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## **ADMINISTRATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS**

### *Statement of Need*

The Midtown Greenway Corridor is an extraordinary opportunity – as an amenity, as a development incentive, and as an organizing principle for a large residential and commercial portion of the City of Minneapolis.

Although recognition of the opportunity has taken some time since the first signs of advocacy by the neighborhoods in their early 1990s action plans, all sectors of the community are now participating in its planning and development. Neighborhoods, nonprofits, local and regional government, and the corporate sector all have claimed a role and a voice in the process.

Participation at the neighborhood level is substantially organized around the Midtown Greenway Coalition, a coalition of 16 neighborhood organizations within whose boundaries the Greenway passes. This group gets credit for early recognition of the Greenway’s potential, and continues to play a vital role including advocacy for a trolley line in the Greenway, interest in public art along the Greenway, and a safe and graceful crossing at Hiawatha.

Participation by government and corporations is concentrated in the Midtown Community Works Partnership. As a focused body it brings to the Greenway the necessary elements of political will and government resources, corporate visibility and leverage, and funding advantages drawn from and attracted by both. Credit for getting the Greenway built, and the growing awareness of the Greenway as an amenity and development opportunity goes to this group.

Numerous other organizations, mentioned elsewhere in this report, claim a role as well. It is precisely this breadth of participation that poses the greatest challenges and opportunities for the Greenway over time. Public art, like development of commercial, retail and housing along the Greenway, must be viewed as a long-term commitment. It will take decades to realize the vision and promise of the Greenway. Bridge replacement alone – one of the most significant public art and design opportunities on the

Greenway – is estimated at the current rate of funding structures to require 20-30 years to complete.

**Leadership’s single-minded dedication to the Greenway vision and promise is essential, but strength and consistency of administration will also be vital to ensuring that quality of the built-environment remains a primary goal.** Yet this goal must be balanced by meaningful input from all the partners including corporations, government, nonprofit organizations and adjacent neighborhoods.

During the interviews conducted for this public art master plan, we asked, “Who owns the aesthetics of the Greenway?” Sometimes the answer we got was bemusement and this response, “What a good question.” By far the most common response was “The neighborhoods.” But when we ask the next question, “Who builds the Greenway?” the answer is diverse: government, private developers, nonprofits, local philanthropy, corporate sponsors, local business. How do the owners – the neighborhoods – come to the table where the builders make day-to-day decisions about implementation? The neighborhoods will only be there through carefully coordinated action. **Whether the building project is public art, public infrastructure, private development, or local business, a central point of administration, communication, and coordination for all participants and partnerships will remain a central need.**

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## Options for Funding Public Art

Communities nationwide have experimented with different methods for funding public art. By far the most common method is public funding, typically derived from a percentage of the capital expenditures by municipal, county, or state government. Other methods include direct appropriation of project costs by a governmental unit, local government requirements for private development inclusion of public art, or fundraising from corporate and private philanthropy by a nonprofit organization. Occasionally, federal dollars are available for public art. **Regardless of the structure for funding, the core issue of where the money originates dictates to a substantial degree who feels ownership of the public art, and the level of responsibility they have for collaborating, cooperating, or partnering with others.**

### Percent for Art

The impetus for setting aside a percentage for public art is simple: local government holds that quality design is for everyone, and understands that bringing artists and artworks out of the gallery and museum and into the public realm enriches the life of the community. Citizen advocacy is often at the root of the political decision to make this commitment, and citizen involvement in the public process of public art is a given. Although the means of achieving this vary dramatically from community to community, some basic principles are common.

Percent for art is generally calculated on the basis of the local government's program budget for capital improvements. The percent figure varies: one percent is most frequently used, but some communities use a low figure of ½%, while others have mandated 2% or even 2½%. These higher figures often cover the costs of administration, public education, and on-going maintenance, which in the lower percentages are generally covered by appropriations from the core operating budgets of the local government rather than from the capital improvement program budget.

The ordinances that govern percent for art programs differ as much as the communities in which they operate. Several characteristics of the most effective percent for art ordinances are:

- 1 A percent for art is set aside from the entire capital improvement budget, including infrastructure projects, and is not just applied to icon buildings such as City Hall or an airport. Funds thus set aside may be spent throughout the community (we refer to this as “pooling funds” for flexible and responsive application community-wide).
- 2 The percentage calculation is mandated, not optional, and the governing body of the community makes the appropriation, not the individual departments tasked with building public facilities and infrastructure.
- 3 Implementation of the percent for art program, including project planning and budgeting, community interaction, artist selection, project monitoring, public education, final implementation and maintenance, is delegated by the governing body of the community to a politically-appointed citizen's committee, under the administration of a qualified public art professional. This delegation moves the aesthetic process out of the political and into citizen decision-making.
- 4 Funds appropriated in one year may be carried forward for use in future years, in projects that require multiple-years to develop and for on-going maintenance costs.

The funding advantage presented by percent for art is clear. Less obvious, but equally important is the internalization of aesthetic interests within the local government. Percent for art makes a statement that the local government upholds a standard for quality public facilities and infrastructure. And administration of the percent for art program from within the local government allows, in the best examples, for a level of coordination and cooperation between governmental offices, such as between an office of cultural affairs (typically the percent for art administrator) and a public works department. The percent for art program can do multi-year planning, with participation by the other line departments, and artists are brought into capital projects at the earliest stages.

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Pitfalls for percent for art are often related to understaffing, leading to inattention to the details of managing the complex environment in which public art must exist. Community participation may suffer, other city departments may not be included in the process effectively, public education neglected, contract monitoring and expenditure oversight may be inadequate. The cost of understaffing is controversy. The conditions leading to controversy are exacerbated when administration is neglected.

### *Direct Appropriation of Public Art Project Costs*

Direct appropriation is primarily a technique used in smaller communities that do not build facilities or infrastructure with any great frequency. In these communities, construction of a roadway or a library may happen only once in a decade or a lifetime, so appropriations for public art may be a response to the local citizens' focus on that singular opportunity.

In larger communities, use of direct appropriation may indicate discomfort with the community-wide scope of a percent for art program. If citizen advocacy for public art is sporadic, or the governing body of the community has not been convinced of the simple premise for public art—that quality design is for everyone—then direct appropriation may be the method used to test acceptance of public art.

An office of cultural affairs may administer a direct appropriation, or it may be administered by an outside agency that has been awarded a grant or contracted to perform services. A common problem with direct appropriation is that it is neither regular nor predictable. It is often allocated long after the facility or infrastructure project has been designed – perhaps even as a mitigation response to public concerns over the design of a public space. This “Band-Aid” approach limits multi-year planning, may restrict the artists involvement to surface decoration, and may limit the involvement of community in the dialogue about the aesthetics of the larger design issues of a facility, public space or infrastructure project that they must use regularly.

### *Percent for Art on Private Development*

A few cities and towns have implemented programs that require an arts component in private development projects. The requirement may apply to a specific part of the city, such as a downtown or a redevelopment area, or it may be applied citywide. Housing is often excluded from the requirement but commercial and retail must demonstrate an arts component, either at design review or prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy.

Often the developer is given an opportunity to select from several types of arts components. They may commission a work of public art for their development site or make a cash contribution to a pooled fund administered by either the local government's office of cultural affairs or a non-profit agency designated by the local government to perform arts services. Such pooled funds may be granted out to support local arts organizations or used to commission public art projects.

This technique may raise concerns among developers when it is proposed and passed as a local ordinance, but experience has shown that it is well received in practice. Because the developers are making their own choices – first on the decision to give to a pooled fund or to commission a public art piece for their own project, and second (if they select the latter) on the type of art they will commission, the artist who will produce it, and how it will relate to their project – the developers are more receptive and happy with the final product.

Percent for Art in Private Development has been most successful in communities that foresee a local development market that is competitive, where market forces drive the developer to make concessions to the local community as a condition of selection for a project, and where the risk factors are low for the developer.

Percent for Art in Private Development rarely stands alone as public art policy in a community. Local governments that support a percent for art policy on their own capital expenditures are best positioned to ask developers to do the same. When both are in operation, collaborations may be possible that enrich both public and private spaces.

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## *Fundraising by a Nonprofit Organization*

Any nonprofit organization may choose to produce a work of public art, and many do. From murals on buildings, to temporary installations, to large-scale pieces of public infrastructure, nonprofit organizations may bring their own aesthetic vision into the public realm. They may or may not seek input from the community that will experience the artwork daily, depending on the audiences the organization serves and the funders it depends upon. Funding for such endeavors is generally sought from private philanthropy, individual donors, or corporate sponsors.

Grants from governmental entities may also contribute, including federal, state and local arts agencies. Such nonprofits may be delegated to perform arts services by the local government; in such cases these organizations may become quasi-governmental in character, with funding from multiple sources, and reporting responsibility to each.

### *Summary*

No one method of funding is best. The efficacy of any one funding choice, or combination of funding choices, will vary according to the local culture, wealth, growth, sophistication, commitment and inclusiveness of the community. The funding pattern will influence the character of the public art and the program's structure.

## *A Snapshot of Public Art in Minneapolis*

A wealth of public art efforts is underway in Minneapolis today. These provide context for a Greenway public art program, and underscore an increasingly professional approach to public art project design and management.

The Office of Cultural Affairs has managed a Neighborhood Gateways program since 1990, funded by annual City appropriations. Currently, the Office of Cultural Affairs receives an annual direct appropriation from the City's capital budget in an amount equivalent to 1% of net debt bond. This past year the appropriated amount was \$214,000. Other projects have included artist-designed manhole covers on 6th and 7th Streets South between Hennepin Avenue and Nicollet Mall, artist-designed benches completed in 1988 and installed along Hennepin Avenue and Lake Street Uptown, mural projects downtown co-sponsored with business partners such as the construction site fence at 6th Street South and Nicollet Mall and a mural collaboration on grain elevators at Hiawatha Avenue and 42nd Street South. The Office of Cultural Affairs recently hired Mary Altman into a full-time, City-funded public art staff position.

Metro Transit's Light Rail Transit Public Art Program used artist-architect teams to design 15 stations and related sites. Joan Mondale heads the art and design steering committee, and David Allen provides professional staff management.

Hennepin County authorized 1% of construction costs from Hennepin County Library building projects of one million dollars or more. Ridgedale, Edina and Wayzata Libraries will benefit initially. An Art Advisory Committee will be appointed, and project management will be through a consultant contracted by the Library Foundation.

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Intermedia Arts designed and implemented *People, Places, Connections* focusing on a portion of Lake Street and the Greenway as a laboratory for artist and community interaction. The project is co-sponsored by the Midtown Greenway Coalition, the Design Center for American Urban Landscape at University of Minnesota, and the Lake Street Partners. Neighborhood participants will work with artists to “define, create and maintain public art and green spaces ...they will leave behind a legacy of artworks, re-developed public space, and documentation of their processes.” An initial phase included an exhibition of project ideas by five artists; the next phase has been funded by the Rockefeller Foundation.

Avenue of the Arts, a special project of the Office of the Mayor, will soon contract with artists for design teams developing street furniture, pavement patterns, manhole covers, and kiosks. Sites for commissioned artworks have been identified, and private projects include a winter garden designed by Maya Lin for American Express. The City has contracted with FORECAST Public Artworks to provide planning services; the Office of Cultural Affairs Public Art Program will manage the projects.

In 1997 and 1998, the Midtown Greenway Coalition convened a group of neighborhood, business, and nonprofit representatives to determine how to incorporate artistic enhancements into the design of the 4th Avenue Bridge to be rebuilt over the Greenway. Funding for these enhancements came from a grant awarded from the Metropolitan Council through the Livable Communities Demonstration Account. In addition, a mural, a sculpture, and various performance-based events have been commissioned through a variety of funding sources.

Near Northside Redevelopment, a new neighborhood adjacent to downtown, will include an integrated art strategy in the 70-acre site. FORECAST Public Artworks provided management services for a team of artists in the site planning process.

Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board has an established policy on Public Art in the Parks, which requires public consultation as well as Board review and approval.

Minneapolis Center for Neighborhoods and FORECAST Public Artworks is facilitating a Public Art Policy Initiative, funded by the McKnight Foundation. It will bring together representatives of public art endeavors throughout the region to network, share ideas and challenges, and to provide assistance to the City of Minneapolis and Hennepin County on public art issues.

Neighborhood Revitalization Program provides downtown tax-increment financing funds to neighborhoods for improvements over a 20-year period. Several neighborhoods have elected to use a portion of this funding for art projects.

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## **SEVEN ACTION STEPS**

In our interviews, Gordon Sprenger offered some sage advice. He said the Greenway should not become “like a science fair, with many unrelated demonstration projects.” With careful nurturing and consistent administration, Greenway public art can become a spectacular asset to the community. Without those things, it may be just so many paper-mache volcanoes and sweet potatoes in mason jars.

### PHASE ONE (1-3 YEARS)

- 1** Midtown Community Works Partnership (MCWP) **establishes the Midtown Greenway Art and Design Committee** by revising and expanding the current MCWP Art Advisory Committee, **and appoints a strong, vocal and politically-savvy chairperson.** Charge this committee with ensuring communication between organizations and agencies involved with art and design issues on the Greenway. Committee members include representatives of the Midtown Community Works Partnership (corporate leadership), the Midtown Greenway Coalition (board leadership), Office of Cultural Affairs, Minneapolis Arts Commission, Minneapolis Public Works Department, Hennepin County Transit and Community Works, the LRT Arts Commission, the University of Minnesota Design Institute and Design Center for the American Urban Landscape, Minneapolis Historical Society, Minneapolis Center for Neighborhoods, and at least two appointments from adjacent neighborhoods and from nonprofit arts organizations with direct connections to the Greenway (such as Intermedia and Heart of the Beast).

Community representation should play a significant role on this Committee, as represented by MGC, Minneapolis Arts Commission, and Minnesota Center for Neighborhoods, and two representatives of neighborhoods adjacent to the Greenway (rotating among the 16 neighborhoods).

- 2** MCWP **establishes and funds a three year contract for professional public art project coordination on the Greenway** for up to 1000 hours per year (equal to 50% FTE). This contractor reports to the Midtown Greenway Art and Design Committee, serves as the central coordination point for all public art projects on the Greenway, working with City, County, the Metropolitan Council, nonprofits, and private development, and represents the Greenway on the Minneapolis Center for Neighborhoods Public Art Policy Initiative. Estimated cost: \$60,000/year
- 3** MCWP works with City to **establish a percent for art ordinance on all public capital improvement projects citywide and to designate the Midtown Greenway Corridor as a special development district** for a percent for art ordinance on private development (excluding housing) adjacent to the Greenway. MCWP works with the City to **increase the capacity of the Office of Cultural Affairs** to manage 6-8 City-funded top priority public art projects on the Greenway, by bringing the public art staff up to two full time professional public art administrators and one support person.
- 4** MCWP works with the County to **designate any County-funded projects in, on, or around the Greenway as eligible for County-funded percent for art** (similar to the recently enacted percent for art on libraries, passed December 6, 2000) and advocates for professional public art staff within the County government.
- 5** MCWP **conducts a fundraising campaign for capital improvements and temporary art projects on the Greenway**, with a goal of \$3,000,000 for public art. These private dollars should be used to commission non-governmentally funded permanent and temporary works and to enhance (but not replace) government funding of public art projects on the Greenway. Establish a fund at

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the Minneapolis Foundation to receive contributions; leave a remainder of at least \$500,000 as endowment to provide on-going maintenance of permanently-placed works of public art (such an endowment will generate a stable income-stream of \$25,000 annually and appreciate in value over time).

It should be noted that, if private funding will apply to infrastructure projects, such as the ramps or bridges, funds must be secured prior to the conceptual design. If this does not occur, opportunities for integration will be lost.

#### PHASE TWO (3 YEARS AND ON-GOING)

- 6 Conduct strategic planning process to determine need and feasibility of establishing a public-private partnership organization as a qualified 501(c)3 nonprofit tax exempt legal entity** capable of receiving on-going support from both governmental agencies and corporate and individual donors. The Midtown Community Works Partnership, as it transitions into the board of directors of this organization, explores closer collaboration with the Midtown Greenway Coalition. The public-private partnership's mission is to match the build-out of the Greenway with the vision of the neighborhoods and the Partnership, by maintaining consistent high-quality coordination and communication among all permanent and temporary projects along the corridor, including encouraging and facilitating private development projects along the edges of the Greenway. The Midtown Greenway Corridor Art and Design Committee becomes a subcommittee of this organization and the public art coordination contract ends. A staff of professionals in development and design, public art, marketing and special events is hired.
  
- 7 Audit the perceived success of this organization every three years** by conducting a survey of stakeholders — neighbors, nonprofit organizations, governmental agencies, private developers. Build in a sunset audit for the Greenway organization (described above) triggered by the replacement of the last bridge on the Greenway.