

# Sonoma County Public Art Plan

DRAFT

# Table of Contents

<b><u>Executive Summary</u></b>	<b>5</b>
<b><u>Introduction</u></b>	<b>7</b>
Why Public Art	
The Role of Creative Sonoma	
The Role of Creative Sonoma and County Government in Public Art	
<b><u>What We Do: Public Art Project Types</u></b>	<b>11</b>
A Framework for Public Art	
Capital Projects	
Partnerships with County Departments and Affiliated Agencies	
Curated Projects	
<b><u>How We Do It: A Framework for Implementation</u></b>	<b>14</b>
<b><u>Project Planning</u></b>	<b>14</b>
Department and Agency Consultations	
Project Intake	
Annual Public Art Work Plan	
Specific Project Plan	
<b><u>Program Administration</u></b>	<b>15</b>
Artist Selection Processes	
Community Engagement Approaches	
Existing County Artworks	
Donations, Commemorative Works, Memorials and Loans	
Relocation, Deaccessioning (Removal) of Artworks	
Maintenance and Conservation of Artworks	
<b><u>Funding</u></b>	<b>17</b>
Annual Appropriations	
Project-Specific Allocations	
Programmatic Grants	
In-Lieu Fees from Developers	
Public Art Grants	
Uses of Funds	
<b><u>Governance: Roles and Responsibilities</u></b>	<b>19</b>
Board of Supervisors	
Economic Development Board Executive Director	
Creative Sonoma Director	
Creative Sonoma Public Art Manager	
Public Art Committee	
Project Task Force	
<b><u>Where We Are Going: Opportunities for Public Art</u></b>	<b>21</b>
Health Services / Human Services / Office of Equity	
Sonoma County Public Infrastructure (PI)	
Sonoma County Regional Parks	

Sonoma Water  
Permit Sonoma  
Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District  
County Clerk-Recorder-Assessor-Registrar of Voters  
Sonoma County Library  
Sonoma County Regional Transportation Authority (SCTA)  
Regional Climate Protection Authority (RCPA)  
Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit (SMART)

## [Appendix](#)

26

Definitions

DRAFT

## Inspirations for Public Art in Sonoma County

Early in the process of developing this public art plan, Creative Sonoma met with and surveyed community members to learn what they valued most about Sonoma County. Their responses touched on six themes, which are summarized in the following pages. These responses provide a starting point for how Creative Sonoma can urge artists to find inspiration for public art that reflects Sonoma County's civic purpose, its shared understanding of itself and the dialogues it is having about its future.

- Our history: people, places and narratives that have shaped the county
- Our landscape: environmental qualities, cultural meanings and traditions, with the land and water at the center
- Our creative practices: innovations of making and creation
- Our diversity: the traditions, struggles and accomplishments of all people in the county
- Our resilience: our collective experiences, traumas and commitment to a new future together
- Our hunger for connection: building bridges between communities across distance and difference

# Executive Summary

Public art is not a discipline or a profession. It is an idea and a way of thinking about art. What makes it public is that it is situated at the congested crossroads of aesthetics, public life, cultural ideas and political issues.

– Janet Zweig, *Public Artist*

This public art plan represents the culmination of several years of effort by Creative Sonoma, artists, public agencies and communities throughout Sonoma County to explore the role that a County-led public art program might play. In doing so, it addresses the following key questions:

- What does public art mean, in the context of Sonoma County?
- What is the unique role that a County-led public art initiative can play, considering the breadth and depth of experience that can already be found in various municipalities, non-profits and artist practices?
- What are the possibilities for collaboration between Creative Sonoma, other County departments and affiliated agencies, municipalities and the community at large?
- What are the planning and decision-making processes that will be most effective for County-led public art initiatives, in terms of offering creative leadership, building sound partnerships, and providing oversight over public resources?

The plan provides a framework for the types of projects a Creative Sonoma-led initiative could take on:

- Public art that is incorporated into County Capital Improvements, enhancing the public's perception and experience of those projects,
- Public art that is developed in partnership with County departments and affiliated agencies through flexible project approaches, helping partners achieve their missions, and
- Curated public art projects that are initiated by Creative Sonoma and address broader community goals.

In addition, the plan outlines the following:

- A planning and implementation framework that provides the foundation for a County public art program. The plan provides a governance structure indicating the need for a new Public Art Committee to provide leadership and oversight in public art matters, and a staff position to manage the program. This position does not currently exist within Creative Sonoma, and staffing considerations should be included with the adoption of the Public Art Policy.
- Core processes for doing the work of a public art program. It explains the development process and function of an annual work plan for public art and how Creative Sonoma will work collaboratively with its partners to make specific plans for the projects it undertakes.
- Options for funding a County public art program, based on typical methods used by other government-based programs. Possible approaches are presented as a menu of options and include annual appropriations, project-specific allocations, in-lieu fees from developers, and grants. A mix of funds would be beneficial to the program.
- Potential partnerships with County departments and affiliated agencies based on current priorities. Where possible, it shows precedents from other communities to inspire the work that can happen here.

The Sonoma County Public Art Plan was prepared by Creative Sonoma at the request of the Board of Supervisors. It fulfills one of the strategic goals that was established for Creative Sonoma when it was founded in 2014, which was to recommend to the Board of Supervisors a strategy for establishing a public art program in the county.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> "Sonoma County should consider enacting a percent for art ordinance to ensure that art is incorporated into new and renovated capital projects. It should also consider extending the public art requirement to new private commercial, industrial and major residential development. Creation of

This plan was developed through consultation with arts, culture and community stakeholders throughout the county, including artists, representatives from municipal public art programs and Municipal Advisory Councils in unincorporated areas. The Creative Sonoma Advisory Board reviewed and provided input throughout development.

The plan was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on \_\_\_\_\_.

DRAFT

---

this program would best be accomplished by developing a County public art master plan that includes mandates as well as incentives (state-of-the-art public art ordinances often include incentives for developers to contribute to an in lieu fund, for example). This plan would draft program policies, guidelines and procedures. It would establish artist selection processes and standards and would ensure meaningful community engagement. The plan would identify appropriate themes and sites for public art placement.” Creative Sonoma work plan, approved by the Board of Supervisors, Agenda Item Number: 47, June 24, 2014

# Introduction

Creative Sonoma Vision:

Creativity is a defining economic driver for Sonoma County.

Creative Sonoma Mission:

Creative Sonoma's mission is to support and advance the creative community of Sonoma County.

## Why Public Art?

Sonoma County is a place that speaks immediately and powerfully to anyone who encounters it – particularly in the language of its landscape, which is a repository of stories about how people have lived and worked in this place for thousands of years.

Public art is an indelible part of this experience. Sonoma County has long been a destination and a thriving work place for artists and their creativity is part of its visual landscape. Public art has been incubated by city arts programs, non-profit arts organizations, wineries and even artists themselves, and it can be found in urban, rural, and natural spaces throughout the county. This work – playful, exuberant, and often surprising – is always deeply embedded in this place, a visual record of the conversation that artists are having with the life forces of the landscape, a reminder to people of where they are and why they are here.

This plan imagines an expanded role for public art that is connected not only to Sonoma County's landscape but also to its community and civic lives. The relevance of this approach to public art has become unquestionably clear over the past few years, as communities have faced the challenge of devastating wildfires, flooding, and a pandemic, as well as the urgency of addressing long-neglected issues of equity and climate change.

This plan imagines how artists can give voice to the experiences Sonoma County residents are having as a community – an interconnected and symbiotic network of towns and cities; working and natural landscapes; coastal areas, riparian valleys and the mountains that rise beyond; as well as successions of peoples who have been here for millennia, who have settled here over recent centuries and who are newly arrived.

It imagines how artists can help confront the challenges the community is facing, acknowledges the traumas it has experienced, and uplift the myriad stories and shared purpose that weave Sonoma County together.

And it imagines public art as essential at a time when paths forward must be openly questioned and when everyone's voice must be embraced in constructing what the future can be.

## The Role of Creative Sonoma

Sonoma County's public art activities are managed by Creative Sonoma, a division of the Sonoma County Economic Development Board, a department of County government that is devoted to business attraction, expansion and retention.

Creative Sonoma was established in 2014 to support and advance Sonoma County's creative community, with a vision that "creativity is a defining economic driver for Sonoma County." One of the key charges the Board of Supervisors gave to Creative Sonoma was to explore the creation of a public art program.

Much of Creative Sonoma's work involves programs and services that meet the needs of individual artists and arts and culture organizations throughout the county. These have included professional development and capacity building; arts education initiatives to ensure that all students have access to creative education and resources; funding to support the work of the creative community; grants to provide support for response and recovery following local disasters and crises; and other convenings and programs.

Creative Sonoma also initiates and manages public art projects and programs on behalf of the County. Over the past ten years, it has been organizing research studies and demonstration projects that lay the groundwork for a broader public art initiative. Key milestones have included:

## **Creative Sonoma: Public Art Study (2019)**

One of the first steps Creative Sonoma took to explore the creation of a public art program was to commission a public art study whose purpose was to “enhance County staff knowledge and understanding of the opportunities and issues involved in managing a public art program and to outline considerations should the County choose to consider a county-wide public art ordinance.”

The study includes an eight-point case for why the County should support public art funding and programming, drawn from a literature review; an outline of key factors and best practices to consider when developing a public art program, drawn from interviews with public art program leaders; broad considerations for how to move forward with the development of a public art program, including topics that a public art plan should cover.

The key factors the study identified were:

- Engage the community in the public art program’s development and throughout its life
- Establish a clear definition of public art
- Establish funding mechanisms that allow for art to be integrated into the fabric of the community as it grows and changes
- Outline responsibilities for civic leaders, staff and the public
- Establish fair and thoughtful ways to work with artists early on in a project’s development
- Engage experienced and qualified staff
- Allow for commissions of temporary public art, including the performing arts
- Establish adequate funding for collection maintenance
- Establish policies for accepting gifts and loans and for decommissioning artworks

## **Public Art Benchmarking Study for Sonoma County (2021)**

Two years later, Creative Sonoma commissioned a second study, this one gauging public and agency attitudes toward public art, and further benchmarking programs in California. The consulting firm Art Builds Community conducted interviews and focus groups with local governmental agencies, arts organizations, and artists, and reviewed public art programs throughout California. Separately, the consulting firm Third Plateau included a series of questions about public art in the interviews it conducted while preparing a business plan for Creative Sonoma.

Key findings about community sentiments included:

- Sonoma County residents were clear they would like to have more opportunities to access public art. The most frequently cited benefits of such a program included pride of place, the opportunity to bring people together and promote interaction, opportunities to support local artists and the creative economy, opportunities to represent diverse cultures, and opportunities to promote cultural tourism.
- Participants articulated that public art communicates values, positive or negative. Stakeholders were clear that the expressions of public art in the community help communicate what matters to the community.
- Administrators from different departments and agency leaders were especially enthusiastic about public art, and many have had experience working with public art.

The study also outlined best practices for a public art program.

## **Demonstration Projects (2018 to date)**

Starting in FY18-19, Creative Sonoma began producing six small-scale public art projects with County department partners with the following objectives: assess internal capacity, test processes on which to build a more formal program, and troubleshoot processes through “real-world” examples. Partnering departments included Public Infrastructure (Culture Vulture at Laughlin Road, Hacienda Bridge, Old Redwood Highway Sidewalk Improvements, Larkfield Wikiup Road-Hole Covers) and General Services (Los Guilicos Village Homeless Shelters Signage, Meridith Pier at Bodega Bay).



## Creative Reopening (2021)

In response to the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, especially its economic, social and physical impacts, Creative Sonoma provided resources for local businesses to reopen safely, using the arts. Creative Sonoma's project funds paid for participating communities to hire artists to enliven the "new" spaces to help community members feel safe and engaged while patronizing local businesses. The project supported ongoing recovery efforts and demonstrated the role that the arts can play in strengthening community resiliency and economic development.

## ArtSurround (2022)

ArtSurround was a collaborative effort among the public, private and nonprofit sectors to enhance Sonoma County's creative vitality by supporting artists and infusing the arts into our public realm. The program engaged businesses and public agencies that sought to enhance community livability through the arts, and sparked public imagination by supporting artists who work at the intersection of inspiration and effective community arts engagement. The program involved an Artist Cohort and an Advocate Cohort, which worked on parallel tracks to increase community arts.

The **Advocate Cohort** included staff from cities, towns arts organizations and businesses who engaged with artists to incorporate their work into public spaces. Art projects were designed to engage the surrounding neighborhoods and communities in creative processes as the art works are developed.

The **Artist Cohort** was open to Sonoma County artists interested in developing skills and best practices in their own public art and community engagement work. The artists received training and then were invited to develop proposals for Advocates' sites. The projects were funded by Creative Sonoma and its partners.

## Fire Memorial Public Art Project (Current)

At the request of the Board of Supervisors, Creative Sonoma is facilitating the development of commemorative artwork that will recognize the lives of those who perished in the 2017 wildfire complex. The development and implementation have provided Creative Sonoma an opportunity to "pilot" a full-scale public art project from start to finish.

## The Role of Creative Sonoma and County Government in Public Art

County government can be an ideal partner for this visionary and purposeful approach to public art. The day-to-day work of public agencies—building infrastructure, managing critical environmental resources, supporting the health and welfare of residents, guiding the community to a sustainable future, providing leadership in the acknowledgment and repair of historic injustices—provides a powerful platform for creative explorations and community partnerships.

Creative Sonoma is an ideal entity to stimulate this work. Established by the County Board of Supervisors in 2014 to support the county's ecosystem of creative practitioners, businesses and non-profits, part of its original work plan was to lead a public art planning process and implement a public art program. Since then, Creative Sonoma has laid the groundwork by undertaking two benchmarking studies of programs throughout California and by producing demonstration projects in collaboration with County departments and communities. The conversations that began this planning process underscored the sense of connection and shared purpose that people hope public art can engender and their desire to participate in meaningful public art processes.

Creative Sonoma can leverage its relationships with County government, creative enterprises and artists, and the broader community to inspire, instigate and successfully manage a public art program aimed towards this vision. This plan provides a framework for how Creative Sonoma can do that, focusing on three overarching public art objectives:

### Align public art with the County's strategic pillars.

Sonoma County's investment in public art can help County government achieve its broad strategic goals. Key among these are the strategic pillars of **healthy and safe communities** ("provide equitable access to quality housing, health and human services for all") and **organizational excellence** ("communication and engagement with Sonoma County residents should result in services that meet the needs of our residents"). Public art projects can also support the County's racial justice, equity, and climate change initiatives.

#### Incorporate public art into the projects, programs, and activities of County government.

This plan provides inspiration for aligning the creative mission of public art with the mission of the County's departments and affiliated agencies. Creative Sonoma will work in partnership with County departments and affiliated agencies to incorporate public art into their everyday projects and programs. This will require clear planning and project management models that facilitate partnerships that are not only effective and transparent but also flexible enough to adapt to the unique circumstances of each project. This plan outlines a framework for several project types – Capital Projects and Partnership Projects – that can be a foundation for collaboration. It also provides examples of where those project types can be applied.

#### Catalyze public art projects in the community.

Creative Sonoma will be looked to for leadership in this approach to public art. This plan also outlines a framework for Curated Initiatives, a model that will enable Creative Sonoma to catalyze and support public art projects not only in conjunction with County departments and affiliated agencies, but also with municipalities, nonprofit civic and arts organizations, and individual artists and communities. This will enable Creative Sonoma to respond to opportunities and needs, and to catalyze and collaborate with resources, beyond those of County government.

# What We Do: Public Art Project Types

## Public Art Vision

Public art is embraced as a priority of Sonoma County government, incorporated into County programs, projects and services and celebrated for its ability to connect people and inspire civic purpose.

## Public Art Mission

Creative Sonoma inspires, catalyzes, and facilitates public art projects in collaboration with Sonoma County government and community partners.

## Public Art

Public art is defined as an original artwork in any media, existing in a single copy or in a limited edition, produced by an artist or by a team of artists, and conceived and executed with the intention of being staged in the physical public domain, usually outside and accessible to all.

## A Framework for Public Art

Creative Sonoma will prioritize three types of public art projects:

**Capital Projects** are artworks that are made integral into major County facility, infrastructure and public space improvements, which are usually but not always part of the County's Capital Improvement Plan.

**Partnership Projects** are initiatives created in collaboration with County departments and affiliated agencies. These projects will focus on connecting public art with ongoing services, programs, and special initiatives, specifically tailored to each opportunity. They will also focus on facilities and infrastructure developed and funded by a affiliated and/or outside agencies, such as Sonoma Water and Sonoma Ag + Open Space.

**Curated Projects** are specific projects and broad initiatives that Creative Sonoma organizes through its own leadership in response to priorities or opportunities that it identifies, and allows it to collaborate with resources outside of County government.

## Capital Projects

Sonoma County seeks to incorporate public art into its Capital Improvements, such as buildings and other facilities, parks and other community public spaces, and components of the proposed County Government Center. Capital Improvements are generally documented in the County's Capital Improvement Plan, though it is possible that there are exceptions. For the purposes of this plan, these artworks are called "Capital Projects."

Public art in County Capital Improvements will be developed by Creative Sonoma, working in partnership with the department building the project, the design team, and the department that will ultimately operate the facility. Early, coordinated consideration of opportunities for public art in County Capital Improvements should be a standard part of the planning and design processes.

## Approaches to Capital Projects

Capital Projects can come in many forms, including artwork that is integrated into architectural or landscape design, functional artworks, site-specific sculpture or two-dimensional works. In some circumstances, a "design team" approach, in which an artist is a member of the design team and collaborates on the design of the underlying Capital Improvements, can be considered.

When the Capital Improvement is a building, public art can be inside the building, integrated into the building design, or near the building, but always in a place that is visible and accessible not only to the users of a facility but also to the general public. When the Capital Improvement is infrastructure, public art can be integrated into the infrastructure design or near the infrastructure, but always within site of the project and visible to the general public. When the public art is related to an open space project, the location can be flexible, based on considerations, such as the sensitivity of the open space and public access.

## Planning and Developing Capital Projects

Capital Projects require collaboration and coordination between Creative Sonoma and the departments that are the project lead for the corresponding Capital Improvement. While the process will vary from department to department and project to project, there are several touchpoints that should be kept in mind.

- Long-term plans and specific area plans should consider general and specific opportunities for public art.
- When a department undertakes planning for a specific project (such as a facility plan, program plan or concept plan) the plan should note the potential for including public art, identifying potential goals, opportunities and budgets.
- When a department adds a Capital Improvement to the County's capital plan, the Capital Improvement should be flagged for its potential for including public art, and an estimated public art budget should be incorporated into the project budget. Creative Sonoma and the department should explore both County and external sources of funding for public art in the project.
- When a department begins developing a Capital Improvement that will include public art, staff from Creative Sonoma and the lead department should confer about how the key thresholds in the public art process will align with the expected planning, design, public review, contracting and construction processes for the project. Creative Sonoma should prepare a Specific Project Plan.
- When a Capital Improvement moves into a preliminary or schematic design phase, the nature of the public art approach, how it is integrated into the related project, the budget, artist selection process and technical coordination should be confirmed.
- After the preliminary or schematic design process, Creative Sonoma should lead the artist selection and concept development process in collaboration with the department and other stakeholders.
- During the public art concept design phase, the Creative Sonoma, the department, and the artist should confer on maintenance and conservation issues.
- When appropriate, departments developing Capital Improvements should scope their design consultants to coordinate with Creative Sonoma on public art matters.

## Partnership Projects with County Departments and Affiliated Agencies

Creative Sonoma will collaborate with other County departments and affiliated agencies, when possible, to develop projects that help partners achieve their programmatic goals by working with artists and through public art processes.

Partnership Projects will be co-developed between Creative Sonoma and the partnering department or agency, subject to respective legal and funding restraints. Typical projects would be related to services and programs; campaigns and other special initiatives; and Artwork related to facilities and infrastructure developed by those departments that is otherwise consistent with the goals of this Policy but not included in the County's capital budget. The approach to each project will be tailored to the opportunity at hand.

## Approaches to Partnership Projects

Partnership Projects can come in many forms in addition to traditional permanent artworks. These include temporary installations, events, or exhibitions in a variety of media (including but not limited to physical installations; audio, video and photography documentation; graphic design; textiles; music, dance or performance).

Partnership Projects can be developed through a variety of approaches, including artist residencies, community collaborations, or traditional commissions. Artists can also assist with public engagement processes, particularly in support of the County's goals for equity in public engagement and create artworks that document community input or the engagement processes themselves. Several possible Partnership Projects are included in the "Where We Are Going: Opportunities for Public Art" section of this plan and include a variety of artist services to support the missions of the Department of Health Services, the Human Services Department and the Office of Equity, Sonoma Water, and Ag & Open Space. Included earlier in this plan, many of the Demonstration Projects (2018 to date) are examples of recently completed Partnership-type projects.

## Planning and Developing Partnership Projects

Partnership Projects are initiated when Creative Sonoma and a County department determine that they can advance their missions through a partnership that involves public art.

Creative Sonoma and potential partner departments will discuss the aspects of the project listed below as early as possible in the process. Answers to the threshold questions outlined below will help the Public Art Committee determine whether the project will be added to the Annual Public Art Work Plan.

- **What are the goals of the project and possible approaches to structuring it?** Creative Sonoma can stimulate the conversation by providing background on previous projects and process options.
- **What is the potential budget and what are potential sources of funding?** Creative Sonoma will have limited funds to support Partnership Projects and partnering departments may have insight into programmatic funding streams that would support artist-led projects.
- **What will the roles of Creative Sonoma and the partnering department be?** For example, what aspect of the project management will each entity be responsible for? What working relationship will each entity have with the artist? What capacity do Creative Sonoma and the partnering department have to fulfill those roles?

## Curated Projects

Creative Sonoma will organize Curated Projects through its own leadership to pursue significant opportunities that are not identified as Capital Projects or Partnership Projects, or through other public art initiatives in the county.

Curated Projects will enable Creative Sonoma to address unique community needs and artistic opportunities by playing a catalytic role in initiating projects, bringing together cross-sector partnerships, and connecting with outside resources. Curated Projects will also enable Creative Sonoma to establish ongoing bodies of work focused on the inspirational themes outlined earlier in this plan — multiple projects, in a variety of locations and by artists over time, that can inspire an ongoing creative conversation. Some possible Curated Projects are included in the “Where We Are Going: Opportunities for Public Art” section of this plan and include a variety of artist services and projects. Included earlier in this plan, Creative Reopening (2021) and ArtSurround (2022) are examples of recently completed Curated Projects.

## Approaches to Curated Projects

Creative Sonoma will consider a wide variety of approaches for Curated Projects:

- Traditional permanent artworks, such as two- and three-dimensional artworks in any durable media
- Temporary installations, events, or exhibitions in a variety of media (including but not limited to physical installations; audio, video, and photography; music, dance or performance; graphic design; textiles) and with a variety of durations
- Artist residencies or community collaborations
- One project or multiple projects staged in different locations and/or at different times, as part of an intentional collection of projects
- Projects that involve creative resources not typically engaged through public art, such as processes related to the lifeways and traditions of Sonoma County’s diverse communities

## Planning and Developing Curated Projects

Creative Sonoma can find inspiration for Curated Projects in many ways. Ideas may be seeded by an opportunity for a grant or a partnership, by a major external event, or by the recognition that there are artistic opportunities or community needs that are best met through leadership that Creative Sonoma can offer and the flexibility that Curated Projects can offer.

The process of developing a Curated Project will generally follow the same basic steps that other projects do, as is appropriate to the scope and scale of the project and/or program, though there will potentially be a need for flexibility, compared to a Capital Project or Partnership Project because of the unique nature of these projects.

# How We Do It: A Framework for Implementation

## Project Planning

The process of identifying and defining a public art opportunity is a creative activity in and of itself, combining the collaborative vision of stakeholders with the expertise of professional public art staff. Creative Sonoma staff should lead this process. Following are four key steps and tools for Creative Sonoma to consider incorporating into its ongoing processes of identifying and planning public art projects: **Department and Agency Consultations, Project Intake Reports, the Annual Public Art Workplan, and a Specific Project Plan.**

### Department and Agency Consultations

Creative Sonoma staff should engage in ongoing **consultations** with peers in other County departments and countywide agencies to explore project opportunities. This includes monitoring the pipeline of Capital Improvements that are potential candidates for public art and to identify Partnership Projects that are aligned with other agencies' missions, priorities – particularly initiatives, programs and campaigns that would be fertile ground for collaborating with artists. These consultations can take a variety of forms: formal conversations, such as presentations at the Department and Agency Head Association, an annual “listening tour” of check-in meetings during the preparation of the Annual Public Art Work plan, and/or informal periodic one-on-one meetings with department heads and program managers. Whatever the format, it's important for Creative Sonoma to establish a reliable pipeline of ideas.

### Project Intake

Creative Sonoma should consider, as the first step in the project planning process, initiating a **Project Intake Report**. This report would include preliminary information about project goals, location, timing, budget and funding sources and, for Partnership Projects, the roles that each partner will play.

Project Intake Reports should be developed and tracked by Creative Sonoma staff. They can be used by the Public Art Committee during the process of developing and Annual Public Art Work Plan, and can provide the framework for a Specific Project Plan.

### Annual Public Art Work Plan

Creative Sonoma should consider creating an **Annual Public Art Work Plan** that outlines the public art projects that it will undertake in a given fiscal year. The Work Plan should be submitted to the Public Art Committee (PAC) for its review and approval.

In developing the Annual Public Art Work Plan, Creative Sonoma staff and the Public Art Committee should review the opportunities identified in the Project Intake process against the criteria outlined below. The Work Plan should prioritize the new projects that the program will initiate and provide basic information for each: a rationale for how the project meets the County's public art goals, an indication of what the proposed budgets and funding sources will be, and what staff capacity needs are anticipated.

The Work Plan should take a multi-year view. In addition to outlining plans for the coming year, it should also indicate which projects are being carried over from previous year and will identify what future-year opportunities should be considered, even though future-year projections are subject to change.

In general, all commitments to Public Art projects should be made through the Annual Public Art Work Plan process. Exceptions can be made, as in the case of external funding opportunities that arise in the middle of a year and must be responded to. In this case, the staff can recommend and the PAC can approve an amended Work Plan.

Creative Sonoma should also include a maintenance and conservation component in the Work Plan. This component should identify repair, maintenance and conservation needs for the County's Public Art Collection for the upcoming fiscal year and anticipate needs for future years.



## Specific Project Plan

Creative Sonoma should consider preparing a **Specific Project Plan**, which is a foundational document that guides the planning and execution of a project. Project Plans will be developed for projects with a budget of more than \$50,000, and other projects at the Public Art Manager's discretion. While Creative Sonoma staff has the lead responsibility for drafting and administering the Public Art Project Plan, the Public Art Committee, the Project Task Force (if one has been assigned) and project partners play a collaborative role. The PAC must approve the Project Plan before the project begins, though the plan may be updated as the project evolves to reflect new or changing circumstances.

A Project Plan is intended to be a flexible tool; it can be as brief or as detailed as required by the nature of the project, but the goal is to provide a clear basis for managing the project and for accountability and evaluation.

A Project Plan is also intended to be an evolving tool. Some decisions about a project need to be made early on, while others can be made later (and the Project Plan updated) as the project progresses.

## Program Administration

### Artist Selection Processes

There are a variety of processes that Creative Sonoma should consider using for selecting artists for public art commissions, all of which are grounded in the best practices in the public art field.

These are the basic models and tools of artist selection that are common in the public art field and that Creative Sonoma should consider:

- **Request for Qualifications (RFQ)** – A call to artists that asks for artists to submit their credentials, which is the basis of selecting an artist or developing a pool of finalists who are interviewed or invited to submit proposals.
- **Request for Proposals (RFP)** – A call to artists that asks for artists to submit both their credentials and a conceptual proposal for a project, both of which are the basis for selecting an artist. Sometimes, a proposal-based selection is the second phase of a qualifications-based process.
- **Open Competition** – An artist selection process in which any artist may submit their qualifications or proposal, subject to the requirements established in the underlying solicitation.
- **Limited Competition** – An artist selection process in which artists are pre-identified through a curatorial process and are invited to submit to be considered for a project.
- **Direct Selection** – An artist selection process in which a single artist is identified and selected through a curatorial process.
- **Artist Database** – A process by which Creative Sonoma would maintain a record of all artists who respond to RFQs it issues, including all materials that the artists provide for their submission, such as letters of interest, work samples and references. The advantage for artists is that when applying for a new project they could draw on the material Creative Sonoma already has on hand, thereby simplifying their application process. To increase the effectiveness of this approach, Creative Sonoma could lead a consolidated data base for all jurisdictions in the County.
- **Artist Roster** – A process by which artists can submit their credentials and be pre-evaluated and pre-qualified for future opportunities. Generally, an artist roster is developed through an open call, and can be focused on a specific set of opportunities or could be used broadly for a range of commissions. While a roster requires up-front work, in the long run it can make artist selection processes more streamlined by providing a pre-qualified pool of artists to draw from. Creative Sonoma could create an artist roster on its own or lead a consolidated roster for all jurisdictions in the County.

For any particular project, the artist selection processes should be designed with the following principles in mind:

- Selection processes should be competitive, except in situations where there are extraordinary circumstances, as outlined in the approved Specific Project Plan.

- Artist selections should generally be made based on artist qualifications. If artists are asked to prepare concepts or other proposal deliverables, short lists of qualified Artists should first be developed and Artists should be compensated for the concepts or deliverables they prepare, as shall be set forth and in accordance with the specific solicitation materials.
- Artist selection processes must comply with the procurement requirements of the funding source and/or the project sponsor.
- All conflict-of-interest laws shall apply, including under Government Code section 1090. A conflict-of-interest policy shall be adopted for the PAC and for artist selection processes.
- Artist selection processes should be designed, as much as possible, to maximize accessibility and eliminate barriers that prevent artists from participating and to support artists throughout the selection process.<sup>2</sup>

## Community Engagement Approaches

Community engagement is important to a public art process as a matter of equity and inclusion. It can help ensure that people have the ability to influence decisions that impact the places they experience and value, and to ensure that public art reflects their voices and the way they would like to express their stories.

Community engagement is also important because a permanent public art project will have a public presence for a very long time; it can play a substantial role in creating an image for the community where it is located, as well as an impression of that community in the public's mind.

Creative Sonoma should give careful thought to the community in which it will be located and set clear goals for the role they would like community stakeholders to play in the development of the project. Creative Sonoma should also consider projects in which community engagement is a fundamental goal, such as those that might be developed as partnership projects or curated initiatives that focus on health, human services and civic engagement issues.

With those goals in mind, staff and the task force can then determine the best approach to involving the community at various phases of the project, such as planning, designing, creating, and celebrating the artwork. When appropriate, artists should be involved in determining the goals for and approaches to engaging the community.

## Existing County Artworks

Sonoma County currently has a small inventory of exterior and interior artworks. Most are in and around buildings at the County Government Center, others were recently commissioned as pilot projects in infrastructure projects around the County, primarily with Public Infrastructure.

These artworks should be formally accepted into the County's Public Art Collection so that they can be managed through ongoing collection management, conservation and relocation/deaccessioning policies.

## Donations, Commemorative Works, Memorials and Loans

From time to time there will be individuals or groups that would like to donate public art to Sonoma County, either to help beautify the county or to bring attention to people, events and causes that they think deserve recognition.

Also, from time to time, Creative Sonoma, or other County department might seek to borrow or loan an artwork for display in a location managed by the County. This means that the artwork will not be owned by the County and will be returned to owner when it is removed from display.

To manage these opportunities so that the public interest is considered, the County should create standard review processes for accepting or declining donated works of public art, commemorative artworks, memorial projects and loans. The following processes and protocols provide a framework for managing this decision-making:

- Definitions for what constitutes a Donation, a Commemorative Artwork, a Memorial and a Loan.
- Guidelines for evaluating proposals based on technical criteria, aesthetic quality and general relevance to the location and the community at large.

---

<sup>2</sup> Barriers can include access to information about the opportunity, the language in which opportunities are communicated, and rigid submission formats. Support measures can include information and coaching sessions, and acceptance of statements in alternative formats, such as audio or video.



- Acceptable terms and conditions for donations and loans of public art.
- Standard procedures regarding short and long-term maintenance and risk and liability assessment.

## **Relocation, Deaccessioning (Removal) of Artworks**

The County should retain the right to relocate artwork in its collection or remove it altogether. However, the relocation or removal of an artwork before the end of its anticipated lifespan should be a rare and unusual measure.

To manage proposals for relocating or removing artworks, so that the public interest is considered, Creative Sonoma should create standard review processes for managing such proposals, including:

- Definitions for what constitutes the Relocation or Deaccessioning of an artwork.
- Guidelines for evaluating proposals based on consideration of technical factors, site appropriateness and public opinion.
- Assuring any legal and contractual compliance.

## **Maintenance and Conservation of Artworks**

As Sonoma County begins to build its public art collection, it should keep in mind future maintenance and conservation needs. The following practices and protocols should be considered to ensure that maintenance and conservation can be planned for effectively. In addition, the County should create a baseline inventory and conservation assessment of the public art currently existing at County facilities and/or commissioned by Creative Sonoma.

- Identify conservators and fabricators active in the region and contract with a public art conservation and maintenance firm for annual services.
- Consider issuing on-call services contracts to consultants with specific expertise as needed.
- Prior to fabrication and installation, identify the conservation needs of each permanent artwork. Include, when appropriate, consultation with a conservator during the design development phase of the project to identify the anticipated conservation needs of the artwork or, submit design documents for review by a conservator prior to executing or authorizing the fabrication and installation portion of a contract.
- Require artists to provide a maintenance guide for artworks they create. A maintenance guide typically includes protocols for routine cleaning of the artwork (including recommended frequency, cleaning agents and methods) as well as an inventory of specifications for and sources of materials used in fabricating the artwork.
- Require artists to guarantee the artwork against any failures of workmanship for one year and to assign manufacturers' or fabricators' warranties to the owner of the artwork.
- Clean artworks and perform routine maintenance regularly, according to the protocols in the maintenance guide.
- Report any damage or conservation needs to Creative Sonoma; facility managers will not perform any non-routine maintenance unless requested.
- Ensure that there is a periodic conservation assessment of the works in the County's collection, including budget estimates and prioritization for conservation work. Incorporate these recommendations into the proposed Annual Public Art Work Plan and budget.
- Undertake all maintenance and conservation in a manner appropriate to the medium and characteristics of the artwork, following the protocols established by the artist and conservators.

## **Funding**

Sonoma County can consider a variety of possible sources of funding for public art.

These can include general annual appropriations that can be used flexibly for public art consistent with the planning processes outlined in this plan, direct allocations for public art in specific Capital Improvements, in-lieu fees from private developments with a public art requirement, programmatic funding from County agencies, and grants for Capital Improvements or programs.

A mix of funds would be beneficial to the program. Flexible funding sources allow Creative Sonoma to respond to opportunities and leverage additional resources through partnerships and grants, while project-specific funds allow public art resources to be focused where the opportunities are most significant.

## **Annual Appropriations**

Make a regular, annual appropriation to fund public art. This allocation could come from a variety of sources and be calculated in a variety of ways. For example, funding could be based on a percentage of the amount of general funds that are transferred to the capital budget each year or come from other discretionary funding sources.

Annual appropriations will provide for predictability and reliability in the funding stream, which will make it easier for Creative Sonoma to seek external funding and to plan and make commitments to projects that may last more than one year. Annual appropriations can also provide Creative Sonoma with the most flexibility about what projects to take on.

## **Project-Specific Allocations**

The County could go about this in two ways. One would be to make one-time allocations to fund specific public art projects. This is how the Fire Memorial project was funded.

Another would be to identify, early on, Capital Improvements that are good candidates for public art and work with sponsoring departments to build funding for public art into the project budgets.

One-time, project-specific allocations will allow the County to directly fund public art opportunities of the highest significance. However, this would not provide for stability, predictability or flexibility for the program.

## **Programmatic Grants**

Work with County departments and other countywide agencies to identify sources of external funding. These sources may include grants for public art projects directly as well as grants for public programs that allow funds to be used for community engagement and public art strategies. Fields such as transportation planning, water conservation, human and social services, restorative justice and climate change are increasingly encouraging collaborations between core agencies and arts programs.

## **In-Lieu Fees from Developers**

Establish a “public art in private development” approach, through whatever legal mechanism is appropriate, that would require development of certain types and/or in certain areas to either include public art on site or, as an alternative, to contribute “in-lieu” funds to the County. To implement a “public art in private development,” Creative Sonoma would work with Permit Sonoma to develop protocols for managing the process.

In-lieu developer fees would provide for funds that are flexible, but not necessarily predictable or steady, as the pace of construction permitting is highly dependent on the overall economy and, more particularly, real estate finance.

## **Public Art Grants**

Continue to seek funding for specific projects through arts and culture funding sources, such as federal, state, regional and private grant making agencies.

## **Uses of Funds**

Funds allocated for public art should be placed in a “public art fund,” an account specifically dedicated to public art. This fund should be structured so that it can carry over from year to year.

Funds allocated for public art from any of the above sources can be used for public art project or program expenses, including as may be specified in any particular allocation. Specific allowable uses, and disallowed uses, should be outlined in the Public Art Policy.

## Governance: Roles and Responsibilities

This section sets out the roles and responsibilities of elected officials, County staff and appointed committees in making decisions about public art and managing projects.

### Board of Supervisors

*The Board of Supervisors is the legislative body of Sonoma County. Its five members are elected by district.*

- Adopt the Public Art Plan
- Appoint members of the Public Art Committee
- Designate representatives to participate in Project Task Forces

*As a courtesy, Supervisors will be notified of decisions about artist selections and artist concepts for projects in their districts before the decisions are finalized.*

### Economic Development Board Executive Director

*The Economic Development Board (EDB) Director oversees the activities of Creative Sonoma, which is a program of the EDB. The EDB Director's responsibilities can be delegated to the Director of Creative Sonoma as allowed by County policy.*

- Approve all art-related contracts, including funding agreements, consultant services, and artist engagements
- Report as requested to Board of Supervisors and/or other advisory bodies

### Creative Sonoma Director

*The Creative Sonoma Director leads Creative Sonoma, supervising professional staff and developing and implementing programs that enhance the County's creative economy. The Director would supervise the implementation of the public art program.*

- Supervise Creative Sonoma Public Art Manager
- Recommend Annual Public Work Plan
- Review Specific Project Plans
- Approve program and project budgets
- Approve RFQs and RFPs
- Manage day-to-day contacts with directors of other County departments, agencies and programs

### Creative Sonoma Public Art Manager

*Creative Sonoma's public art program should be led by a Public Art Manager who works under the supervision of the Creative Sonoma Director. This position does not currently exist within Creative Sonoma, and staffing considerations should be included with the adoption of the Public Art Policy.*

- Manage day-to-day operations of public art program
- Prepare Annual Public Art Work Plan
- Prepare Specific Project Plans (in collaboration with Project Task Force, if one has been appointed)
- Manage Public Art Committee agendas
- Manage implementation of public art projects
- Manage processes for accepting and reviewing proposals through Project Intake Reports
- Oversee the conservation and maintenance of the County's Public Art Collection
- Facilitate project evaluation and the periodic program evaluation
- Organize public communication and outreach for the program

## Public Art Committee (PAC)

*The Public Art Committee should be appointed by the Board of Supervisors. It would consist of seven members, one representing each Supervisorial district, and two at-large representatives. Members will be artists, or arts or design professionals.*

- Approve the Annual Public Art Work Plan
- Approve Specific Project Plans
- Appoint Project Task Forces
- Approve recommendations from Project Task Forces

## Project Task Force

*A Project Task Force would be appointed by the Public Art Committee for projects with budgets of more than \$50,000, or for other projects at the discretion of the Public Art Committee, following a recommendation of the Creative Sonoma staff.*

*A Project Task Force should have at least five members. The membership should include the Supervisor (or representative of Supervisor) of the district in which the project is located as well as artists, arts professionals, and representatives of project stakeholders, including any County departments that are involved. Task Forces should include membership from the community in which the project is located.*

- Collaborate with Creative Sonoma staff to develop Specific Project Plans
- Review and comment on draft RFQs and RFPs
- Review artist materials and recommend selection to Public Art Committee
- Review artist concepts, and design proposals and recommend selection to Public Art Committee

## Where We Are Going: Opportunities for Public Art

Following are potential Capital Projects, Partnership Projects, and Curated Projects that Creative Sonoma could undertake with key County departments and affiliated agencies. These are all specific opportunities that are aligned with Sonoma County's public art mission to "inspire, catalyze and facilitate public art projects in collaboration with County government and community partners" as well as the various goals and criteria outlined elsewhere in this plan. They are also illustrative of the types of projects that could be considered in the future, as opportunities and priorities change, and as other resources become available.

### Health Services / Human Services / Office of Equity

The **Department of Health Services**, the **Human Services Department** and the **Office of Equity** intersect in their work related to ensuring the health, safety, and well-being of the county's most vulnerable residents, as well as to addressing equity issues. Their mission areas include behavioral health, public health, services for the aging, economic assistance, family services, employment and training services, racial equity, and language access. They have been central to the County's efforts to address the intersecting traumas of the Covid pandemic and wildfires, as well as its efforts to address equity issues.

The work of each of these departments intersects with *A Portrait of Sonoma*, a study that shifted the community's understanding of what determines well-being in Sonoma County and how conditions vary between neighborhoods. *A Portrait of Sonoma* was commissioned in 2014 by Health Services and updated in 2021 through a partnership of Health Services, Human Services, Office of Equity, and the Community Foundation of Sonoma County. After the 2021 update, County agencies and community leaders began to work on an Agenda for Action to address the inequities that the study documented.

#### Public Engagement: "No Wrong Door"

"No Wrong Door" is a service framework that means when a member of the community asks for help with housing, health or human services, they can access the array of services they need regardless of where they enter the system. The goal is to create easier access to services and reduce people's fear and confusion about asking for help because they don't know where to turn.

Consider engaging artists to create portals for county residents to access housing, health, or human services. Processes can include placemaking at service delivery locations and pop-up resource events.

#### Public Engagement: Raising the Visibility and Voice of Communities

Both *A Portrait of Sonoma* and the traumatic events of the last few years have dramatically brought to light the cultural, economic, social, and generational disparities that are not always evident to people in the course of their everyday lives. Consider artist projects that bring more public awareness of these disparities by raising up the voices and stories of community members who have previously been much less visible, if seen at all.

#### Public Engagement: Datawalk and Freedom Dreaming

"Datawalk" and "Freedom Dreaming" are follow-up projects to *A Portrait of Sonoma*. "Datawalk" works with community leaders to "ground-truth" *Portrait of Sonoma*'s findings by asking whether the *Portrait* reflects what they know about their community and what it might have missed. "Freedom Dreaming" asks residents to imagine the positive changes they envision for their community. Consider asking artists to play a role in facilitating these processes and helping people to communicate their ideas through creative approaches.

### Sonoma County Public Infrastructure (PI)

Public Infrastructure builds and manages much of the County's infrastructure, such as general facilities, roads and the airport; it also manages Sonoma County Transit, five small water systems and the County's landfill and refuse transfer stations. PI's Facilities Development and Management Division, which is responsible for facilities planning, construction, maintenance, and real estate services, will be a key partner in developing public art in County Capital Improvements.

## **Specific Near-Term Opportunities**

### **Capital Improvements: County Government Center**

The County is currently considering options for upgrading the current Government Center campus in Santa Rosa based on the recommendations of a facilities study from 2013. This could be one of the most important opportunities for public art in Sonoma County over the next decade, in terms of scale, impact and symbolism.

Consider integrating public art into near-term Capital Improvements, such as all new buildings proposed for the new County Government Center. When the County determines its strategy for the facilities planning, design and construction for this project, consider developing a specific public art overlay strategy.

### **Capital Improvements: Bridges**

PI has approximately fifteen bridges in its construction pipeline. The bridges are in a variety of locations, from urban to rural, and vary in their construction type and in the integration of features such as lighting and pedestrian walkways.

Consider developing a variety of public art scenarios that could be applied depending on the circumstances of the bridge (such as its location, construction method, design, and level of use) and evaluate each bridge as to the potential for public art early in the design and budgeting phase.

## **Sonoma County Regional Parks**

Regional Parks manages more than fifty parks and preserves throughout the county. Its resources include ocean, mountain, river, and rural landscapes, as well as community-oriented parks in unincorporated areas. These resources offer wild landscapes, trails, interpretive resources, marinas, swimming areas, campgrounds, sports fields, playgrounds, and other facilities. Regional Parks Capital Improvements, planning, programming, and interpretive projects all provide opportunities for public art.

### **Capital Improvements**

Consider developing a variety of public art scenarios that could be applied to Regional Parks capital improvements depending on the type and location of the parks resource, including the cultural and environmental sensitivity of the landscape. Evaluate the potential for public art early in the design and budgeting phase of parks projects. In some cases, a public art component could help a grant proposal be more attractive to funders.

## **Sonoma Water**

Sonoma Water provides four core services: drinking water, flood protection services, wastewater treatment and distribution of recycled water, particularly for the urbanized areas of Sonoma and northern Marin Counties. It also generates electricity from hydropower, to help achieve its carbon-neutral operations goals, and it undertakes habitat and wetlands restoration projects as part of its stormwater management and flood protection activities. Some of its land holdings are also used for public access and recreation, in collaboration with Sonoma Regional Parks.

### **Stream Restoration Projects**

Consider developing interpretive projects related to major stream restoration projects, such as the Dry Creek Habitat Enhancement Project.

### **Public Information Campaigns: Drought, Resiliency, Water Quality**

Consider collaborations on public education around core Sonoma Water policy areas: drought, flooding/climate resiliency and quality of drinking water. These issues could be explored through permanent artworks, projects that focus on direct public engagement, or campaign-style approaches.

### **Curated Strategy: Water as a Platform for Public Art**

Water is a resource that both connects and differentiates Sonoma County's various communities. It has deep cultural resonance as well as immense practical utility. Consider a long-term artistic strategy, through curated projects or residencies, for encouraging artists to explore connections between water, land, and the life of the community.



## Permit Sonoma

### Public Art in Area Plans

Permit Sonoma occasionally develops “specific area plans” that focus on private development and public infrastructure in certain areas of the County. When undertaking these plans, Permit Sonoma and its consulting teams could consult with Creative Sonoma about opportunities for public art in those areas and means of implementing public art projects through future public and private investment.

### Public Art in Private Development

The funding section of this plan includes the option of initiating a “public art in private development” requirement, through which certain developments would include public art or provide an in-lieu fee to the County. These requirements are common in urban communities throughout California, including Santa Rosa, Petaluma and Sebastopol. In California, Los Angeles is the only county currently with such a requirement. If there is interest in pursuing this option, further analysis, consultation and development will be required.

Creative Sonoma could also provide resources to developers who are seeking to involve artists in their projects, such as toolkits about how to manage such projects and references to resources.

### Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District

The Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District (Ag + Open Space) protects natural land that is important for ecological, scenic, or agricultural reasons. Ag + Open Space maintains an extensive network of partnerships for the purpose of providing awareness of and public access to the County’s open space resources and supporting research on land management best practices from an ecological, agricultural and fire protection point of view.

### Grant Programs: Improving and Engaging Open Space Resources

Ag + Open Space manages a variety of grant programs for communities to create or improve public access to open space resources and for programming that engages people in the lands it has purchased.

Consider how artists/creatives can be eligible for grant projects and consider providing matching funds to grants related to public art.

### Curated Strategy: Land as a Platform for Public Art

Consider a long-term artistic strategy, through curated projects or residencies, for encouraging artists to explore the many meanings of the land – cultural, economic, personal – and how it is managed.

### Data Residency: Sonoma Veg Map

Ag + Open Space is a partner with Sonoma Water in the Sonoma Veg Map project,<sup>3</sup> a five-year effort to map the County’s topography, physical and biotic features, and diverse plant communities and habitats. Consider an artist residency to explore how these data sets could be used to generate artworks in visual, digital, sound, or other media.

### Cultural Residency: Local Tribal Outreach

Ag + Open Space is working to expand its relationships with local tribes, to learn how their knowledge of the land can be incorporated into the land management practices that the agency’s partners follow. Consider a residency of a local tribal artist that could help improve public understanding of native land practices. Consider collaboration with Sonoma Regional Parks, which is partnering with Graton Rancheria on management of the Tolay Lake Regional Park.

### County Clerk-Recorder-Assessor-Registrar of Voters

---

<sup>3</sup> Sonoma County Vegetation Mapping and LiDAR Program

The County Clerk-Recorder-Assessor-Registrar of Voters provides many vital services to the public. The Assessor's Office is responsible for providing accurate and timely property assessments and for determining eligibility for various property tax exemptions and exclusions. The County Clerk's Office issues marriage licenses, filing fictitious business name statements, processing notary bonds, handles environmental documents, and performs civil marriage ceremonies. The Recorder's Office maintains various land and finance documents for Sonoma County. The Registrar of Voter's Office registers Sonoma County voters and maintains the County's voter registration file, conducts federal, state and local elections held in the county, files candidates' campaign statements, and performs various other duties related to elections.

Consider how artists/creatives can provide services and or implement projects to increase awareness of what the department offers. For example, the outdoor and indoor locations for civil marriage ceremonies could include public art that enriches the environments and provides an opportunity to showcase artists.

## **Sonoma County Library**

The Sonoma County Library consists of a central library, ten branches, two rural stations and one temporary site (Roseland). It also maintains three special collections (the Sonoma County Wine Library, the History and Genealogy Annex, and the Petaluma History Room) as well as a collection of oral histories of people's experiences during the 2017 and 2019 wildfires.

In 2021, the library completed a "reimagining" process to assess how it could meet the community's needs more holistically. One of its goals is to "embody a culture of creativity, for quality of life," which includes the specific actions of "emphasize programs that provide opportunities to interact, engage and contribute," and "support public art at library buildings."

### **Public Art: Roseland Branch Library**

Consider co-commissioning a permanent public artwork or helping the library identify an artist who could create an artwork for the new library.

### **Library Residency: Patron Engagement**

Consider creating a residency in which an artist works alongside library staff to collaborate with library patrons on programming to reimagine how the library can be a community and cultural resource. The residency could be based in one library or organized to rotate throughout the entire system.

### **Library Residency: Exhibitions**

Consider creating an artist or curatorial residency to support exhibitions and temporary artworks on display by serving in a curatorial role. This could be an annual or a multi-year residency, to allow the artist time to develop intentional exhibitions or commission original work.

### **Branding Campaign: Library**

Consider commissioning artists to design patron tools such as library cards and bookmarks that support library branding. This could be an ongoing set of commissions that would become a collection in and of itself.

## **Sonoma County Regional Transportation Authority (SCTA) Regional Climate Protection Authority (RCPA)**

Sonoma County's Regional Transportation Authority and its Regional Climate Protection Authority are interrelated agencies. SCTA coordinates transportation planning, state and federal transportation funding, and some Capital Improvements for the County and its nine municipalities. RCPA provides leadership for climate protection efforts among the cities and multiple public agencies.

As SCTA and RCPA focus on research and planning, coordinating policy and funding, and urging shifts in public behavior, the best opportunities for public art involve artist-led public engagement and information campaigns, as well as technical assistance for incorporating public art into transportation projects.



### **Public Engagement: Moving Forward 2050 Comprehensive Transportation Plan**

SCTA is preparing to update Sonoma County's comprehensive transportation plan, which guides the allocation of state and federal funding to local transportation projects. The planning process is an opportunity for broader conversations about the County's mobility vision and how it interfaces with sustainability and equity.

Consider asking artists to develop projects that help SCTA connect with residents, by documenting community ideas and recommendations and demonstrating alternative strategies for mobility.

### **Grants: Public Art in Transportation Projects**

SCTA's funding supports improvements at all levels of the transportation network. SCTA is currently in the late stages of accepting and evaluating proposals for projects that will be incorporated into SCTA's five-year "transportation improvement plan."

Consider collaborating on a workshop for project sponsors to help them develop opportunities for public art during the next stages of planning, design, and funding.

### **Residency: Dynamic Climate Action Data Tracking**

Much of RCPA's work involves monitoring and evaluating data related to climate action progress.

Consider a residency for an artist who works with information technology to work with data streams that drive a dynamic art project. Such an art project, with either an online presence or in physical space, could serve as a constantly evolving reminder of the County's progress towards carbon-reduction goals, as well as the work yet to be done.

### **Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART)**

SMART is a passenger rail line that runs along a 45-mile route, currently from Larkspur to Santa Rosa, eventually extending further north to Cloverdale. Its customer base is more or less evenly split between commuters and leisure travelers.

#### **Public Art: Wayfinding Pylons**

Consider collaborating with SMART on wayfinding projects that create a unique sense of arrival for each station. For example, commission a series of public art pylons, one at each station. Each pylon could have its own identity, signifying the community where it is located, but also could exist within a common vocabulary that conveys the idea of a coordinated system. Creative Sonoma's role could be to collaborate with SMART on planning for the pylons across the system and to work with communities that do not have their own public art programs on specific funding and commissioning strategies.

#### **Marketing Campaign: Poster Series**

Consider commissioning a marketing campaign, such as an ongoing poster series, that helps promote SMART services and regional tourism. Posters could appear in the SMART environment (platforms, rail cars) as well as the areas around the stations. Consider collaboration with Tourism Sonoma.

# Appendix

## Definitions

The following terms are commonly used in this plan and have the following meanings, which are presented here for informational purposes. The definitions that will be provided in the County Public Art Policy constitute the official definitions of these terms and supersede these definitions for legal purposes.

### Annual Public Art Work Plan

A plan developed by Creative Sonoma and approved by the Public Art Committee that outlines the public art projects that Creative Sonoma will undertake in a given fiscal year.

### Artist

An individual, or a team of people, who meets one or more of the following criteria:

- Realizes income through the sale, performance, publication, or commission of original works of art;
- Has previously exhibited, presented, performed, or published original works of art in museums, galleries or other recognized art venues and publications;
- Has formal training or education in a field of art; or
- Has received awards or other forms of recognition from arts juries, arts grant panels and similar entities for his/her/their artistic abilities or accomplishments.

An environmental design professional, such as an architect or landscape architect, can be considered an Artist if they otherwise meet the criteria in this definition.

### Artwork

An original work that is created by or under the direction of an Artist or Artists as an expression of an important idea or feeling, produced in any form or media, (including functional artworks, integrated artworks or the design of a facility itself, including architectural elements if designed by an Artist), of permanent or temporary duration and existing in a single copy or limited edition.

### Artist Residency

An arrangement through which an Artist works for a fixed time within a specific agency, program, or community and through which the Artist develops a research and engagement process that leads to a project that is driven by both the artist's practice and the agency's mission.

### Capital Improvement

Buildings, facilities, infrastructure, parks and other community public spaces that are built by the County of Sonoma.

### Capital Project

A public art project that is developed in conjunction with a Capital Improvement

### Commemorative Artwork

An Artwork whose purpose is to commemorate an individual, organization, event, or topic.

### Conservation

The preservation of Artworks through ongoing examination, documentation, treatment and prevention.

### Curated Project

A Public Art project or initiative (a series of projects) that is organized through the leadership of Creative Sonoma.

### Deaccession

The permanent removal of an artwork from the County's Public Art Collection.

### Donation

An Artwork that is given to the County as a gift and accepted through the County's formal donations procedure.

### Loan

The acceptance of public art that is not owned by the County for temporary display on County property.

### Maintenance

Work performed to keep public artworks functioning and presentable in the best possible condition as a public asset.

### Memorial

A design element other than a Commemorative Artwork whose purpose is to commemorate an individual, organization, event, or topic. Examples of Memorials include, but are not limited to, plaques, monuments, plazas, gardens, fountains, or other civic features.

### Partnership Project

A Public Art project that is developed through a collaboration between Creative Sonoma and a county department, affiliated agency, or countywide affiliate.

### Project Intake Form

A checklist that the Public Art Manager uses to collect information about potential opportunities and presents them to the Public Art Committee.

### Public Art

An original Artwork in any media, existing in a single copy or in a limited edition, produced by an Artist or by a team of Artists, and conceived and executed with the intention of being staged in the physical public domain, usually outside and accessible to all.

### Public Art Collection

All public art artworks that have been commissioned, purchased, accepted for donation or otherwise formally added to the inventory of public art owned by Sonoma County, through processes outlined in the County's Public Art Plan and Public Art Policy.

### Public Art Committee

A body that is appointed by the Board of Supervisors to provide oversight over public art decision-making.

### Public Art Fund

A dedicated account into which funds received for expenditures related to the Public Art Program are held.

### Public Art Plan

A strategic document, approved by the Board of Supervisors, that establishes the vision, goals and directions for a Public Art Program, and broadly outlines funding, governance and operational considerations.

### Public Art Policy

A formal document, approved by the Board of Supervisors, provides specific guidelines and rules that operationalize the objectives outlined in the Public Art Plan.

### Public Art Program

Activities organized by Creative Sonoma on behalf of Sonoma County related to the addition, display, interpretation, and caretaking of public art, through processes outlined in the County's Public Art Plan and Public Art Policy.

### Relocation of an Artwork

The re-siting of an artwork in the Public Art Collection to a location other than that which it was originally intended for.

### Removal of an Artwork

The withdrawal of an artwork in the Public Art Collection from public view entirely.

#### Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

A call to artists that asks for the submission of an artist's credentials, which is the basis of selecting an artist.

#### Request for Proposals (RFP)

A call to artists that asks for the submission of both an artist's credentials and a conceptual proposal for an artwork, both of which become the basis for selecting an artist.

#### Roster

A pre-qualified pool of artists from which artists can be selected to participate in a Limited Competition/Invitational process or be selected directly.

#### Specific Project Plan

A plan, developed by Creative Sonoma and approved by the Public Art Committee, that details the planning and execution of a specific Public Art project.

#### Temporary Artwork

A work of Public Art that is commissioned for display in a public setting for a limited period of time, usually less than one year.

#### Temporary Exhibition

A collection of Artworks that are organized and presented for display in a public setting for a limited period of time.

This plan was prepared by consultant Todd W. Bressi (Artful Places) in association with Meridith McKinley (Via Partnership, LLP) and Susan Gray (Susan F. Gray & Co.), with assistance from Emma Rose Sonner and Creative Sonoma staff.

The Sonoma County Public Art Plan is funded in part by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the California Arts Council.

Creative Sonoma is a division of the Sonoma County Economic Development Board.