



CITY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW

## MEMORANDUM

Community Development Department/  
Economic Development Division

**DATE:** February 9, 2022  
**TO:** Visual Arts Committee  
**FROM:** John Lang, Economic Vitality Manager  
**SUBJECT:** **Public Art Strategy Work Plan for 2022**

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### PURPOSE

Seek feedback on the Public Art Strategy Development from the Visual Arts Committee.

### BACKGROUND

#### Public Art In Mountain View

*Public Art and Capital Improvement Program Projects (City Council Policy K-5)*

In 1987, the City Council approved Council Policy K-5 to include public art for City capital improvement projects. The Council Policy provides direction on the types of City projects in which public art is included, the budget allocated to public art, and the process for approving the selection.

The current Council Policy K-5 calls for 1% of the construction budget of all major capital improvement projects (\$1 million or more) to be devoted to the selection and purchase of a significant appropriate piece of art which shall be incorporated as an integral piece of the design of the project. This artwork may consist of works integrated into the project; acquisitions; art commissioned for the building exterior, interior, or site; or other appropriate installations. The Visual Arts Committee (VAC) is responsible for advising the City Council on the selection of art for qualifying capital improvement projects.

Over the past five years, Council Policy K-5 facilitated public art at the Teen Center, Community Center, Rengstorff Park Aquatics Center, and Fayette, Mora, Pyramid, and Wyandotte Parks. Council will be considering modifications to Council Policy K-5 as recommended by the VAC and Council Policy and Procedures Committee (Attachment 1: Council Policy and Procedures Committee Item 5.1: Council Policy K-5 – Public Art and Capital Improvement Program Projects).

#### *Public Art and Mountain View Land Use Policies*

Public art was integrated into the 2030 General Plan, which serves as the guiding document for the City's physical development and preservation. It includes goals and policies that convey a long-term vision and guide local decision-making to achieve that vision. The plan identified a visual arts goal, POS-11: commitment to the visual arts that celebrate the diversity and aspirations of the City and are accessible to the entire community.

The General Plan also identified five change areas. These are: East Whisman, El Camino Real, Moffett Boulevard, North Bayshore, and San Antonio. The identification of these areas resulted in four new Precise Plans: East Whisman, El Camino Real, North Bayshore, and San Antonio. These plans require developers seeking additional development capacity to provide community benefits. Developers may provide public art as a community benefit to meet those requirements. The following is a summary of the four adopted plans:

- East Whisman: Public art is incorporated to support City public projects and public spaces in private development projects. In addition, the Plan will integrate findings and direction from the Public Art Strategy.
- El Camino Real: Public art will be integrated in public plazas as special street-facing open areas that act as gathering spaces for surrounding neighborhoods. These would be designated as unique and notable destinations with the potential to accommodate a range of activities. Amenities could include benches, art, water features, or other elements.
- North Bayshore: Public art is defined as a public benefit where nonresidential projects could earn extra floor area ratio (FAR) if they provide public benefits or contribute to a district improvement project.
- San Antonio: Public art is included as part of the design guidelines in which art can be added to enrich the pedestrian experience. The Precise Plan outlines how public

art could be incorporated into new development and what the art should be: locally sourced, interactive, interpretive, and functional.

## **Public Art Strategy Development**

### *Benchmarking*

Cities across the Bay Area support public art through a variety of strategies and policies to fund public art programming. Staff has looked at art programs, master plans, and policies across most jurisdictions within Santa Clara County. The benchmarking process has resulted in an understanding of how cities, in varying degrees, support art deployment in their respective communities. Staff focused attention on those cities that have a public art policy for private development, art donation and temporary art programs, art deaccessioning policy, and public art collection maintenance policy, as model cities for developing a Mountain View public art strategy. Staff has also had conversations with select jurisdictions on lessons learned from implementing such programs. A matrix of public art strategies and programs identified by staff is included as Attachment 2.

### *Initial Outreach*

Staff, with the assistance from Barbara Goldstein and Associates, conducted an initial phase of public outreach at three community events (Monster Bash in October 2019, and two Sunday Farmers' Markets in November and December 2019) to provide information to the community on what public art is and what it could look like, and also to receive input on potential goals for public art. In addition, staff held two focus groups in February 2020, one for neighborhood groups and the other for artists.

### *Identified Goals*

Clear goals provide the foundation for what public art programs and policies should be established and how the strategy should be implemented. As part of the initial evaluation and considerations for a Public Art Strategy in Mountain View, staff identified four potential high-level goals based upon staff's evaluation of neighboring cities and the initial phase of public outreach conducted in 2019 and 2020.

The four goals received unanimous support of the VAC at its March 11, 2020 meeting. The goals connect with the Public Art Goal articulated in the 2030 General Plan while

guiding implementation through an integrated set of policies/framework that the strategy will ultimately incorporate, and include the following:

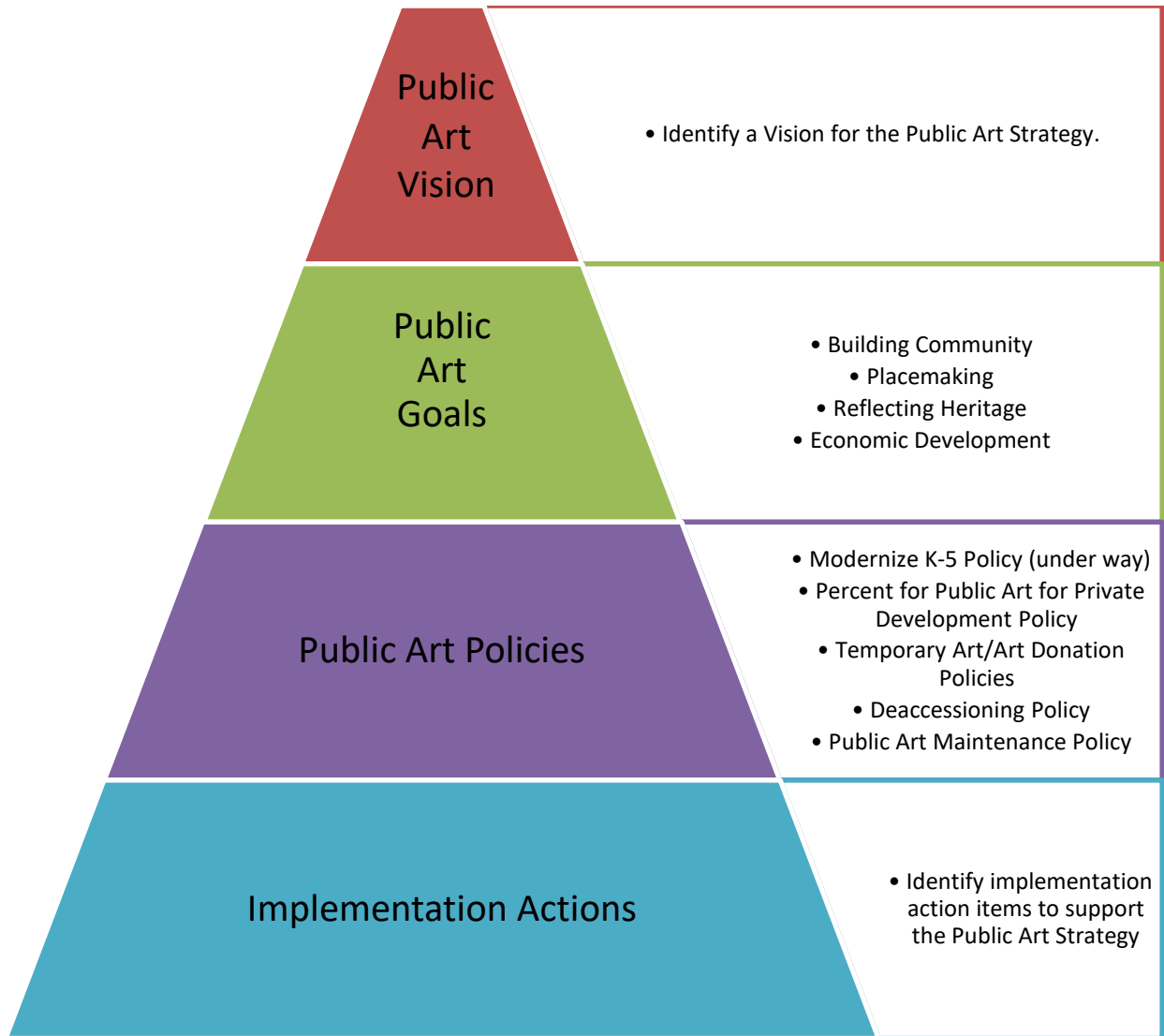
- **Building Community:** Public art can build and support a community by promoting a sense of ownership, pride, and understanding in the community. As cities evolve and populations grow and change, artwork can help bring people together by creating shared experiences or help communities through times of change or significant events. These can take the form of temporary or permanent artwork.
- **Placemaking:** The term “placemaking” has been used in various ways and could have different implications. However, at the broadest level, a core component of placemaking is the process and/or creation of places that are visually or physically accessible to the public (i.e., plazas, parks) that cause people to want to be there. Successful placemaking creates a public space which serves as a community focal point where people of all ages, abilities, and socioeconomic backgrounds can access and enjoy a location within a city.
- **Reflecting Cultural Heritage:** Community identity is often defined by the cultural heritage of the people who live there. Public art can refer to a city’s past, present, or even its future, and such art can celebrate and share cultural heritage, shared experiences, and history.
- **Supporting Economic Development:** Public art can promote economic development and support commercial districts through visually activating vacant storefronts, bringing unique artwork to commercial districts, and enhancing commercial property. Distinct districts can emerge or be strengthened, adding to the positive characteristics of the area.

## ANALYSIS

The process for developing the Public Art Strategy originally identified in 2019 as a Work Plan item for the VAC has been delayed due to prolonged issues with the COVID-19 Pandemic.

## Public Art Strategy Framework

In order to facilitate the development and eventual adoption of the Public Art Strategy for 2022, staff is proposing the following framework and work plan to complete the project:



### *Develop a Public Art Vision*

Working with the Visual Arts Committee and the Mountain View community, develop a vision statement for Public Art. A vision statement should reflect the unique character of Mountain View and align with other guiding documents and policies for the City.

*Develop Policies that Support the Goals and Vision of an Art Strategy*

Based upon initial outreach to the community, staff has identified five initial policies to encourage and manage more public art that is widely accessible and available throughout Mountain View and aligns with the goals identified as a part of the Public Art Strategy development process.

The five policies include:

- Modernize Council Policy K-5: Discussed by the VAC and the Council Policy and Procedures Committee in fall 2021, and a revised policy will be considered by the City Council in February 2022.
- Develop a Percent for Public Art for Private Development Policy.
- Develop Temporary Art Policy and Art Donation Policy.
- Develop a Public Art Deaccessioning Policy.
- Develop a Public Art Collection Maintenance Policy.

*Identify Implementation Actions*

Working with the Visual Arts Committee and the community, the process will include seeking feedback and input on developing implementation actions associated with the five policies and four goals of the Public Art Strategy. An example of an implementation action could be the execution of a utility box public art program that aligns with the goals, vision, and policies identified in the Public Art Strategy.

**NEXT STEPS**

Use the VAC monthly meetings to gather further feedback and input on developing the Public Art Strategy.

- March/April VAC meetings on developing a Vision Statement for the Public Art Strategy.
- March/April VAC meetings to seek feedback and input on a temporary art and donation policy and a public art collection maintenance policy.

- April/May VAC meetings to seek feedback and input on a percent for public art in private development policy.
- Over the next three months (February through April), work with the VAC to develop a good inventory of public art imagery for use in the Public Art Strategy document and further refining online materials about Mountain View Public Art.
- Work with the City's Geographic Information System team to update and refine the Public Art Map with imagery and content.
- Work with the VAC and City staff to identify potential locations for additional public art installations.
- Engage the VAC in expanding outreach to the artist community and the larger Mountain View community for their feedback in developing the Public Art Strategy.

Feedback from the VAC meetings will help inform policy and implementation items associated with the development of a Public Art Strategy.

JL/SM/4/CDD  
~~819-02-09-22M~~

- Attachments:
1. Council Policy and Procedures Committee Item 5.1: Council Policy K-5 – Public Art and Capital Improvement Program Projects
  2. Benchmarking other Bay Area Public Art Programs