

Public Art Murals Guidelines and Process

Section 2.438 of the Municipal Code requires that exterior murals must be approved by the Medford Arts Commission, whose role is to ensure that each project aesthetically enhances its location and surroundings. The costs associated with developing and executing/installing a mural are the responsibility of the applicant and/or property owner of the wall where the proposed mural will be installed. To simplify this document, the word ‘mural’ refers to artwork that is painted on an exterior wall and other works of art affixed to an exterior wall.

Overview

- The approval process for executing/installing murals on public or private property within the City of Medford is administered by the City of Medford staff liaison to the Medford Arts Commission (MAC).
- Applicants without professional mural experience may apply but should partner with a professional muralist.
- Applicant must provide a budget for the project and if the project is approved funding must be in place before work can begin.
- Proposed murals are reviewed by the MAC, by the Landmarks & Historic Preservation Commission if required, and if recommended by the MAC, approved by the City Council.
- Murals shall not be considered for installation on building facades with a public entrance in historic districts.
- Murals may be considered for installation on building with a public entrance outside historic districts.
- Murals shall not be proposed for installation on an unpainted façade surface (natural brick, stone) of a historic building.
- All property owners must sign an Art Agreement to be included with the Public Art Mural application agreeing to transfer ownership of the mural to the City pending approval of the proposed mural by the City Council.
- All murals approved through this process become part of the City’s public art collection for as long as the Art Agreement remains in effect.
- The number of murals per block may be limited.
- Historically significant murals (including historic advertisements) shall not be painted over, even if faded.
- To the extent practicable, murals shall be applied only to the flat planes of walls.
- Imitative materials including but not limited to asphalt siding, wood textured aluminum, and artificial stone should be avoided on murals within historic districts.
- All applicants are required to meet with the MAC and staff liaison at least one month prior to submitting an application. To schedule an appointment contact Medford Parks, Recreation & Facilities at 541-774-2400 or parks@cityofmedford.org.

Murals on Historic Buildings

- Murals proposed for installation on the exterior of structures listed on the National Register of Historic Places or to a contributing property within a Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places will be forwarded to the Landmarks & Historic Preservation Commission for review.
- The Landmarks & Historic Preservation Commission will review the proposal using criteria stated in the City of Medford Municipal Code and provide their comments to the City Council and to the MAC.

Criteria for Approval of Wall Murals

The mural should be a professionally designed, original work of exceptional quality with consideration of the following criteria:

- Visual imagery that is reflecting partisan politics or containing sexual or religious content or expressing a commercial aspect will not be accepted. Visual imagery content that comes under question will be reviewed by the MAC, the Landmarks & Historic Preservation Commission and by city council if necessary.
- Artwork that is designed to be visible from many view points (by pedestrians, from moving vehicles, seated audiences, etc.).
- Artwork that is appropriately sited for directional exposure to minimize fading of colors.
- Suitability of the wall surface to receive all materials that are to be used to execute the mural, including the wall preparation material.
- Work that is appropriate in scale to the building and to the site.
- All installation and technical issues.

Mural Design Application

Applicants (artist, property owner, etc.) intending to execute/install a mural on an exterior wall that is visible from a public-right-of-way and within the boundaries of the City of Medford must apply for approval through the following process. Applicant shall:

- a. Schedule an appointment and meet with the staff liaison to the MAC for an informational overview of the process and initial review of the proposed project.
- b. Complete and submit a Public Art Mural application.
- c. Submit a signed Art Agreement from the property owner.
- d. Prepare a mural presentation package as described in *Mural Design Presentation and Review*.
- e. Schedule an appointment for MAC review of mural package at a monthly public Commission meeting.
- f. Submit a complete Mural Presentation package to staff no less than ten days prior to MAC review. Only packages that are totally complete will be accepted for review.

Mural Design Presentation and Review

The proposed mural application will be presented to the Medford Arts Commission at their monthly public meeting.

▪ **Initial MAC Presentation Meeting**

Presentation materials for the initial meeting must include:

- a. Photos of the proposed location of the mural including all wall features and features immediately adjacent to the proposed mural site; complete wall measurements.
- b. Professional portfolio of the lead artist's mural work including examples of the artist's demonstrated ability from prior projects to carry out the project as designed.
- c. A color drawing at ½ inch scale that adequately illustrates the proposed mural including actual color, finishes and materials samples with their locations designated on the mural drawing,
- d. Verbal explanation of imagery concept including:
 - How the artwork enhances the existing character of the site through scale, color, material, texture, and content,
 - How the mural considers the social dynamics of the location, and
 - How the artwork considers the historical, geographical and cultural features of the site as well as its relationship to existing architecture and landscaping.
- e. Statement regarding the durability of the artwork and its potential to require ongoing maintenance.
- f. Art Agreement signed by the property owner.

▪ **Preliminary Design Approval**

Generally, the MAC review and preliminary approval for the applicant to move forward with the proposed mural concept occurs at the regularly scheduled monthly MAC meeting following the applicant's initial presentation. Staff will notify the applicant of the Commission's decision and if necessary, schedule a date for the second design meeting.

*NOTE: If the mural is proposed for installation on the exterior of structures listed on the National Register of Historic Places or to a contributing property within a Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places the proposal will be forwarded to the Landmarks & Historic Preservation Commission for review. See **Murals on Historic Buildings** above.*

Design Approval by City Council

- Following final design approval by the MAC and review by the Landmarks & Historic Preservation Commission (if required). If the Commission votes to forward the mural concept to the City Council, the Commission will forward the concept to the City Council for approval.
- Once final approval is granted by the City Council, the applicant must:
 - a. Provide staff with the installation schedule. Applicant will be responsible for implementing all safety requirements per direction from staff (if work is occurring within the public right of way).
 - b. Enter into a contract between the applicant and the City of Medford.

Note: If the MAC finds that there are areas of the mural that are not rendered according to the approved design documents, the MAC may request the applicant adjust the mural to comply with the approved design. The MAC also recognizes that an artist may wish to make minor changes during the process that deviate from the approved concept but that enhance the overall project. The MAC and artist will agree on any changes to the approved design drawing.

- Once the MAC and applicant are satisfied that the mural is complete, the mural must be coated with a clear UV protectant paint to protect the mural from graffiti and ultra violet light.
- The MAC will vote to accept the mural into the City's public art collection and forward their recommendation to the City Council for approval.

Other Things to Know

- The City will contract with the applicant for the execution/installation of the mural.
- The Art Agreement will require the applicant to submit proof of liability insurance.
- The Art Agreement will be in place for a period of five years. At the expiration of the five years, the Art Agreement may be terminated or extended by either party upon 30 day written notice.
- The City retains the right to remove the mural if the mural is not executed according to the approved concept documents.
- The City is responsible for the maintenance of the mural during the existence of the Art Agreement.

Medford Arts Commission Mural Application

Applicant (City contracts with)

Applicant's Name: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Lead Artist

Artist Name: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
Artist Website: _____

Name of Property Owner of proposed mural building (if different from applicant):

Phone: _____ email: _____
Proposed Mural Building Street Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____

Dimensions of proposed mural wall: _____

Has the owner given permission for a mural to be painted on the proposed wall and is the owner willing to enter into an Agreement with the City? Yes: No:

The wall is: brick: cinderblock: stucco: wood: other:

Project Questions

1. Please describe the project, the specific location of the mural and why a mural will enhance the area.

2. Can the wall be seen from the public right of way (e.g. sidewalk, alley, street etc.)?

3. Describe the process you used to select a professional mural artist.

4. Describe the theme/image you envision for this mural if known at this time.

5. Why do you want a mural at this location? How will the mural benefit the neighborhood? Community?

6. Please attached a detailed budget for the project. What funding do you have for the project?

7. Describe the ground in front of the wall (condition, debris etc.) and surrounding features.

