



Sandpoint Arts Commission

Public Art Master Plan:
Mural Policy and Guidelines

Mission Statement: The purpose of the public art program is to enhance the public spaces of the City of Sandpoint by the introduction of art into the City environment and to promote the City as a center for artistic and cultural excellence by such provision.



Mural Policy and Guidelines

BACKGROUND

Murals are one of the oldest methods of artistic expression. Murals have been made for thousands of years in a variety of styles and media. Typically, murals are large-scale pieces of visual art on a wall or ceiling and may be created with paint, ceramic, tile, wood, photography and projected light. Many murals are public in nature and incorporate local themes, locations, or traditions into the design. Additionally, murals sometimes incorporate architectural nuances into their design. Murals foster community pride and draw people into a specific area, such as art districts.

Definitions

Sign - The primary purpose of a sign is to relay commercial or instructional information. In its commercial role, a sign may have aesthetic value though its primary function is as a sales tool.

Ghost sign - A ghost sign is an old hand-painted advertising sign that has been preserved on a building for an extended period of time.

Graffiti - Graffiti is illicit writing, drawing or painting. Differing from murals in its illegal nature, graffiti is considered a form of vandalism.

Mural - A mural is a work of art commissioned or sanctioned by a building's owner. Appearing on walls and ceilings in a variety of media, murals have aesthetic and conceptual value. While a mural may incorporate text or other formal references to graphic design, its primary purpose is not to advertise.

Mural Sign- A wall painting or design that may include graphics, illustrations or symbols that represent the on-site business use or name but shall be limited in its allowed sign area to only such numbers, letters, logos or trademarks that represent or identify the business or use occupying the building on which the mural sign appears.

Hoarding – A temporary board fence put about a building being erected or repaired.

Note: The above definitions are for the purposes of this policy and are not intended to supersede any definitions specified in City of Sandpoint code.



SANDPOINT POLICY

The 2009 Sandpoint Comprehensive Plan, which serves as a road map for the community to follow as it considers development decisions, places a high value on attracting, encouraging and developing arts and culture. Sandpoint aspires to be one of the nation's best small arts towns by encouraging local artists, preserving cultural heritage, nurturing creativity, inspiring original expression, and cultivating art appreciation. The Sandpoint Arts Commission is dedicated to this goal. Recently, the City has experienced an increased number of artists seeking to paint murals. The 2009 Sandpoint Comprehensive Plan intends to preserve historical buildings, homes and neighborhoods. Sandpoint's history is something Sandpoint residents are very proud of and wish to protect and enhance. Therefore, the Arts Commission will continue to oversee the implementation of art in the City of Sandpoint, including murals.

The Arts Commission will use the following sections to review the compatibility and appropriateness of the theme, location and design of proposed murals. As always, it is the desire of the Arts Commission to support local artists and allow them to use their artistic expression for the public good. This goal must be balanced with one of continuing to uphold the character of the City and its neighborhoods. Consequently, future murals will be considered based on the following policies¹:

¹ The policies within the sections: *Theme, Location, Design, Enforcement, and Maintenance* were drawn from a Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission Mural Policy Draft. This draft was included in the September 1, 2011 *The Savannah – Chatham Historic Site and Monument Commission* under Agenda Item #6.



Theme

- The theme for the mural should be representative of the history, culture, or location of the community and be respectful of the greater context of the community.
- Keeping in line with the Comprehensive Plan, new murals must provide residents and visitors with an unquestionable sense of place.
- Depictions of violence will be reviewed for their appropriateness for public display.
- The mural must comply with Idaho obscenity laws, as defined by State Code, and cannot depict sexual conduct or sexual explicit nudity, nor advertise any activity illegal under the laws of Idaho or the United States.
- The laws of free speech are applicable to the content of a mural.

Location

- The installation of a mural should complement and enhance the building and be incorporated architecturally into the façade.
- The location of the mural on the building should not cover or detract from significant or character-defining architectural features including ghost signs.
- Murals should enhance and complement the character of the surrounding neighborhood.
- Murals should not be located in an area which may cause undue distraction to drivers thereby creating a safety hazard.

Design

- The scale of the mural should be appropriate to the building and the site.
- The mural should be appropriate within the context of the surrounding neighborhood.
- The mural should be an original design.
- Sponsor and artist names may be incorporated but should be discreet and not exceed 5% of the design.
- Paint utilized should be of superior quality and intended for exterior use.
- The mural should have a weather-proof and vandalism-resistant coating.



Enforcement

- Any mural without approval may be considered graffiti and enforced accordingly.
- All murals must have approved application with Arts Commission and City Council approval.
- When an official interpretation is deemed necessary, the Planning Department will determine if a proposal is a mural or a sign. The decision may be appealed to the City Council or City Attorney.
- Painted art on movable or temporary boards or surfaces are considered murals by the City and shall be regulated as such.

Maintenance

- The maintenance of the mural will be the responsibility of the property owner.
- The mural must be properly maintained to ensure that material failure (peeling paint) is corrected and vandalism removed promptly.

CONCLUSION

The City of Sandpoint is characterized by its strong artistic and cultural character. This character has been nurtured through the cultivation of partnerships between local artists, community members, and city organizations. The Sandpoint Arts Commission is an integral aspect of this partnership and aims to weave arts and culture into the fabric of the community. As the Sandpoint Comprehensive Plan articulates, this is done by incorporating elements of arts and culture into urban design, the educational system, commerce, community events, public-sector institutions, and neighborhood life. This mural policy aims to integrate this goal with the conservation of the unique historic atmosphere that Sandpoint residents value and promote.



LOCAL MURALS

Sandpoint's tradition of murals can be seen on several buildings, many of which line the historic downtown of Sandpoint. These murals include²:

1. The Tree; Corner of First Avenue and Cedar Street



2. History of Brewing Beer; MickDuff's Brewing Company; 220 Cedar Street

3. "Bugs, Butterflies & Wildflowers"; Jeff Jones
Town Square Mural



² Photos of Sandpoint murals come from the Sandpoint Arts Commission archives.



4. "Paint Bucket," 714 Pine Street



5. Caribou; 100 Cedar Street

6. Monarch Mountain Coffee;
206 N Forth Avenue

