

Guidelines for Mural Art on Private Property (MAPP) Revised 3/27/2023

Mural art is widely considered one of the oldest methods of artistic expression. They have the ability to create a sense of place, strengthen a community's identity, add visual and aesthetic value, reinforce a town's characteristics, and provide a medium to display the history and culture of a locality. When appropriately executed, murals enhance the character of a town.

The following guidelines are for murals placed on private property, facilities, or grounds which are not the property of the Town of Leesburg or Loudoun County but on which Town of Leesburg art projects may be sited. **This program excludes the H-1 District.** These guidelines will help ensure that the location, size, shape, color palette, materials used, and relationship to historic context meet the goals of this program, while striking an appropriate balance between historic character and artistic expression.

Non-Discrimination Clause: Neither the Town of Leesburg nor the Public Art Commission shall discriminate against any artists on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, disability, age, or gender. Proposals for Works of Art that include inappropriate subject matter, in the sole opinion of the Town Council, shall not be approved.

1. Purpose

The purpose of permitting mural art is to ensure the continued visual aesthetic of Leesburg while allowing for compatible artistic and creative expression in appropriate locations and designs while attracting visitors to the Town. The incorporation of such art will help improve quality of life and benefit Leesburg as a whole.

2. Definitions

Art Advisory Panel – The panel convened by the Commission on Public Art to review a specific project, select an artist to be commissioned and/or an artwork to be purchased. A list of qualified art professionals/practitioners is compiled by the Commission on Public Art and referred to when panelists are required.

Artist – Students of art; professional or academic in nature.

Commission on Public Art (COPA) – A Town commission created to support the development of a public art program and the expansion of public access to and participation in the arts in the Town, the members of which are appointed by the Town Council and serve in an advisory capacity to the Town Council.

Friends of Leesburg Public Arts (FOLPA) – A non-profit membership organization established to preserve, promote and provide funding for public art in the Town, including art projects submitted by the Town's Commission on Public Art.

Government-Owned Property – Real property owned by Loudoun County, the Loudoun County Public Schools, the Commonwealth of Virginia or the federal government.

Privately-Owned Property – Facilities or grounds which are not the property of the Town or Loudoun County but on which Town art projects may be sited.

Town Council – The Town Council members of the Town of Leesburg.

Town Facility – Publicly-accessible facilities owned and operated by the Town; this may include buildings, parks, public spaces or public works which are physically or visually accessible to the general public.

3. Mural Art vs. Signage

Murals are an artistic form of expression. Murals are not meant to serve as an advertisement, which is one of the primary ways in which they will be distinguished from signs. The use of trademarks, service marks, or other markings, colors, or patterns identifying or associated with an existing business or brand may require permission from the entity and often will fall under any applicable regulations that cover signage. Signs are interpreted by the Zoning Administrator.

4. Implementation

In sequence the process of implementing Mural Art on Private Property includes:

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| A. Identification of a Theme | December |
| B. Call for Walls | January |
| C. Call for Artists | February |
| D. Section/Approval | March/April |
| E. Installation | May |

* All timeframes are subject to change.

A. Identification of a Theme:

- Determined by COPA on an annual basis.

B. Call for Walls

On an annual basis, Commission on Public Art (COPA) may solicit interest from private property owners in the Mural Art on Private Property Program. The purpose of this solicitation is to allow private property owners to enter into an agreement which commits their designated building façade for a potential mural. Please note:

- Call for Wall excludes the H-1 District.
- An application does not guarantee selection.
- The call is subject to an agreement between the Town and the building/property owner.
- Walls will be selected based off a scoring system defined herein.
- Selection entitles owner to be a member of the final selection panel when choosing mural art.

Locational requirements:

- Murals must be painted on the side or rear walls of the building, and not on its primary façade or above its roof line.
- Murals should not be painted over historically significant surfaces.
- The installation of a mural should complement and enhance the building and be incorporated architecturally into the façade.
- The location of a mural on the building should not cover or detract from significant or character-defining architectural features.

C. Call to Artists

Eligibility requirements for each project will be established by the Art Advisory Panel and consideration and collaboration with staff, and other relevant commissions.

Artist will be selected on the basis of qualifications or quality as demonstrated by past work, appropriateness of the proposal to the particular project, and probability of successful completion. Murals will be selected based off a scoring system defined herein. Selection will be based on the criteria set in the guidelines below:

Criteria for selection of Artist or existing Works of Art:

- Quality/originality: demonstrated capabilities of the Artist and merit of the proposed Works of Art;
- Suitability: appropriate in scale, material, form, and content for community and physical environment;
- Durability: demonstrates structural and surface integrity, reasonable maintenance cost and requirements;
- Safety/Public Liability: The Work of Art should not present issues in these areas. The Work of Art should be reviewed by appropriate departments or offices to ensure that the Work of Art does not present safety hazards.
- A funding source has been identified

Methods of selecting Walls and Mural Proposals:

- Call for Walls: Any business owner may apply
- Call to Artists: Any Artist may apply, subject to any limitations established by the Art Advisory Panel
- Art Advisory Panel recommends Artist, design and budget to COPA
- COPA reviews recommendation with input from other commissions and staff members
- COPA votes to endorse Art Advisory Panel recommendation
- Town Council presentation – the Town Council endorses proposed Public Art
- Artist is contracted
- Work of Art created / installed

D. Selection Process

On an annual basis, Commission on Public Art (COPA) may solicit interest from private property owners in the Mural Art on Private Property Program. The purpose of this solicitation is to allow private property owners to enter into an agreement which commits their designated building façade for a potential mural. See section 4D for more details.

Mural art will be selected on the basis of qualifications or quality as demonstrated by past work, appropriateness of the proposal to the particular project, and probability of successful completion.

An Artist may create/fabricate a selected Work of Art independently, collaboratively, or with subcontractors and may install the Work of Art at the site, or may create the Work of Art on site. The Public Art Program may acquire a selected design from an Artist and execute the Work of Art under a separate contract with a consultant or contractor other than the Artist.

If the initial design, created under contract, for the Work of Art is not acceptable, the Artist shall have two additional opportunities to satisfy COPA and the Town Council. If not approved, another Artist may be selected (and the Artists will be paid for their time in accordance with their contract terms).

As part of the selection process, an Art Advisory Panel, an ad hoc group of five [5] convened by the Commission on Public Art, will review each submission with consideration and collaboration from staff and other relevant commissions. Walls will be selected based off a scoring system defined in the project guidelines. The property owner of the subject wall will be a member of the Art Advisory Panel for each proposed project and the Panel may not recommend a final mural design without the concurrence of the property owner.

Before, after or during COPA meetings called for the consideration of the recommendation of the Art Advisory Panel, members from the Department of Public Works and Capital Projects, and other Town staff and commissions as required will be asked to provide their feedback and recommendations on a project.

COPA will determine if a project is acceptable and will present it to the Town Council for its consideration at a work session. Following feedback and direction from the Town Council, the project will be submitted to the Town Council for approval with a resolution. Once a project has been approved by the Town Council, a contract for the required services of the Artist(s) shall be developed by the Town Staff and COPA.

An application does not guarantee selection.

E. Design & Materials

- The scale of the mural should be appropriate to the building and the site.

- The mural should be an original design.
- The mural should be composed of a color palette that compliments the colors or architecture found within its location.
- Sponsor and artist names may be incorporated but should be discreet and not exceed 5% of the design or 2 square feet in area, whichever is less.
- The paints and materials used should not chemically corrode nor compromise the integrity of the building's exterior or structure.
- Reflective, neon, and fluorescent paints should not be used.
- All costs associated with installing the mural, artist fees, and the selection of the artist will be managed by the building owner. Stipends may become available.

5. **Funding Sources**

COPA will be active in applying for non-Town public, private funds, and grants to support Public Art projects as appropriate. Individuals, businesses and organizations will also be encouraged to make contributions to the Town for Public Art projects.

6. **Maintenance**

The Town of Leesburg will be responsible for any and all maintenance or repairs to the mural after it is installed. This includes the repair of material failure (peeling paint) and promptly removing vandalism in accordance with the Town Code. Murals will be inspected periodically by Town staff to determine if they need maintenance. However, if a maintenance issue arises between such inspections, the property owner shall notify Town staff of the issue. The mural will be painted over by the Town, at its expense at the end of the lease.

7. **Government-Owned Property**

In addition to the process set forth above for Privately-Owned Property, the Town, no more than one time annually, may consider approval of a mural on a Government-Owned Property.

- A. The Government-Owned Property may not be in the H-1 District
- B. The Government entity will be required to lease or license the wall on which the proposed mural would be installed to the Town.
- C. The proposed mural will be evaluated in the manner set forth in the Town of Leesburg Public Art Guidelines for Unsolicited Projects.
- D. The Government entity must be responsible for all costs associated with preparation, installation, maintenance, and removal of any approved mural.

References: Resolution 2022-030 and Resolution 2021-101

Disclaimer: this process is discretionary and any decisions made by this group are final.