



151 Martin St., Birmingham, MI 48009
248-530-1800

VIRTUAL MEETING - PUBLIC ARTS BOARD

WEDNESDAY, July 15th, 2020
6:30 PM

<https://zoom.us/j/96699463161> (Click on Blue Link)

Or dial 1 (312) 626-6799, MEETING CODE 917 5332 6446

MEETING AGENDA

***** Board members who are not able to attend this meeting are encouraged to notify the staff representative in advance for consideration of a quorum. *****

- A. Roll Call
- B. Approval of Minutes – June 17th, 2020
- C. Unfinished Business
 - 1. Terminating Vista Report**
- D. New Business
- E. Communication
 - 1. Piano in the Park 2021 and Beyond**
 - 2. Laurie Tennent Art Installation**
- F. Public Comments
- G. Adjournment

Upcoming PAB Meeting: August 19th, 2020

NOTE: Persons with disabilities that may require assistance for effective participation in this public meeting should contact the City Clerk's Office at the number (248) 530-1880, or (248) 644-5115 (for the hearing impaired) at least one day before the meeting to request help in mobility, visual, hearing, or other assistance.

Las personas con incapacidad que requieren algun tipo de ayuda para la participacion en esta sesion publica deben ponerse en contacto con la oficina del escribano de la ciudad en el numero (248) 530-1800 o al (248) 644-5115 (para las personas con incapacidad auditiva) por lo menos un dia antes de la reunion para solicitar ayuda a la movilidad, visual, auditiva, o de otras asistencias.

Public Arts Board Minutes

Public Meeting on Zoom – June 17th, 2020

A. Roll Call:

Members Present: Barbara Heller, Monica Neville, Jason Eddleston, Anne Ritchie, Annie VanGeldereren, Natalie Bishae

Members Absent: Linda Wells

Administration: Brooks Cowan, City Planner

B. Approval of Minutes – May 20th, 2020

Motion to approve minutes as amended made by Annie VanGeldereren, seconded by Anne Ritchie.

Yeas: 6 Nays: 0

The motion carried.

C. Unfinished Business

At the May 20th, 2020 Public Arts Board meeting, the Board discussed changes and enhancements to their Terminating Vista report after receiving comments on the Crayon Box proposal and Terminating Vistas from City Commission. A rough draft of such changes were provided and discussed. For types of public art, the Board was comfortable with recommending sculptures, furniture, utilities, and murals. Members of the Board requested that painted furniture, mosaics and tiles be included as well.

There was general consensus that the recommendations captured what the PAB felt would help enhance Terminating Vistas. The Board also felt that the recommendations should be prioritized with some type of action plan or implementation guidelines. These were to be provided in the next meeting's draft.

The Public Arts Board then discussed their Piano in the Park program. They had previously considered recommending the art installation as an annual program and reviewed suggested recommendations to do so. The Board wanted to ensure that the piano be placed in Shain Park only when COVID-19 restrictions were lifted. Members of the board also suggested amending the recommendations so that the piano donated to the City was preferably from a Birmingham Resident, it would be painted as a community arts project on a date to be determined by the PAB, and the PAB be responsible for moving and maintenance. Motion to approve recommendations with suggested edits was made by Annie VanGeldereren, seconded by Monica Neville.

Yeas: 6 Nays: 0

The motion carried.

D. New Business

The Public Arts Board then reviewed the Public Art Installation Loan from Laurie Tennent. An initial application was completed to place a piece of her artwork at the corner of Park and Maple. Complications of this site were discussed regarding the current construction and not having a clear idea of how the space will look until it is complete, as well as the site being a Terminating Vista and the Board having a study related to these design elements underway.

The potential for a multi-piece installation was discussed throughout the City's parks and trails. The Board and the artist were in agreement that the trails connecting Booth Park, Quarton Lake, and Linden Park would be ideal for a multi-artwork installation of the artist's photos due to the way that the photos compliment the natural surrounding features.

The artist indicated that the images are installed into the ground with 2 pieces of rebar and leave 0 footprint when removed. A similar installation concept had been done at Belle Isle with great success. The artist also indicated how solar lights were shined on the artwork to keep them illuminated at night and the PAB was amicable to this. The artist was also agreeable to a 1-year loan term.

A motion to recommend a multi-installation of art work by Laurie Tennent from Booth Park to Quarton Lake and Linden at locations to be determined by the artist for a period of 1 year was made by Anne Ritchie, seconded by Annie VanGeldereren

Yeas: 6 Nays: 0

The motion carried.

E. Communication

Barbara Heller indicated that she will be leading a tour of Birmingham sculptures for the Detroit Artist Market on July 18th, 2020 from 2-4pm.

F. Comments

G. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.



MEMORANDUM

Planning Division

DATE: July 15th, 2020

TO: Public Arts Board Members

FROM: Brooks Cowan, City Planner

APPROVED: Jana Ecker, Planning Director

SUBJECT: Terminating Vistas

On May 22, 2019, The Public Arts Board proposed a popcorn box design to City Commission for the electrical box on S. Old Woodward in front of the Birmingham 8 Theater. The City Commission approved the electrical box design and also directed the Public Arts Board to examine possible ways to enhance the City's Terminating Vistas through the use of public art in other parts of the City. Birmingham's Downtown Overlay Plan identifies multiple intersections as Terminating Vistas where Section 3.04(E)(15) of the Zoning Ordinance states:

Any building that terminates a view, as designated on the Regulating Plan, shall provide distinct and prominent architectural features of enhanced character and visibility, which reflect the importance of the building's location and create a positive visual landmark.

Photos of all Terminating Vistas in Birmingham as designated on the Regulating Plan were provided for review by the Public Arts Board as directed by City Commission. On October 16th, 2019, the Public Arts Board reviewed photos of the Terminating Vistas and determined that their top five priorities for sculptures are Chester & Willits, Bates & Willits, Park & Maple, S. Old Woodward & Bowers, and S. Old Woodward & Woodward. On November 20th, 2019, the PAB reviewed designs for the repaving of Maple Road. The Terminating Vista at Maple at Henrietta (#3) will have design elements meant for an art sculpture. The Public Arts Board agreed to make this location a priority for a sculpture as well.

On April 15th, 2020, The Public Arts Board had come to a general consensus on recommendations for ways to use public art to enhance the City's Terminating Vistas, as well as City policies that could be amended to further the use of public art throughout downtown. Along with these recommendations was a proposal to paint the electrical box at N. Old Woodward and Hamilton Ave as a Crayon Box.

The crayon box painting was presented to City Commission on May 18th, 2020. The City Commission had various opinions on the design, but there was general consensus that they would like to postpone deciding on the crayon box until they had approved a Terminating Vista Report from the Public Arts Board. The City would like public art approvals in Terminating Vista to align with recommendations of the plan.

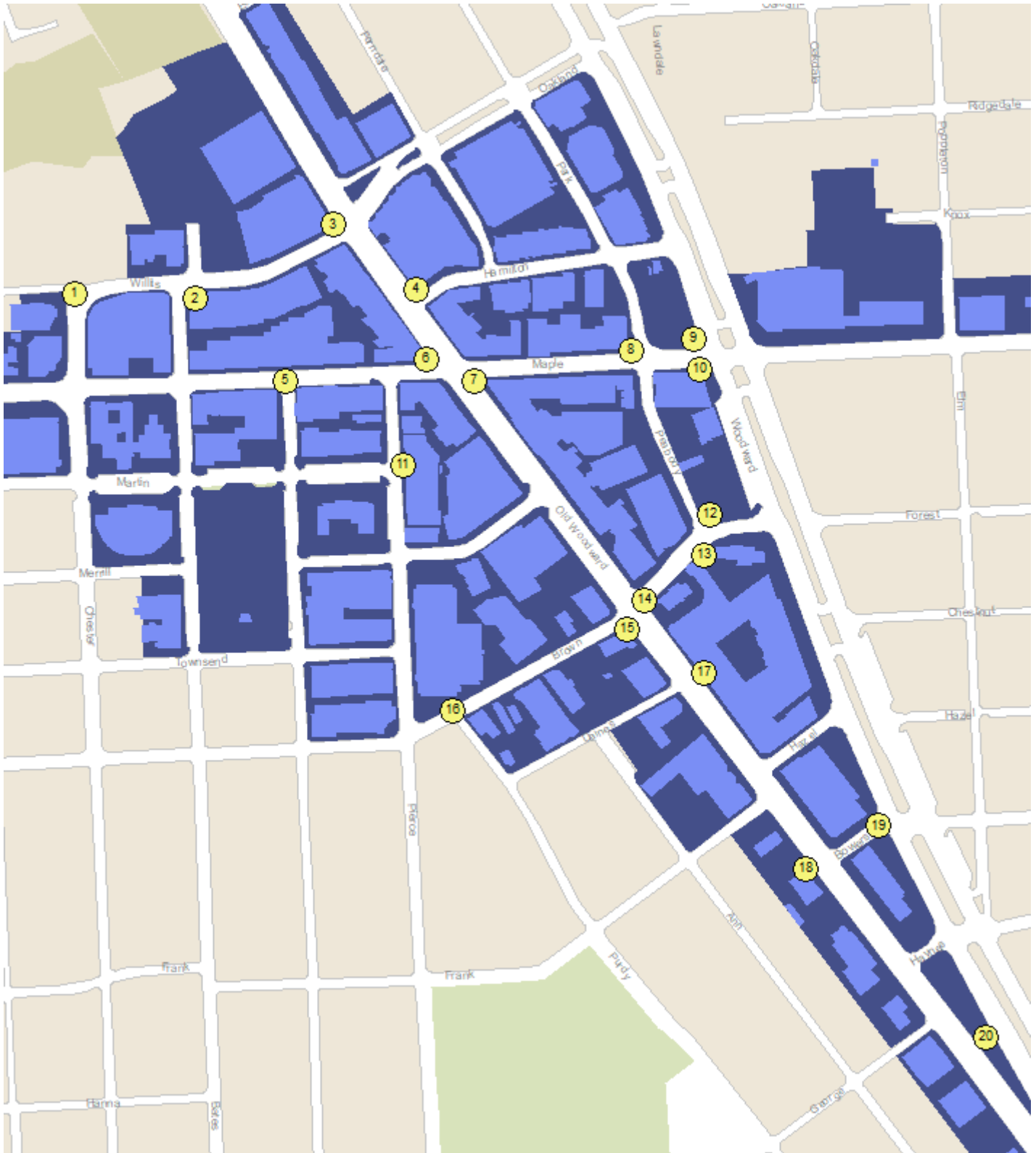
On May 20th, 2020, the Public Arts Board considered comments and questions from City Commission regarding Terminating Vistas and determined that they should address such issues in a more elaborate Terminating Vista Report. The Public Arts Board wanted to provide a more in depth explanation of possible public art that could be used and include more photos. Staff also noted they would include more thorough recommendations to provide more direction and guidance for decision making.

On June 17th, 2020, an updated rough draft for a Terminating Vista report was reviewed by the Public Arts Board. The report went into more depth regarding how sculptures, artistic furniture, artistic utilities, and wall art can interact with surrounding buildings and streetscape to enhance Terminating Vistas. The report included more photos of examples of such art, and how these mediums may improve public spaces. The report also included more in depth analysis of policies affecting public art in Birmingham, as well as recommendations to enhance public art in Terminating Vistas.

Upon review, the Board approved of the general direction the report was going but wanted to have it updated with more formal recommendation lists and implementation priorities. The Board agreed that a designated section on the end summarizing the final recommendations and implementation priorities would lead to a more efficient process of what to address next. Sections for Final Recommendations and Implementation Priorities have been added to the end of the report to summarize what was presented and provide guidelines for moving forward.

Terminating Vistas in Downtown Birmingham (ROUGH DRAFT)

A Report by the Birmingham Public Arts Board



July 15th, 2020

Executive Summary

On May 22nd, 2019 The Birmingham Public Arts Board was directed by City Commission to evaluate ways to enhance Terminating Vistas in Birmingham's downtown through the use of Public Art.

The concept of enhanced design features for Terminating Vistas was first introduced to the City in the Downtown Birmingham 2016 Plan as a part of the Overlay District that was approved in 1996.

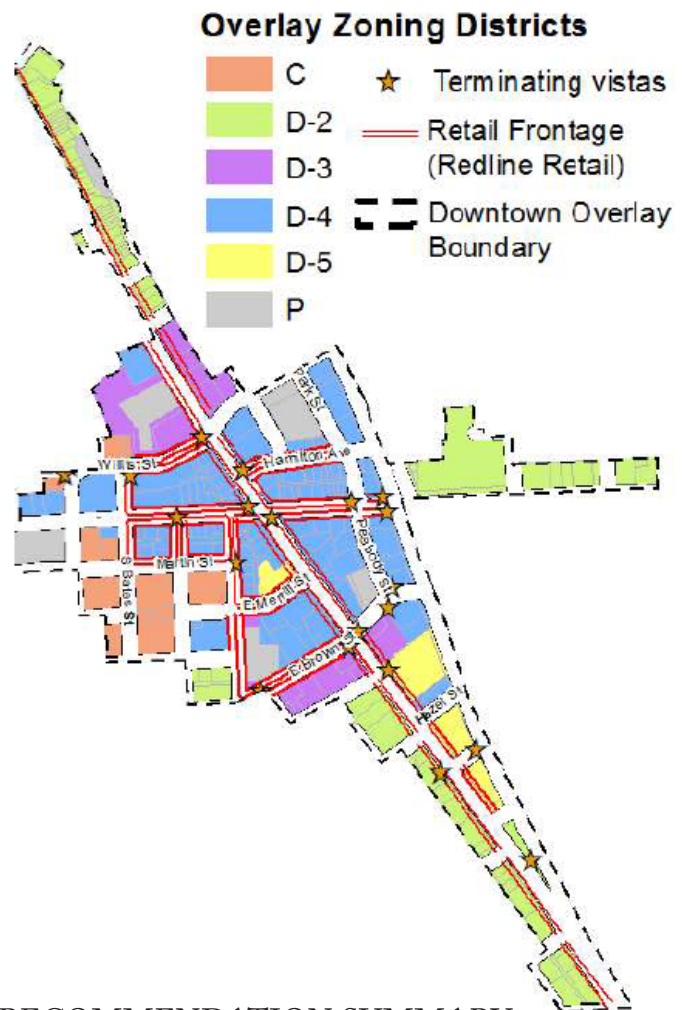
Terminated Vistas are defined in the Zoning Ordinance as “a building or structure, or a portion thereof, as designated on the Regulating Plan, that terminates a view with architectural features of enhanced character and visibility” (Section 9.02 Definitions).

Section 3.04(E)(15) of the Downtown Overlay Standards states that “any building that terminates a view, as designated on the Regulating Plan, shall provide distinct and prominent architectural features of enhanced character and visibility, which reflect the importance of the building's location and create a positive visual landmark.”

The City has identified 20 Terminating Vistas which are identified on the Overlay Zoning Map. As such, the Birmingham Public Arts Board has evaluated photos of each Terminating Vista and made recommendations relative to ways in which public art may help enhance the City's Terminating Vistas, as well as policy recommendations to enable public art to be placed in an efficient manner.

The Public Arts Board evaluated various types of public art that could be placed in terminating vistas such as sculptures, artistic furniture, artistic utilities, and murals. Current City policy affecting the review process and installation process was also considered and recommendations were made regarding City standard furniture, utilities and signage policy.

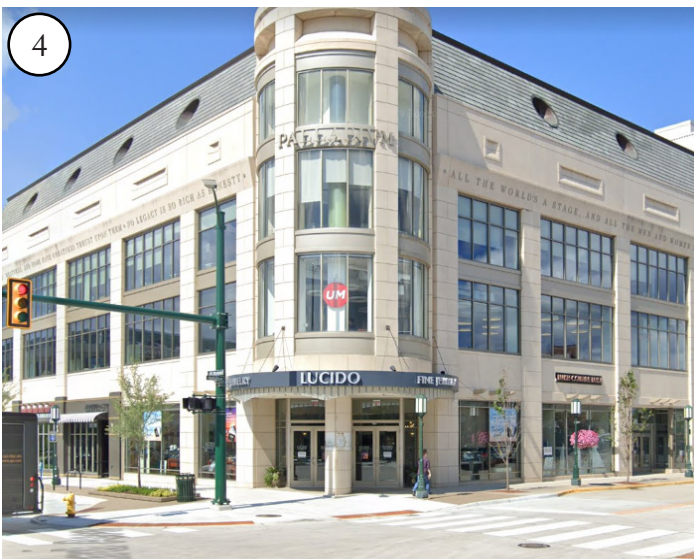
Lastly, the Public Arts Board evaluated City policy impacting the installation process of public art and has policy recommendations to assist in the implementation of the public art recommendations.



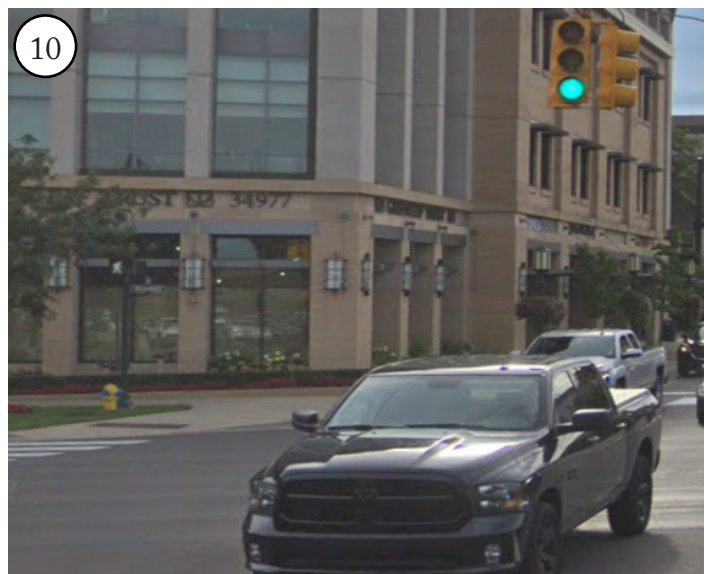
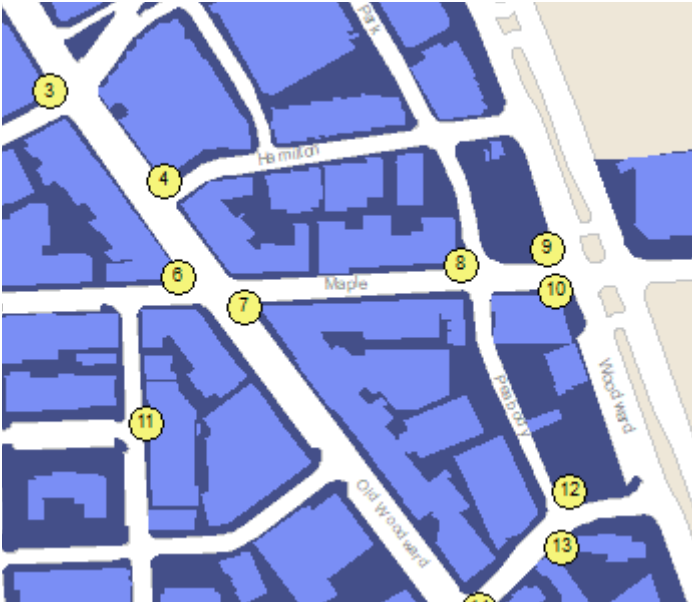
RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

- 1.) Use public art such as sculptures, artistic furniture, artistic utilities and wall art to enhance the City's Terminating Vistas.
- 2.) Revise the sculpture installation process to incentivize sculptures on loan and to make the installation process more efficient for artists and City staff.
- 3.) Revise City policy towards City-standard benches, light poles and utility boxes to permit an occasional artistic variation.
- 4.) Amend the sign ordinance and create a new design review policy to allow murals to be placed on the exterior of buildings.
- 5.) Create a public notification process for art in public spaces.

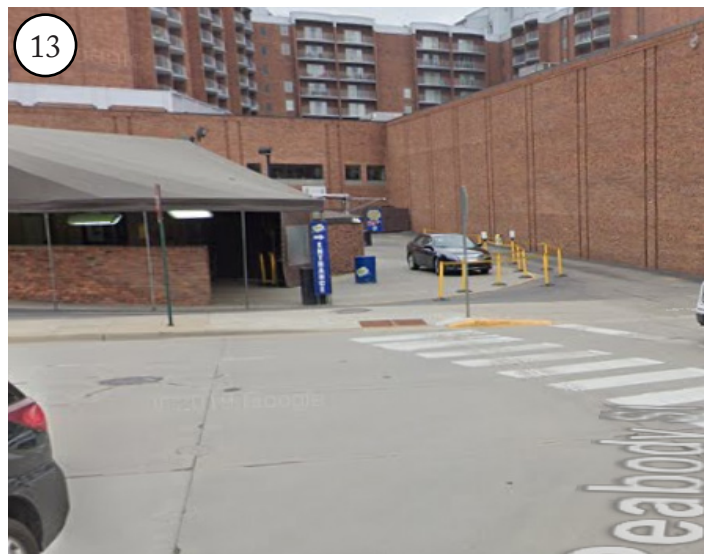
Terminating Vistas in Birmingham



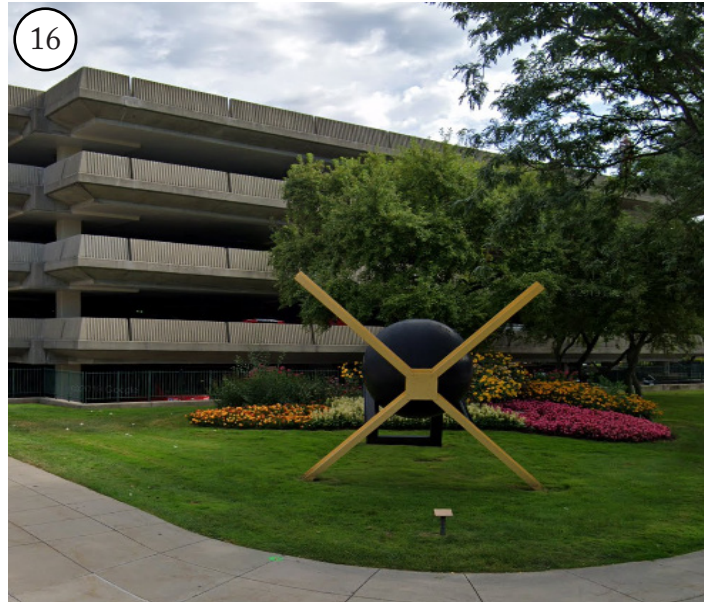
Terminating Vistas in Birmingham



Terminating Vistas in Birmingham



Terminating Vistas in Birmingham



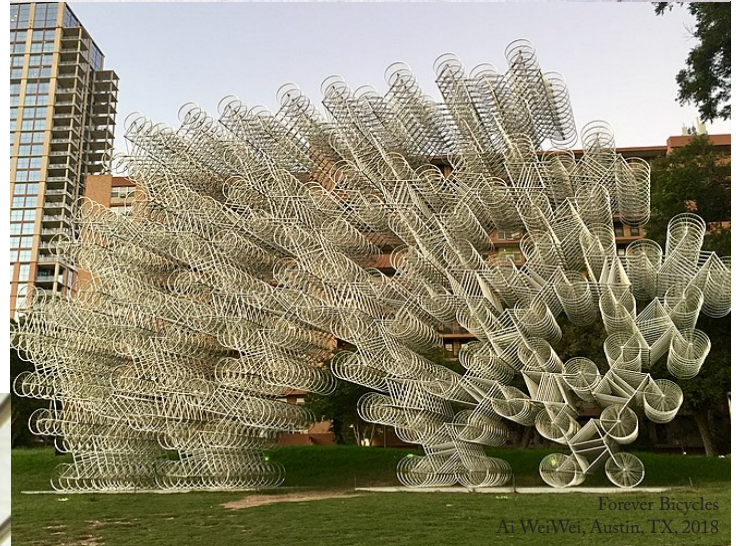
Best Practices in Public Art for Terminating Vistas: Sculptures

Sculptures are one way in which public art can be used to enhance the architectural features of a Terminating Vista. Doing so may effectively draw more attention and bring more prominence to the surrounding buildings. Birmingham currently has fifteen sculptures throughout the City that have either been purchased, donated or placed on loan, though only one is currently in a designated Terminating Vista which is located at the corner of Pierce and Brown Street.

Public sculptures have the ability to compliment the surrounding buildings and invigorate public spaces. The various colors and shapes of sculptures provide the ability for art to interact with the surrounding building and public right-of-way, potentially enhancing the connection between the two. Unique public art may create a stronger sense of place and identity for the building and intersection where it is placed in a Terminating Vista. Such sculptures may capture the eye of a passer-by, bring more attention to the civic environment and contribute to a greater sense of civic vitality.



Tembo, Mother of Elephants
Derrick Hudson, Toronto, ON, 2002



Forever Bicycles
Ai Weiwei, Austin, TX, 2018



I See What You Mean
Lawrence Argent, Denver, 2005



Flamingo
Alexander Calder, Chicago, IL, 1974

Best Practices in Public Art for Terminating Vistas: Artistic Furniture

Artistic furniture is another way public art can be used to enhance the character of a Terminating Vista. Doing so may accent the surrounding buildings while providing a unique public space for socializing or respite.

The City of Birmingham is a walkable city with pedestrian oriented design throughout its downtown and neighborhoods. Unique public furniture may invite a variety of uses that activate a Terminating Vista and promote social interaction. The shape and color of artistic furniture may also have an aesthetic contribution to the right-of-way and surrounding buildings. An artistic bench can be more inviting for a pedestrian to relax and enjoy a section of the City they may have otherwise walked past, and may provide an enhanced civic experience for leisure and appreciation of the surrounding cityscape. Artistic furniture can provide the opportunity to activate Terminating Vistas with people-oriented architectural streetscape design.



The Wave
dSPACE Studio, Chicago, IL, 2014



Circular Bench
Lucile Soufflet, Bruxelles, France 2003



Swirling Bench



Custom Curve Seats
University of Sydney, Australia



Bench of Expectations
Jeppe Hein, Springfield, MA 2018

Best Practices in Public Art for Terminating Vistas: Artistic Utilities

Artistic utilities may also enhance a space and bring more prominence to the surrounding buildings. Many cities, including Birmingham, Michigan have painted electrical boxes with an interesting design to add more character to a utility box placed in the right-of-way. Cities such as Milwaukee, Wisconsin have commissioned artists to paint numerous utility boxes throughout their downtown with a theme to be determined by the artist. There are other examples of cities having sculpturists create artistic coverings for electrical boxes that are equipped with hinges and gates for access to interior controls. These coverings provide opportunities for other types of art to be placed on and around them to compliment the surrounding space and improve the aesthetics of public utilities.

Artistic lighting could also be used to enhance the pedestrian experience and illuminate architectural features in a Terminating Vista. Cities such as Portland, Oregon and Seattle, Washington have explored various solar powered lights and sculptures with an artistic design and ambient glow to create unique public spaces. A well placed artistic light can enhance the character of the area and create an interesting talking point while highlighting the surrounding buildings.



Best Practices in Public Art for Terminating Vistas: Wall Art

Outdoor wall art such as murals, mosaics, and tiling are another example of public art that can enhance a public space and the surrounding architectural features.

Wall art can be temporary or permanent. For local examples, The Park Shelton mural in Detroit, MI has been up since 1978, meanwhile Detroit's Eastern Market cycles through numerous murals every year.

Temporary murals can be done on materials such as plywood or canvas and be applied to the exterior of a building for a length of time and then be removed, thus maintaining the original design and color and the building. Mosaics and tiles can also be used to provide an interesting texture to the artistic experience.

The various forms of wall art can be especially effective in activating Terminating Vista spaces that have large sections of blank walls.



Tiger
Arlin Graff, Detroit, MI



Park Shelton
John Egner, Detroit, MI, 1974



Aretha
Desiree Kelly, Detroit, MI

City Policy Related to Public Art in Terminating Vistas

SCULPTURES

Birmingham currently has sculptures on display that were either donated to the City, purchased by the City, or placed on loan to the City for a certain period of time. If the sculpture is donated and placed on public property, the City is responsible for installation and maintenance of the sculpture. If a sculpture is on loan, the loan agreement specifies that the artist is responsible for installation, maintenance and removal.

An issue with the current policy for sculpture installation is that each piece is unique and may require special care for installation. This includes but is not limited to how the sculpture is transported to the installation site, how to safely secure the sculpture to the location, how to create the necessary base and fabricate proper mounts. City staff may not have adequate experience to handle the installation process of various unique sculpture shapes and sizes. Requiring the artist to be responsible for all installation and removal processes may also create issues related to the artist operating machinery on City property.



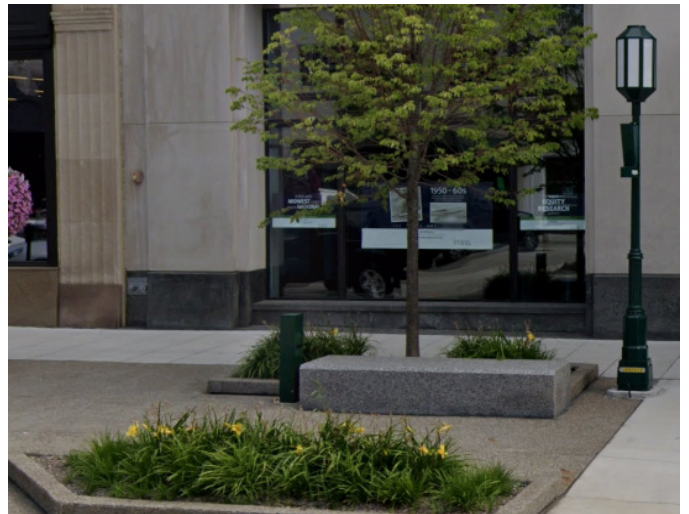
Local art institutes such as the Detroit Institute of Arts and Cranbrook Museum have employees who specialize in the installation of sculptures. **The Public Arts Board recommends that the City of Birmingham consult with such specialists for installing sculptures that have been either donated or loaned to the City.** Doing so would enable a more efficient installation process in areas such as Terminating Vistas.



ARTISTIC FURNITURE

Downtown Birmingham has City-standard green metal benches installed along the sidewalks as well as granite benches that were a part of the downtown Old Woodward and Maple Reconstruction projects. This classic design for public furniture fits in with the surrounding streetscape and does not detract from the architectural style of downtown Birmingham.

The Public Arts Board recommends that Birmingham consider allowing more creative and artistic furniture that will contribute a positive design aesthetic to the character of the area. Doing so could enhance the pedestrian space in Terminating Vistas and be used to activate the public space and compliment the surrounding architecture. The City's current approach to streetscape furniture with City-standard benches should remain relatively consistent, but the Public Arts Board recommends that an occasional deviation from City-standard furniture in Terminating Vistas could create a unique pedestrian experience and enhance the character of the area.



City Policy Related to Public Art in Terminating Vistas

PUBLIC UTILITIES

Birmingham's streetscape contains electrical utility boxes and a number of light-poles in the right-of-way in Terminating Vistas. The City-standard light poles and electrical boxes are all painted Birmingham green, with the exception being the recent popcorn box art project at the intersection of Merrill and Old Woodward.

The Public Arts Board has considered a number of different ways to paint and decorate electrical boxes throughout downtown. Various themes were discussed, as well as whether or not the design should be contextual with the surrounding. It was determined that each box should be considered on a case-by-case basis and should not be directly tied to any theme or be required to be related to the surrounding use. **The Public Arts Board recommends the City be open to all types of artistic designs for electrical boxes.**

Sculptural enclosures for such utility boxes have also been considered by the Public Arts Board. **The Public Arts Board recommends that these be considered on a case-by-case situation as well, and not be tied to any theme or surrounding context.** Given the intended function of electrical boxes, any sculpture placed on or around the electrical box should provide easy access to the interior controls and should only be mounted on the ground. **The Public Arts Board does not recommend drilling holes or attaching public art directly to the electrical boxes in order to maintain the integrity of the box.**

The Public Arts Board also recommends that the City consider allowing unique designs in lighting that are in Terminating Vistas. Lighting can be used for either function or form to create a unique aesthetic from the shape of the lantern and the ambient glow of the light. An occasional artistic light pole to replace a city standard lamp in front of a Terminating Vista could enhance the interaction between the streetscape and surrounding buildings. City standard lights should remain relatively consistent, but the Public Arts Board recommends an occasional deviation in this pattern to allow for unique designs.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

At the moment, there are no formal requirements for public notification regarding proposals for sculptures, artistic furniture and artistic utilities. The item is posted on the Public Arts Board Agenda and City Commission Agenda, but notifications are not required to be sent to surrounding businesses and residents for public art projects. **In order to promote public input at the Public Arts Board and City Commission, the Public Arts Board recommends establishing a public notification policy for public art projects on City property.**



City Policy Related to Public Art in Terminating Vistas

WALL ART

Artistic paintings such as murals on the front, side or rear of buildings are not currently permitted in Birmingham. Such paintings are considered a sign and section 1.03(D) of the Sign Ordinance states that *“No sign may be painted directly onto any building or surface.”*

The Public Arts Board recommends that the City re-evaluate its policy towards wall art and create a design review process for such art work. There are several Terminating Vistas with large blank walls that the Public Arts Board believes would be ideal for murals, but current policy restricts the building owner from pursuing such design enhancements.

The 2020 Birmingham Plan Draft recommends implementing a mural policy in the Lower Rail District to extend and improve upon the area’s current character, though the Public Arts Board recommends that such a policy be implemented throughout the entire City. A temporary mural program is also recommended where the painting could be placed on some type of material which is then attached to the building.

Murals could be another form of public art used to enhance Terminating Vistas throughout downtown. There are some Terminating Vistas that are more suitable than others and the Public Arts Board recommends that the review process engage the public for input so there is support on a community level.

In order to permit murals and various types of wall art, the Public Arts Board recommends that the City amend the Zoning Ordinance and Sign Ordinance to allow wall art and to define a proper review process by the necessary boards. This would also include creating a public notification process for public art in the municipal code.

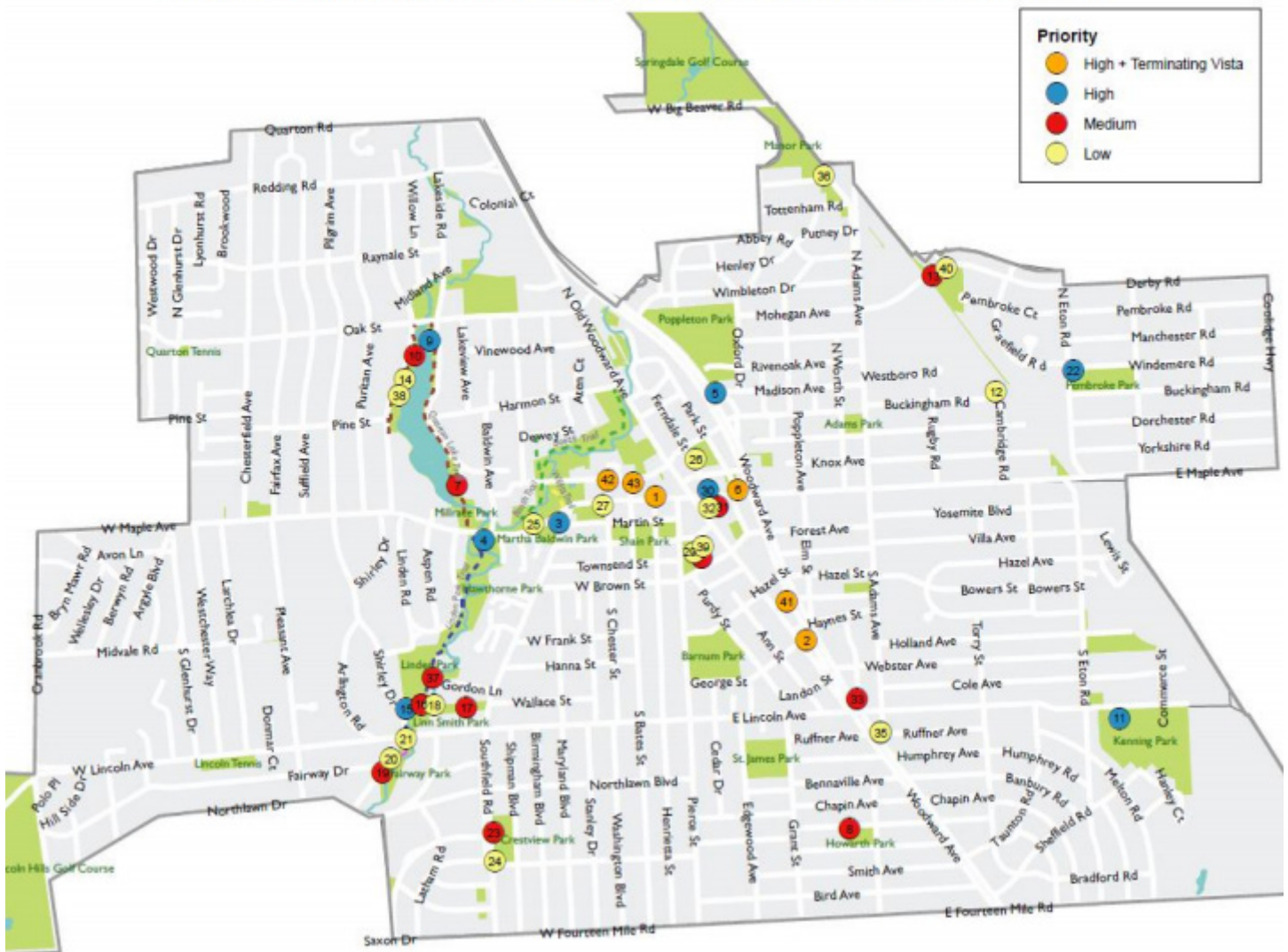


Prioritized Locations for Sculptures

The Public Arts Board maintains a map of prioritized locations for sculptures. It is used as a reference whenever a sculpture for loan or donation is made to the City. Each point is numbered for reference, and the colors indicate areas with higher priority. The priorities are meant to serve as a guideline, though the Public Arts Board has indicated that each sculpture will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis so that it can be contextual with its surroundings.

The Public Arts Board reviewed the various Terminating Vistas and selected six of the locations to add to their priority map for sculptures. These locations include Chester & Willits, Bates & Willits, Maple & Henrietta, Park & Maple, S. Old Woodward & Bowers, and S. Old Woodward & Woodward. The updated Prequalified Public Art Locations Map is pictured below where downtown Terminating Vistas were placed as a high priority.

City of Birmingham Prequalified Public Art Locations



Recommendation and Implementation Priorities

Recommendation 1: Use public art such as sculptures, artistic furniture, artistic utilities and wall art to enhance the City's Terminating Vistas

Implementation: Actively seek artists to provide various forms of artwork. Advertise in the art community for the type of art the City is seeking.

Recommendation 2: Revise the sculpture installation process to incentivize sculptures on loan and to make the installation process more efficient for artists and City staff.

Implementation: Establish an agreement with a professional sculpture installation specialist to consult and assist with sculpture installations in Birmingham. Amend the City's art on loan agreement to require approval of sculpture installation from installation consultant.

Recommendation 3: Revise City policy towards city-standard furniture and utilities to allow for an occasional artistic variation.

Implementation: Amend the Zoning Ordinance to allow an occasional deviation from city-standard benches and light poles where such items may be replaced by an artistically designed light or bench.

Recommendation 4: Create a new policy and review process to allow murals and other various forms of wall art to be placed on the exterior of a building.

Implementation: Amend Zoning Ordinance and Sign Ordinance to allow for placement of temporary and permanent murals and other various forms of wall art. The amendment should include review process by all relevant boards.

Recommendation 5: Establish a public notification policy for art projects on public property.

Implementation: Create a provision in the Public Art Section of the Municipal Code to require public notifications to be sent to residents for public art projects proposed within their area.





MEMORANDUM

Planning Division

DATE: July 15th, 2020
TO: Public Arts Board Members
FROM: Brooks Cowan, City Planner
APPROVED: Jana Ecker, Planning Director
SUBJECT: Communications

- 1.) Laurie Tennent's public art installation was recommended for approval by Parks and Rec Board and will be going to City Commission in the near future.
- 2.) Piano and the Park was recommended by Parks and Rec Board to be an annual program from 2021 and beyond, assuming all social distancing requirements have been lifted. The Board felt that the piano was a great success last year, but that it should be postponed this summer given current circumstances related to COVID-19.
- 3.) Call for Artists will be advertised once Maple Rd is finished with the goal of occupying the space at Maple and Henrietta as well as the new vacant pads at Linden Park and Poppleton Park.