easily available here.
- Create a better, more informative map of the collection, create on-line tours or scavenger hunts and develop or sign up with a service to offer a local artist roster.
- Highlight artworks that are on display at special events, mark milestones of the growth of the collection and new acquisitions.
- Ask artists to speak at dedications of new artworks and include images of their artworks in publications and communications about culture in Colorado Springs.
- Submit the collection information to Public Art Archive, the only online, freely accessible, comprehensive, national database of completed public artworks.
- Develop a marketing strategy for getting the word out about the public art collection and the ways and places where people can learn more about it.
- Collaborate with like-minded organizations and partners to cross-promote relevant events and programs



# GOAL 6

## CREATE A UNIFIED, OLYMPIC-LEVEL PUBLIC ART COLLECTION

### **STRATEGY 1: DEVELOP A GOLD MEDAL PUBLIC ART COLLECTION**

The designated City public art expert and stakeholder group will develop a collection strategy, selection policies and procedures for the program and the growth of the collection. The community will be engaged in the selection process so that the public art collection will grow to reflect the community and to become a source of civic pride and connection.

residents value artwork in their neighborhoods, they become stewards of those artworks and better caretakers of their communities. Public support for and engagement in the process of public art is vital to growing the necessary support for the creation of a long-term, sustainable fund for public art in Colorado Springs. Keep in mind that everyone will grow to love something in the art collection, but no one will like everything.

### **STRATEGY 2: EMPHASIZE PROCESS OVER PRODUCT**

Public engagement is the key to building a successful public art collection. If the public is involved and heard, and the projects emanate from within the community, the community will embrace the process and the artwork. When

# GOAL 7



## MAINTAIN, PRESERVE AND CHERISH THE PUBLIC ART COLLECTION

The existing public art collection is a valuable City asset, and like other City assets, the public art collection deserves to be maintained and celebrated. The City must create a more robust and proactive maintenance and deaccession plan for the existing collection. This will ensure the integrity of the collection, grow civic pride and enable the value of the artwork to increase..

### **STRATEGY 1: CONDUCT REGULAR PUBLIC ART COLLECTION ASSESSMENTS**

Distribute an RFP for professionals to conduct a public art collection assessment. Assign the task to the designated public art expert staff person or an experienced staff person from the Museum. (See toolbox section for sample Maintenance Plan. <https://www.artworkarchive.com/blog/public-art-maintenance-best-practices>)

### **STRATEGY 2: MAINTAIN EXISTING ASSETS**

Conduct a public art collection assessment every other year at minimum or schedule each artwork on an assessment rotation as recommended in Strategy 1.

### **STRATEGY 3: EVALUATE THE FUNDING FOR MAINTENANCE AND ADJUST ACCORDINGLY**

Goal 2 Strategy 6 outlines recommendations to identify a sustainable source of funding for public art. That strategy should also incorporate the evaluation and determination of sustainable funding for public art maintenance and conservation projects.

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# APPENDICES

**THE FOLLOWING DATA WAS COLLECTED AND COMPILED BY THE CONSULTANTS  
DURING THE PUBLIC ART MASTER PLAN PROCESS**

APPENDIX 1 – SAMPLE BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS

APPENDIX 2 – RAW SURVEY DATA

APPENDIX 3 – INTERVIEW AND FOCUS GROUP NOTES



# TOOLKIT

**The following resources are provided as sample documents and guides to best practices that the City of Colorado Springs may wish to use in reviewing, revising, and developing public art policies and procedures.**

## **Public Art Best Practices, Americans for the Arts**

### **Sample Public Art Management Plan, Wheatridge, CO**

### **Sample Cultural Commission Policies and Bylaws**

- Art Commission Re-establishment Ordinance, Seattle, WA
- Public Art Commission Bylaws, Golden, CO
- Public Art Commission Ordinance, Lafayette, CO
- Public Art Commission Policies and Procedures, Wheatridge, CO

### **Sample Public Art Contracts**

- Public Art Contract, Lakewood, CO
- Public Art Agreement, Commerce City, CO

## **Sample Public Art Ordinances**

- Public Art Ordinance, Carbondale, CO
- Public Art Ordinance, Loveland, CO
- Public Art Ordinance, Portland, ME

## **Sample Public Art Policies**

- Public Art Policies, Boulder, CO
- Public Art Policies, Golden, CO
- Public Art Policies, Louisville, CO

## **Sample Public Art Selection Processes**

- Artist Selection Process Resource Guide (2013), Americans for the Arts
- Public Art Handbook for Louisiana Communities
- Artist Selection Guidelines, Public Art Network

## **Sample Mural Policies**

- Mural Guidelines, Boise, ID
- Mural Policy, Denver, CO
- Mural Policy, Albuquerque, NM



**WE MUST CONTINUE  
TO CREATE A CITY THAT  
MATCHES OUR SCENERY.**

COLORADO SPRINGS PUBLIC ART MASTER PLAN