

Community Planning and Economic Development News Release

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Minneapolis City Council Unanimously Votes to Approve Annual, Dedicated Public Arts Funding Percent-for-Art Ordinance Dedicates One-Point-Five Percent of City Net Bonds Annually to Public Art

Friday, September 25, 2015 (Minneapolis, MN) – The Minneapolis City Council unanimously voted to approve a Percent-for-Art Ordinance today. The ordinance dedicates the equivalent of 1.5 percent of City-issued net debt bonds annually to public art funding. The net debt bond program is funded by property tax revenue. This provides a way for the City to predictably fund public art while allowing for flexibility in the source of funds used from year to year.

"Displays of public art have been a reflection of the cultural and economic wealth of civilizations throughout history," said Mayor Betsy Hodges. "Dedicating predictable funding for public art is fundamental for twenty-first century Minneapolis to continue growing and strengthening its diverse social fabric. Thank you Council Vice-President Glidden and Council Member Reich for your leadership on this effort."

Presently, the Art in Public Places budget fluctuates from year to year making it difficult for the City's department of Community Planning and Economic Development to plan public art projects effectively. This is compounded by the fact that budgets are adopted annually while the process of developing, fabricating, and installing pieces of public art takes on average about three years from start to finish.

In December 2014, Council Vice-President Glidden and Council Member Reich gave notice of intent to amend Chapter 36 of the Code of Ordinances to include dedicated funding for public art. In January 2015, these Council Members assembled a team comprised of staff from various City departments to conduct research on ordinances in other cities, possible funding sources for an ordinance, and recent history of City of Minneapolis public art funding allocations. Based on the research, the staff group collectively developed the Percent-for-Art Ordinance language.

“Minneapolis has a long-time city practice of investing in public art,” said Council Vice President Elizabeth Glidden. “The Percent-for-Art Ordinance uses tried and tested mechanisms that have worked in other places to make sure we are establishing our goals of consistency around our commitment to public art and maintenance. There is no better way to ensure everyone in our city has access to art than through public art.”

The ordinance will officially become effective when City Council Actions are published joining Minneapolis with other local governments in Minnesota who have already adopted similar ordinances including Saint Paul and Duluth. The ordinance allocates the money to the commissioning, siting, placement, conservation, and maintenance of public art.

“Given that the Northeast Arts District produces \$30 million in direct and related annual economic activity, it’s easy for me to want to reinforce the City’s support of the arts,” said Ward 1 Council Member Kevin Reich. “However, this ordinance is also significant because art isn’t just about economics; it’s often the defining activity of a community and a city at large.”

As part of this action, the City Council also approved expanding the purpose and duties of the Arts Commission. This 17-member body, which includes artists, arts administrators, board members from arts organizations and laypersons, advises the City Council and City departments on City arts initiatives.

For more information on details related to the Percent-for-Art Ordinance please visit the City of Minneapolis [website](#).

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