

Tarpon Springs Public Art Program

Master Plan 2020-2025

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Tarpon Springs Public Art Program MasterPlan

Introduction

Tarpon Springs was known as an artist community long before it became a major player in the world sponging trade. Today it continues to be home to many artists, both amateur and professional, who contribute to the rich texture of our community. Evidence of this history is listed in Appendix I.

Artists and their work are a strong economic force in a community as evidenced by a 2004 study conducted by the Tampa Bay Business Committee for the Arts. The study determined that the arts are not a drain on Tampa Bay's economy; they are in fact a key component of economic development. The study specifically determined that the arts and cultural events:

- had an annual economic impact of \$521.3 million
- attracted over 5.6 million visitors that same year
- contributed 7,800 jobs to the local workforce
- increased economic impact by 29.6 percent over a 5-year period, compared to a 1999 study

Organizations participating in the study contributed \$3.1 million in taxes and collected an additional \$1.3 million from patrons. This data is taken from the Pinellas County Comprehensive Plan, quoting, "The arts and cultural activities are agents of change. The economic impact of arts and cultural organizations in the Tampa Bay area, as well as the nation, surpasses that of professional sports."¹

The 2020-2025 Tarpon Springs Public Art Program Master Plan has been prepared to satisfy the master plan requirement of Tarpon Springs Public Art Ordinance (revised January 24, 2017). The discussion and approval process of the first master plan provided the opportunity for the citizens of Tarpon Springs, Tarpon Springs Public Art Committee (TSPAC) members, City staff and the City Commission (BOC) to agree on public art projects to enhance the City before 2014.

Mission Statement of the Tarpon Springs Public Art Committee

The mission of the Tarpon Springs Public Art Program is to enrich community through art in our surroundings.

1. Pinellas County Planning Department for the Board of County Commissioners of Pinellas County, Florida. "Recreation, Open Space and Culture Element," Pinellas County Comprehensive Plan, Ordinance 08-19. (Clearwater, FL, 2008), c. 12, p. 1. http://pinellascounty.org/plan/comp_plan/8rec/ch12.pdf [accessed June 1, 2010].

Goals of the Public Art Program

The goals and philosophy of the Public Art Program start with the objectives outlined in the Public Art Ordinance. These objectives state the desired future impact of public art on the built environment and the value that public art will bring to the City. Public art will:

- Assist in the creation of a superior and diverse aesthetic character of the City's built environment that is:
 - Vital to the quality of life of its citizens
 - Vital to the economic success of its businesses
 - An attraction for visitors
 - Consistent with its mission to make Tarpon Springs "the premier city in Florida in which to live, work and raise a family"
- Create a stimulating cultural environment by:
 - Promoting aesthetic values of the entire community
 - Providing an opportunity to enjoy and appreciate works of art
 - Reflecting and enhancing the City's
 - Heritage
 - Diversity
 - Character
 - Integrating public artworks in the architecture, infrastructure and landscape
 - Encouraging the preservation and protection of works of art
- Inspiration
 - Sometimes places for public art projects just seem perfect to create a sense of place that many people will appreciate. The Public Art Program will always remain open to this discovery.

Development of the Original Public Art Program Master Plan

Procedures for Developing the Master Plan

On July 17, 2007, the City of Tarpon Springs passed Ordinance 2007-23 that created Chapter Seventeen of the Comprehensive Zoning and Land Development Code and established the Public Art Program. The Ordinance required the appointment of a Public Art Committee and the development of a Public Art Program Master Plan and the Public Art Program General Guidelines. In January 2007, the process for the development of the Public Art Program Master Plan began with the appointment of seven (7) TSPAC members and two (2) alternates. There was no candidate for high school or college student representation. The TSPAC met for the first time in February, 2008. In January 2009, the Ordinance was amended to allow for five (5) TSPAC members with two (2) alternates and changed the status of the two (2) Ex Officio members to staff advisors. The amendments also clarified the role of City staff as being advisors to the TSPAC. Therefore, the Department of Cultural and Civic Services provides staff for the TSPAC, following the changes in the Ordinance.

The development process included research, TSPAC discussions, focus group discussions, TSPAC deliberations and feedback from City staff.

The TSPAC developed a mission statement in support of the purpose and intent of the Public Art Ordinance.

Under the first Master Plan, the TSPAC completed these projects:

Craig Park Mural

In 2011, the City of Tarpon Springs, with direction from the original artist, Elizabeth Indianos, restored the Sunburst mural in Craig Park which was originally created in 1978.

Ama Mermaid at Craig Park

In 2014, Ama Tarpon Springs, a mermaid sculpture, was installed in Craig Park under an Art for Charity program sponsored by Koh-i-Noor, a German art supply company, and the artist Amaryllis.

Urban Furnishings

In 2018 and 2019, seventeen unique, artist-designed bicycle racks were installed within the City at: Craig Park, the Sponge Docks, Downtown, the Performing Arts Center, the Community Garden, the Dog Park, and Sunset Beach.

City Entrances

The entrances to the City are important locations that express the unique identity of Tarpon Springs. Gateway sign designs were provided to the City by the Public Art Committee in August 2018. Ongoing engineering and structural considerations to bring the signage into compliance with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and other agencies is underway.

Dodecanese Meeting Place Respite Park

Glenna Goodacre's Naiads sculptures were placed with a decorative water feature at the Roundabout at the west end of the Sponge Docks.

Outdoor Sculpture Celebrating the Library

Glenna Goodacre's Storybook Time will be placed at the Cultural Center when renovations there are complete. The building, originally City Hall, was also the home of the City's first public library.

Development of this Second Public Art Program Master Plan

The Public Art Program Master Plan is supported by detailed policies and procedures in the Public Art Program Ordinance and General Guidelines.

The ideas discussed here were addressed during a TSPAC Workshop held on June 15th, 2020. Those in attendance were:

Public Art Committee

Chair Joan Jennings
Member Patricia Gregory
Member William Meals
Member Lucyanne Robinson
Member Theodore Ioannou
Alternate Member 1 Robert Stackhouse
Alternate Member 2 Michaela Oberlaender

This Public Art Program Master Plan establishes four (4) main functions for the Public Art Program during the next five (5) years:

- Community-based mural program
- Temporary public art program
- Urban furnishings
- Major Permanent Installations

Approved and Ongoing Project Descriptions 2020

Historic and Cultural Mural in the Cultural Center – Elizabeth Indianos

After extensive renovations to the Cultural Center, an interior wall was specially prepared for a large mural designed and painted by Elizabeth Indianos. The mural represents figures from Tarpon Springs' history and the flora and fauna of the area. A key will be prepared explaining the figures and various other components of the mural.

Original sculpture on the Sponge Docks

A series of whimsical chrome pelicans are being fabricated for consideration for purchase by local metalwork artist Kyle Pearce. A location on the Sponge Docks near the docking area for the charter fishing boat Two Georges has been investigated and approved by the City of Tarpon Springs Office of Public Works. Completion of the project by the artist is estimated to be late 2020 to early 2021.

Artistic recycling containers

Inspired by the “Goby fish,” creation and installation of various artistic plastic recycling containers is being formulated for Sunset Beach and the Splash Park. The containers will be designed in consultation with the City of Tarpon Springs Department of Public Works so that they may be easily maintained.

Solar powered Art Boxes

A vendor has been identified who can custom-make 30” x 30” solar-powered back-lit locking art boxes that can be mounted on light poles. One 20" x 30" prototype was ordered in order to determine its suitability for our project and a local business has offered to do low- or no-cost prints for the boxes. Twenty additional 30" x 30" square boxes have been ordered; the majority will be placed along Dodecanese Boulevard. The purpose of the project is to spotlight local student and emerging young artists. The prints can be changed out easily and inexpensively and can even be done with holiday themes at appropriate times of the year.

Bahamian Sponger Statue

The PAC feels that the African American community has been underrepresented in public art projects and will be issuing a call to artists to provide concepts for a Bahamian sponge diver statue. When sponge beds were discovered off Key West, the original divers came from the Bahamas and used “hooks” to harvest sponges from the bottom of the Gulf. The invention and utilization of the hard hat diving suit in Greece ushered in a new era in the sponge industry. The Bahamian divers worked closely with the immigrant Greeks, going so far as to become fluent in Greek. A statue honoring these divers, much like that of the Greek diver on the Sponge Docks, seems to be a notable project.

Community-Based Mural Program

Murals are expected to play a major role in the Public Art Program. Tarpon Springs has many local artists. A community-based mural program will be developed to encourage creative people to participate in the development and installation of murals that reflect the wishes of local residents of the area. The murals will be painted on city-owned property; locations for the murals are being formulated. The community mural program will not preclude the City from contracting with a single artist to produce a mural. This program requires public education and outreach.

Public Art on City Property

The Master Plan specifies criteria required to evaluate the locations and types of public art projects sponsored by the City. These criteria apply to the overall geographic distribution of public art in the City, to the qualities of individual sites, and to best practices for managing a public art program.

The Public Art Committee has identified the following locations as sites of interest for future Public Art Projects. This list will be continuously added to as is deemed necessary by the committee.

- The Marina
- Inness Park
- The Golf Course
- Sunset Beach
- Dumpster Corrals
- Sisler Field
- The Water Tower
- Public Safety Memorial Garden: Project to be discussed.
- Under Represented Areas of the city.

Goals and Objectives

Each project should satisfy some of the goals and objectives as established by the Public Art Ordinance, the City's Comprehensive Plan, the Downtown Development Plan, the Public Art Program Master Plan and the Public Art Program General Guidelines.

Balanced and Diverse Approach

Rather than one particular kind of public art in the City, the Public Art Program Master Plan endorses project selection that provides for a diversity of public art types from large city icons to artist-made benches, and a diversity of places from highways to public buildings and parks.

Donations of Public Art for City Property

Any public artwork proposed for donation to the City or for installation on public property must meet the City standards for public art and secure the approval of the TSPAC for artist qualifications, artwork, site design, and final installation. The City may require a maintenance endowment.

Public Art on Private Property

Key Principles

Commercial developers required to meet the Public Art allocation as defined in the Public Art Ordinance have the option to create a public artwork on his/her property or contribute funds to the Public Art Fund. The developer will secure TSPAC approval for the qualifications of the artist, the specific public artwork design, site conditions, and budget. The developer has full control over the choice of artists and artworks to be presented to the TSPAC. The developer and/or property owner must provide ongoing maintenance for the artwork and site. Improper maintenance will be a code-compliance violation.

Public Information

Public information regarding public art in the City is extremely important to maximize the value of the Public Art Program to both citizens and visitors. All TSPAC meetings are subject to government under Sunshine laws and public meeting laws; therefore, all discussions of potential public art projects by TSPAC members will take place in a public forum. Visitors to the meetings are encouraged to give written input to the TSPAC through the City Liaison, or in person at a TSPAC meeting. Public input is not only encouraged, but is welcomed by the TSPAC.

Public information should occur at all steps in the public art process: planning, selecting, installing and maintaining each work of public art. Overall, the Public Art Program requires an internet website, general printed information, and high-quality digital photographs. The internet website will provide both friendly public information on existing artworks in the City (sculptures, murals, fountains, etc.) and the technical information for developers, artists and City staff. Onsite plaques should summarize information about the purpose and attributes of the artwork. The following elements of the Program should be implemented with the assistance of appropriate City departments.

Printed Matter

- Public Art Program Brochure - produced in-house to reduce cost and allow for frequent updates as more projects come to completion
- Art & History Trail map(s) in collaboration with Economic Development
- Information piece for commercial developers required to meet the Public Art allocation

Physical Information

- Onsite plaques with summary information about the artwork will be installed if appropriate. Content will include: name of the artwork, name of artist, and date of installation. Additional information regarding the artwork's purpose and attributes may be included as well as donor entity if applicable. All content is subject to review of the TSPAC whose decision will be final. The TSPAC will develop a standard style for the identification plaques.

Digital Materials

- Comprehensive website (define artwork to be included on the website) including high-quality digital photographs for use by media and tourism agencies

Appendices

I. History of Public Art in Tarpon Springs

Public involvement in improvement and beautification has a long history in Tarpon Springs. Many individuals and groups have contributed artistic elements or beautified the landscape, but there has never been a cohesive structure or a vision to support continuance or maintenance of these efforts.

- In 1892, the Women's Town Improvement Association banded together to keep the streets and bayou clean, to provide sidewalks and streetlights in the village and to beautify the cemetery.
- Tarpon Springs was the winter home of the artist, George Inness, Jr. The Unitarian Universalist Church on Grand Boulevard houses a significant collection of his paintings.
- When a new library was built in 1995, the old one became the Heritage Museum, housing a permanent art and historical exhibit.
- The new library showcases numerous public art displays. The entrance features a sculpture of tarpon in a fountain donated and built by Pinellas Pools. Inside the library are carved and etched glass panels designed and donated by artists Julian and Karin Mesa. Changing Tides, a painting by Christopher Still, hangs behind the circulation desk.
- Renovation and restoration of the "old city hall," now the Cultural Center, and the "old high school," now City Hall and the Performing Arts Center, include interior public art installations and public spaces for changing displays of privately owned art.
- A variety of monuments have been erected on public land over the years: the war memorial and the one-hundredth Epiphany anniversary monuments in Craig Park, and a commemorative marker stone at Sunset Beach Park for the Nicholas family's donation of the land for the park. There is also a monument in front of the Public Safety Building in memory of five fallen officers.
- Murals have been painted on both public and private buildings, many of which have been painted over and lost. One of the murals, on a historic building in Craig Park, was partially painted over and the remainder poorly restored. Murals on several private buildings remain in the Sponge Docks area and on commercial buildings on Tarpon Avenue.
- Public monies have been used to restore several historically significant buildings in the City. Two of them, the Cultural Center and the Performing Arts Center, regularly display the work of artists.
- In 2002, winter resident Louis Liginos donated to the City, a bronze patina statue of a sponge diver by artist John Mazzolini.
- There are many works of art displayed throughout the City. In 2001, the Leepa-Rattner Museum of Art opened. The focus of the museum is Twentieth Century art. Tarpon Springs architect, Ed Hoffman, Jr., designed the museum.

II. Public Art Types

A public art type is a recognized form of public art. Public art takes a variety of forms including monuments in plazas, murals, sculpture parks, ephemeral artworks and decorative art integrated into the built environment. The following are public art types that the TSPAC has placed emphasis on for this Master Plan. Details for each category are provided. These details include: media, qualities, issues to be aware of, potential problems to avoid and the cost of maintenance for each type. The City's preference is to integrate all public art types in an environmentally friendly way.

Murals

The primary element of a mural is adornment of an exterior wall, fence or other large vertical surface.

- Variety and Media
 - Paint
 - Tile
 - Relief sculpture
- Positive Qualities
 - Surface already exists
 - Creates dimension
 - Adds color
- Siting Issues
 - Usually requires easement or agreement with wall/fence owner
 - May become obscured by trees and other landscaping
- Maintenance
 - Susceptible to casual vandalism such as graffiti. Vulnerable murals could be coated with graffiti-resistant coating
- Cost Concerns
 - Murals can be one of the most cost-effective forms of public art
 - Allowable costs are the difference between a standard finish, such as paint or tile, and an artist designed and installed mural
 - Because of weathering issues, painted murals may not last as long as other public art but can provide a powerful impact at affordable costs
- Additional Concerns
 - Lack of proper preparation of surface
 - Improper choice of materials for long-term maintenance
 - Not keeping sample chips of colors and a cartoon of the mural for future maintenance

Sculpture

In both traditional and modern planning, sculpture attracts the eye as a focal point in public spaces and landscapes. The sculpture requires the correct size and color to provide the necessary civic, architectural or intimate impact on its space.

- Variety and Media
 - Stone: Carved shapes or arranged blocks
 - Metals: Cast, laser-cut or forged bronze, steel, aluminum, etc. - natural or painted

- Concrete: Cast, poured or sprayed - stained or mosaic tile covering
- Wood: Carved or fabricated
- Resin Fiberglass: Translucent or painted
- Landscape: Shaped earthberms
- New materials: Glass, fiber optics, LEDs
- Mixed media: A mixture of many materials
- Positive Qualities
 - Icon: Can create a recognizable icon in public space for wayfinding and publicity
 - Durable: Low maintenance if made correctly for the environment
 - Art: Generally appreciated as art from a museum
 - Touch: If appropriate to the work, people enjoy touching sculpture
- Siting Issues
 - Must be placed correctly on the site with clear surroundings, backdrop and good lighting
 - Small sculptures can be visually more substantive with pedestals, or site design, etc.
 - Relationship of the color of the sculpture with the color of the surroundings
 - All sculptures should be anchored and all parts rated to survive hurricane winds without shattering or causing potential debris to become airborne.
- Maintenance
 - Requires pre-installation study for corrosive action of different materials of the sculpture itself, pooling of water, and acid or minerals (iron) in rain/sprinkler water that will discolor sculpture
 - Requires clear instructions from the artist on maintenance methods
 - Some sculptures may be designed to age as with bronze. Acid-based cleaners can remove aging
- Cost Concerns
 - Materials like cast bronze have a high initial cost
- Additional Concerns
 - View of art congested or hidden by trees, landscaping, signage, light poles, etc.
 - Wrong scale for the space
 - Sun blinds the viewer by backlighting or reflection, or by tree leaf-shaded patterns
 - Sculptures placed where people can damage the work by climbing, pulling or driving
 - If a sculpture is designed to weather, age in the elements or otherwise decompose, the artist must so state within the proposal and include this feature in the art contract.

Urban Furnishings

For centuries, artists created and embellished the common furnishings and elements of outdoor spaces. Today, artists design and/or fabricate all elements of our urban places.

- Variety and Media
 - Seating: Benches, seating walls, and sculpture as seating
 - Fences and gates
 - Lights and light poles: Metal fixtures, blown glass, decorative tops or pole wraps
 - Bus shelters and gazebos
 - Other street furnishings: Bicycle racks, trash cans, mail boxes, etc.
- Positive Qualities
 - Adds to the planned architectural character of the building or streetscape
 - Tends to be durable and low maintenance

- Provides for basic functional needs of the building/site
- Siting Issues
 - Requires strong aesthetic and functional coordination with architecture or landscape
 - Item should repeat for more physical impact
- Maintenance
 - Requires standard cleaning, trash pick-up and removal of gum, stickers, etc.
- Cost Concerns
 - For certain items, recommend purchase and storage of replacement items that might be damaged by “life of the City”
 - If the artist creates the entire item artistically, then all costs are in the standard art budget. If the artist-made element is added, then only the added element is part of the budget. For example, the art budget would pay for the “heron” added to the top of light pole, but not the standard light pole.
- Additional Concerns
 - Not placed in active location where visitors can interact with the artwork
 - Not recognized as a public artwork

Contemporary Design-Integrated Public Art

In the last fifteen (15) years, a new group of artists have emerged that work directly with architects, engineers and landscape architects to enhance the quality of buildings, spaces or even infrastructures. The actual physical results are not known until the artist and other design professional work together.

- Variety and Media
 - Plaza design
 - Landscape design
 - Water retention systems and design
 - Design of building entrances, lobbies or facade elements
- Positive Qualities
 - Enhances the overall quality of the place or building
 - Excellent coordination with the building or landscape character
 - Method demonstrates the successful integration of new ideas and materials such as solar collectors, new materials or rainwater collection
 - Helps create distinguished, unique buildings
- Siting Issues
 - The resulting collaboration needs to be visible and prominent from the street
- Maintenance
 - Depending on the outcome, maintenance will vary
- Cost Concerns
 - Cost of the design team time
 - The method for this process is to set aside a design fee for the artist and the remainder for implementation. Either the artist produces something for the remaining fee as a result of collaboration or the remainder is given to the construction budget. When given to the general construction budget, the owner should show cost increases due to artist ideas that will be implemented in the design. The artist will verify.

- Additional Concerns
 - Lack of direction to the architects and artists on the collaboration
 - Resulting collaborative site and building is not sufficiently unique and artistic
 - Not recognized as a public artwork

Fountains and Water Features

Public art where the primary element is shaping and movement of water.

- Variety and Media
 - Sculpture fountain: Water flows over and out of a sculptural form
 - Pool: Shaped flat-water pools
 - Stream: Flowing water through a plaza, garden or landscape
 - Rain: Artworks that operate from rainwater, flowing water or standing pools
 - Waterfront or water bodies: Open to the inspiration of the artist
- Positive Qualities
 - Sound: Creates an atmosphere in a space and can hide traffic noises
 - Movement: Creates something to watch
 - Water: Adds water to air, increasing cooling
 - Reflection: Light on water reflects onto surrounding surfaces
- Siting Issues
 - Scale of public art appropriate to space for visual and sound prominence
 - Water splashing on people, cars or hardscape in the wind
 - Too close to traffic where the traffic sounds dominate
- Cost Concerns
 - High non-art costs of ongoing operations, plumbing and the basic pool
 - The allowable art costs are additional costs over a regular fountain of the same scale and quality. The owner should submit a cost estimate of construction without the artist participation, then demonstrate the additional costs as a result of the artist-designed changes or additions.
- Additional Concerns
 - May not be recognized as a public artwork
 - Attracts people to play in the water
 - Requires ongoing preventive maintenance for things like spray jets, computer controllers, pumps and filters
 - Watertight surfaces such as pool bottom must be resealed
 - Pools require cleaning
 - Chemicals in the water can stain and etch surfaces
 - Times of drought often require disabling fountains and other ornamental elements that consume water. At such times, the installations can appear unsightly and seals can dry out, resulting in leaks when the water is turned back on. Therefore, preference will be given to those water features that use minimal amounts of water or rainwater, or that take advantage of our coastal waters.

III. Existing Public Art

Until recently, public art in Tarpon Springs has been limited to a fountain in front of the library with a tarpon sculpture, carved and etched glass, and other two-dimensional art within the library. There is a War Memorial in Craig Park, a statue of a sponge diver on the Sponge Docks and a statue of an Epiphany diver by Mitch Kolbe at St. Nicholas Greek Church. The Leepa-Rattner Museum on the St. Petersburg College campus has provided another dimension to the artistic texture of the community. In 2019, a grouping of bronze Naiads by renowned sculptor Glenna Goodacre was installed in the roundabout at the west end of Dodecanese Boulevard. Another Goodacre sculpture, Story Time, will be installed at the southwest corner of the Cultural Center. In 2020, a series of solar-powered illuminated art boxes will be installed on the Sponge Docks and other locations in the city.

There is a list of artworks and aesthetic enhancements owned by the City. Most are in storage. This list and a digitized, complete inventory of City-owned art was created by one of our art ambassadors, Regina Knudegarde. The database incorporates a photograph of each item, its condition, location, acquisition method, age, etc. We expect to use it in ongoing conservation and record-keeping efforts for all public art in Tarpon Springs. A copy of the database on a computer thumb drive and is available for each PAC Member's Master Plan. A printed version is available from the TSPAC.