



## PPAC Gifts & Acquisitions - Information & Inquiry Document - Updated 3/6/24

From time to time, the City of Portland receives offers from potential donors interested in contributing artwork to the City's Public Art Collection for placement on City property. These are generous and much-appreciated gestures to the citizens of Portland, and they often represent substantial investments of time, resources, and effort on the part of donors.

Installing works of art in public spaces is a partnership between the City and the potential donor/artist in conception, design, and implementation. It is an honor for an artist's work to be included in the City of Portland's collection of public art.

Many gifts of art are offered to the City, but only a few can be accepted. There are a limited number of public spaces in Portland, and the City is entrusted with deciding how these spaces are to be enhanced for the greatest good of the community.

The Portland Public Art Committee is charged with the responsibility of reviewing all artwork offered as gifts to the City. Depending on the proposed location for siting the artwork, other review committees may also need to render a subsequent recommendation.

After reviewing a proposal of artwork, the Portland Public Art Committee makes a recommendation to the City Council to accept the gift or decline the gift. The artwork must be approved and accepted by the City Council before placement can occur. Nothing in these guidelines limits or modifies in any way the authority of the City Council to accept or reject gifts of public art.

The Portland Public Art Committee will review potential gifts of art with regard to:

1. Appropriateness of the gift to the City's Public Art Collection as defined in the criteria for review
2. Quality of design, materials, and construction of the proposed gift; and
3. Accessibility, public safety, site improvements, costs to the City, and maintenance requirements.
4. Compatibility with the current Public Art Plan.

Potential donors are invited to consider a proposal to display a work of art temporarily on City property. Eligibility, guidelines and review requirements are outlined in *Guidelines for Temporary Public Art*, see Appendix: Suggestions & Resources.

### Summary of the Review Process

1. The potential donor shall discuss the idea of donating artwork to the City's Public Art Collection with the Planning Office. A staff person from the Planning Office and a volunteer from the Public Art Committee will be designated to work with the potential donor throughout the review process.
2. Artist selection is a critical step. If the project is to be gifted to a site on City land, the Public Art Committee must be part of the selection of the artist and the project unless otherwise agreed to by the Public Art Committee. A list of potential artists and other resources can be provided by the Public Art Committee, see Appendix: Suggestions & Resources
3. The potential donor works with the Planning staff and the Public Art Committee to review the appropriateness of a proposed gift to the Public Art Collection. This threshold issue of appropriateness should be addressed before the applicant invests inordinate amounts of time or money in designing work or in preparing a detailed application.
4. Once the Portland Public Art Committee has rendered a decision regarding the appropriateness of the proposed gift, the potential donor will prepare additional application materials for review according to the *Criteria for Review* (see below). Planning staff will assist the potential donor to ensure the completeness of the application.
5. The Portland Public Art Committee reviews a potential donor's application material according to the *Criteria for Review* (see below). To ensure a timely review of a potential gift, the Public Art Committee will schedule a review of a project at its next regularly scheduled meeting, or as requested by the potential donor. Public comment will be taken at the time that the project is reviewed by the Public Art Committee.
  - If the proposed site of the artwork falls within the jurisdiction of another review body (e.g., the Friends of the Parks for park sites, or the Historic Preservation Committee for sites in a historic district), the Planning Office will assist the potential donor in scheduling a review by the other review bodies. After recommendations are received from other review bodies, if any, the Planning Office will forward the recommendations from those review bodies back to the Portland Public Art Committee for consideration.
  - If the application is determined to be complete at the time of its review, and once other appropriate review bodies, if any, have rendered a recommendation, then the Portland Public Art Committee will vote to make a recommendation to the City Council as to whether to accept or not accept a proposed gift. The recommendation of the Public Art Committee is then forwarded to the City Council for review and action. The submission to the City Council will include designs, plans, and supporting documents reviewed by the Portland Public Art Committee, as well as the recommendation from

the Portland Public Art Committee and recommendation(s) from other appropriate review bodies, if any.

6. Artists are required to collaborate with an art conservation expert to determine issues related to sustainability, to make maintenance recommendations, and to submit a maintenance report.

## Criteria for Review

1. The proposed donation of artwork must be of appropriate theme, character, and design for public display, and must be consistent with the objectives of the Portland Public Art Collection (as outlined in sections A & C of the [Public Art Guidelines](#)). The Portland Public Art Committee will work with the proponents to develop concepts that respond sensitively to the objectives of the Public Art Collection, the proposed site and the surrounding context.

Appropriateness is a threshold issue. It is recommended that a proposed donor gain the consensus of the Public Art Committee that the proposed gift is appropriate before investing inordinate amounts of time or money in planning, designing or documenting a potential gift.

2. The proposed donation of artwork shall be of the highest quality design, materials, and construction. It shall be designed and fabricated for durability as well as for relatively low maintenance. It should retain its intended appearance, quality, durability and function for a minimum of twenty years.
3. The proposed donation of artwork shall be accessible to the general public.
4. The proposed donation of artwork shall not contain commercial advertising including logos, slogans and mascots.
5. The appropriate level of design documentation will be required at all stages of the review process. Proposed donors must follow the documentation outline as set forth in Guideline III, Requirements for Design Documentation for Review of an Art Project.
6. The Portland Public Art Committee will work with the donor and/or the artist to integrate a Portland Public Art plaque into the site. Public Art plaques adhere to a specified format as laid out by the Committee. Deviation from that format requires proposal and discussion and is subject to a vote by the committee. Concerns include the cohesiveness of information across our collection, accessibility, and cost implications of format changes.
7. Any required commitment of public resources to the project must be thoroughly identified by the proponent, evaluated by the Portland Public Art Committee, and understood and agreed upon prior to the acceptance of any donation. An itemized breakdown of all City contributions shall be required including estimates for all design time, labor, and ongoing maintenance.
8. All applicable considerations found in *Public Art Guidelines*, Sections III *Guidelines for Selecting Artwork and Artists*, and Section IV *Requirements for Design Documentation and Project Records* shall apply.

INQUIRY - Gifts & Donations

After reviewing the guidelines above, individuals interested in entering into the gift/donation process are strongly encouraged to fill out the form below and return it to [publicart@portlandmaine.gov](mailto:publicart@portlandmaine.gov).

Images, renderings, or sketches for work proposed or, if available, are highly encouraged to accompany this form.

Name / Organization

This individual is the primary contact regarding this inquiry. If the inquiry is coming from an organization, please be sure to also list an individual contact.

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Phone number

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E-mail address

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Inquiry regarding:

Proposed neighborhood to site artwork

Existing Artwork proposed

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If you have a particular, site, location or neighborhood in mind, please fill out section B.

If you have an existing artwork or object, please fill out section C.

If you have a proposal for an artist commission, please fill out sections C & D.

Section B - Site location

*Please fill out as much information as you have available.*

Do you have a particular site location or neighborhood you are proposing public art for?  Yes  No

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If yes, please provide the name/location of the desired neighborhood.

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Do you have a particular cross section/intersection/park/other landmark in mind where you would like to see this work of art situated? If so, please notate it here:

Rationale:

*This is the reasoning for this particular site. If you do not have a rationale, the Public Art Committee is happy to discuss site options with you.*

Section C - Artwork or Object

*Please fill out as much information as you have available or is applicable.*

Proposed  
artist name(s)

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Proposed artwork  
Title

---

Year of creation

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Proposed artwork  
medium(s)

---

Proposed artwork  
dimensions

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Current artwork  
Condition

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Current artwork  
owner

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A conservation plan is required for all PPAC artwork. Please provide a plan based on the needs of the artwork.

*Artworks accepted into the Portland Public Art Collection must have a 20 - year lifespan at minimum.*

Why do you wish to  
add this artwork to  
the Portland Public  
Art Collection?

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Anything else we  
should know?



Section D - Artist commission

*Please fill out as much information as you have available or is applicable.*

Summary of Commission process to date:

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Proposed project budget & funding sources:

## Appendix: Suggestions & Resources

It is suggested that you complete this document to the best of your ability before approaching the Portland Public Art Committee. We will be better able to assess your inquiry with all the information that is requested above.

If you are an organization that does not yet have an:

- Artist
- Object
- Site
- Fundraising plan

The PPAC has compiled the below list of resources available

### Artists

The PPAC does not make specific artist recommendations due to concerns about conflicts of interest. We therefore direct you to the following organizations and resources that might be able to assist you in connecting with an artist who is an ideal match for your project:

#### Local Organizations

- Creative Portland  
As the City of Portland's official arts agency, Creative Portland's mission is to elevate the artists, makers, and cultural institutions that make our city by the sea one of a kind.  
  
84 Free Street  
Portland, ME 04101  
<https://www.creativeportland.com/artists>  
Tel: 207-370-4784

- [Maine Arts Commission Artists & Organizations Directory](#)  
The Maine Arts Commission fosters and encourages public interest and participation in the cultural heritage and artistic expression in our state. The Commission pursues its mission through partnerships and collaborations, initiatives, advocacy, and grants for organizations, individual artists, communities, and schools throughout Maine.  
  
193 State Street  
25 State House Station  
Augusta, Maine 04333-0025

Phone: 207/287-2724

### National / Other resources

PAX - Public Art Exchange

[https://www.publicartexchange.org/share/Tt\\_22UOsjKejq9kt?utm\\_source=manual](https://www.publicartexchange.org/share/Tt_22UOsjKejq9kt?utm_source=manual)

Public Art Exchange is an open and transparent network for artists, administrators, and others interested or involved in the public art field. They promote inclusivity and connectivity in the field through resources, events, and discussion forums.

## Objects

If you are working with an artist, we recommend you keep the materials guidelines outlined in the Review Process in mind, as well as the guidelines for the longevity of artwork accepted into our collection.

The PPAC cannot advise on material procurement or selection. It is recommended you work closely with your artist for this aspect of the project.

## Site

The PPAC can advise on a location for artwork. We prioritize neighborhoods that have little public art in order to create a more democratic distribution of our collection.

## Fundraising

The PPAC occasionally sits on fundraising groups for particular artworks with the goal of communicating developments and progress back to our committee. Beyond this capacity, the PPAC does not directly assist with fundraising needs due to the volume of inquiries we receive.

If your organization is new to fundraising, we recommend you look at grants available from:

[Creative Portland's list of grants](#)

[The Maine Arts Commission](#)

[New England Foundation for the Arts](#)

NEFA invests in artists and communities and fosters equitable access to the arts, enriching the

cultural landscape in New England and the nation.

321 Harrison Ave, Suite 420

Boston, MA 02118

617-951-0010

[info@nefa.org](mailto:info@nefa.org)

## Guidelines

Portland public art program website - <https://www.portlandmaine.gov/470/Public-Art-Program>

Public Art guidelines -

<https://content.civicplus.com/api/assets/c5dea3a8-41e6-4d73-b9fe-2335aa7aec6c>

Temporary Art guidelines -

<https://content.civicplus.com/api/assets/2f88e738-53b6-461f-b645-e58e5b7bb31b>

Portland public art collection website - <https://www.publicartportland.org/>