Art Commission Application Form

You must submit the following along with this form as a single PDF.

- Individual or organizational statement (250 word max)
- Letter of intent that includes history of project and its impact on the community (500 word max)
- Visual materials (See Art Commission Guidelines for requirement)
- Budget describing cost of materials, artist fees, maintenance, installation, etc.
- Two letters of support from project partners or neighborhood organizations
- One letter of support from the Department of Public Works or Department of Mobility & Infrastructure

Notes:

- You may be required to hold a Development Activities Meeting with the applicable Registered Community Organization prior to Hearing. For more information, visit pittsburghpa.gov/dcp/ro.
- After receiving Art Commission approval, any necessary permits, certificates of occupancy, legal agreements, or other city approvals are still required. These must be applied for separately at the appropriate City departments and are the responsibility of the applicant.
- Application format is a digital copy of full application form, required documents, and the presentation to be projected at the Hearing as one single PDF. Send all documents to pacd@pittsburghpa.gov.

Project Information

Type of Project: [X] Conceptual Review
- Conceptual/Final Review
- Final Review
- Courtesy Review

Has this project been come before Art Commission before?
- [X] No
- [ ] Yes, when: ______________

Duration of project: From ____/____/____ to ____/____/____

Permanent? [ ] No [X] Yes
Project Location

Address: south side of Smallman Street from 20th Street to 21st Street.
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Cross Streets or other relevant information: ________________________________

Neighborhood: Strip District

Applicant Information

Name: Derek Reese, Office of Public Art

Mailing Address: 810 Penn Avenue, 6th Floor

City: Pittsburgh State: PA Zip: 15222

Phone: 412-491-0900 Email: dreese@pittsburgharts council.org

Relationship or Role in Project: public art project manager and artist selection coordinator

Co-Applicant (optional)

Name: Jay Sabo, Buchart Horn, Inc.

Mailing Address: 2200 Liberty Avenue, #300

City: Pittsburgh State: PA Zip: 15222

Phone: (800) 274-2224 Email: jsabo@buchart horn.com

Relationship or Role in Project: Engineering and design consultant to the City of Pittsburgh

Presenter at Hearing if different than applicant: Artist Marlana Vassar will present with Derek Reese.
Art Commission, City of Pittsburgh  
200 Ross Street, 4th Floor  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15219

November 4, 2020

Dear Art Commission Members,

We are writing to request **Conceptual Review** of the pedestrian plaza surface design to be stamped in the pavement of the forthcoming Smallman Street plaza. This project is part of the larger revitalization currently underway on Smallman Street between 16th and 21st Street, in the heart of the Strip District. We request to be placed on the Art Commission Agenda for the upcoming hearing scheduled for November 18, 2020.

The project will be presented by Derek Reese, project manager for the Office of Public Art (OPA), and artist Marlana Vassar in collaboration with Sallyann Kluz, director of OPA.

OPA has provided artist selection and continues to provide project management services for the creation of an artist-designed pavement project as part of the new plaza creation. The project is being implemented by the Department of Mobility and Infrastructure (DOMI). The artist’s design will be stamped into the asphalt paving, and will be fabricated and installed by a general contractor for the project. OPA is working as a consultant to Buchart Horn, Inc. (BH), the engineering firm contracted by the City of Pittsburgh for the overall streetscape project.

An open call for artists was released in July of 2020. All applications were reviewed by a selection panel convened by OPA that included City of Pittsburgh staff, Buchart Horn staff, community members and stakeholders from the Strip District, and visual arts professionals. The selection panel identified three artists to interview for the project. After the interviews, the panel identified artist Marlana Vassar as the finalist for the project. Ms. Vassar entered into a contract with Buchart Horn, Inc. in September.

Ms. Vassar has since been working in collaboration with Buchart Horn and Strip District stakeholders to develop the design proposal. This has included several interviews between the artist and stakeholder, as well as a public community meeting where stakeholder had the opportunity to share their feedback on a series of preliminary designs. Finalization of the design is expected to take place in February of 2021, with fabrication tentatively scheduled for April of 2021. We intend to return to Art Commission with a Final Design in February 2021.
We look forward to having the opportunity to share further project details and design plans with the members of the Art Commission.

Sincerely,

Sallyann Kluz
Director, Office of Public Art
Office of Public Art Organizational Statement
The Office of Public Art envisions a region in which the creative practices of artists are fully engaged to collaboratively shape the public realm and catalyze community-led change. OPA builds capacity for this work through civically engaged public art, artist resources, public programming, and technical assistance.

For the Smallman Street Plaza Paving Design Project, we are providing artist selection and project management services. We are commissioned by Buchart Horn, Inc., who are providing engineering and design services to the Department of Mobility and Infrastructure (DOMI).

Project Site
The project site is located adjacent to the intersection of Smallman Street and 21st Street in the Strip District. A new pedestrian plaza will be created on the southern side of Smallman Street, as indicated in the enclosed images.

Artist Selection Process
Artist Marlana Vasser was selected through a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) which was executed and managed by the Office of Public Art. All applications were reviewed by a selection panel convened by OPA that was composed of City of Pittsburgh staff, Buchart Horn staff, community members and stakeholders from the Strip District, and visual arts professionals. After the initial application review, the selection panel identified three artists to interview for the project. Ms. Vasser was selected as the finalist based on the strength of her past work and her performance during the interview process.

A copy of the original RFQ is included with this application.

Fabrication Process and Materials
The artist is being commissioned to design a paving pattern that will be embossed into the asphalt using custom asphalt stamps. The artist will be able to design up to four stamps that can be combined to create different effects.

The artist will also work with the contractor and design team to identify asphalt stain to be mixed with the asphalt before it is laid, or a color treatment to be applied after asphalt is installed. There may also be opportunities to integrate surface applied paint to further enhance the artwork.
While the paving pattern will be fabricated and installed by others, the artist will provide project oversight and observe the installation to confirm that the final artwork meets the artist’s design intent.

**Project Budget**
The Artist Fee for the project is $15,000. There is an additional allowance for reimbursable expenses, such as travel, parking, printing, and materials required to support design of $2,500.

All costs associated with fabrication and installation of the artwork are part of the General Contractor’s scope of work and are not included in the artist fee.

**Maintenance Considerations**
The plaza and surface design will be maintained by the City of Pittsburgh as part of the overall maintenance plan for the plaza. As part of the final artwork design, the artist and general contractor will provide maintenance and repair recommendations.
Smallman Street Plaza Paving Project

Conceptual Review at Art Commission
Artist Marlana Vassar with
Office of Public Art and Buchart Horn, Inc.
November 2020
Office of Public Art

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The Site

Smallman Street, from 20th to 21st Street in the Strip District
The Site

Smallman Street, from 20th to 21st Street in the Strip District
Project Details

- The project is to create a paving pattern design, which will be embossed into the surface of the pedestrian plaza through asphalt stamping techniques.

- Commission is for artist design only; fabrication and installation will be performed by the general contractor for the streetscape project.

- Artist fee if $15,000 plus $2,500 for reimbursable expenses. Fabrication and installation costs are not included in this number and are carried by the general contractor.
Artist Selection Process

- Managed by Office of Public Art
- Open call for artists, released July 2020
- Selection panel interviewed four artists
- Recommended artist Marlana Vassar for the commission
- Ms. Vassar is under contract with Buchart Horn, Inc.
Project Timeline

RFQ Release: July 2020
Artist Selected: September 2020
Conceptual Design Review: November 2020
Final Design Review: February 2021
Artwork Installation: April 2021
Marlana Vassar, artist

Work samples
Marlana Vassar, artist

Work samples
Materials

A design is created digitally.

The design or pattern is given to a fabricator that creates a wire metal stamp.

The stamp is rolled on top of the hot asphalt creating indentations.
Materials

Stamped asphalt, finished with asphalt stain and/or surface painting
How to get inspiration for public art?

- Talk with residents and local businesses
- Research culture and history of the Strip
- Site visits and walking through the neighborhood
- Take pictures of the surroundings (architecture, site and existing artwork)
Context & Inspiration
Context & Inspiration
Conceptual Design: Site

Smallman Street, from 20th to 21st Street in the Strip District
Conceptual Design: Option 1
Conceptual Design: Option 2
Questions?