

PUBLIC ART PROJECT PLAN

PROJECT PLAN FOR TORPEDO FACTORY ART CENTER LOADING DOOR MURAL

November 9, 2023

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I. Introduction

The City of Alexandria's Public Art Implementation Plan outlined a vision and goals for the public art program and established three Creative Directions: Time and Place, Neighborhoods & Gathering Spaces, and Natural and Urban Systems.

The Public Art Implementation Plan sets out a process for the commissioning of new public art. For each project approved in Public Art Annual Work Plan, the Commission for the Arts appoints a Public Art Project Task Force to advise on the entire project development process. The staff and the Project Task Force develop a Project Plan that sets out the project goals, artist selection process, budget, timeline, and communications strategy. The Project Task Force then selects an artist, through a process set out in the Project Plan. The artist develops a concept, which is then approved by the Project Task Force and the Commission for the Arts.

This document is the Project Plan for the Torpedo Factory Art Center Loading Door Mural.

II. Site and Context

About the City of Alexandria

Alexandria, Virginia is a small historic seaport city of about 158,000 residents located on the Potomac River, minutes from Washington, D.C. It is best known for its historic Old Town but is also home to federal agencies such as the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office, the Defense Department and the headquarters of the National Science Foundation.

About the Torpedo Factory Art Center

Founded in 1974 in an old munitions plant, the Torpedo Factory Art Center is home to the nation's largest collection of working-artists' open studios under one roof. The mission of the Torpedo Factory Art Center is to foster connections among artists and the public that ignite the creative spirit. Within the Torpedo Factory Art Center, artists create works in a wide variety of media including painting, ceramics, photography, jewelry, stained glass, fiber, printmaking, and sculpture in 71 artists' studios. As an Alexandria landmark for nearly 50 years, it's a highlight of the City's waterfront, attracting approximately 500,000 visitors annually.

For more information about the history of the Torpedo Factory Art Center, please visit:

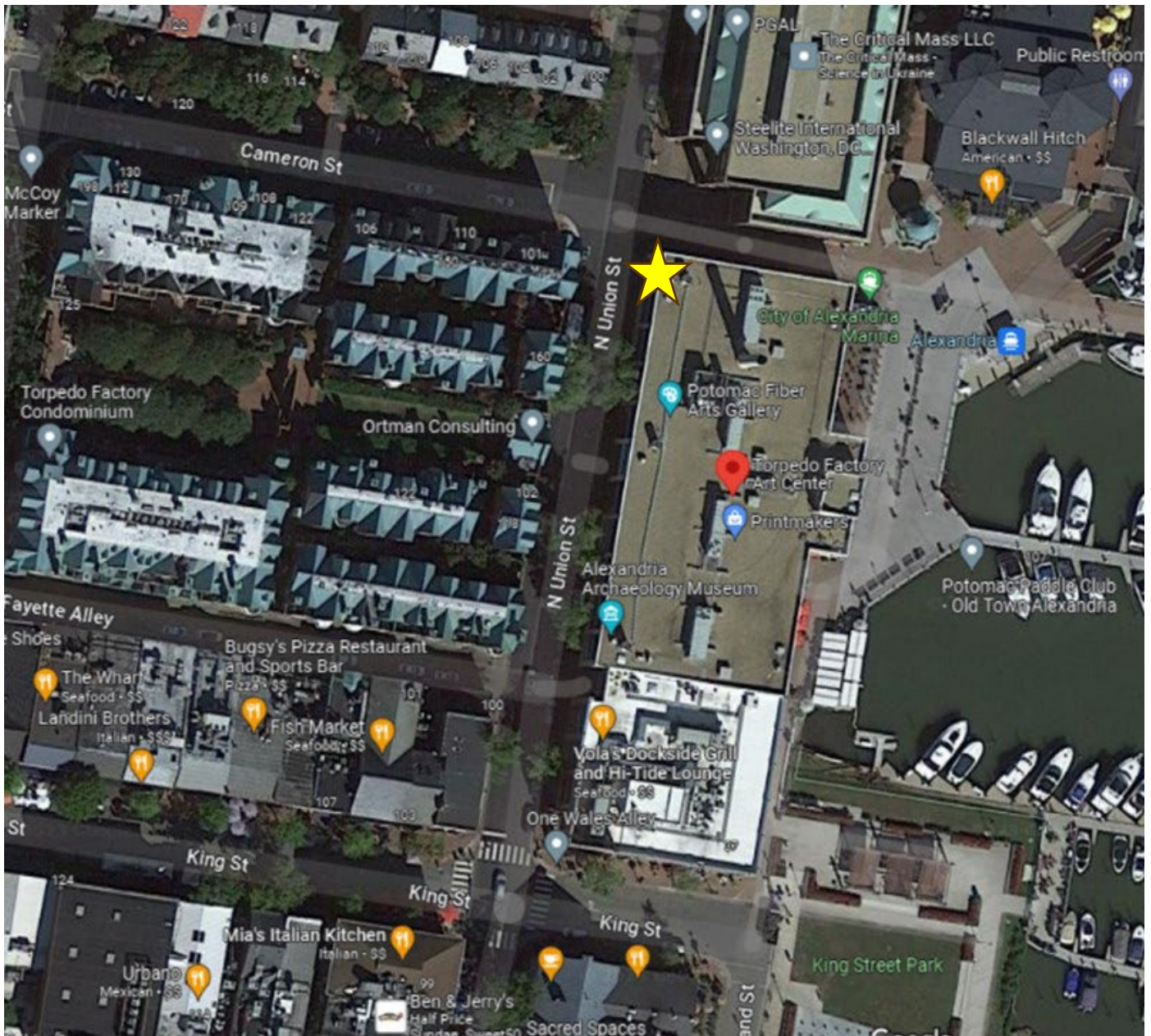
<https://torpedofactory.org/about-us/history/>.

History of the Loading Door Mural

In 2015, a mural was commissioned to be placed on the loading door of the Torpedo Factory Art Center along its busy Union Street frontage. Artist Erin Curtis created *Beaded Curtain* for the site and the mural quickly became a colorful and welcome landmark for locals and visitors. Unfortunately, the loading door was irreparably damaged in a collision and needed to be replaced. The mural was deinstalled in August 2021.

After the mural was deinstalled, the City committed to commission a new mural at this location to bring back artistic vibrancy to the Union Street frontage of the Torpedo Factory Art Center building.

III. Maps, Photos, and Exhibits



Location: Torpedo Factory Art Center, 105 N. Union Street, Alexandria, VA 22314
Mural location is proximate to the yellow star.
Image, Google Maps.

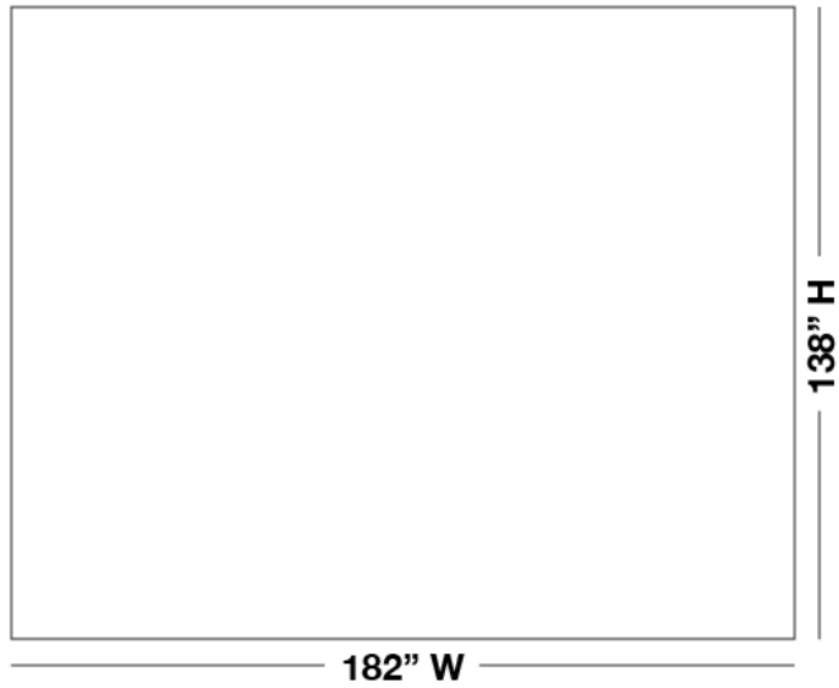


Image Google Maps, Street View. Loading door location is to the right.



Image: Loading door close up

Dimensions of loading dock door:



11.5 feet in height by 15.16 feet in width.
Dimensions are approximate and will be confirmed by the selected artist.

IV. Goals

The Alexandria Public Art Program is interested in commissioning an artist to design and execute a mural on the exterior door of the Torpedo Factory Art Center loading dock. The program goals of the projects are to:

- Inspire, engage, and delight the community and visitors to Old Town Alexandria.
- Spark curiosity and draw interest to the space that further welcomes the public to experience the artists' studios, galleries, and museum space (Alexandria Archaeology Museum) inside the Art Center.
- Improve the pedestrian experience by bringing light, color, and public interaction (photos!) to a shadier side of the building.
- Bring a vibrant and contemporary presence to the Union Street frontage of the building that is reflective of a modern Art Center.

In preparing the project goals, the Task Force acknowledges that a mural in this location on an operable door is temporary in nature and recommends that the condition of any future mural be periodically assessed and monitored for repairs, and even complete replacement, as warranted based on future conditions.

V. Project Scope

- The mural is only permitted on the loading door (which is a roll-up style door), and not on the building.
- The mural will be painted on the door by the selected artist.
- The design of the mural should also be appropriate for and inspire all audiences.
- The artist will be required to apply an anti-graffiti coating to the mural.
- The selected artist will be required to meet with the community prior to beginning mural installation, and the conversations may inform the final design.

VI. Selection Process

The Office of the Arts will issue an open call for an artist or artist team to design and execute a mural on the exterior of the Torpedo Factory Art Center loading door. Finalists will be selected and invited to prepare a conceptual design for a stipend. The selected artist and concept will be recommended by the Task Force and approved by the Alexandria Commission for the Arts.

Task Force

The Task Force helps shape the Project Plan, recommends selection of the artist(s), and recommends conceptual approval of the public art.

The two Commission for the Arts representatives on the Task Force are:

- Marcee Craighill
- Paul Painter

The Community Stakeholders for the Task Force include:

- Taylor Chauncey
- Jacqui Michel

Project Stakeholders for the Task Force include:

- Saya Behnam
- Lisa Schumaier
- Matt Wise

Artist Selection Process and Concept Approval

An open call process will be used to select artists for the project. This call will be open to all artists/muralists in the Tri-State area (Virginia, Maryland, and Washington D.C.). In accordance with the Public Art Implementation Plan and Policy, the Office of the Arts will draft a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) based on the information provided in the Project Plan. This call will be issued via an online application system (Café – callforentry.org). Interested artists/artist teams will be welcome to submit a letter indicating their project approach, qualifications, and work samples. Experienced and emerging muralists are encouraged to apply.

The Task Force will review the application materials and qualifications and recommend finalists for the project. Selected finalists will be provided with a stipend to develop a conceptual design for review and consideration by the Task Force. The Task Force’s recommendation for an artist and mural concept will be forwarded to the Commission for the Arts for approval.

VII. Timeline

November 2023	Task Force reviews and approves Project Plan
Nov/Dec	Project Plan submitted to Commission for the Arts for approval
December	Staff develops call to artists for review by Task Force
Dec/January 2024	Issue Call for Artists via Café (callforentry.org)
February	Review applications and select finalists
February/March	Finalists develop concepts
March	Task Force Recommends Artist(s)
March	Arts Commission Approval of Artist(s)
April	Artist contract
April	Community Engagement
May/June	Mural Installation (based on artist’s earliest availability)

*Dates are subject to change without notice.

VIII. Budget

The project plan recommends the following budget for the mural project:

Conceptual design stipend fund (to be divided among up to four finalists)	\$2,000
Final design, materials, and installation	\$10,000
Total	\$12,000

IX. Community Engagement, Marketing and Communications

Community engagement, marketing and communications should be geared toward engaging with existing stakeholders as well as bringing new audiences to experience the artwork.

Stakeholders

Community engagement, marketing, and communications should build upon the existing stakeholder base for art and tourism in Alexandria. These will include, but are not limited to, representatives from:

- Alexandria Archaeological Commission (AAC)
- Alexandria Waterfront Commission
- Old Town Business
- Old Town Civic
- Torpedo Factory Art Center artists and tenants

Marketing and Communications

The Office of the Arts staff will develop a marketing and communications strategy for the public art. Information/materials should be provided in languages relevant to the nearby communities. The marketing plan will include:

- Web-based information about the project.
- Social media.
- Print materials to be distributed at local events.
- Media releases to local and national publications and blogs.

Additionally, the Office of the Arts will explore placing a graphic on the loading door to help communicate that public art is coming soon to this location, and help increase public awareness and interest in the project.