

Chapter 10: Public Art Guidelines

The City of Marietta celebrates its history and cherishes structures of historical significance via preservation efforts within designated commercial and residential districts. Per Article 7-8-8, the City Council authorizes the Historic Board of Review to ensure the protection of designated historic assets and features within the boundaries of the Marietta Historic Boundary.

Additionally, as established within the City of Marietta's Vision Statement and approved by the City Council, the City of Marietta values the role of art within the community. Akin to historic preservation, public art can serve to interpret the history of a place, people and social issues. Simultaneously, it can instill a greater sense of identity, meaning, and understanding of where we live, work and visit.

The guidelines detailed below act as an addendum to the "Design Guidelines for Downtown" and serve to clarify the appropriateness of public art within the Marietta Historic Boundary by aligning these two values.

Section 1: Definitions

"Public art" or "art" refers to an original artistic display painted or installed on the exterior of private property in an area open and accessible to the general public when used as a means of artistic expression.

"Mural" refers to an original, "one-of-a-kind" artwork that is painted or directly applied to the exterior of buildings or structures as sanctioned by the property owner. A mural is not a sign as defined by section 714.09 of the zoning ordinance.

Section 2: General

For authorization to proceed with a public art installation, interested parties should submit the following:

- Color samples, if paint;
- Sketch of the exterior of site as it appears at time of submission;
- Sketch of the exterior of site with proposed changes to scale;
- Samples or detailed descriptions of materials to be used;
- Project timeline;
- Maintenance/removal plan; and
- Authorization from property owner.

Works of public art should initially be permitted for a period not to exceed one year and may be renewed indefinitely. Upon expiration of permitted exhibition period, the location of the artwork shall be restored to its prior condition unless applicant submits application for exterior change. Applicant wishing to renew should submit their application within the 90 day before the exhibition period expires.

Section 3: Considerations

In evaluating public art for approval on the square, adjudicators shall consider the following:

- **Theme: Is the theme respectful to the community?**
 - The theme of the mural should be respectful of the greater context of the community, including historic and socio-cultural contexts.
 - All artwork shall comply with Georgia obscenity laws, as defined by O.C.G.A. 16-12-80, and may not depict sexual conduct or sexual explicit nudity, as defined by O.C.G.A. 36-60-3, nor advertise any activity illegal under the laws of Georgia or the United States.

- **Design: Is the installation a commercial expression or artistic expression?**
 - Works of art should be an original design unless it is decided that the work will enhance and complement the character of the surrounding area.
 - Proposed artwork should feature no copy, lettering, symbols, or any references directly promoting any product, business, or service unless such images are discreet and do not detract from the artwork.
 - Sponsor and artist names may be incorporated in murals but should be discreet and not exceed 5% of the design.

- **Location: Does planned placement of the artwork enhance or detract from overall aesthetics?**
 - No murals shall be painted or installed on unpainted brick.
 - Paint utilized in murals should be of superior quality and intended for exterior use. Reflective, neon, and fluorescent paints shall not be used.
 - No murals should be permitted on the primary, as defined as front, façade of buildings unless the board determines that the proposed work will complement or enhance the character of the surrounding area. Buildings at the intersection of two streets may be defined as having 2 primary facades.

- **Installation and Maintenance: Does the applicant present a reasonable plan to install and remove (or preserve) the work?**
 - If approved, installation should begin within 60 days from approval and should take no more than 30 consecutive days to complete.
 - Maintenance plan agreed upon between the artist, business owner, and/or property owner should adequately make arrangements to preserve and, if necessary, restore the quality of work during its exhibition. Considerations should include weather, graffiti, corrosion, etc.
 - If intended to be installed for longer than one year, the mural should have a weather proof and vandalism-resistant coat.