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## **CITY OF OREGON CITY ARTS COMMISSION AGENDA**

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City Hall Mt. Hood Room, 625 Center St., Oregon City, OR 97045  
Thursday, September 18, 2025 at 7:00 PM

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Ways to participate in this public meeting:

- Attend in person, location listed above. Please see the public comment guidelines below.
- Attend the livestream of the meeting on the City's YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/CityofOregonCity>

- Register to provide electronic testimony (email [agriffin@orc.city.org](mailto:agriffin@orc.city.org) or call 503-974-5517 (1588) by 3:00 PM on the day of the meeting to register)
  - Email [agriffin@orc.city.org](mailto:agriffin@orc.city.org) (deadline to submit written testimony via email is 3:00 PM on the day of the meeting)
  - Mail to City of Oregon City, Attn: City Recorder, P.O. Box 3040, Oregon City, OR 97045
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### **1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

### **2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

### **3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a. Approve the Minutes from August 21, 2025

### **4. PUBLIC COMMENT**

*Citizens are allowed up to 3 minutes to present information relevant to the City but not listed as an item on the agenda. Prior to speaking, citizens shall complete a comment form and deliver it to the City Recorder. The Arts Commission does not generally engage in dialog with those making comments but may refer the issue to the City Manager. Complaints shall first be addressed at the department level prior to addressing the Arts Commission.*

### **5. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- a. Proposal Public Art Assessment Update
- b. Approve Recommended Municipal Code Amendments and Arts Commission Goals for City Commission Work Session
- c. Salmon Bench Updates and Next Steps

### **6. COMMUNICATIONS**

### **7. ADJOURNMENT**

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### **PUBLIC COMMENT GUIDELINES**

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Complete a Comment Card prior to the meeting and submit it to the clerk. When the Chair calls your name, proceed to the speaker table, and state your name and city of residence. Each speaker is given 3 minutes to speak. As a general practice, the committee does not engage in discussion with those making comments. Complaints shall be addressed at the department level prior to addressing the committee.

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### **ADA NOTICE**

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The location is ADA accessible. Hearing devices may be requested from the City Recorder prior to the meeting. Individuals requiring other assistance must make their request known 48 hours preceding the meeting by contacting the City Recorder's Office at 503-657-0891.

**Agenda Posted at City Hall, Pioneer Community Center, Library, City Website.**

**Video Streaming & Broadcasts:** The meeting is streamed live on the [Oregon City's website](#) and available on demand following the meeting. The meeting can be viewed on Willamette Falls Television channel 28 for Oregon City area residents as a rebroadcast. Please contact WFMC at 503-650-0275 for a programming schedule.

**Oregon City Arts Commission**  
**August 21, 2025**

**I. Roll Call**

Josh Planton called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Present: Rebecca Sira (online), Myra Ravenwise (online), Joyce La Master, Quire, Josh Planton, Emma Lugo, Amy Wilson, and Mayor McGriff. Daria Loi had an excused absence. Amanda Dexter was not present. Tima Carlson from Soulflags and Carrie Richter, City Attorney with Bateman Seidel, participated remotely.

**II. Adoption of the Agenda**

With no updates suggested, the agenda was considered approved.

**III. Approval of the Minutes**

Rebecca Sira noted that there were several items incorrectly attributed to her in the minutes. She specifically identified an issue in the Communications section where it stated she would contact someone at the city, but this action was actually to be taken by Josh Planton.

Motion: A motion was made to approve the minutes with the amendment that Josh Planton, not Rebecca Sira, would be the one to reach out to the city manager.

Moved by: Amy Wilson. Seconded by: Emma Lugo Vote: Approved unanimously.

**IV. Public Comment**

Ava Peterson, a nine-year-old resident of Oregon City, submitted a statement. Mayor McGriff introduced her. Ave read her statement regarding the importance of public murals and advocated for a public mural space that could continually be updated by members of the community. The Arts Commission thanked Ava for sharing her ideas.

**V. Discussion Items**

**A. Arts Commission Budget Discussion**

Matt Zook, Finance Director for the City of Oregon City, reported that the carryover from the 2023-2025 budget would be \$20,500. This amount would be added to the newly budgeted \$25,000 per year for the 2025-2027 biennium.

Planton summarized that the Commission would have a total of \$70,500 to spend during the 2025-2027 biennium (\$50,000 new budget plus \$20,500 rollover). He noted the importance of not waiting until the end of the biennium to spend these funds.

**B. Photographer RFP Proposal**

Planton presented a proposal to hire a photographer to take high-quality photos of public art in Oregon City. The project would involve photographing approximately 20 pieces of public art, with 3-5 photos of different angles and lighting for each piece, resulting in 60-100 photos in total. He suggested a proposed budget of up to \$2,500.

The timeline proposed was to release the RFP by September 3, close submissions by September 15, approve the selected photographer at the September 17 meeting, and have photos completed by October 17.

Emma Lugo questioned whether spending \$2,500 on photography was a good use of the Commission's limited budget. Mayor McGriff suggested consulting with Jarrod Lyman, the City's Communications Manager who is also a professional photographer, to see if he might be able to take the photos as part of his job responsibilities.

The Commission decided to postpone the approval of an RFP and budget to first explore whether Jarrod Lyman could take the photographs. Planton agreed to work with Ann Griffin to reach out to Lyman.

**C. File Sharing Budget Request**

Planton proposed acquiring a Dropbox account for the Arts Commission, to facilitate file sharing and easier access to Arts Commission resources. The cost for Dropbox would \$11.99 per month (approximately \$144 per year) to store all public documents for easier access by Commission members.

Griffin reported that she had spoken with Mike Dobaj, the Manager of IT for the City, who was hesitant about the idea of a separate Dropbox account. Dobaj offered to provide training on how to better use the city's OneDrive system and suggested creating individual accounts for Commissioners.

Mayor McGriff strongly cautioned against creating a separate document storage system outside of city systems.

The Commission agreed to invite Mike Dobaj to a future meeting to provide training on using the city's file sharing system.

#### **D. Budget for Salmon Bench Plaque Installation**

Griffin reported that she had spoken with BBC Steel in Canby. They offered to donate the plaque for the restored Salmon Bench. The only cost would be for powder coating, estimated at less than \$200.

Planton suggested postponing approval of this budget item until after discussing the Salmon Bench and issues that had arisen related to it.

#### **E. Municipal Code 15.28.090 Comment Review – Public Art Murals**

Planton explained that the current municipal code limits the Arts Commission's capacity to fund murals in Oregon City based on how the law is written. He presented proposed changes to address this limitation and clarify undefined terminology.

##### **City-owned property exemption**

The proposed text exemption would allow murals funded by the city or through grants obtained by the city/Arts Commission and located on public property to proceed without Arts Commission approval, though the Commission would be notified for inventory purposes.

City Attorney Carrie Richter joined the meeting to provide legal guidance. She explained that her preference was not to exempt the city from Arts Commission review for murals. Instead, she recommended that the Arts Commission wear "two hats" - first deciding to fund a mural on public property (acting in a proprietary capacity) and then reviewing it for compliance with code section 15.28 (acting in a quasi-judicial capacity).

Carrie clarified that when the Commission acts in its regulatory function, it reviews materials and longevity but not content. However, when deciding to fund a project, the Commission does have control over content.

##### **Mural renovation exemption**

Chair Planton proposed text to define "alteration" and "restoration" to clarify when a renewed approval would be needed. The definition of "alteration" included substantial changes to material, surface covering, or UV protection. "Restoration" would include minor repairs due to weather exposure, routine maintenance, slight deviations when repairing due to time or vandalism, and exact replication after wall replacement or repair.

Carrie Richter supported the concept of defining these terms but requested time to review the specific language. The Commission agreed to have Carrie review the proposed text and provide feedback at the next meeting.

## **F. Proposed Mural on Railroad Ave - Salmon Life Cycle**

Tima Carlson, the Executive Director of the Soulflags Art Center in Oregon City and former Vice Chair and Chair of the Oregon City Arts Commission, presented information about a proposed mural along Railroad Avenue. The project, called "Circle of Life: Salmon Life Cycle," would be 150 feet in length and triangular in shape.

Soulflags received an Oregon City Enhancement Grant for 2025-26 to fund a mural along Railroad Avenue between the 99E pedestrian tunnel and the Oregon City elevator, terminating prior to the public restroom area. The proposed design includes salmon imagery and a camp scene featuring Pacific Northwest indigenous long houses.

The mural project would include a "paint by number" activity at the lower heights to allow community involvement. Carlson also noted that while the project was initially hoped to be completed in summer 2025, it now looks like it will happen in spring of 2026.

The Commission had questions about the inclusion of lamprey in the design, which Carlson confirmed had been discussed with the artist. The Commission also discussed the process for reviewing the mural application in their quasi-judicial capacity at a future meeting.

## **G. Proposed Agenda Topics for City Commission Work Session**

Chair Planton noted that he would be having a conversation with Mayor McGriff about topics for the upcoming work session with the City Commission scheduled for October 7. Topics suggested for discussion included:

1. Municipal code changes
2. Arts Commission goals and objectives
3. The letter of intent for the Willamette Corridor (collaboration with Lake Oswego and West Linn)
4. Building a relationship with the City Commission and understanding their expectations

Emma Lugo emphasized the importance of establishing a good relationship with the City Commission and hearing directly from all commissioners about what they want from the Arts Commission.

Chair Planton proposed holding a special meeting on September 11 from 6-8 PM to prepare for the City Commission work session, focusing on finalizing the municipal code changes and an Arts Commission strategy document.

## **H. Website Update**

Sira repeated the need for high-quality photographs of public art, and that those images were important for the website.

Sira has been working on updating the inventory list of all public art in Oregon City, building on previous work by Cathy Rowe. She has added additional fields to track funding sources, renovation information, and other details to create a comprehensive database of all the public art in Oregon City.

## **I. Public Art Renovation Projects Update**

Planton reported that issues had been identified with the recently restored Salmon Bench. Amy Wilson conducted an assessment of the bench and thought that there were several quality concerns, including uneven marble elevations, sharp edges, water collection points, and problems with the grout work.

Wilson stated that she thought these issues could lead to tiles popping out over time due to water collection and freeze-thaw cycles. She stated that in her opinion the workmanship appeared to lack proper ceramic techniques, and she felt that this would affect the long-term durability of the piece.

The Commission discussed how to address the potential quality issues. They also recognized the need to develop a better quality assurance process for future public art projects, including a final inspection before payment and holding back some funds until work is verified to be of good quality.

Griffin stated that she and Arts Commissioner Myra Ravenwise had been planning a celebration for the Salmon Bench and the restored mural at DC Latourette Park. The Commission agreed to focus the event on the DC Latourette park mural.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:51 PM.

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# CATHY ROWE ARTS

## ESTIMATE

916-300-9607  
cathyrowe.art@gmail.com  
www.cathyrowearts.com

923 Hazelwood Dr.  
Oregon City, OR97045

Attention: Ann Griffin  
Economic Development Coordinator  
Oregon City Art Commission  
City of Oregon City  
Date: 9/9/25

Project Title: Public Art Assessment Update  
Project Description: Current Oregon City Public Art Assessment would be updated to include several new pieces as well as several pieces that were overlooked on the previous assessment. Condition and photographs will be updated or added as needed. Not all pieces will require a condition update. A few pieces have been restored/refurbished, and a few pieces have further degraded or been damaged. New additions to the Assessment should number between 7 and 15 items (estimate 11). Condition updates should number between 5-12 items (estimate 9). The updated Assessment would also include a table of contents to more easily locate a given piece of artwork in the document and an abbreviated spreadsheet style index. This update would be treated as an amendment to the previous Public Art Assessment Contract.

Description	Quantity	Unit Price	Cost
Assessment additions	11	\$100.00	\$1,100.00
Condition updates	9	\$50.00	\$450.00
document additions (table of contents and index)	1	\$100.00	\$100.00
		Total	\$1,650.00

Thank you for attention and interest in this project.

Sincerely yours,

Cathy Rowe

1 15.28.090 Public art murals.

2 A. Public Art Mural Program Intent and Purpose. The intent and purpose of this section is to encourage the  
3 production of public art murals preserved through a public art mural easement held in trust by the city.  
4 Public art murals are a medium of expression which serves the public interest in unique ways, including, but  
5 not limited to: Enhancing the aesthetics of the city; adding economic value and rejuvenation; providing  
6 avenues for original artistic expression in the city; encouraging community participation in the creation of  
7 original works of art; defining a cultural value and community identity; and reducing the incidence of graffiti  
8 and other crime.

9 B. Criteria for Public Art Murals. All the following criteria shall be met for public art murals:

10 1. Public art murals shall remain in place, without alteration, for a period of no less than five years, except  
11 as may be specified by a designated governing body or by the Arts Commission in the conditions of  
12 approval. At the end of the 5 years, or other designated period, the public art mural easement shall  
13 automatically renew for another 5 years unless termination is requested by the building owner. If the  
14 building owner requests termination prior to the renewal date, the public art mural shall be removed  
15 at the building owner's cost and the city and owner will agree to terminate the easement.

16 2. Alterations to an approved and/or installed public art mural must receive approval by a designated  
17 governing body or the Arts Commission.

18 a. Alteration shall be defined as a change or modification made to a public art mural, that has been  
19 reviewed and designated, including but not limited to changes in materials, surface covering, or UV  
20 protective or anti-graffiti coating. However, the following restorations shall not be considered  
21 Alterations:

- 22 i. Repair due to naturally occurring changes from exposure to the elements or the passage of  
23 time.
- 24 ii. Minor changes resulting from routine maintenance or repair.
- 25 iii. Slight and unintended deviations from the original when repairing the mural due to time,  
26 or vandalism.
- 27 iv. Replication of an identical public art mural made necessary because of replacement, repair,  
28 or renovation of the exterior wall on which the public art mural is displayed. These cases  
29 will be defined as a Restoration of an existing mural as long as the mural undergoes only  
30 minor modifications when it is placed back on the wall. The restored mural must be placed  
31 back on the wall within 3 years of its initial removal.

32 2. No public art murals shall be allowed on single-family dwellings, duplexes, 3—4 plexes, designated  
33 historic structures that were originally constructed for residential use, or multi-family dwellings. As  
34 used in this subsection, single-family dwellings, duplexes, 3—4 plexes, or multi-family dwellings do not  
35 include mixed-use buildings which contain commercial space in addition to single-family dwellings,  
36 duplexes, or multi-family dwellings.

37 3. Public art murals shall only be permitted within approved zoning districts.

38 a. Approved zoning districts include:

- 39 i. General Commercial.
- 40 ii. Mixed Use Downtown.
- 41 iii. Mixed Use Corridor 1.

Commented [AW1]: Contested? Need to specify what is requested

Commented [JP2R1]: They will have to basically tell us that they want to cancel the easement. I added language to clarify this point.

Commented [CR3]: Doesn't this imply that if the building owner keeps the mural for the term, they don't have to cover the cost?

Commented [JP4R3]: Since the easement will essentially go on forever unless it is terminated, this means that if the easement is terminated the building owner will need to pay the cost of removal.

Commented [AW5]: Must?

Commented [JP6R5]: Shall and must are the same thing here. Happy to change it.

Commented [CR7]: The degree of the modifying term "substantial" is not clear here and I'm not sure that it is necessary given the exceptions that include minor repairs, routine maintenance, slight deviation and replication. If "substantial" means some significant amount, that term should be defined.

Commented [JP8R7]: Removed the word substantial.

Commented [CR9]: Why are these qualifiers necessary? If the underlying wall needs repair, replacement or renovation, then an identical mural can be installed within 3 years. I don't see the significance of the "damage, code enforcement or safety concern" qualifiers.

Commented [JP10R9]: I am fine with removing the language if you think it is already broad enough to cover all possible reasons for the wall to be touched.

Commented [JP11]: If we consider intersection murals, should this list be expanded?

Commented [CR12R11]: All street intersections are included within city base zoning designations so I don't see that this list would need expansion.

15.28.090 Public art murals.

- 1           iv.   Mixed Use Corridor 2.
- 2           v.    Willamette Falls Downtown District.
- 3           vi.   Institutional.
- 4         b.   Any use that is listed under permitted uses in the institutional district in Section 17.39.020 but
- 5           located in a non-institutional zone.
- 6         4.   The public art mural shall be applied directly onto the surface of a building with a paint, ceramic, glass
- 7           tiles, tesserae, or metal that ensures longevity, durability, and structural and surface stability. If placed
- 8           on a wall, no part of the public art mural shall exceed the height of the structure to which it is tiled,
- 9           painted, or affixed.
- 10        5.   No part of the public art mural shall be placed over the exterior surface of any opening of a building in
- 11           a manner that prohibits use of the opening, including its windows, doors, and vents.
- 12        6.   No public art mural may contain electrical components; employ electrical lights as part of the image,
- 13           moving structural elements, flashing or sequential lighting, interior lighting elements, any automated
- 14           method that causes movement, or any method that causes periodic changes in the appearance, image
- 15           or message of the public art mural.
- 16        7.   Public art murals shall be located in a manner that is visually accessible to the public.
- 17        8.   Materials that are mechanically reproduced, or completely computer or AI generated and printed on a
- 18           base to be attached to the wall, such as, by way of, images digitally printed on vinyl, will be reviewed
- 19           on a case-by-case basis.
- 20        9.   The mural proposal shall include methods to mitigate the impacts of weather and vandalism and a
- 21           commitment to repair the mural surface as necessary for a minimum of five years.
- 22        10.  No compensation will be given or received for the display of public art murals or for the right to place
- 23           the mural on another's property by the city.
- 24        11.  The approval and acceptance of each public art mural shall be contingent upon the conveyance of a
- 25           public art mural easement to the city from the owner of the building upon which the mural will be
- 26           located, in a form approved by the city attorney. The terms of the easement shall grant the right to
- 27           create the public art mural on the wall of the building and provide that the person granting the
- 28           easement will maintain and restore the public art mural in its original condition for the period of the
- 29           easement, and state that upon termination of the easement, the mural shall be removed.
- 30         1
- 31        C.   Approval Process.
- 32           1.   Public art murals shall be approved by the Oregon City Arts Commission ("Arts Commission") at a
- 33           public hearing based on the criteria in the Oregon City Municipal Code. Notice of the application and
- 34           the hearing date shall be published online and mailed to the applicant, recognized neighborhood
- 35           association(s) and property owners within three hundred feet of the proposed mural location. Notices
- 36           shall be issued at least twenty days pre-hearing, and the staff report and mural documents shall be
- 37           available at least seven days pre-hearing. At the evidentiary hearing held before the Arts Commission,
- 38           all issues related to the Oregon City Municipal Code shall be raised and addressed. Failure to raise an
- 39           issue at the hearing will preclude review on that issue.
- 40           2.   In the absence of an active arts commission, the City Commission will review the proposal through the
- 41           public hearing process described in subsection 15.28.090.C.1.
- 42        D.   Appeal Process

Commented [AW13]: Unless renewed?  
 Commented [JP14R13]: Correct.

Commented [AW15]: In the absence of?  
 Commented [JP16R15]: Changed  
 Commented [AW17]: Shouldn't there be a header like "Appeal Process" and then this paragraph as 1.?  
 Commented [JP18R17]: There wasn't in the original, but I added one here.

- 1 1. The decision is appealable to the City Commission on the record. Notice of the appeal shall be
- 2 received in writing by the Economic Development Department within fourteen calendar days from the
- 3 date the challenged decision is provided to those entitled to notice. Late filing of any appeal shall be
- 4 deemed a jurisdictional defect and will result in the automatic rejection of any appeal so filed.
- 5 2. All the following shall be included as part of the notice of appeal:
- 6 a. The city file number and date the decision to be appealed was rendered;
- 7 b. The name, mailing address and daytime telephone number for each appellant;
- 8 c. A statement of how each appellant has an interest in the matter and standing to appeal;
- 9 d. A statement of the specific grounds for the appeal;
- 10 e. The Appropriate Appeal Fee. Failure to include the appeal fee within the appeal period is deemed
- 11 to be a jurisdictional defect and will result in the automatic rejection of any appeal so filed. If a
- 12 city-recognized neighborhood association with standing to appeal has voted to request a fee
- 13 waiver pursuant to Oregon City Municipal Code Section 17.50.290.C, no appeal fee shall be
- 14 required for an appeal filed by that association. In lieu of the appeal fee, the neighborhood
- 15 association shall provide a duly adopted resolution of the general membership or board
- 16 approving the request for fee waiver.
- 17 2. Standing to Appeal. Only those persons or recognized neighborhood associations who have
- 18 participated either orally or in writing have standing to appeal the decision. Grounds for appeal are
- 19 limited to those issues raised in writing before the close of the public record. No new evidence shall be
- 20 allowed.
- 21 3. Notice of the Appeal Hearing. The economic development department shall issue notice of the appeal
- 22 hearing to all parties who participated in writing before the close of the public record at least twenty
- 23 days pre-hearing, and the staff report shall be available at least seven days pre-hearing. Notice of the
- 24 appeal hearing shall contain the following information:
- 25 a. The file number and date of the decision being appealed;
- 26 b. The time, date and location of the public hearing;
- 27 c. The name of the applicant, owner and appellant (if different);
- 28 d. The street address or other easily understood location of the subject property;
- 29 e. A description of the permit requested and the applicant's mural proposal;
- 30 f. A brief summary of the decision being appealed and the grounds for appeal listed in the notice of
- 31 appeal;
- 32 g. A statement that the appeal hearing is confined to the issues raised in the notice of appeal;
- 33 h. A general explanation of the requirements for participation and the city's hearing procedures.
- 34 4. The City Commission decision on appeal is the city's final decision.

Commented [JP19]: Do we give each mural case a file number?

35 No person shall commence creation of any public art mural without first obtaining approval from the city and  
36 executing an easement pursuant to Section 15.28.090.B.11. Murals that are created without approval through the  
37 aforementioned process that are not otherwise exempt pursuant to this chapter or are inconsistent with the  
38 conditions of approval from the city's decision shall not be deemed public art murals.

Commented [JP20]: What is the advantage of being considered a piece of public art?

Commented [AW21]: What does this even mean? It can go ahead but just not be recognized?

Commented [JP22R21]: Correct. It would be still subject to signage municipal code, but not be designated a piece of public art.

39 (Ord. No. 21-1011, § 1(Exh. A), 8-4-2021)

1 15.28.090 Public art murals.

2 A. Public Art Mural Program Intent and Purpose. The intent and purpose of this section is to encourage the  
3 production of public art murals ~~preserved through a public art mural easement held in trust by the city. for~~  
4 ~~acquisition by the city.~~ Public art murals are a medium of expression which serves the public interest in  
5 unique ways, including, but not limited to: Enhancing the aesthetics of the city; ~~adding economic value and~~  
6 ~~rejuvenation;~~ providing avenues for original artistic expression in the city; ~~providing public edification~~  
7 ~~through access to original works of public art;~~ encouraging community participation in the creation of  
8 original works of art; ~~defining a cultural value and community identity;~~ and reducing the incidence of graffiti  
9 and other crime.

10 B. Criteria for Public Art Murals. All of the following criteria shall be met for public art murals:

11 1. Public art murals shall remain in place, without alteration, for a period of not less than five years,  
12 except as may be specified by a designated governing body or by the ~~arts Arts commission Commission~~  
13 in the conditions of approval. ~~At Within thirty days of the end of the approval easement 5 years, or~~  
14 ~~other designated period, the public art mural easement shall automatically renew for another 5 years~~  
15 ~~unless termination is requested by the building owner. If the building owner can request~~  
16 ~~termination the easement be terminated at any point prior to the end of the easement period. If the~~  
17 ~~building owner requests that the easement be terminated prior to the renewal date, the public art~~  
18 ~~mural shall be removed at the cost of the building owner's cost and the city and owner will agree to~~  
19 ~~terminate the easement. easement removed, unless a new approval is granted.~~

20 2. Alterations to an approved and/or installed public art mural shall ~~must~~ receive approval by a  
21 designated governing body or the ~~arts Arts commission Commission~~.

22 a. ~~Alteration shall be defined as a change or modification made to a public art mural, that has been~~  
23 ~~reviewed and so designated, including but not limited to changes in its materials, surface covering, or~~  
24 ~~UV protective or anti-graffiti coating. However, the following certain restorations shall as noted below~~  
25 ~~will not be considered Alterations:~~

26 i. ~~Repair due to naturally occurring changes from exposure to the elements or the passage of~~  
27 ~~time.~~

28 ii. ~~Minor changes resulting from routine maintenance or repair.~~

29 iii. ~~Slight and unintended deviations from the original when repairing the mural due to time,~~  
30 ~~or vandalism.~~

31 iv. ~~Replication of an identical the exact public art mural made necessary because of after~~  
32 ~~replacement, repair, or renovation of the exterior wall in on which the public art mural is~~  
33 ~~displayed mural is displayed on due to damage, code enforcement, or safety concerns.~~  
34 ~~These cases will be defined as a Restoration of an existing mural; as long as the mural~~  
35 ~~undergoes only minor modifications when it is placed back on the wall. The restored~~  
36 ~~mural and must be placed back on the wall within 3 years of its initial removal.~~

37 2. No public art murals shall be allowed on single-family dwellings, duplexes, 3—4 plexes, designated  
38 historic structures that were originally constructed ~~for as a~~ residential use, or multi-family dwellings. As  
39 used in this subsection, single-family dwellings, duplexes, 3—4 plexes, or multi-family dwellings do not  
40 include mixed-use buildings which contain ~~commercial commercial~~ space in addition to a single-family  
41 dwellings, duplexes, or multi-family dwellings.

42 3. Public art murals shall only be permitted within approved zoning districts.

43 a. ~~Approved zoning districts include:~~

Commented [AW1]: Is the City really acquiring these? As in owning?

Commented [JP2R1]: Yes, that is what the easement form dictates.

Commented [AW3]: Contested? Need to specify what is requested

Commented [JP4R3]: They will have to basically tell us that they want to cancel the easement. I added language to clarify this point.

Commented [CR5]: Doesn't this imply that if the building owner keeps the mural for the term, they don't have to cover the cost?

Commented [JP6R5]: Since the easement will essentially go on forever unless it is terminated, this means that if the easement is terminated the building owner will need to pay the cost of removal.

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Commented [JP8R7]: Shall and must are the same thing here. Happy to change it.

Commented [CR9]: The degree of the modifying term "substantial" is not clear here and I'm not sure that it is necessary given the exceptions that include minor repairs, routine maintenance, slight deviation and replication. If "substantial" means some significant amount, that term should be defined.

Commented [JP10R9]: Removed the word substantial.

Commented [CR11]: Why are these qualifiers necessary? If the underlying wall needs repair, replacement or renovation, then an identical mural can be installed within 3 years. I don't see the significance of the "damage, code enforcement or safety concern" qualifiers.

Commented [JP12R11]: I am fine with removing the language if you think it is already broad enough to cover all possible reasons for the wall to be touched.

Commented [JP13]: If we consider intersection murals, should this list be expanded?

Commented [CR14R13]: All street intersections are include within city base zoning designations so I don't see that this list would need expansion.

- 1 i. General Commercial.
- 2 ii. Mixed Use Downtown.
- 3 iii. Mixed Use Corridor 1.
- 4 iv. Mixed Use Corridor 2.
- 5 v. Willamette Falls Downtown District.
- 6 vi. Institutional.
- 7 b. Any use that is listed under permitted uses in the institutional district in Section 17.39.020 but
- 8 located in a non-institutional zone.
- 9 4. The public art mural shall be ~~painted, or if ceramic, glass tiles, tesserae, or metal~~, applied directly onto
- 10 the surface of a building with a paint, ceramic, glass tiles, tesserae, or metal that ensures longevity,
- 11 durability, and structural and surface stability. ~~If placed on a wall, No~~ part of the public art mural shall
- 12 exceed the height of the structure to which it is tiled, painted, or affixed.
- 13 5. No part of the public art mural shall be placed over the exterior surface of any opening of a building in
- 14 a manner that prohibits use of the opening, including its windows, doors, and vents.
- 15 6. No public art mural may contain electrical components, ~~three-dimensional structural elements~~; employ
- 16 electrical lights as part of the image, moving structural elements, flashing or sequential lighting,
- 17 interior lighting elements, any automated method that causes movement, or any method that causes
- 18 periodic changes in the appearance, image or message of the public art mural.
- 19 7. Public art murals shall be located in a manner that is visually accessible to the public.
- 20 8. ~~The mural proposal is not~~Materials that are mechanically reproduced, or ~~completely~~ computer or AI
- 21 generated and printed on a base ~~that will to~~ be attached to the wall, ~~will not be allowed~~, such as, by
- 22 way of ~~illustration but not limitation~~, images digitally printed on vinyl, ~~will be reviewed on a case by~~
- 23 ~~case basis~~.
- 24 9. The mural proposal shall include methods to mitigate the impacts of weather and vandalism and a
- 25 commitment to repair the mural surface as necessary for a minimum of five years.
- 26 10. No compensation will be given or received for the display of public art murals or for the right to place
- 27 the mural on another's property ~~by the city~~.
- 28 11. The approval and acceptance of each public art mural shall be contingent upon the conveyance of a
- 29 public art mural easement to the city from the owner of the building upon which the mural will be
- 30 located, in a form approved by the city attorney. The terms of the easement shall grant the right to
- 31 create the public art mural on the wall of the building and provide that the person granting the
- 32 easement will maintain and restore the public art mural in its original condition for the period of the
- 33 easement, and state that upon termination of the easement, the mural shall be ~~removed, and the~~
- 34 ~~building restored to its prior condition~~.
- 35 ~~15~~
- 36 C. Approval Process.
- 37 1. Public art murals shall be approved by the Oregon City Arts Commission ("Arts Commission") at a
- 38 public hearing based on the criteria in the Oregon City Municipal Code. Notice of the application and
- 39 the hearing date shall be published online and mailed to the applicant, recognized neighborhood
- 40 association(s) and property owners within three hundred feet of the proposed mural location. Notice
- 41 shall be issued at least twenty days pre-hearing, and the staff report ~~and mural documents~~ shall be
- 42 available at least seven days pre-hearing. At the evidentiary hearing held before the ~~arts Arts~~

**Commented [AW15]:** Unless renewed?

**Commented [JP16R15]:** Correct.

**Commented [AW17]:** Why not? Belies the public approval process in the next paragraph

**Commented [JP18R17]:** If we are required to approve the murals, then we can't ever fund one. This means we can't do murals with any acquired funding we receive on public spaces.

**Commented [JP19]:** This section is being removed per legal counsels confirmation that we would not be required to approve murals on city property being paid for by city funds.

**Commented [CR20R19]:** This is not quite right. In this issue, the City is wearing two hats:  
 1) Proprietary hat - whether to put a public art mural on a public building is a decision that the art commission, if delegated by the City Commission may pursue.  
 2)Regulatory hat - whether the public art mural complies with OCMC 15.28.090 in terms of 5-year commitment, materials, quality, anti-graffiti coatings etc is something that the City should not be excused from treating the public just like the private.

commission~~Commission~~, all issues related to the Oregon City Municipal Code shall be raised and addressed. Failure to raise an issue at the hearing will preclude review on that issue.

- 2. In lieu~~the absence~~ of an active arts commission, the city-City commission-Commission will review the proposal through the public hearing process described in subsection 15.28.090.C.1.

**d.** Appeal Process

- 1. The decision is appealable to the city-City commission-Commission on the record. Notice of the appeal shall be received in writing by the economic-Economic development-Development department Department within fourteen calendar days from the date the challenged decision is provided to those entitled to notice. Late filing of any appeal shall be deemed a jurisdictional defect and will result in the automatic rejection of any appeal so filed.

- 12. All of the following shall be included as part of the notice of appeal:

- a. The city file number and date the decision to be appealed was rendered;
  - b. The name, mailing address and daytime telephone number for each appellant;
  - c. A statement of how each appellant has an interest in the matter and standing to appeal;
  - d. A statement of the specific grounds for the appeal;
  - e. The Appropriate Appeal Fee. Failure to include the appeal fee within the appeal period is deemed to be a jurisdictional defect and will result in the automatic rejection of any appeal so filed. If a city-recognized neighborhood association with standing to appeal has voted to request a fee waiver pursuant to Oregon City Municipal Code Section 17.50.290.C, no appeal fee shall be required for an appeal filed by that association. In lieu of the appeal fee, the neighborhood association shall provide a duly adopted resolution of the general membership or board approving the request for fee waiver.
- 2. Standing to Appeal. Only those persons or recognized neighborhood associations who have participated either orally or in writing have standing to appeal the decision. Grounds for appeal are limited to those issues raised in writing before the close of the public record. No new evidence shall be allowed.
  - 3. Notice of the Appeal Hearing. The economic development department shall issue notice of the appeal hearing to all parties who participated in writing before the close of the public record at least twenty days pre-hearing, and the staff report shall be available at least seven days pre-hearing. Notice of the appeal hearing shall contain the following information:
    - a. The file number and date of the decision being appealed;
    - b. The time, date and location of the public hearing;
    - c. The name of the applicant, owner and appellant (if different);
    - d. The street address or other easily understood location of the subject property;
    - e. A description of the permit requested and the applicant's mural proposal;
    - f. A brief summary of the decision being appealed and the grounds for appeal listed in the notice of appeal;
    - g. A statement that the appeal hearing is confined to the issues raised in the notice of appeal;
    - h. A general explanation of the requirements for participation and the city's hearing procedures.
  - 4. The city-City commission-Commission decision on appeal is the city's final decision.

Commented [AW21]: In the absence of?

Commented [JP22R21]: Changed

Commented [AW23]: Shouldn't there be a header like "Appeal Process" and then this paragraph as 1.?

Commented [JP24R23]: There wasn't in the original, but I added one here.

Commented [JP25]: Do we give each mural case a file number?

[15.28.090 Public art murals.](#)

4

1 No person shall commence creation of any public art mural without first obtaining approval from the city,  
2 and executing an easement pursuant to Section 15.28.090.B.11. ~~and~~ Murals that are created without approval  
3 through the aforementioned process that are not otherwise exempt pursuant to this chapter or are inconsistent  
4 with the conditions of approval from the city's decision shall not be deemed public art murals.  
5 (Ord. No. 21-1011, § 1(Exh. A), 8-4-2021)

6

**Commented [JP26]:** What is the advantage of being considered a piece of public art?

**Commented [AW27]:** What does this even mean? It can go ahead but just not be recognized?

**Commented [JP28R27]:** Correct. It would be still subject to signage municipal code, but not be designated a piece of public art.

**ORDINANCE NO. 00-1041**

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING TITLE 2: ADMINISTRATION AND PERSONNEL, BY ADDING A NEW CHAPTER, OF THE 1991 MUNICIPAL CODE, TO INCLUDE AN ARTS COMMISSION

**OREGON CITY MAKES THE FOLLOWING FINDINGS**

WHEREAS, the arts are an important part of the cultural and economic life of the entire community of Oregon City and enrich the participants in the arts as well as those who observe them; and

WHEREAS, the continued vitality of the arts in the City of Oregon City is a vital part of the future of the City as well as of its citizens; and

WHEREAS, several organizations already existing in Oregon City are active in the arts and provide leadership to the community on arts related matters, and

WHEREAS, the creation of an Arts Commission for the City of Oregon City will assist those organizations, as well as many other organizations and individuals to make arts a more important part of the City’s life, and

NOW THEREFORE, THE CITY OF OREGON CITY ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. There is hereby created a new chapter of the Oregon City Municipal Code, which shall provide as follows.

**Chapter 0.00**  
**An Ordinance Establishing an Arts Commission for Oregon City**

**Sections:**

- 0.00.010 Created
- 0.00.020 Members; Terms
- 0.00.030 Officers
- 0.00.040 ~~Secretary~~; Meetings; Quorum.
- 0.00.045 Annual Report
- 0.00.050 Rules and Regulations
- 0.00.060 ~~Powers~~ Purpose, Mission, and Duties
- 0.00.065 Powers and Authority
- 0.00.070 Policies

0.00.010 Created There is hereby created an Arts Commission (“Commission”) for Oregon City (“City”) having the powers and duties provided in this chapter.

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~~The Arts Commission should shall also contain at least five (5) members from a broad spectrum of citizens representing the performing arts, music, drama the visual arts, literary arts, and the fields of structural and landscape architecture, and shall also include, in addition to these five members from the arts community, at least two (2) citizens at large. At least five members of the Commission shall reside inside the city limits. ¶~~

The appointees shall have **evenly staggered** three-year terms. Members of the Commission may reapply to a new term yet shall not serve for more than two consecutive terms, unless the Mayor makes an appointment for additional terms. ~~The original appointees shall be appointed: three for one year, three for two years and three for three years, thereafter all terms will be for three years.~~ All members may vote on any matter coming before the Arts Commission, except as the Ethics Laws of the State of Oregon may provide. After a member has three consecutive absences without adequate reason, the **City** Commission may remove that member. Should a member be removed, the Mayor will make a new appointment.

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**The Arts Commission shall provide the City Commission with an annual report yearly.**

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Read for the first time at the regular meeting of the City Commission, City of Oregon City, Oregon, on the 20<sup>th</sup> day of December 2000, and the foregoing ordinance was finally enacted by the City Commission this 20<sup>th</sup> day of December 2000.

Revisions to Municipal Code 425 read for the first time at the regular meeting of the City Commission, Oregon City on XXXXXXXX.

~~BRONSON CRELLY~~

Jakob Wiley ~~LEILANI~~

City Recorder

ATTESTED to this 20<sup>th</sup> day of ~~December 2000~~ ¶

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~~JOHN F. WILLIAMS, Jr., Mayor~~

ORDINANCE NO. 00-1041  
Effective Date: January 19, 2001

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~~JOHN F. WILLIAMS, Jr., Mayor~~

ORDINANCE NO. 00-1041  
Effective Date: January 19, 2001

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## Proposed 5-Year Plan Goals – DRAFT

### **Strengthen the OCAC Foundation**

*Build a strong foundation for the OCAC by implementing best practices, standardizing operations, and securing flexible funding to create a leading public art program.*

**Examples: Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), dedicated art funding (e.g., percentage for the arts), public art website.**

### **Forge Community Partnerships Through Art**

*Develop strong partnerships to engage the Oregon City community through art. Connect city government, the regional arts community, and citizens to expand public art opportunities.*

**Examples: Cross-city art projects, collaborations between city departments/commissions and regional art groups.**

### **Enhance Regional Awareness and Brand**

*Increase regional awareness and build a strong, cohesive identity for the Art Commission, establishing Oregon City as a premier public art destination. Position OCAC as a strategic leader in shaping the city's public art landscape by grounding our work in clear values and community storytelling.*

**Examples: Define OCAC's mission, vision, and values. Connect those guiding principles to stories behind existing public art and how those narratives evolve with the community. Establish a leadership and advisory role with the City.**

### **Curate Projects that Enhance Placemaking**

*Focus on projects that support the City's placemaking efforts. Expand the city's art program by diversifying artistic mediums, subject matter, and locations to enhance tourism and community quality of life.*

**Examples: Develop a Master Public Art Plan. Diversify art geographically, by medium, and by subject matter.**

## Report: Oregon City Salmon Bench Restoration

### Introduction

The “Salmon Bench” was created by Nora Brodnicki as part of the 7<sup>th</sup> Street Corridor project in 2005, costing the city \$10,000. Adjusting for inflation, the value for the bench as of 2024 was approximately \$16,100.

The bench is listed as item #5 in the Oregon City Public Art Assessment, which was funded by the Oregon City Arts Commission. At that time, the report noted that “There is a significant amount of damage on the top of the bench [, where] large areas of the glazed portions have been cracked and chipped off.” The report recommended addressing the heavily damaged top portion of the bench in the near future.

Feedback from the original artist in Q4 2024 noted that the piece was not intended to last as long as it had. Her recommendation was to affix new tiles to replace the cracked tiles on the top surface of the bench with some sort of adhesive. After reporting this to the OCAC, the group agreed to move forward with using Restoration Grant funds to restore the upper surface of the bench.

### Restoration Grant Summary

The restoration grant RFQ went live on the Oregon City website on January 29, 2025 with a deadline to respond of 12:00PM on Wednesday, February 26, 2025. The upper limit of the grant award was \$12,000. [The City also published a Qualified Vendor application to identify artists interested in partnering with property owners or the City of Oregon City on public art renovation projects.](#)

[The City received three Qualified Vendor applications. Becky Dawson was the only applicant who referenced A single applicant responded, Becky Dawson on the Salmon Bench.](#) Becky noted in her application that she does not have any direct experience restoring public art but has “completed several tile mosaic projects and have experience with ceramics and glazing techniques, which would help [her] match the colors and textures used in the original bench.”

Becky met with the OCAC at its April 17<sup>th</sup> meeting to discuss the proposal. The OCAC discussed the proposal during the meeting which included feedback that the artist might not have the qualifications necessary to properly restore the bench. There were also concerns that the budget was aligned to the maximum grant amount rather than reflecting a reasonable budget for such a project. The examples of mosaic work within the artist’s portfolio appear to be smaller pieces to be hung on interior walls.

The artist noted that the “bench top will be replaced with a new, hand-sculpted and glazed ceramic tile mosaic” top, not a restoration outlined in the RFQ. Once informed that this was a restoration, the artist updated the proposal to reflect this. After several conversations regarding the budget of the proposal, the OCAC ultimately approved the proposal project contingent on receiving a revised \$10,000 budget at a special June 5<sup>th</sup> meeting.

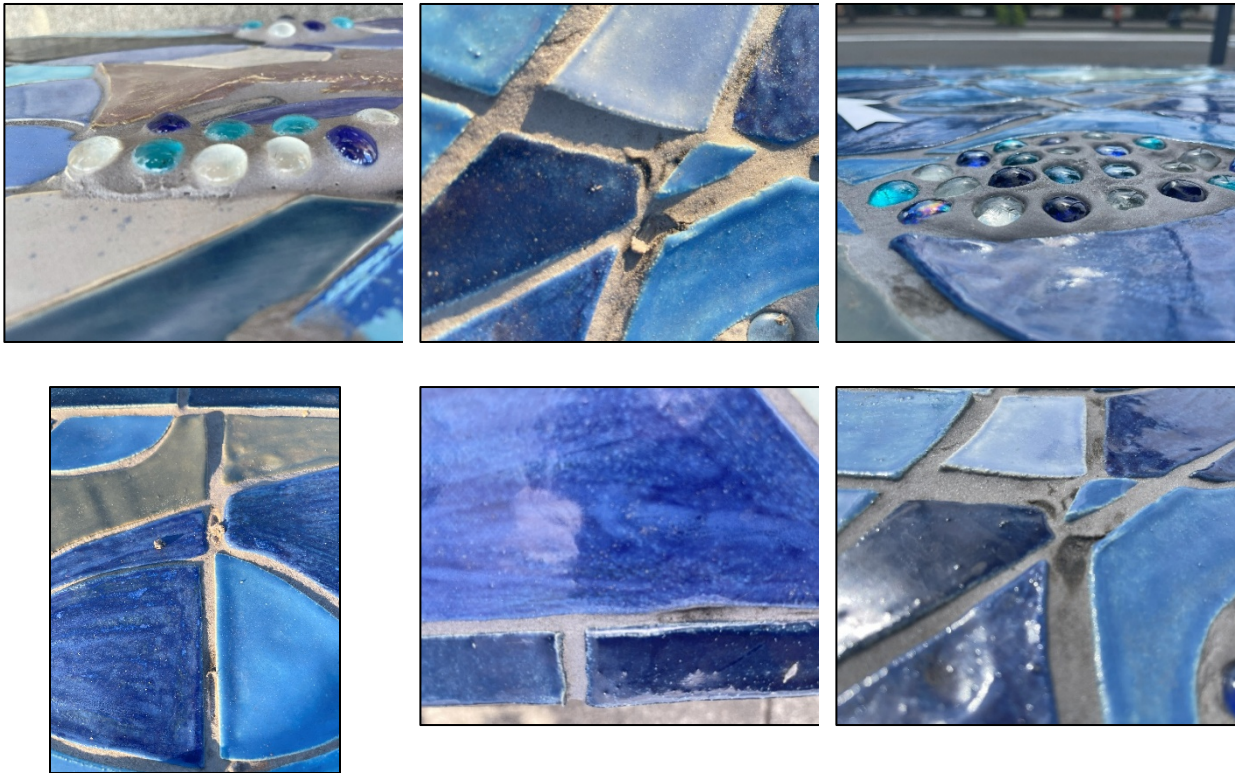
**Report: Oregon City Salmon Bench Restoration**

At its June 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting, Myra provided an update on discussions with the artist about how to proceed. The main concern was creating a deterrent for skateboarders while restoring the bench. Two design options were presented, but after discussion, the commission decided to omit this component for the present and consult with Public Works on a possible solution in the future.

**Identified Issues**

Sometime in mid-August several members of the Arts Commission, the Mayor and Ann were informed that there were several tiles that had sharp edges. Ann reported that after calling Becky, she remediated the problem in some way.

After further inspection of the bench, several other issues with the bench were identified (see images below). The issues included sizable uneven surface bumps due to uneven grouting, uncured grouting, depressions which would collect water, black organic material (this has not been tested but could be mold), and several tiles with persistent rough edges.



The original bench artist and another local artist familiar with public art were asked to examine the bench and give their feedback on the condition of the work. Below is a summary of their feedback:

## **Report: Oregon City Salmon Bench Restoration**

- The tile looks good from far away, but when you look at it closely, you could definitely see flaws in the craftsmanship. The tile is inconsistent in dimension, indicating that the restorer likely didn't use a high-grog clay formulated specifically for tile work.
- There is canvas texture still visible on the tile, so the tile wasn't smooth and compressed with a rib.
- The biggest problem is that the artist didn't take time to smooth down the edges. They are sharp and unfinished, which is problematic for functional art.
- The color match and pattern were pretty good, however upon further inspection, many of the edges were rough and stuck up in a way that could cause discomfort if bare skin were to contact it.
- The small round marbles were mounded very high and should have been placed at the same level.
- Areas of grout were flaking and easy to scrape, indicating an improper cure.
- The bench was still attractive, and would be fine in a private setting, but should not be out in the public as functional art.

### **Moving forward**

With these types of issues already presenting themselves within 2 months of the project completion, it seems very likely that problems will continue to develop in the future with exposure to weather (especially freeze/thaw cycles in the winter). Sharp edges may reappear as the grout breaks down further and rough tile edges become more prominent. Continued grout erosion could exacerbate rain collection/damage and lead to continued ongoing erosion.

In addition to these structural issues, there is also the question of whether this bench, in its current state, is still reflective of the quality of art OCAC would consider worthy of being included as part of the City's Public Art inventory.

### **Options to consider**

Option 1 – Take no further action.

Option 2 – Continue to file down sharp/rough areas as they appear.

Option 3 – Apply a clear, durable coating to cover the top surface.

Option 4 – Relocate the bench to a non-public location.

Option 5 – Leave the bench in place as public furniture but deaccession it from the City's Public Art inventory.

Option 6 – Remove the bench and have it demolished.

**Date** Reviewed: September 18, 2025

**Report:** Oregon City Salmon Bench Restoration

**Prepared by:** Josh Planton and Amy Wilson

Suggested edit inserted by Ann Griffin

September 11, 2025

James Graham/Ann Griffin  
Oregon City Economic Development Department  
625 Center Street  
Oregon City, Oregon 97045

RE: Salmon Bench Condition Assessment  
7<sup>th</sup> and Madison, Oregon City, OR

Dear James and Ann,

As manager of the permitting of the right-of-way within the City of Oregon City, I completed an assessment of the condition and safety of the art installation named the Salmon Bench which is located near the intersection of 7<sup>th</sup> and Madison Street.

There are no standards, guidelines, or codes which apply to art installations with City right-of-way except that they cannot impede the flow of pedestrian traffic within the sidewalk area. This art installation does not impede the flow of pedestrian traffic and is acceptable in its location which is commonly referred to as the 'furnishing zone'.

The City owns and maintains trash receptacles and benches within the City right-of-way and make repairs when needed as funds are available. This may include replacement of a trash receptacle, replacement of a wood slat or metal arm on a bench, or replacement of screws and other attachments to ensure no or little impact to the user.

In comparing the Salmon Bench to other public amenities such as benches and trash receptacles along 7<sup>th</sup> Street, I found no issues with the Salmon Bench. As a piece of art, it has some unevenness but poses no threat to the typical user. I placed the palm of my hand on the bench and rubbed it along every surface of the bench without receiving any scrape, cut, or impact. I found the surface to be uneven, but it has no edges which I could be hurt by when using the bench normally. I also sat on the bench in 5 different areas and again was not hurt by any of the surfaces. In summary, I do not find the bench to be unsafe.

I was asked to investigate some imperfections in the grout. There are several reasons imperfections could exist. They could exist due to workmanship, artistic choice, or potentially even vandalism since the art installation was back open to the public. I do not anticipate that any weather we have had this summer has caused any deterioration to the grout. It is possible but unlikely from what I observed. Could the grout fail in the future? Yes. Why could it fail in the future? It could fail due to normal wear and tear and could fail due to vandalism. No reason is more likely than the other. The grout seems sufficient for its application.

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If I were to offer any solutions in the event you would like to improve the unevenness and hard edges of some of the tiles, I would recommend a sealant of some type. There are numerous clear resins or sealants which can cover a material and which is transparent so that you can still see the design but is smooth and creates a flat surface. A good example is the large wood conference table within the City Hall conference room. If you do choose to add a resin/sealant, I recommend you work with Facilities to find a product meant for outdoor use.

In summary, having no standards, guidelines, or codes to follow, I found no issues with the condition of the Salmon Bench and do not find it to be unsafe when compared with conditions of other City amenities within the right-of-way.

Sincerely,

Josh Wheeler, PE  
Assistant City Engineer  
Public Works Department  
City of Oregon City