

DATE: September 10, 2025

TO: Visual Arts Committee

FROM: Kirstin Hinds, Economic Development Strategist
And Art Builds Community

SUBJECT: Update and Discussion regarding the Public Art Strategy Planning Process

PURPOSE

To provide the Visual Art Committee with an overview of the planning and development process for the City of Mountain View Public Art Strategy.

BACKGROUND

Public Art in Mountain View

The City of Mountain View's public art policy was first adopted in 1987 through Council Policy K-05: Public Art and CIP Projects (K-05 Policy, seen in Attachment 1). The K-05 Policy set aside funds for the "selection and purchase of a significant appropriate piece of art which shall be incorporated as an integral part of the design of a project." This policy has been refined over time: in 2013, to apply the percent for art requirement to City construction projects over \$1 million and to formalize the Visual Arts Committee's (VAC) role; and in 2022, to increase the allocation from one to two percent.

Since 1987, approximately 111 public artworks have been commissioned for installation in Mountain View, including 46 on public property through the City's percent for art policy or as a donation, and 65 in publicly accessible areas of privately owned developments. In addition, the Visual Arts Committee which reviews and advises on public art installations through the Council Policy K-05, selects annual exhibits at the Center for Performing Arts and has initiated a program of artworks on utility boxes.

Development of a Public Art Strategy

On [October 22, 2024](#), City Council held a study session to discuss the development of a Public Art Strategy. The strategy will establish a long-term framework for public art in Mountain View, including a vision, goals, implementation priorities, funding strategies, and maintenance

planning. Key areas of investigation could include expanding requirements for public art in private development, identifying priority locations and types of public art to enhance the City, and exploring additional funding sources for public art.

Strategic Planning Process

City staff is working closely with consulting group Art Builds Community (consulting team) in the development of the Public Art Strategy, which will include three phases:

1. **Phase 1 – Research and Review** (through September 2025)
2. **Phase 2 – Community Outreach / Marketing Campaign** (September–December 2025)
3. **Phase 3 – Development of the Plan** (anticipated completion Q2-2026)

In addition to regular check-ins with City staff, the consulting team will work closely with the VAC's ad hoc committee established to support this project, including Chair Susi Merhar and Vice Chair Regina Sakols. Staff and the ad hoc committee will provide regular updates during the full Visual Arts Committee meetings.

ANALYSIS

Art Builds Community analysis will focus on the following areas. During the research phase, additional topics of significance may also be identified.

1. **Assessment of Mountain View's Public Art Program**
 - Review existing artworks, locations, and conditions
 - Understand funding sources and allocation process
 - Policies governing selection, installation, and maintenance
2. **Review of VAC Public Art Strategy Discussion**
 - Evaluate how ideas previously generated by the VAC can be incorporated
 - Identify gaps or areas for further exploration through community members and stakeholder engagement
 - Discuss with the VAC which priorities from the December 2023 VAC public art strategy presentation (attachment 2) are still relevant

3. **Integration with the City's general plan and precise plan.**

- Identifying opportunities to align public art goals with other planning documents and initiatives

4. **Public Art strategy models and principles**

- Review comparable cities by population, geography, and cultural context
- Consider public art needs and current projects

This research and the discussions with the public and the VAC will form the foundation for the strategy and ensure recommendations are aligned with Mountain View's vision and policies.

Next Steps

1. **Phase 2 – Community Outreach / Marketing Campaign (September to December 2025):** The Consulting team will lead outreach efforts, including the development of promotional materials, public meetings, focus groups, and surveys. It will be important to have the support of the VAC in sharing with their networks the opportunities to provide feedback regarding the strategy.
2. **Phase 3 – Development of the Plan (anticipated completion Q2-2026):** The Consulting team will prepare the draft strategy, to include vision, guiding principles, and identifying emerging themes, for review by Staff, the advisory committee, full VAC, and City Council.

Attachments: 1. Council Policy K-05
 2. December 2023 VAC Public Art Strategy Presentation