

Sample Projects

Banners

Banners are often used by neighborhoods to define main intersections, celebrate a local event, or let visitors know the boundaries of the community. Banners can give a sense of cohesion to diverse streets, or compliment a larger beautification project.

A good starting place for your project would be to learn from the experiences of another Seattle neighborhood group that has completed a banner project. See the external links at the bottom of the page. You may also want to consult with a sign or awning company that fabricates banners as part of their business. There are fabricators listed in the Yellow Pages.

Typical Considerations

Permits and agency reviews

Banners in the public right-of-way

For any banner in the public-right-of-way (e.g., on a light pole), Seattle Department Of Transportation (SDOT) requires a Street Use Permit¹. SDOT's guidelines restrict banners to those that present information relative to a specific neighborhood or are purely decorative. For banners, the Permit must be renewed annually. You will also need to purchase your own banner brackets and rods (the hardware used to attach banners to poles.)

Cross-street banners must be strung between buildings. Installing eyebolts in a building requires a Building Permit² from the Department of Planning and Development (DPD).

SDOT will make a site inspection once a detailed description of the banner and location is submitted.

Banners on, or partially, on, private property

A Sign/Awning Permit² will be required from the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) for any permanent banner (sited in a location for more than 56 days).

Banners on private property, but projecting over the public right-of-way

This may require both a Sign/Awning Permit² and a Street Use Permit¹.

See Permits and Agency Reviews⁴ to find out if you may need to contact another agency for an additional review. (The location of your project may be within or adjacent to the jurisdiction of an agency.)

Note that King County Metro¹¹ generally does not allow a banner on a bus shelter.

Insurance

Insurance coverage⁵ will be necessary for both the installation of the banners (to protect passersby, the City, and the installer), and for the life of the Street Use Permit¹ for the same protections.

Engineering

Plans for a proposed sign or banner must meet standards for design and location as indicated in the Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 23.55 Signs⁹. With regards to projections over the right-of-way, the Code states that signs projecting into any public right-of-way, except alleys, should have a minimum clearance of eight feet over the adjacent sidewalk or other grade. It further states that no permanent sign can extend into any public right-of-way to within less than two feet of the curblin, or more than six feet beyond the property line (with exceptions at intersections).

A Washington state-licensed structural engineer should review plans for banner design if custom-mounting hardware is used. Engineers are listed in the Yellow Pages and hardware stores also sometimes have listings of construction professionals. Members of your working group may also have connections in the construction field.

Appropriate materials

Use off-the-shelf mounting hardware and metals with appropriate protection from corrosion if such corrosion might make the banner unsafe. Use durable fabric to protect from wind, rain and ultra-violet rays to enable the banner to withstand extreme weather and prevent it from rapidly wearing or fading.

Basic design, user and maintenance issues

You will need to have a sufficient number of pole banners in the area to have a strong visual impact. Ideally, the banners will be easily legible from the natural viewing distance and contain information that is concise and comprehensible without being a distraction to drivers. The banners should be high enough to avoid casual vandalism. For more information, contact the agency or jurisdiction where you will apply for your permit or review.

Maintain a contingency budget for repair or replacement of banners that become damaged or destroyed.

Contacts

- 1. Street Use Permit (Page 120)**
Seattle Department of Transportation, City of Seattle
Benita Staadecker, benita.staadecker@seattle.gov
Street Use and Annual Permits
700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 3900
PO Box 34996
Seattle, WA 98124-4996
(206) 615-1224
City of Seattle contact for Street Use Permits. You will discover the specific requirements and steps required to obtain the permit.
- 2. Sign/Awning Permit (Page 118)**
Department of Planning and Development, City of Seattle
Kent Hunnicutt, kent.hunnicutt@seattle.gov
Sign Inspector
700 Fifth Ave, Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019
(206) 684-8419
City of Seattle contact for Sign/Awning Permits. You will determine the specific requirements and steps you need to take to obtain the permit. Kent Hunnicutt is also the contact for building permits for cross-street banners.
- 3. Neighborhood Matching Fund (Page 97)**
Department of Neighborhoods, City of Seattle
700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1700
PO Box 94649
Seattle, WA 98124-4649
(206) 684-0464
Call for Department of Neighborhood's Quick Information Sheet on "Installing Banners" for more information on banner projects, including considerations for a typical work plan and budget.

Related Articles

4. **Permits and agency reviews** (Page 29)
5. **Insurance coverage** (Page 14)

Web sites

6. **Wedgewood Community Council**
<http://www.scn.org/wcc/>
This Northeast Seattle neighborhood group installed a banner project.
7. **Wallingford Chamber of Commerce**
<http://chamber.iactivesite.com/page.aspx>
A North Seattle neighborhood group that has installed banners.
8. **Columbia City Farmers Market**
<http://seattlefarmersmarkets.org/market/columbiacity/index.shtml>
A neighborhood group in South Seattle that installed banners.
9. **Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 23.55 Signs**
<http://clerk.ci.seattle.wa.us/~scripts/nph-brs.exe?s1=23.55&s2=&S3=&Sect4=AND&l=20&Sect1=IMAGE&Sect3=PLURON&Sect5=CODE1&d=C&ODE&p=1&u=%2F%7Epublic%2Fcode1.htm&r=1&Sect6=HITOFF&f=G>
The complete text for Seattle Municipal Code - Chapter 23.55 on Signs.
10. **Banners**
http://seattle.gov/economicdevelopment/biz_district_guide/biz_dist_pages/banners.htm
More information on developing banner projects from Office of Economic Development, City of Seattle
11. **King County Metro**
<http://transit.metrokc.gov/>
The department's home page.

Sample Projects

Bus Shelters

The colorful Seattle bus shelters—each with a unique mural—are evidence of what public art can do for an everyday structure. Other types of public art may be placed in or near bus shelters; in some instances, the shelter itself can be a custom-made work of public art.

The King County Metro Transit (Metro) is the public transit agency serving King County. The Metro Bus Shelter Program² plans many projects for bus shelters. These are often neighborhood or community groups, schools, or individual art projects that reflect the neighborhood in which the shelter is located. Bus shelter art projects have included tile, laser cut steel and painting.

Contact Metro if you would like to create a bus shelter project. Participants need to apply to create a mural in a bus shelter. Select the shelter where your artwork will be installed and submit the design for the mural (see external links below). Metro must receive your application at least one month before your intended start date. All designs are reviewed by program staff and design approval usually occurs within a few days of receiving the design. Metro contributes panels and paint to those whose applications are approved and members of the community donate their talent to create murals. Community groups have up to three months to complete the mural. If Metro is to maintain the bus shelter, the specific considerations for developing a public art project in or around a bus shelter are entirely at the discretion of Metro.

A community organization or the City can add a new, custom bus shelter, although this will mean the sponsoring group must obtain all of the appropriate City permits, review the siting in the bus stop with Metro, and assume all ongoing maintenance responsibilities. See Permits and Reviews⁴ for more information.

Sound Transit is a regional network of express buses, commuter rail and light rail that connects communities in King, Pierce and Snohomish Counties. Sound Transit has no immediate plans for public art projects directly organized by neighborhood groups. The Sound Transit Public Art Program³ commissions artists to work on public art projects throughout the Sound Transit system.

Typical Considerations

Insurance

King County Metro will determine the insurance requirements.

Safety

Bus stops must have a clear area, 10-feet deep by nine-feet long, at the head of the bus stop for boarding and unloading passengers. Contact Metro regarding other safety issues.

Engineering

Depending on the scale and location of the proposed art project, an engineer may need to review the plans. If a bus shelter is being constructed, at minimum a Washington state licensed engineer will need to review the plans. Engineers are listed in the Yellow Pages and hardware stores also sometimes have listings of construction professionals. Members of your working group may also have connections in the construction field.

Appropriate materials

Contact King County Metro.

Basic design, user, and maintenance issues

See the external links at the bottom of the page. Contact King County Metro for more information.

Samples, Templates, and Other Files

1. **Application form for King County Metro Bus Shelter Mural Program** (Adobe PDF)
http://transit.metrokc.gov/prog/sheltermural/sm_appform.pdf

Contacts

2. **Metro Bus Shelter Program, King County Metro** (Page 127)
http://transit.metrokc.gov/prog/sheltermural/shelter_mural.html
Dale Cummings
Program Manager
201 South Jackson St., M.S. KSC-TR-0413
Seattle, WA 98104-3856
(206) 684-1524
King County Metro contact for King County Metro public art projects (murals, custom lighting, sidewalk inlays, benches, etc.) located within or on a bus shelter, or in a designated bus zone.
3. **Sound Transit Public Art Program, Sound Transit**
<http://www.soundtransit.org/working/art/>
Carol Valenta
401 S. Jackson St.
Seattle, WA 98104
A local transit agency with staff expertise in public art.

Related Articles

4. **Permits and Reviews** (Page 29)
Permits and reviews required by the City of Seattle for public art projects.

Web sites

5. **General Design Ideas**
http://transit.metrokc.gov/prog/sheltermural/sm_design.html
Tips for creating a design for a bus shelter art project. From King County Metro Bus Shelter Program.
6. **Starting a Project with the King County Metro Bus Shelter Program**
http://transit.metrokc.gov/prog/sheltermural/sm_steps.html
A description of the steps involved in a bus shelter art project.
7. **Tips to Help Your Mural Last**
http://transit.metrokc.gov/prog/sheltermural/sm_tipstolast.html
Suggestions on how to avoid maintenance and graffiti problems. From King County Metro Bus Shelter Program.

Sample Projects

Landscape/Garden Projects

It is not always possible to know where landscaping ends and public art begins. For instance, a landscaping project using handmade planters; a custom-designed, stone pathway; and unique plant identification markers can be, in total, a public art project. The arrangement of plants itself can be seen as public art. Many Department Of Neighborhood Matching Fund grants are given for traffic circles, park improvements, and P-Patches (community garden space provided by the City of Seattle). Some of these projects can provide wonderful opportunities for art (e.g., seating elements, art fences, unique objects of art) as well as opportunities for artful landscaping.

There is abundant information available on proper tree planting and landscaping. Landscape and garden projects may also benefit from a review of existing successful projects, such as the Belltown P-Patch⁹.

Typical Considerations

Permits and agency reviews

Landscape projects located on public property

In the public-right-of-way

Contact the City Arborist at Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) about your idea for a landscape project. You will also need to obtain a Street Use Permit⁵. The public right-of-way includes planting strips. See rules and regulations⁹ for obtaining a Street Use Permit for projects in planting strips.

A Street Tree Planting Application¹³ is required whenever a tree is planted in the public right-of-way. See external links for resources on planting in the public right-of-way.

In a park

Contact Seattle Parks and Recreation⁶ for a project review and possible permits. This department maintains not only the City parks but greenbelts and boulevards. Depending on the complexity of your project, the process could take from one week to three or four months.

Landscape projects located on private property

Before starting your project you will need to get written permission from the property owner and an agreement that specifies who is responsible for maintenance. The Land Use Review Service⁷ at Department of Planning and Development (DPD) will be able to determine if you will need to apply for a Land Use Permit. The Public Resource Center⁷ can answer your permit submittal and zoning questions. You will need to follow the Director's Rules in Landscaping Standards² for compliance with the Land Use Code when carrying out your landscaping project.

See Permits and Agency Reviews¹⁰ to find out if you may need to contact an additional agency for a review. (The location of your project may be within or adjacent to the jurisdiction of an agency.)

Insurance

Insurance will be necessary for both the installation of the landscape project (to protect passersby, the City and the installer), and for the life of the landscape garden or P-Patch.

Safety

Do not make paths too slippery or uneven. Use City recommended trees¹. For more information on safety, contact the agency or jurisdiction where you will apply for your permit or review.

Accessibility

Garden paths or overlooks should be designed to accommodate disabled citizens. Most landscaping or garden projects must meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)²¹ standards for accessible design.

Appropriate materials

Use drought resistant, low maintenance plants.

Basic design, user, and maintenance issues

Properly prepare the soil and plant the trees and other vegetation to ensure that they will become established and survive to maturity. Provide adequate irrigation, especially at the early stages of growth, to ensure the plants become entrenched. Unless previously arranged through an agreement with the property owner, the sponsoring group is responsible for long-term maintenance¹⁰ of the landscaping project.

For more information, contact the agency or jurisdiction where you will apply for your permit or review.

Samples, Templates and Other Files

1. **DPD Client Assistance Memo #234 on Landscaping Information** (Adobe PDF)
<http://www.seattle.gov/dclu/Publications/cam/cam234.pdf>
Specific landscaping advice and a list of drought tolerant/low water usage trees and plants, as well as City department contacts.
2. **DPD Director's Rules in Landscaping Standards** (Adobe PDF)
<http://www.seattle.gov/dclu/Codes/dr/DR1992-13.pdf>
Rules for compliance with the Land Use Code when carrying out your landscaping project on private property.

Contacts

3. **Neighborhood Matching Fund** (Page 97)
Department of Neighborhoods, City of Seattle
700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1700
PO Box 94649
Seattle, WA 98124-4649
(206) 684-0464
Call for Department of Neighborhood's Quick Information Sheets on Landscaping/Beautifying Public Areas, P-Patch Upgrades, and Street Tree Planting. The Quick Information Sheets include resources, a step-by-step description of a typical work plan, and information about creating a budget.
4. **Landscaping Projects in the Public Right-of-Way**
Seattle Department of Transportation, City of Seattle
Nolan Rundquist, nolan.rundquist@seattle.gov
City Arborist
700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 3900
PO Box 34996
Seattle, WA 98124-4996
(206) 615-0957
City of Seattle contact for a landscaping project in the public right-of-way. You will also need to obtain a Street Use Permit.

- 5. Street Use Permit (Page 120)**
Seattle Department of Transportation, City of Seattle
Benita Staadecker, benita.staadecker@seattle.gov
Street Use and Annual Permits
700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 3900
PO Box 34996
Seattle, WA 98124-4996
(206) 615-1224
City of Seattle contact for Street Use Permits. You will discover the specific requirements and steps required to obtain the permit.
- 6. Seattle Parks and Recreation, City of Seattle (Page 135)**
Pam Kliment, pam.kliment@seattle.wa
Neighborhood Project Planner for Department of Neighborhoods
800 Maynard Avenue South
Seattle, WA 98134
(206) 684-7556
City of Seattle initial contact for public art projects that take place in a park.
- 7. Land Use Permit, Land Use Review Service (Page 90)**
Department of Planning and Development (DPD), City of Seattle
<http://www.seattle.gov/dclu/landuse/>
700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019
(206) 684-8467
Contact the DPD Applicant Services Center if your project is a unique object of art developed in conjunction with a private developer to see if you will need a land use permit. Groups planning to convert private property into a landscaping/garden project may also need to obtain a permit.
- 8. P-Patch Program**
Department of Neighborhoods, City of Seattle
<http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/ppatch/start.htm>
700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1700
PO Box 94649
Seattle, WA 98124-4649
(206) 684-0264
If your project is a landscape/garden project and is a proposed site for a new P-Patch garden, staff can help evaluate and secure access to your proposed site. They can give advice, technical assistance, and lead your group through a garden design process.

Related Articles

- 9. Belltown P-Patch (Page 50)**
Read about this successful landscaping project that was funded by the Neighborhood Matching Fund.
- 10. Step-by-Step (Page 4)**
A description of ten steps needed to complete a neighborhood public art project.

Web sites

11. **Planting Strip Landscaping and Paving**
<http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/plantingstrip.htm>
Rules and requirements for obtaining a Street Use Permit for projects in planting strips.
12. **Department of Neighborhoods - Catalog of Publications**
<http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/pubs/>
The "Environmental Projects" guide profiles several neighborhood environmental projects, describing what they did and how. Includes resources to help you conceive, plan, organize, fund and implement neighborhood self-help projects.
13. **City Arborist Web site, Seattle Department of Transportation**
<http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/arborist.htm>
Includes information such as a recommended right-of-way plant list and tips on tree planting.
14. **Street Tree Planting Application (Adobe PDF)**
<http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/docs/treeplantapp2004.PDF>
An application required whenever a tree is planted in the public right-of-way.
15. **Urban Forestry, Seattle Department of Transportation**
<http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/forestry.htm>
Resources on trees and landscaping.
16. **Vegetation Management Program, Seattle City Light**
http://www.seattle.gov/light/Neighborhoods/nh4_trtr.htm
Published *The Right Tree Book*, a downloadable 24-page document about choosing, planting and maintaining appropriate trees near power lines.
17. **Garden Paths for the Disabled**
http://www.suite101.com/article.cfm/enabling_garden/4798
Information about things to carefully consider when creating garden paths that may be used by disabled citizens. From Suite 101.com .
18. **Center for Urban Horticulture**
<http://depts.washington.edu/urbhort/>
University of Washington
Conducts a wide variety of adult education programs for everyone. They can also find resources that can help improve your garden or landscaping project.
19. **Natural Lawn and Garden Care**
http://www.seattle.gov/util/Services/Yard/Natural_Lawn_&_Garden_Care/index.asp
Tips for creating and maintaining a natural garden. From Seattle Public Utilities (SPU).
20. **How to Build a Traffic Circle in Your Neighborhood**
<http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/trafficcircles.htm>
From the Seattle Department of Transportation
21. **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**
<http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm>
Information and technical assistance on the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Sample Projects, In First Person... Belltown P-Patch

A Little Bit of Green Space in the Heart of the City

Dozens of P-Patch community gardens exist in neighborhoods throughout Seattle. P-Patch advocates are not shy in their claims: the gardens, they say, cultivate friendships, strengthen neighborhoods, increase self-reliance, provide public open space, foster environmental awareness, relieve hunger, improve nutrition, and create recreational and therapeutic opportunities. But those claims seem positively modest compared to what the Friends of a Belltown P-Patch set out to do and what they have, with creativity and years of persistence, managed to accomplish.

The very idea of having a P-Patch garden in the Denny Regrade is audacious. The Regrade is one of Seattle's most profitable development corridors and fastest growing neighborhoods. The P-Patch site is one-eighth of a city block highly desirable to the businesses surrounding it. It's not that the surrounding businesses didn't want it: they did. But the Friends of a Belltown P-Patch wanted it even more and were willing to work long and hard enough to get it.

Acquiring the Land

The Belltown P-Patch started out as an empty lot. The Friends of a Belltown P-Patch started out as five people who lived nearby. Transients used the lot as an illegal camping spot, but these five neighbors imagined a garden. "We were," said project spokesperson Eulah Sheffield, "a bunch of wild-eyed dreamers." Where others saw a weedy lot littered with broken glass, needles, and garbage, they saw a place where flowers and vegetables could grow. They saw a space that could be open and green in the midst of tall buildings and concrete. They saw, moreover, a focal point for the neighborhood, a place where neighbors could gather. It would be a place that neighbors would take care of because it belonged to them. Because of it, neighbors would come to know one another better and the neighborhood would become a safer place.

The Friends of a Belltown P-Patch began to garner support and to campaign for the lot's purchase by the Open Space Opportunity Fund — and, all the while, kept on dreaming. The Fund had \$4.5 million, meaning that only nine or ten purchases would be made out of 112 nominations. "It took a year and a half of lobbying," Sheffield said. "We did a lot of lobbying. We showed up for a lot of bureaucratic meetings. I did a lot of speaking — before City Council, the Open Space people, others. We're not lawyers and bankers, we're just normal people," said Sheffield. "It's persistence that makes the difference."

"With that many nominations, it was important to do something to stand out," she said. "We used some unusual methods. Wendy had this bee hat that I would wear when I was speaking: it was a lady's pillbox hat shaped like a bee, black and yellow with bouncing antenna. And we would chalk the sidewalks before meetings so that people going into the building had to walk across sidewalks chalked with 'Belltown P-Patch.'"

The group's lobbying generated publicity. The attorney for a developer who was building adjacent to the site remembered reading something about the group. Knowing that the City would require some mitigation in return for the planned development, the developer's attorney contacted the Friends of a Belltown P-Patch. They, along with Tim Hatley and the neighborhood community council, negotiated with the developer: in the end, the developer contributed \$30,000 to the P-Patch. At that point, it was all still speculative since no one knew if the land would be purchased.

But in 1993 the group's creatively unconventional lobbying paid off: Seattle's Open Space Program, with additional money from King County's Open Space Program, bought four-fifths of the lot for \$495,000. Sheffield said, "We charmed them into it, someone told me afterwards."

Creating a Garden on the Land

The group was at no loss for how to proceed. For one thing, they had been designing the garden long before the land for it was purchased. “We worked ahead,” said Sheffield. “There was a lot of positive thinking.”

With the \$30,000 in cash and nearly \$18,000 in donated time and services, the group successfully applied for \$44,566 from the Neighborhood Matching Fund to construct the garden. Behind the group was the support of the local community council, the neighborhood's crime prevention council, and local businesses and agencies. Also, more than 40 people were on the waiting list to get a plot in the garden-to-be.

The project never lost sight of its larger purpose of becoming a place of ongoing neighborhood interaction. And as a garden-cum-park, it would be maintained by the community itself as well as by the P-Patch program. This broad ownership answered many people's misgivings that the garden would incur the costs and the problems of an unsupervised park. The Department of Parks and Recreation supported the project precisely because the project was not dependent on maintenance funds which the Department did not have.

The group was careful to spend the award money only on those things that could not be donated. One use of the money was to remove the litter-saturated dirt and bring in new soil two feet deep — although even here the group managed to get some of the soil donated. Still rich in volunteer hours, the group was trying to reserve some of its cash for future maintenance.

The Belltown P-Patch is a remarkable project. It is one of the most urban of Seattle's community gardens. To create it required enough community effort to create seven gardens elsewhere. And the final product is, as Sheffield understated it, “more elaborate than most.” For one thing, the Belltown P-Patch is full of artwork.

Art in the Garden

The garden's art comes in different forms. Because the land was on a hillside, a high retaining wall was built and a guard rail across the top of it was needed to satisfy safety requirements. The concrete retaining wall is curved to add beauty to utility; it contains several mosaics, with room for others. The metal railing on the garden's north and west sides depicts modernistic looking vegetables growing. Within a high arched entry way are a pair of steel gates, created by a different artist, using traditional blacksmithing techniques. The rock walls that form the garden's raised beds serve the additional function of making it clear where people can walk — an important function in a P-Patch that is as much a park as a garden.

Among the other committees, an Art Review Committee was set up to review and approve art for the garden and, later, an Art Committee was set up to coordinate its installation.

In initially planning the garden, “we knew we wanted to use Belltown artists,” said Sheffield. Because Belltown is a pretty small neighborhood, artists (and everyone else in the community) tend to know one another and one another's work. Louie Raffloer, a Belltown blacksmith whose shop is in the neighborhood, immediately came to mind to create the garden gates. In the neighborhood, everyone was familiar with a gate that he had created, metal with garden tools welded onto it. The job did have to go out to bid, but Raffloer agreed to create the gate for “the cost of materials and what turned out to be about a dollar an hour.” The steel gate took approximately 200 hours to create. Unlike the earlier gate, the P-Patch garden gate incorporates garden tools made entirely by hand by the artist. It is easily worth ten times what the group paid for it. A labor of love, it is constructed with a craftsmanship that only another blacksmith could begin to appreciate, but with a beauty and whimsy that no one could fail to enjoy.

Unlike the gate, the railing was needed immediately and went out to bid with an urgent deadline. The gardeners found that for the same price as they could have a plain and basic guard railing, they could contract with

neighbors Kevin Spitzer and Jonathan Barnett to build a work of art — given that the artists were willing to donate twice as much time as they were paid for.

Wilbur Hathaway headed up the garden mosaic projects while Shanty Slader did research and coordinated donations. Anyone in the group who was interested got together and sketched out designs. Then they researched how to make mosaics: they went to the library but more importantly, said Hathaway, “for months we told everyone about it — and people gave us leads, told us stories, gave us tips.” Hearing of other mosaics around Seattle, they took field trips to see what others had done. “We plagiarized the good ideas we saw and put our own spin on it.” To get materials, the group put an ad in the *Regrade Dispatch* asking for donated tile and marble, and the materials poured in.

“There’s a lot to know,” said Hathaway: about grouts, adhesive, the effect of weather conditions, interior vs. exterior materials, colors, prices. A professional mosaicist came and showed them how to install the mosaics. The members of the group who initially learned have taught others who in turn will teach still others.

A note to community groups working with timelines and with artists: Remember that more goes into a process than a non-practitioner understands. Be clear with project deadlines and other expectations. Verify that a deadline is realistic before you set it.

The Next Phase

Belltown’s P-Patch is an ongoing project. More mosaics have been installed as people have time. The group constructed a tool shed. Like everything else in the Belltown P-Patch, it combines utility with beauty and whimsy, and is topped by a bell once used at an old school.

In the course of their organizing, project participants found out that one of the streets bordering the garden (Vine St., appropriately enough) is zoned as a “Green Street (Type 1)” — meaning, it can be closed to cars and landscaped. A design class at the University of Washington took it on as a design competition project. That design, in turn, gave more weight to the prospective project. “That’s what we did all along,” said Sheffield, “have everything in place. That way, the City or other backers can look and see that everything is in place and ready to go — the design is completed, the maintenance is arranged for. Projects like that are more attractive to funders.”

In more recent years, the Friends of Belltown P-Patch was involved in the creation of Belltown Cottage Park, a major renovation project which was completed in 2003.

Celebration

When the P-Patch opened, the group held a ground-breaking ceremony and commemorative program to celebrate and to thank everyone who helped make it happen. One group member who owns a costume shop made its stock available to people for the parade that wound through the neighborhood. There was music from two bands, dancers, and a blessing ceremony. Gardeners led guided tours of the garden. A neighboring social service agency opened one of its kitchens and provided several cook’s helpers; local restaurants donated supplies: with that kind of community support, the Belltown P-Patch was able to serve enough food to feed all 400 of the people who attended the celebration.

Advice

Sheffield’s foremost advice is: “Have faith and just keep going.”

Second: “Be as organized as possible.” The group may have been full of wild-eyed dreamers but they also made sure that they were ready whenever any opportunity came along — and, as well, they went far toward creating those opportunities. They lobbied long and hard and effectively to get the land purchased. They used a variety of tactics, employing humor and art. It was the publicity they generated that brought them to the attention of a

developer who was seeking avenues of mitigation. What might have been a relationship marked by mistrust and adversarial cross-purposes turned out to be one of mutual benefit and community building.

“Don’t burn people out,” said Sheffield. Especially in a long ongoing project like this one, people burn out and leave (and, given enough time, may return). But ideally, watch for burn-out and organize to avoid it.

And finally: “Be devoted.” Projects are usually more work than anyone imagined. If people are going to stay involved with it, the project has got to be important to them. “For everyone involved with the Belltown P-Patch, it was really important to have that little bit of green space in the neighborhood — there’s so little green in the Regrade. People gave huge amounts of their time and energy.”

That devotion paid off — paid off for the gardeners, for the surrounding neighborhood, and for Seattle as a whole, both now and in the future. “As the city grows, the idea of community-maintained parks will grow more important,” said Sheffield. “And this P-Patch will grow more important as the area grows up around it.”

Samples, Templates & Other Files

1. Growing Vine Street (Adobe PDF)

<http://www.for-wild.org/download/GrowingVineSt.pdf>

A description of Growing Vine Street, which borders Belltown P-Patch. Reprinted from the January/February 2003 issue of the *Wild Ones Journal*.

Contacts

2. Seattle Parks & Recreation, City of Seattle (Page 135)

Pam Kliment, pam.kliment@seattle.gov

Neighborhood Project Planner for Department of Neighborhoods

800 Maynard Avenue South

Seattle, WA 98134

(206) 684-7556

City of Seattle contact for public art projects that take place in a park.

Related Articles

3. Neighborhood Matching Fund (Page 97)

Many different types of public art projects are funded via the Neighborhood Matching Fund. For example, neighbors have painted unique murals, commissioned distinctive neighborhood sculptures and created unique neighborhood gateway art.

Web sites

4. P-Patch Program

<http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/ppatch/start.htm>

If your project is a landscape/garden project and is a proposed site for a new P-Patch garden, staff can help evaluate and secure access to your proposed site. They can give advice, technical assistance, and lead your group through a garden design process.

5. Friends of Belltown P-Patch

<http://www.speakeasy.org/~mykejw/ppatch/>

A neighborhood non-profit organization.

6. Open Space Acquisition

<http://www.seattle.gov/parks/proparks/opportunityfund.htm>

The Pro Parks 2000 Levy included an Opportunity Fund for acquisition projects.

7. Belltown Cottage Park

<http://www.seattle.gov/parks/proparks/projects/belltownCottages.htm>

Cottages were restored to their original historic condition and the area around the cottages were landscaped into a small neighborhood park accessible from the Belltown P-Patch.

Sample Projects

Murals

Most public art murals are relatively large two-dimensional paintings on exterior walls or fences. However, a mural could also be a series of small works or use many types of art media such as photography, oil or acrylics. A mural could even use a technique such as fresco or incorporate three-dimensional objects or tiles. Finally, mural themes can vary considerably; they can be instructive, decorative or historical or provide social commentary.

In Seattle, neighborhood organizations often create murals in bus shelters⁵

Typical Considerations

Permits and agency reviews

Murals located in the public-right-of-way

If the mural will be located on a bridge or retaining wall, or other roadway structure owned by Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT), contact David Chew at SDOT¹ to discuss your project idea and discuss SDOT requirements for the mural. You will then need to obtain a Street Use Permit².

Murals on private property but created or installed by community members using the public-right-of-way

A mural that is not located on public property or in the public right-of-way may still require a Street Use Permit² from SDOT if artists or community members use the public right-of-way to create the mural.

Murals on private property

Murals on private property naturally require the written permission of the property owner. An agreement with the property owner should specify who is responsible for maintenance.

Murals containing no "copy" (writing or advertisement)

If a painted wall mural on either private or City property contains no "copy"; that is, if there is no writing or advertisement on the mural, it will not require a Sign/Awning Permit. If the mural is essentially an advertisement, it will require a Sign/Awning Permit³. Murals that are essentially advertisements will need to adhere to the Code requirements in SMC 23.55 (Signs).¹⁰

See Permits and Agency Reviews⁸ to find out if you need to contact another agency for a review. (The location of your project may be within or adjacent to the jurisdiction of an agency.)

Insurance

Insurance⁸ will be necessary for the installation of the mural (to protect passersby, the City and the installer) and, if required, for the life of a Street Use Permit¹ or Sign/Awning Permit³ for the same protections.

Accessibility

Try to make any fine details in the mural viewable at close range by people who are sight or mobility impaired.

Appropriate materials

Water-soluble (and if possible bio-degradable) site preparation solutions like 100 per cent latex paint are recommended. Use recycled paints when possible. Select quality paints that will wear well over time and are washable, in case of graffiti. See information on mural surface preparation⁷.

Basic design, user and maintenance issues

Ideally, the mural will be easily legible from the natural viewing distance and contain information that is concise and comprehensible without being a distraction to drivers.

A mural will generally need to be maintained for approximately ten years (the average life span). The sponsoring group is responsible for long-term maintenance. Direct sunlight can fade murals and is undesirable.

Develop a maintenance plan⁸ and include a contingency budget for repairs should they be needed. In case of heavy damage it may be more practical to start again rather than refurbish the mural. If the mural requires nighttime lighting, have a clear plan for how that will be provided.

For more information, contact the agency or jurisdiction where you will apply for your permit or review.

Contacts

1. Mural located on a bridge, retaining wall or other roadway structure

Seattle Department of Transportation, City of Seattle
David Chew, dave.chew@seattle.gov
Structures Maintenance & Operations Manager
700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 3900
PO Box 34996
Seattle, WA 98124-4996
(206) 684-8325

City of Seattle contact for a mural located on a bridge, retaining wall owned by Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) or other roadway structure.

2. Street Use Permit (Page 120)

Seattle Department of Transportation, City of Seattle
Benita Staadecker, benita.staadecker@seattle.gov
Street Use and Annual Permits
700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 3900
PO Box 34996
Seattle, WA 98124-4996
(206) 615-1224

City of Seattle contact for Street Use Permits. You will discover the specific requirements and steps required to obtain the permit.

3. Sign/Awning Permit (Page 118)

Department of Planning and Development, City of Seattle
Kent Hunnicutt, kent.hunnicutt@seattle.gov
Sign Inspector
700 Fifth Ave, Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019
(206) 684-8419

City of Seattle contact for Sign/Awning Permits. You will determine the specific requirements and steps you need to take to obtain the permit. Kent Hunnicutt is also the contact for building permits for cross-street banners.

4. **Neighborhood Matching Fund** (Page 97)
Department of Neighborhoods, City of Seattle
700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1700
PO Box 94649
Seattle, WA 98124-4649
(206) 684-0464
Call for Department of Neighborhood's Quick Information Sheet on Public Art: Murals for more information on mural projects, including considerations for a typical work plan and budget.

Related Articles

5. **Bus Shelters** (Page 44)
Things to consider when creating murals in bus shelters.
6. **57th Street Underpass Murals** (Page 58)
Read about how a community group created a mural in the Phinney Ridge neighborhood.
7. **Mural surface preparation** (Page 94)
Information on preparing the surface of a mural.
8. **Step-by-Step** (Page 4)
A description of 10 steps needed to complete a neighborhood public art project.

Web sites

9. **Seattle Public Utilities' Graffiti Removal and Prevention**
http://www.seattle.gov/util/Services/Garbage/Reduce_Garbage_&_Litter/Graffiti_Prevention_&_Removal/
Advice on preventing and removing graffiti.
10. **Seattle Municipal Code Title 23 Land Use Code for Signs 23.55**
<http://clerk.seattle.gov/~public/2355.htm>
Land use code requirements for murals that are essentially advertisements.
11. **Metro Murals**
<http://www.metromurals.org/>
A resource for the creation of community based murals in Portland, Oregon. Much of the information may apply to murals created in other geographical locations.
12. **Department of Neighborhoods - Catalog of Publications**
<http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/pubs>
The "Celebrating Cultural Heritage" booklet has an excellent case study of a mural project with a thorough discussion of the issues involved in developing a mural project.

Sample Projects, In First Person...

57th Street Underpass Murals

If You Can't Beat 'em ...

Back in 1994, Lise Ward and some of her neighbors were sitting together at someone's house, drinking coffee and talking about the graffiti that kept appearing in the 57th Street underpass nearby. They had spent every weekend in January and February painting out the graffiti. And every week it reappeared. So, said Ward, "we figured, if you can't beat 'em, join 'em." Through the Phinney Ridge Community Council, they applied for a Neighborhood Matching Fund Small and Simple Projects award to install a mural on both walls of the underpass.

By October the mural was done. What had been an ugly tunnel became an attractive passageway — one that has deterred graffiti. Less tangibly but even more importantly, the project in its planning and execution brought together neighborhood organizations, adults, at-risk youth, and children — the neighborhood became that much more of a neighborhood.

First Steps

Ward, who volunteered as project manager, knew that she had organizational skills but no artistic skills. So she did some investigating and "all roads led to Rob Mattson," coordinator for the Ballard Neighborhood Service Center. Mattson recommended Saundra Valencia, a mixed-media artist who directed Street Smart Art. "We were a perfect team," said Ward: "I did the organizing and she coordinated the detail work and artistic work."

Street Smart Art was a former organization that not only designed and managed the installation of art; it also gave kids opportunities to provide leadership. For this project, Street Smart artists first developed preliminary designs. Because the underpass is near Woodland Park Zoo, it was decided that the mural's theme would involve animals. Street Smart Art presented a design of "Mexican-style drawings with wild, impressionistic images of animals such as an elephant, giraffe and the kangaroo monkey, set against backgrounds of a blue sky and bright orange sunset."

The public had two months in which to comment on the designs. The designs were published in local newspapers, posted in public gathering spots — "all over," said Ward — and directly circulated to tunnel neighbors. All public comments went to a five-member design review panel. The design panel of local residents included both artists and non-artists. Taking into consideration the wide variety of comments and the subjective nature of design review, the panel addressed only those concerns that came up repeatedly in the written comments. It then approved the design with two recommendations. The final revised design was then submitted to the Phinney Ridge Community Council, the Zoo and the Seattle Engineering Department for final approval.

At that time, the tunnel was the Engineering Department's jurisdiction. (Please note: a mural project in a tunnel is now Seattle Department of Transportation's jurisdiction.) Engineering's concerns in general were that murals have non-controversial designs (that is, no political slogans) and use brushed-on exterior latex paint. Since it would be responsible for maintaining the tunnel, the Department especially wanted to ensure that a clear sealer be applied to the finished mural to help protect against weather and allow easy removal of graffiti.

The project waited to apply for a Street Use Permit until after receiving notice of the award from the Neighborhood Matching Fund. Ward also coordinated with the Zoo through its community liaison. The Zoo provided general support and also offered to arrange sketching tours for the design artists. Ward, Valencia, and the lead Street Smart artist attended a Zoo administration staff meeting to address design concerns.

Ward arranged for donated paints and materials. "We got a lot of support from businesses," she said — "people were really generous." The project collected over 23 gallons of paint plus sealer. Later on, it would be the task of

neighbors who had pledged labor to pick up and store the donated materials (including a porta-potty), buy what still remained to be purchased, and handle the day-of-event logistics needed to install the murals.

Neighborhood Recruitment

While the design was being presented for comment, Ward was doorbelling the residential area surrounding the tunnel for support and matching assistance. To organize volunteer labor for the actual painting, Ward divided the day into two-hour shifts, 12 persons per shift (including room for day-of-event walk-ups). She made sure to offer plenty of other ways to volunteer as well. The project's Neighborhood Matching Fund application included a list of dozens of persons pledging hundreds of hours.

"I've been told I'm kind of persuasive," said Ward. "I believe in my heart that people do want to help — mostly you have to spend the time to figure out what people can and want to do. You need to offer people specific tasks. There was one woman whose entire task was to arrange for, then pick up and deliver, the orange drink. Someone else might want to put in one hour on the design panel."

Someone had the job of collecting the comment sheets from the 10 locations where the design was posted. Some volunteers sat at the sign-in table for an hour. Someone — and this was essential — was Ward's gofer on the day of the event. "If *you* believe in the project and have rapport with people, you find that people want to help to whatever extent they can."

Ward reiterated the need to spend time with people to figure out what they can do. But, she admits, when in the first two hours of doorbelling she'd hit only five or six houses, it seemed like it was taking an agonizingly long time. Then, "just as I was starting to get desperate I hit a condominium that was willing to commit to 12 people for the painting. These people were excited about the project — you could tell that in that building, people talked to each other."

Finally, all the shifts were filled. The painting would be done by design professionals and apprentices (there were six managing Street Smart artists), area neighbors and their children, and representatives from neighborhood organizations — public and private schools, churches, service groups, youth groups.

Four Days, Many Moments

The installation was divided into prep work on Friday, two-hour-long painting shifts most of Saturday and Sunday, then touch-ups on Monday.

At 3:30 p.m. on Friday, Ward and the Street Smart artists put up street barricades, projected the design onto the walls, and began drawing the outlines of the animals. When the outlining was completed, it became apparent that the change from an 8.5-by-11-inch sketch to an 85-foot wall left some gaps in the design. Around midnight, the team made an executive decision to add a few additional animals and landscape features. The additions would compensate for the gaps but still maintain the integrity of the already-approved design.

On Saturday morning, volunteers set up donated coffee and pastries and taped plastic on the sidewalk and street while the Street Smart artists finished laying out the design. People began to arrive, looking for paintbrushes. The mural project had co-advertised with an exhibit preview at the Zoo that day, and after the preview, around 1:00 p.m., the crowds really began to arrive.

A bagpipe player provided music. He had been recommended to Ward by another neighbor when she was going door-to-door, and when she contacted him he was delighted to come, "kilt and all." A couple of massage therapists came and brought their table. Several people with art training just showed up.

Ward had arranged for an hour-long press event in the early afternoon. She had sent out handmade invitations — “we invited **everybody**.” City officials and neighborhood leaders spoke, and both a local TV station and newspaper covered the event. Former Mayor Rice drove through after the mural was completed.

The painting continued through the afternoon until, around 4:00 p.m., all the spots on the wall low enough for kids to reach were filled. Much to her own disappointment, Ward had to call two Girl Scout troops and warn them of the lack of work. Happily, they wanted to come anyway, and were able to participate in the event and enjoy some donated ice cream bars.

Paint began to run low in the afternoon and a volunteer dashed out to buy more (the merchant gave the project a good discount).

Sunday started with more coffee and pastries. As on Saturday, all the people scheduled to paint showed up, but there was less walk-up traffic. The Street Smart artists were able to take more time instructing volunteers on fine-line and shading techniques at adult and ladder levels. Ward smiled: “It was great seeing respectable-looking Phinney Ridge neighbors taking directions from youths in baggy pants.” The public drifted out around 5:00 p.m. and the Street Smart Artists stayed to do some more touching up.

“There were so many moments — great neighborhood moments,” said Ward. “One man I conned into volunteering came Sunday afternoon and painted sky for three hours. He was so proud of his piece of sky. He came back with his wife and showed her his piece of the sky. It’s really all about moments.”

An Organizing Tip

“To keep a project organized,” said Lise Ward, “I use The Binder System.” The Binder System? “I had this black binder I carried everywhere. In it I had sections for the Neighborhood Matching Fund, the Transportation Department, public comments, volunteer labor, scheduling, budget, donated items. But the very *first thing* to start in it is your contact list — every person you talk to who’s in any way interested, put down their name and number. I still consult that list. It’s a great system for people operating on a shoestring when you don’t have the luxury of an office or even a filing cabinet.”

Graffiti

Ward believes that the only effective response to graffiti involves three steps cycling together: (1) prosecution and restitution, (2) painting out, and (3) an arts program as an alternative activity. Participation in art can offer an alternative to youth who are contemplating tagging or who have just completed their community service hours after being caught. Taggers tend to be young men between the ages of 12 and 20. Some live in Phinney, she said: “these are middle-class kids with after-school jobs who have \$200 a month to spend on spray cans. You have to take that energy and guide it into positive activity. You have to provide legal venues. And you have to establish rapport with youth.” If the art done by the youth working with Street Smart Art was any indication, ex-taggers are capable of creating beautiful and useful murals that are socially enriching.

Finishing Up

On the day after the mural was painted, using the names and addresses from the sign-in sheet, Ward sent approximately 200 thank-you postcards to the people who had participated. She used the pre-stamped postcards that the post office sells for the price of the postage. On one side she pasted a color-Xeroxed snapshot of the mural. On the other side she hand wrote her thanks (and included a small plug for Street Smart Art). From those 200 cards, a handful of people called Ward to offer their services on any future projects. Those volunteers made a good beginning for a database of neighborhood volunteers.

Next Time

Asked what she would do differently next time, Ward said that the two big things would be to provide sufficient child-height painting and to anticipate how much garbage a mural generates.

She suggested getting kids in to paint early on, during a one-day installation, or on the first day only of a two-day installation. As well, project organizers could make panels or canvas boards available for kids in case the walls became fully painted.

As for the garbage — well, even the best organizer can forget something. Ward said she hadn't even thought about it until the paint tarps, drop cloths, and paint cans began piling up in her carport. Fortunately, a neighbor let her borrow his large pickup truck to make a trip to the transfer station. She also returned the leftover paint to the hazardous waste disposal facility there.

Ward is optimistic. "Often you need a catalyst in a neighborhood. But once the project gets going, it just snowballs. You may feel like you're going out on a limb. But you get a few commitments and then other folks think, 'Well, I'd better do it too.'"

"I got to know a lot of people," said Ward of the time she spent organizing the project, "and even if I don't remember their names, we see each other on the street and wave."

In 2005, the 57th Street Underpass murals can still be found on 57th Street just east of Greenwood Avenue North.

Contacts

1. **Phinney Ridge Community Council**
<http://www.phinneyridgecc.org>
c/o Phinney Neighborhood Center
6532 Phinney Ave. N.
Seattle, WA 98103
(206) 783-2244

Related Articles

2. **Neighborhood Matching Fund** (Page 97)
Many different types of public art projects are funded via the Neighborhood Matching Fund. For example, neighbors have painted unique murals, commissioned distinctive neighborhood sculptures and created unique neighborhood gateway art.
3. **Street Use Permit** (Page 120)
This permit is required for any project that is temporarily or permanently in the public right-of-way. Depending on the type and location of your public art project, you will need to discuss your project idea with various SDOT staff.
4. **Murals** (Page 55)
Important issues to consider when carrying out a mural project.

Web sites

5. Neighborhood Service Centers

<http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/nsc/>

When you first consider the idea of a neighborhood public art project, a good first step is to head to your Department of Neighborhood's Service Center Coordinator. Coordinators can tell you what groups and organizations are already active in your area. They are also knowledgeable about other neighborhood resources. Coordinators can also provide insight into the history and dynamics of recent efforts to mobilize your community, and assist in communication between your group and City government.

6. Woodland Park Zoo

<http://www.zoo.org/>

Home page of Seattle's zoo.

7. Artworks

<http://www.urbanartworks.org/>

A non profit organization empowering young people through the creation of public art. The organization is very involved in creating community mural projects.

8. Volunteer Match

<http://www.volunteermatch.org/>

A non profit organization with a mission to help everyone find a great place to volunteer, and to offer a variety of online services to support a community of non profit, volunteer and business leaders committed to civic engagement.

9. Meetup

<http://www.meetup.com/>

Meetup helps people get together with a group of neighbors that share a common interest. It is an advanced technology platform and global network of local venues that help people self-organize local group gatherings.

Sample Projects

Neighborhood Signage

Public art neighborhood signage can be designed for pedestrian or vehicular traffic. Generally, permanently-sited public art signage is a welcoming neighborhood identification sign. These can be large or small, as is appropriate for location and neighborhood. Neighborhood signage indicating a natural feature (e.g., a creek) or a community landmark or other feature should be designed to be read—and appreciated—by pedestrians.

Sidewalks and their features, including signage, get heavy use, so a very important consideration for neighborhood signage is durability. Any off-premise directional signage located on private property will need to be within 1,500 feet of whatever the sign references. Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT)¹ will manufacture and install standard community identification signs if the community raises the funds.

Typical Considerations

Permits and agency reviews

Neighborhood signage in the public right-of-way

Standard community identification signs (usually three feet by two feet)

Contact Carol Wittig at Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT)¹ to discuss your sign request, finalize your design choice to be sure it is feasible, and submit your sign designs and locations for approval. After approval, signs are usually manufactured and installed by SDOT crews within three to six weeks.

Non-standard signage (e.g. signs that are large or mounted on a structure)

Contact the Seattle Department Of Transportation (SDOT)¹ Street Use and Annual Permits for a Street Use Permit.²

Neighborhood signage on or partially on private property

Contact Department of Planning and Development (DPD) for a Sign/Awning Permit³

See Permits and Agency Reviews⁴ to find out if you need to contact another agency for an additional review. (The location of your project may be within or adjacent to the jurisdiction of an agency.)

Insurance

Insurance will not be required by the sponsoring group for the installation of standard community identification signs if they are installed by SDOT. If the signage is large or mounted on a structure, insurance⁵ will be necessary for the installation of the signage (to protect passersby, the City, the sponsoring group and the installers) and, if required, for the life of a Street Use Permit¹ or Sign/Awning Permit³ for the same protections.

Safety

The materials used should not deteriorate rapidly and become a hazard. The sign should not be placed so that a pedestrian (in particular, a sight impaired pedestrian) will walk into it. Do not install signage that requires people to cross an intersection, stand in a median strip, or walk on unpaved surfaces in order to view it. In particular, be concerned about safety issues for mobility-impaired persons and children. For more information, contact the agency or jurisdiction where you will apply for your permit or review.

Engineering

Plans for proposed pedestrian signage must meet standards for design and location as indicated in the Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 23.55 Signs⁸. This will be a minor consideration unless the signage is mounted on a large structure. If so, a Washington state-licensed structural engineer may need to review plans for sign design. Engineers are listed in the Yellow Pages and hardware stores also sometimes have listings of construction professionals. Members of your working group may also have connections in the construction field.

Accessibility

Make sure the information on the sign is available to sight impaired individuals and is at a height and/or print size that is readable by someone in a wheelchair.

Appropriate materials

Metal, wood, fiberglass, plastics, stone, concrete, or porcelain enamel on steel or glazed ceramic are often considered appropriate materials.

Basic Maintenance Issues

Develop a maintenance plan⁶. Include a contingency budget for repair of signs that may become damaged.

If the signage requires lighting, have a plan for how it will be provided.

Contacts

1. Neighborhood Identification Signs, Traffic Management Division

Seattle Department of Transportation, City of Seattle
Carol Wittig, carol.wittig@seattle.gov
700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 3900
PO Box 34996
Seattle, WA 98124-4996
(206) 684-5512

City of Seattle contact for standard community identification signs. You will discuss your sign request, finalize your design choice to be sure it is feasible and submit your sign designs and locations for approval.

2. Street Use Permit (Page 120)

Seattle Department of Transportation, City of Seattle
Benita Staadecker, benita.staadecker@seattle.gov
Street Use and Annual Permits
700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 3900
PO Box 34996
Seattle, WA 98124-4996
(206) 615-1224

City of Seattle contact for Street Use Permits. You will discover the specific requirements and steps required to obtain the permit.

3. Sign/Awning Permit (Page 118)

Department of Planning and Development, City of Seattle
Kent Hunnicutt, kent.hunnicutt@seattle.gov
Sign Inspector
700 Fifth Ave, Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019
(206) 684-8419

City of Seattle contact for Sign/Awning Permits. You will determine the specific requirements and steps you need to take to obtain the permit. Kent Hunnicutt is also the contact for building permits for cross-street banners.

Related Articles

4. **Permits and Agency Reviews** (Page 29)
Permits and reviews required by the City of Seattle for public art projects.
5. **Get Legal Status & Insurance** (Page 14)
Information on legal status to apply for City permits or reviews that are required to develop a neighborhood public art project.
6. **Develop a Maintenance Plan** (Page 36)
Information on how the project will be maintained and who will maintain it.

Web sites

7. **Department of Neighborhoods - Catalog of Publications**
<http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/pubs/>
The *Celebrating Cultural Heritage* booklet includes a case study of a neighborhood experience placing welcome signs at Belvedere Viewpoint in West Seattle.
8. **Seattle Municipal Code Title 23 Land Use Code for Signs 23.55**
<http://clerk.seattle.gov/~public/2355.htm>
Land use code requirements for murals that are essentially advertisements.
9. **Community/District Identification Signs**
http://seattle.gov/economicdevelopment/biz_district_guide/biz_dist_pages/district_id_signs.htm
More information on developing standard community identification signs from Office of Economic Development, City of Seattle.

Sample Projects

Seating Elements

While a park or bus bench is the most common “seating element,” there are many other options. The shape, size, style or form of a seating element can vary in order to reflect a neighborhood identity, serve a specific function, or simply make an artistic statement. The concept of seating elements can also be extended to include “leaning elements” such as rails around a bus shelter or another structure.

Typical Considerations

Permits and agency reviews

Seating element in the public-right-of-way

Seattle Department Of Transportation (SDOT) requires a Street Use¹. SDOT will want to see a design plan with specifications such as the materials, exact site and the amount of drilling necessary. Street use permits for seating elements must be renewed annually.

Seating element in a bus shelter

Contact King County Metro² if you wish to create a seating element in a bus shelter.

See Permits and Agency Reviews³ to find out if you need to contact another agency for a review. (The location of your project may be within or adjacent to the jurisdiction of an agency.)

The support and permission of the adjacent property owners will be needed in order to place a bench or other seating elements in front of a business, apartment building or private residence.

Insurance

Insurance⁴ will be necessary for both the installation of the seating element project (to protect passersby, the City and the installer) and for the life of the Street Use Permit (if required).

Safety

To be safely away from vehicular traffic, seating elements should be aligned with other streetscape objects such as street trees, parking meters, street lights, etc. Seating benches in the public right-of-way must be mounted to the sidewalk and stabilized so they can't be moved. Seating elements should be made of materials that do not deteriorate rapidly or create a hazard. The surface must be free of splinters and other sharp protrusions.

It is also important that the placement of the seating element does not interfere with pedestrian traffic. Generally speaking, all sidewalks must be no less than six feet wide, with no obstructions within that dimension.

For more information on safety issues, contact the agency or jurisdiction where you will apply for your permit.

Engineering

An engineer's review probably is not necessary unless the proposed seating structure is very large or composed of moving parts. If this is the case, you can find engineers listed in the Yellow Pages and hardware stores also sometimes have listings of construction professionals. Members of your working group may also have connections in the construction field.

Accessibility

The seat height must be compatible with the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Guidelines for Benches⁷.

Appropriate materials

Metal that is protected from corrosion, wood (if there are provisions for frequent maintenance), concrete, stone, fiberglass or recycled plastic are often considered appropriate materials.

Basic design, user and maintenance issues

The sponsoring group is responsible for maintaining and cleaning the seating element. One of the main considerations for any group proposing a bench or another seating element should be the maintenance plan⁵ for keeping the bench clean and in good repair. It is best if the bench is easily cleaned with simple tools such as a broom or hose.

The bench should be available to a number of users at all times and not conducive to people lying down. Note that King County Metro usually puts four-foot benches in the bus shelters; if there is no bench in the shelter, it was most likely removed because loitering became a problem.

For further information, contact the agency or jurisdiction where you will apply for your permit.

Contacts

1. **Street Use Permit** (Page 120)
Seattle Department of Transportation, City of Seattle
Benita Staadecker, benita.staadecker@seattle.gov
Street Use and Annual Permits
700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 3900
PO Box 34996
Seattle, WA 98124-4996
(206) 615-1224
City of Seattle contact for Street Use Permits. You will discover the specific requirements and steps required to obtain the permit.

2. **Bus Shelter Mural Program, King County Metro** (Page 127)
http://transit.metrokc.gov/prog/sheltermural/shelter_mural.html
Dale Cummings
Program Manager
201 South Jackson St., M.S. KSC-TR-0413
Seattle, WA 98104-3856
(206) 684-1524
King County Metro contact for King County Metro public art projects (murals, custom lighting, sidewalk inlays, benches, etc.) located within or on a bus shelter or in a designated bus zone.

Related Articles

3. **Permits and Agency Reviews** (Page 29)
Information on permits and reviews required by the City of Seattle for public art projects

4. **Get Legal Status & Insurance** (Page 14)
Information on legal status to apply for City permits or reviews that are required to develop a neighborhood public art project.

5. **Develop a Maintenance Plan** (Page 36)
Information on how the project will be maintained and who will maintain it..

Web sites

6. Street Furniture

http://www.seattle.gov/economicdevelopment/biz_district_guide/biz_dist_pages/street_furniture.htm

More information on developing street furniture from Office of Economic Development, City of Seattle.

7. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Guidelines for Benches.

<http://www.access-board.gov/adaag/html/adaag.htm#4.37>

From the Access Board, a federal agency committed to accessible design.

Sample Projects

Sidewalk Inlays

Sidewalk inlays provide some interesting public art opportunities. Various media could be encased in a sidewalk, patterns of every conceivable type could be inscribed, and messages or themes can vary. Although not a common form of public art, there may be opportunities for inlays in crosswalks or at street intersections.

Typical Considerations

Anytime something is placed in the sidewalk, a potential tripping hazard is created. Early conversations with Seattle Department Of Transportation (SDOT)¹ will help eliminate those kinds of problems.

Permits and agency reviews

For any sidewalk inlay in the public-right-of-way, Seattle Department Of Transportation (SDOT) requires a Street Use Permit¹

See Permits and Agency Reviews⁴ to find out if you need to contact another agency for an additional review. (The location of your project may be within or adjacent to the jurisdiction of an agency.)

Insurance

Insurance² will be necessary for both the installation of the sidewalk inlays (to protect passersby, the City and the installer) and for the life of the Street Use Permit.

Safety

The inlays must not be a potential tripping or slipping hazard or a distraction to pedestrians at a crosswalk. Contact SDOT for other safety issues.

Engineering

Concrete sidewalks expand and contract with changes in temperature. Different materials expand and contract at different rates (called the "Coefficient of Expansion" (COE)). In designing inlays, it is not often necessary to consult an engineer, but it is advisable to consult someone knowledgeable about COE's of various materials (e.g., materials suppliers and fabricators). Material suppliers and fabricators can be found in the Yellow Pages and through word-of-mouth.

Accessibility

Sidewalk inlays must conform to ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) standards⁵. Make sure the sidewalk inlay is not a tripping or slipping hazard to the mobility-or sight-impaired. Talk to SDOT about the allowable height and depth of sidewalk inlays.

Appropriate materials

Metal that does not easily deteriorate or corrode (and discolor adjacent sidewalk), concrete, stone, cast glass (with a slip-resistance top surface), glazed tiles (also with a slip-resistance top), or brick are often considered appropriate materials.

Basic design, user, and maintenance issues

Make sure the inlays are relatively simple to remove if they need to be repaired or replaced. Inlays should not be located adjacent to sections of the sidewalk that have buckled or cracked. For more information, contact SDOT.

Develop a maintenance plan³ and discuss what will happen to the inlays when they wear out.

Contacts

1. **Street Use Permit** (Page 120)

Seattle Department of Transportation, City of Seattle
Benita Staadecker, benita.staadecker@seattle.gov
Street Use and Annual Permits
700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 3900
PO Box 34996
Seattle, WA 98124-4996
(206) 615-1224

City of Seattle contact for Street Use Permits. You will discover the specific requirements and steps required to obtain the permit.

Related Articles

2. **Get Legal Status & Insurance** (Page 14)

Information on the legal status needed to apply for City permits or reviews that are required to develop a neighborhood public art project.

3. **Develop a Maintenance Plan** (Page 36)

Information on how the project will be maintained and who will maintain it.

4. **Permits and Agency Reviews** (Page 29)

Permits and reviews required by the City of Seattle for public art projects.

Web sites

5. **ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Home Page**

<http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm>
From the U.S. Department of Justice.

Sample Projects

Sign Kiosks

A sign kiosk is a small, freestanding sign structure used for posting small signs. Kiosks are limited to a maximum height, width, depth and surface area, and must follow City guidelines for kiosk design. In general, sign kiosks are not allowed in single-family and multi-family residential zones.

Typical Considerations

Permits and agency reviews

(agency contact information is located on the bottom of this page)

Sign kiosks in the public right-of-way

A Street Use Permit² from Seattle Department Of Transportation (SDOT) is required. Note however, when a Street Use Permit is issued for a sign kiosk, it also serves as the permit that would normally be required by Department of Planning and Development (DPD).

While it is not mandatory, SDOT recommends arranging a preliminary meeting before planning a sign kiosk to save time in development of the project.

There is a two-part process for acquiring a Street Use Permit for a sign kiosk in the public right-of-way. SDOT will first complete a safety and maintenance-related review. Plans for proposed sign kiosks must meet standards for design and location in Seattle Municipal Code 23.55.015¹⁰ The document gives clear guidance for SDOT's approval process relating to design, safety and maintenance. Call SDOT for sample kiosk plans.

The second part of the process will include a required proposal review by other City departments. Depending on the size, design and location of the kiosk, the approval process could be completed anywhere from one month to more than one year after submittal of the design. The document Sign Kiosks in the Proposed Right of Way⁹ describes the review process and provides information about the proposal reviews that may be required by other City departments. Sign kiosk projects may also be required to undergo a Seattle Design Commission Review¹⁰

Sign kiosks adjacent to a park, playground or publicly-owned community center

Contact Seattle Parks and Recreation. The kiosk must be reviewed and approved by Seattle Parks and Recreation for aesthetic compatibility with existing signs and the design of the park, playground or community center.

Sign kiosks on private property

Contact Department of Planning and Development (DPD) to see if you need a Sign/Awning Permit³. Sign kiosks are permitted in most zones, provided that a sign kiosk may abut a park or playground at least one acre in size, or a publicly owned community center in all zones. Sign kiosks are generally not permitted within 50 feet of a single-family or multi-family residential zone.

See Permits and Agency Reviews⁷ to find out if you need to contact another agency for a review. (The location of your project may be within or adjacent to the jurisdiction of an agency.)

Safety

Make sure the proposed site is safe (e.g., away from vehicular traffic, well lit and well-traveled). Do not design a kiosk which blocks access to public utilities, traffic flow or street use. At a minimum this means maintaining at least a five-foot wide continuous and clear path along a sidewalk. Do not design a kiosk which requires people to cross an intersection, stand in a median strip or walk on unpaved surfaces to have access to the kiosk. Use

materials that will not deteriorate rapidly and pose a hazard. For further information, contact the agency or jurisdiction where you will apply for your permit or review.

Insurance

Insurance⁷ will be necessary for the installation of the sign kiosk (to protect passersby, the City, the sponsoring group and the installers) and, if required, for the life of a Street Use Permit¹ or Sign/Awning Permit³ for the same protections. For approval, sign kiosks in the public-right-of-way will need to meet the liability coverage requirements in SDOT's Street Use Permit Counter Publication Number 626¹.

Engineering

Plans for proposed sign kiosks should include structural calculations done or reviewed by a Washington state-licensed structural engineer. Engineers are listed in the Yellow Pages and hardware stores also sometimes have listings of construction professionals. Members of your working group may also have connections in the construction field.

Appropriate materials

Metal that is protected from corrosion, wood (if there are provisions for frequent maintenance), concrete, stone, recycled plastics or tempered safety glass are often considered appropriate. Materials used in constructing sign kiosks shall minimize reflective glare from natural or artificial illumination.

Basic design, user and maintenance issues

The design of any sign kiosk shall comply with the design principles approved by the Seattle Design Commission or shall be reviewed and recommended by the Commission. The design of sign kiosks must be approved by the agency or department conducting the review or issuing a permit. More information is available in Seattle Municipal Code 23.55.015¹⁰.

If posted materials are behind glass, the case must be easy to use and be able to withstand heavy use. Posted materials should stay in good condition, even in bad weather. Arrangements must be made so the kiosk is kept clean, updated and in good repair. The outer surfaces must be easy to clean, both for routine maintenance and to remove graffiti. If the kiosk is to be used at night, it should be lit using a convenient and appropriate source near the kiosk.

Note that your group will need to submit a maintenance plan to SDOT in order to get a Street Use Permit. The plan will need to address maintenance of the physical kiosk structure as well as maintenance of the sign kiosk's posting area. More information can be found in Sign Kiosks in the Proposed Right of Way⁹ Create a maintenance plan⁶ includes a general overview for public art projects.

Samples, Templates and Other Files

1. Street Use Permit Counter Publication Number 626 (Adobe PDF)

<http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/pdf/PN626j98.PDF>

Liability requirements for a sign kiosk project in the public right-of-way. From Seattle Department of Transportation.

Contacts

- 2. Street Use Permit (Page 120)**
Seattle Department of Transportation, City of Seattle
Benita Staadecker, benita.staadecker@seattle.gov
Street Use and Annual Permits
700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 3900
PO Box 34996
Seattle, WA 98124-4996
(206) 615-1224
City of Seattle contact for Street Use Permits. You will discover the specific requirements and steps required to obtain the permit.
- 3. Sign/Awning Permit (Page 118)**
Department of Planning and Development, City of Seattle
Kent Hunnicutt, kent.hunnicutt@seattle.gov
Sign Inspector
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019
(206) 684-8419
City of Seattle contact for Sign/Awning Permits. You will determine the specific requirements and steps you need to take to obtain the permit. Kent Hunnicutt is also the contact for building permits for cross-street banners.
- 4. Seattle Parks and Recreation, City of Seattle (Page 135)**
Pam Kliment, pam.kliment@seattle.gov
Neighborhood Project Planner for Department of Neighborhoods
800 Maynard Avenue South
Seattle, WA 98134
(206) 684-7556
City of Seattle contact for public art projects that take place in a park.
- 5. Seattle Design Commission Review, Seattle Design Commission (Page 116)**
Department of Planning and Development, City of Seattle
Layne Cubell, layne.cubell@seattle.gov
Seattle Design Commission Coordinator
700 Fifth Ave, Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019
(206) 233-7911
City of Seattle contact for the Seattle Design Commission. After discussing your project with appropriate City agencies, your project may be referred to the Design Commission for a review.

Related Articles

- 6. Develop a Maintenance Plan (Page 36)**
Information on how the project will be maintained and who will maintain it.
- 7. Permits and Agency Reviews (Page 29)**
Permits and reviews required by the City of Seattle for public art projects.

Web sites

8. Seattle Design Commission

<http://www.seattle.gov/dclu/citydesign/ProjectReview/SDC/>

Department of Planning and Development (DPD)

Conducts special reviews when a City department has a concern or wishes to make an exemption. (Also regularly reviews the design of capital or private projects that involve City property.)

9. Sign Kiosks in the Proposed Right of Way

<http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/signkiosks.htm>

Description of the Seattle Department of Transportation review process for sign kiosks proposed in the public right-of-way.

10. Seattle Municipal Code, Chapter 23.55.015

[http://clerk.ci.seattle.wa.us/~scripts/nph-](http://clerk.ci.seattle.wa.us/~scripts/nph-brs.exe?d=CODE&s1=23.55.015.snum.&Sect5=CODE1&Sect6=HITOFF&l=20&p=1&u=/~public/cod)

[e1.htm&r=1&f=G](http://clerk.ci.seattle.wa.us/~scripts/nph-brs.exe?d=CODE&s1=23.55.015.snum.&Sect5=CODE1&Sect6=HITOFF&l=20&p=1&u=/~public/cod)

Seattle Municipal Code standards for the design and location of sign kiosks and community bulletin boards in Seattle.

11. Seattle Design Commission Handbook

http://www.ci.seattle.wa.us/dpd/Planning/Design_Commission/Project_Review_Handbook/default.asp

A comprehensive guide of the responsibilities of the Seattle Design Commission. It also contains a summary of the design review process.

Sample Projects

Unique Objects of Art

Generally, a unique object of art is a one-of-a-kind sculptural form. Unique objects of art can also be described as privately funded or gifted public art; symbolic objects that advertise adjacent retail establishments; commemorative plaques; special paving; or memorials. Although public art custom-lighting or seating elements are functional as well as artistic, a unique object of art usually has no traditional function. A well-executed object of art primarily serves to give pleasure or invoke insight.

Typical Considerations

Permits and reviews

Unique objects of art located on public property

In the public right-of-way

Contact Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) about obtaining a Street Use Permit¹. If the project will significantly change the look of the street, SDOT will request a review by the Seattle Design Commission. At this review, the Design Commission will review the project's conceptual plan and strive to ensure that the unique object of art is a public amenity and will enhance the pedestrian activity at street level.

In a park

Contact Seattle Parks and Recreation for a project review and possible permits. This department maintains not only the City parks but greenbelts and boulevards. Depending on the complexity of your project, the process could take from one week to three or four months or more.

Unique objects of art located on private property

Implementing the project will require the written permission of the property owner. Your agreement with the owner should specify who is responsible for maintenance. No permits or agency reviews are required unless the object of art could be construed as signage, which would require a Sign/Awning Permit⁶, or if the object is very large a permit such as a Building Permit⁷ may be required. If the object is located on private property but projects over the public right-of-way, a Street Use Permit¹ will be required.

Unique objects of art developed in conjunction with a private developer

If you are working with a private developer, contact Department of Planning and Development to obtain a Land Use Permit⁴. It is also likely that the project will go through a DPD design review⁵.

See Permits and Agency Reviews⁸ for more information on what other City agencies you need to contact for an agency review. (The location of your project may be within or adjacent to the jurisdiction of an agency.)

Insurance

Insurance⁹ is necessary for both the installation and the life of the artwork.

Safety

Any or all of the safety concerns listed for all the other types of projects may apply. Unique objects should not be "climbable" and there should be no sharp protrusions. Any art that is walked on should not be a tripping hazard. Placement of the art should be carefully considered for both safety and aesthetic reasons. For further information, contact the agency or jurisdiction where you will apply for your permit or review.

Engineering

Any fastenings should be highly secure; moving parts within reach should be avoided. Depending on the scale of the project, the plans may need to include structural calculations done or reviewed by a Washington state-licensed engineer. Engineers are listed in the Yellow Pages, and hardware stores also sometimes have listings of construction professionals. Members of your working group may also have connections in the construction field.

Accessibility

The artwork needs to follow Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)¹⁵ standards for viewing and accessibility to the artwork, touching the artwork, etc. (The artwork itself does not need to be ADA accessible.)

Appropriate materials

There are numerous appropriate materials which may include bronze, metal, wood, concrete, stone, brick and others.

Basic design, user and maintenance issues

Any or all of the basic concerns listed in descriptions of other typical projects may apply. Permanent projects should be designed and engineered such that they are stable and durable for a minimum of 30 years. The community should have a firm long-term maintenance plan¹⁰.

For more information, contact the agency or jurisdiction where you will apply for your permit or review.

Contacts

1. Street Use Permit (Page 120)

Seattle Department of Transportation, City of Seattle
Benita Staadecker, benita.staadecker@seattle.gov
Street Use and Annual Permits
700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 3900
PO Box 34996
Seattle, WA 98124-4996
(206) 615-1224

City of Seattle contact for Street Use Permits. You will discover the specific requirements and steps required to obtain the permit.

2. Seattle Parks and Recreation, City of Seattle (Page 135)

Pam Kliment, pam.kliment@seattle.wa
Neighborhood Project Planner for Department of Neighborhoods
800 Maynard Avenue South
Seattle, WA 98134
(206) 684-7556

City of Seattle contact for public art projects that take place in a park.

- 3. Seattle Design Commission Review, Seattle Design Commission (Page 116)**
Department of Planning and Development, City of Seattle
Layne Cubell, layne.cubell@seattle.gov
Seattle Design Commission Coordinator
700 Fifth Ave, Suite 2000
P.O. Box 34019
Seattle, WA 98124-4019
(206) 233-7911
City of Seattle contact for the Seattle Design Commission. After discussing your project with appropriate City agencies, you may also be referred to the Design Commission for a review.
- 4. Land Use Permit, Land Use Review Service (Page 90)**
Department of Planning and Development (DPD), City of Seattle
<http://www.seattle.gov/dclu/landuse/default.asp>
Address: See address for Seattle Design Commission Review
(206) 684-8467
Contact the DPD Applicant Services Center if your project is a unique object of art developed in conjunction with a private developer to see if you will need a land use permit. Groups planning to convert private property into a landscaping/garden project may also need to obtain a permit.
- 5. Design Review Program, City Design (Page 86)**
Department of Planning and Development (DPD)
http://seattle.gov/dpd/design_coordination/
Address: See address for Seattle Design Commission Review
(206) 684-0435
If your project is a unique object of art developed in conjunction with a private developer your project may go through a DPD Design Review.
- 6. Sign/Awning Permit (Page 118)**
Department of Planning and Development, City of Seattle
Kent Hunnicutt, kent.hunnicutt@seattle.gov
Sign Inspector
Address: See address for Seattle Design Commission Review
(206) 684-8419
City of Seattle contact for Sign/Awning Permits. You will determine the specific requirements and steps you need to take to obtain the permit. Kent Hunnicutt is also the contact for building permits for cross-street banners.
- 7. Building Permit (Page 84)**
Department of Planning and Development, City of Seattle
<http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/asc/>
Address: See address for Seattle Design Commission Review
(206) 684-8850
Very large unique objects of art on private property may require a building permit.

Related Articles

8. **Permits and Agency Reviews** (Page 29)
Permits and reviews required by the City of Seattle for public art projects.
9. **Get Legal Status & Insurance** (Page 14)
Information on legal status to apply for City permits or reviews that are required to develop a neighborhood public art project.
10. **Develop a Maintenance Plan** (Page 36)
Information on how the project will be maintained and who will maintain it.
11. **Eastlake Gateway Park and Sculpture** (Page 79)
Read about how one neighborhood carried out a neighborhood sculpture (unique object of art) project. This account thoroughly discusses the issues that were involved in selecting an artist.

Web sites

12. **Seattle Design Commission**
Department of Planning and Development (DPD)
<http://www.seattle.gov/dclu/citydesign/ProjectReview/SDC/>
City of Seattle
Conducts special reviews when a City department has a concern or wishes to make an exemption. (Also regularly reviews the design of capital or private projects that involve City property.)
13. **Seattle Design Commission Handbook**
http://www.ci.seattle.wa.us/dpd/Planning/Design_Commission/Project_Review_Handbook/default.asp
A comprehensive guide of the responsibilities of the Seattle Design Commission. It also contains a summary of the design review process.
14. **Design Review Program** (Page 86)
Department of Planning and Development (DPD)
http://seattle.gov/dpd/design_coordination/
City of Seattle
Helps new developments contribute positively to neighborhoods by exploring ways in which new multifamily and commercial buildings can best respond to their sites and distinctive surroundings.
15. **ADA (American with Disabilities Act)**
<http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/ada/adahom1.htm>
Information from U.S. Department of Justice.

Sample Projects, In First Person... Eastlake Gateway Park and Sculpture

Planning for the Future

Eastlake, with the I-5 freeway on one side and Lake Union on the other, is five blocks wide and one lake long. Its 3,500 residents are diverse, its business community strong, its character distinctly urban. In the first three years of the 1990s, community members used the Neighborhood Matching Fund to create “Eastlake Tomorrow,” a comprehensive community plan that identified six projects to help preserve and enhance Eastlake’s identity. At that time, Eastlake saw some important new construction and redevelopment, especially of the old steam plant at the neighborhood’s south end. By 1993, public involvement had gained a great deal of momentum — but, community organizers realized, that momentum could not be sustained indefinitely once those major construction and redevelopment projects were completed. So, while there was still momentum to be used, the Eastlake Community Council moved. Spearheaded by Eastlake resident and Council board member Joy Huber, the Eastlake Community Council¹ applied to the Neighborhood Matching Fund³ to create a small “gateway” park with a sculpture at the neighborhood’s south end.

That sculpture and park, the Council proposed, would help create community identity in several ways. Launching the project would require neighbors, businesses, and local government to work together and, in doing so, to grow stronger. Once completed, the sculpture would be an object of pride for residents. It would both mark and enhance Eastlake’s unique character. The project would also serve to increase pedestrian and vehicular safety at a dangerous corner, increase public access to the waterfront, keep that bit of land as open space, clean up and re-vegetate shoreline habitat — and, of course, create an art treasure for all of Seattle. To match its request for \$43,419, Eastlake committed to \$264,289 in donated goods, services, and cash.

Adopting the Baby

A tremendous amount of work had already gone into the Gateway Park project by the time the Eastlake Community Council heard that their application to the Neighborhood Matching Fund had been successful. Consequently, no board member felt able to commit the time and energy needed to take charge of the sculpture part of the project. The community sponsors all stood firm in their commitment to the project but when it was time for a Council member or members to take on the sculpture project as their baby, no one came forward. Finally, Judy Rhodes agreed to take it on with the provision that a second person handle the paperwork — finalizing the proposal, handling the contract with the City and with the artist — and that’s where Cheryl Trivison came in on the project.

Trivison was a natural for the job: “I’ve worked with public and private agencies so it didn’t overwhelm me,” she said. While Rhodes interacted with the jury and artists, Trivison interacted with the Department of Neighborhoods, Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs (formerly Seattle Arts Commission) and the corporate sponsors, keeping the process running. Two was the right number to manage the project, Trivison said, even though it was a huge amount of work: “We had be on the on the phone all the time with each other and with David Huber,” then president of the Eastlake Community Council. “We gave the Council board monthly progress reports on the project.”

Call for Artists and Jury Formation

The two-page Call to Artists stipulated what artists could submit to the competition and when it was due. A direct mailing cost more than the project could spare, so the Call went out to artists’ magazines nationwide. (Note: Artists’ magazines all have classified sections in back.) The response was good: about 35 artists or artist teams responded with slides and statements of interest.

Rhodes organized a jury of project and community people: it included artists, an architect, and a landscape architect. The jury chose three finalists. Each finalist received a \$500 honorarium for submitting a completed proposal. The proposals were then presented to the community for a week. Community members were asked for comments but not asked to vote. Taking the comments into consideration, the jury then recommended the winning proposal. The Eastlake Community Council board made the formal final acceptance.

A Misstep and Starting Over Again

The Call to Artists, in its explanation of submission requirements, specified that, for the finalists, "Format is open but proposals must be able to be displayed on a wall or easel." A maximum size was also specified. These criteria ensured that the final proposals could be displayed in the community.

One of the three finalists asked about submitting a model. "We said, 'Sure,'" recalled Trivison. As it turned out, that project was chosen as the winner. But one of the other artists cried foul, pointing out that the requirements had specified boards. He threatened legal action.

At that point Trivison called the Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs for advice. "We all tried hard to think of some way to salvage the work we had put into the project," she said, "but in the end we just had to start the whole process over again."

The second time, they kept the same format but were more *specific* about requirements: models were okay. They sent the Call to all the artists who had previously responded. In addition, the Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs sent the Call out to its mailing list of about 350 artists. The downside was that by then there was only enough money to offer finalists honorariums half as big as before. The good part was that this second Call reached more artists and prompted more responses.

The project had planned to keep the same jury but when one person raised objections, the project assembled a new jury. The new jury did not know the identity of the previous finalists. Of the three previous finalists, two resubmitted their proposals but neither were finalists the second time.

A meeting, billed as a chance to "come and discuss Eastlake's art," was held at a local bakery. The three new finalists were able to chat with the people who showed up. "It helped the artists," said Trivison, "and gave community members an opportunity to have their say." As before, the three finalists' proposals were displayed for a week where community members could see them. The building owner who had agreed to display them in his lobby that week kept it open late one evening and on a Saturday.

Outcome

"Once the second call went out," Trivison reported, "there wasn't a single glitch." The jury recommended Thomas A. Lindsey's sculpture "Shear Draft" and the Eastlake Community Council board approved the recommendation. And at that point, said Trivison, "the artist himself took charge of the project. Which might not always happen." He acquired the necessary permits from Department of Planning and Development (formerly DCLU) and from the Landmarks Preservation Board. The budget was running low, so the artist raised additional money: he asked neighborhood businesses for donations, he contacted all the initial sponsors. Lake Union Dry Dock alone donated about \$10,000. "This is unique for public art," said Trivison: "For an investment of \$42,000 from the Neighborhood Matching Fund, the City got a sculpture valued at nearly \$200,000. The community feels the effect."

Celebrate!

By the time the end was in sight, project organizers were feeling like they'd been down a very long road. But they knew how important it would be to hold a community celebration, and experience proved them right. In recognition of the celebration's importance, the Eastlake Community Council authorized an expenditure of \$400

— a lot of money for the Council. In the end however, \$1,000 and donated goods came in from the community, and the Council ended up spending only \$4.

A date was set for a celebration on the site. (The sculpture, as it turned out, was installed only four days before the date.) It was advertised by means of posters, fliers, and the Eastlake Community Council newsletter. (Each time the newsletter is printed, about 25 people divide up the neighborhood and hand-deliver it to all 3,500 Eastlake residents and businesses.)

The celebration served to announce the gateway sculpture and to publicly recognize the work of the Council and the sponsoring businesses. It was a way to say thank you. “You need to thank people,” Trivison said: “in person, in writing by letter, and in print, in newspapers.” The celebration served another purpose as well: When neighbors who had not previously worked with the project attended the celebration, it gave them some sense of involvement and ownership. “If anyone does *anything*, you *have* to do a celebration,” insisted Trivison — “no matter *how* sick you are of a project. It was healthy for us and for the community.”

A plaque was placed near the sculpture, giving credit where credit was due. In terms of community building, said Trivison, “that plaque turned out to be very important.”

Teamwork and Tenacity

Reflecting on how much work was involved, Trivison said “I don’t know how any one person could have done this.” What does a project organizer need to be successful? Trivison didn’t hesitate in her answer: “Tenacity.”

“Make sure it’s a community project,” she advised anyone who is thinking about doing a project. And she warned: “Getting the community involved is a major job in itself.”

Help from the Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs, Trivison said, was essential. The office provided them with a contract which the Eastlake project then tailored to its own situation. “Our contract spells out everything,” she said, “including the plaque and ongoing maintenance — everything the Eastlake Community Council needed to have, everything the artist needed to have.” Keeping it to a simple minimum, the contract still ran to 12 pages. Trivison recalled the extensive advice and support from both the Department of Neighborhoods and the Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs: “They had a lot of common sense, experience, and resources to offer. Anyone doing a project like this needs that kind of professional backup.”

The Spin-off

“The spin-off for me,” said Trivison, “was that I came in contact with all these people throughout the community in such an affirmative way.” Community members have responded positively to the sculpture: “People are proud of it — and that their Community Council did it. And it was a good experience for the Council — normally, we do so much planning and produce so little that’s tangible.” As a result of the project, Trivison said, “we made friends with the City. Now they realize we can do things like this. And we realize it too.”

Trivison pointed out that *Shear Draft* is the first major public artwork in Eastlake. “This experience enabled me to gain an awareness of what a community’s involvement could be,” said Trivison. “It’s empowering.”

Insurance and Maintenance for Public Art

With a public sculpture, insurance is an issue, in case the artwork is damaged and even more so in case, for instance, someone climbing on the artwork is hurt. Because “Shear Draft” is on private land, the Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs could not take over the maintenance and insurance. For the Eastlake Community Council to insure the sculpture was not an option — even if its insurance company had been willing to insure the piece (the company refused), the cost would have been over \$1,000 annually. Fortunately, the company that owns the sculpture site was able to include it in their insurance at no additional cost.

Maintenance is also a crucial issue for any public art project. Ideally, as with Eastlake's gateway sculpture, the artist can spell out how and how often the piece should be cleaned. For long-term maintenance, the artist can also spell out what paint was used, where paint suppliers are located, and by what method the artwork should be cleaned. Any public sculpture is prey to graffiti, vandalism, day-in-day-out weather, car exhaust grit, bird droppings, and the who-knows-what-else factor. "Shear Draft" used a durable, easily cleanable paint designed for bridges. The artist included an estimate of how often the sculpture would need to be repainted and how much that would cost. The maintenance agreement also includes a clause stipulating, "If there is ever any discussion about changing the color or any aspect, characteristic, or element of the work, the artist shall be consulted."

Contacts

1. Eastlake Community Council

<http://eastlake.oo.net/organ.htm#ecc>

117 E. Louisa Street, #1
Seattle, WA 98102

2. Public Art Program (Page 128)

Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs, City of Seattle

<http://www.seattle.gov/arts/WhatWeDo/PublicArt/default.asp>

Joan Peterson, joan.peterson@seattle.gov

Public Art Project Manager

700 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1766

PO Box 94748

Seattle, WA 98124-4748

(206) 615-1800

Free advice and fee-based consultation on the development and implementation of neighborhood-funded public art projects. Fee-based consultation involves activities such as hiring a consultant to run the artist selection process. Public art walking tour maps can be downloaded from the Web site.

Related Articles

3. Neighborhood Matching Fund (Page 97)

Many different types of public art projects are funded via the Neighborhood Matching Fund. For example, neighbors have painted unique murals, commissioned distinctive neighborhood sculptures and created unique neighborhood gateway art.

4. Find an Artist (Page 20)

Tips on how to find and select an artist for your project.

Encyclopedia Artist's Public Report

It may be beneficial for you to request an Artist's Public Report from the artist. This report can provide important facts and information for press releases and educational copy.

Typically requested information includes:

- A short autobiographical statement relating to the artist's background.
- A paragraph discussing the ideas, concepts and process in the creation of the artist's overall body of artwork.
- A paragraph discussing pertinent aspects of the specific artwork.
- Any additional information the artist considers important for the enhancement of the general public's appreciation of the artwork.

The Artist's Public Report should be typed or clearly printed on a sheet of 8 ½" x 11" paper.

Related articles

1. **Working with the artist** (Page 25)
Advice on writing a contract and working with the artist through the installation of the artwork.
2. **Object Maintenance Sheet** (Page 102)
A form for providing information on artwork maintenance needs. This form can be adapted to your needs. From the Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs.
3. **Object Catalog Sheet** (Page 99)
A form for providing information about the artist and completed artwork. This form can be adapted to your needs. From the Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs.
4. **Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs** (Page 128)
Free advice and fee-based consultation on the development and implementation of neighborhood-funded public art projects. Fee-based consultation involves activities such as hiring a consultant to run the artist selection process. Public art walking tour maps can be downloaded from the Web site.