



Montgomery Housing Partnership, Inc.

*Housing People * Empowering Families * Strengthening Neighborhoods*

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Art Competition/Call for Proposals

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview of Opportunity

Montgomery Housing Partnership (MHP) is seeking artists/artist teams for **two** distinct wall-based permanent public art projects to be displayed in the Long Branch neighborhood. This call for proposals and competition is being organized to determine which artists will be selected for this work. This call is open to artists from a broad range of media, including but not limited to mural art. First place winners will be hired to produce their artwork at the available sites (See Section 2: Description of Project and Sites). Two second place winners (one for each site) will receive awards of \$250 each. The Long Branch community and MHP would like to invite and encourage all creative minds to participate in this great opportunity.

1.2 MHP's Mission

The mission of Montgomery Housing Partnership (MHP) is to preserve and expand quality affordable housing in Montgomery County. As part of its holistic mission, MHP also works to improve the overall vitality and quality of life in neighborhoods around the county. In the Long Branch neighborhood, this work has emphasized physical and aesthetic improvements to the commercial area.

1.3 The Long Branch Business League

The Long Branch Business League (LBBL) is also a partner in the present effort. The Long Branch Business League received the Impact Award in 2014 for its innovation and leadership in building a diverse business community. The LBBL has co-sponsored or sponsored a wide variety of arts activities in the Long Branch neighborhood in recent years, including public art pieces, festivals, music in the park and salsa dance nights. Its Long Branch Business Newsletter and DiscoverLongBranch.com web site also contribute to its goal of branding Long Branch as an exciting, diverse and arts-friendly area.

1.4 Long Branch Background

Long Branch is an underserved, mixed-income neighborhood in Silver Spring, home to approximately 27,700 people. The area has minority majority status (38% Hispanic, 27% Black or African American, 7% Asian). Many residents are new immigrants, thus making it one of the most ethnically diverse areas in Montgomery County. Average income levels in the neighborhood are significantly lower than in the County as a whole. The proposed Purple Line light rail line, if constructed, will have two stops in Long Branch, one along Arliss St. and the other on University Blvd. The heart of the commercial area is generally seen as Flower Avenue, with additional commercial hubs along Piney Branch Road and at the intersection of University Blvd. and Piney Branch Road.

Before recent progress, the area's street-level architecture had little in the way of beauty or color. Existing retail businesses (restaurants, specialty food stores, Laundromats, etc.) are for the most part located in uninspiring early 1970s-era strip malls. Beginning 2.5 years ago, MHP and the Long Branch Business League have undertaken an initiative to bring public art, façade improvements and other beautification initiatives to the community. Four existing murals in the neighborhood have already generated momentum and excitement, and are helping to advertise Long Branch as a place that incubates and nurtures the arts.

1.5 Community Workshop Results

In January, 2014, MHP and the Business League organized a community workshop to ascertain local tastes and priorities regarding public art and place making. In the specific area of mural art, many participants showed a preference for realistic (as opposed to abstract or graffiti-like) styles, and natural themes. The Hispanic participants highly valued artwork that felt grounded in their national traditions. Artwork that uses bright colors is another frequently cited preference. Examples of mural art that were warm, emotionally-engaging and beautiful were well-received even if they violated some of the above guidelines. *NOTE: See also addendum for more detailed result.*

2. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT AND SITES

2.1 Objective

The objective of the projects is to create **two** distinct wall-based public art projects. The artwork must be permanent, durable, weather-proof, and most importantly express the character of the Long Branch neighborhood in all its diversity and cultural richness. The mission of the MHP/Long Branch Business League art project is to:

- Incorporate artwork that makes Long Branch distinct in its artistic impact, encourages neighborhood pride, and serves as a positive symbol for the community;
- Enrich the aesthetics of the surrounding neighborhood;
- Make connections to residents and support neighborhood identities; and
- Create easily recognizable and distinctive landmarks, so someone can say “meet me at ‘x’ mural”

2.2 Site I

The allocated wall space is located just east of the intersection of Piney Branch Road and Flower Avenue on Piney Branch Road. The dimensions of the wall are 42’x15’. The artist(s) chosen for this site must **actively involve the community in the creative process**. How you decide to involve the community is open to interpretation, but must be a fundamental factor of the final product. Please describe your intended process in your “statement of interest” (See Section 3.3). You are encouraged to visit the site and engage with the community to get a sense of direction for your work.

Note: The artwork must leave an accessible area where a sign could, potentially, be placed advertising the business that ultimately leases the adjacent storefront. Therefore the art must allow for a potential sign to be put up, but not interfere with the overall reading/composition of the artwork. Artwork may wrap around the corner. The art does not have to fill the entire marked space in the photo.

Estimated Project Budget: \$10,000*

**includes artist fee, all supplies, and any other expenses.*



Figure 2.1: Current conditions of wall surface (left). Aerial view of designated wall highlighted in red (right).

2.3 Site II

The allocated wall space is located just south of the intersection of Piney Branch Road and Greenwood Avenue on Greenwood Avenue. The dimensions of the wall are 56'x15'. The art created for this site should abide by the objectives stated above (2.1), but otherwise is open to the artist's interpretation. You are encouraged to visit the site and engage with the community to get a sense of direction for your work. The art does not have to fill the entire marked space in the photo.

Estimated Project Budget: \$10,000*

**includes artist fee, all supplies, and any other expenses.*



Figure 2.2: Current conditions of wall surface (left). Aerial view of designated wall highlighted in red (right).

3. SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

3.1 General

This is a competitive request for proposals. All artists are highly encouraged to participate. Students who are highly skilled and talented should apply even if they lack professional experience. However students must possess a strong portfolio and references. Winning artists will be contacted on March 31, 2015. **Please send all required materials either through:**

Dropbox (preferred): ealvarado@mhpartners.org

or, if file size permits, by email (to point of contact).

3.2 Point of Contact

Edgar Alvarado: ealvarado@mhpartners.org 301.812.4115

3.3 Submittal Content

All required materials must be submitted through Dropbox: ealvarado@mhpartners.org, or by email, by **5 PM, March 22, 2015**. Please submit all materials under one folder titled (last name, first name).

- **Statement of Interest:** briefly describe your qualifications for the project. Please state which site you are interested in and how you would go about implementing our objectives (See Section 2).
- **Proposed artwork:** can be a rough sketch or finished draft in JPEG format (artwork must be unique to this site).
- **Resume:** current resume and/or artist's biographical statement which outlines your experience as a public artist.
- **Portfolio – Work Examples/Images:** at least one but no more than ten (10) digital file images of completed past artworks that are relevant to the category for which the artist is applying. Digital files must be in JPEG format.
- **References:** Submit three (3) professional references that have detailed knowledge of your work and working methods. Provide name, title and contact information (e-mail and phone) for each reference.

3.4 Selection Criteria

- Quality of proposal and past work
- Quality of materials and methods
- Cost (balanced against other considerations)
- Experience and evidence of past ability to successfully complete projects within budget and time constraints
- Preference may also be given to artists located within the greater DC/Baltimore metro area.

3.5 Submission and Award Deadlines

All required materials must be submitted either through Dropbox (preferred): calvarado@mhpartners.org or by email to the same email address. (See section 3.3)

Receipt of Proposal: 5 p.m., March 22, 2015

Award announcement: April 7, 2015

Anticipated completion of project: July 31, 2015

Addendum

Current Murals in Long Branch:



“Expanse of the Good” by Peter Krsko

“The mural, which I call ‘Expanse of the Good,’ has as its central element a rose – the symbol of Love, Beauty and Compassion. The mural aims at encouraging the positive and constructive intentions of all its viewers. The rose hovers on feathers of a hawk over an infinite landscape within a dream where everything good has become possible. Though the rose never reaches its infinite horizon, it gives rise to a lot of good happenings along the way.”



“Dreams of Knowledge” by Roza Matlin

“Reading books – a central theme of the ‘Dreams of Knowledge’ (aka ‘Reach for the Stars’) mural – has always been a major part of her life. As Roza puts it, ‘Reading used to take me out of the shabby Soviet reality that surrounded me, taking me anywhere I wanted to go.’”

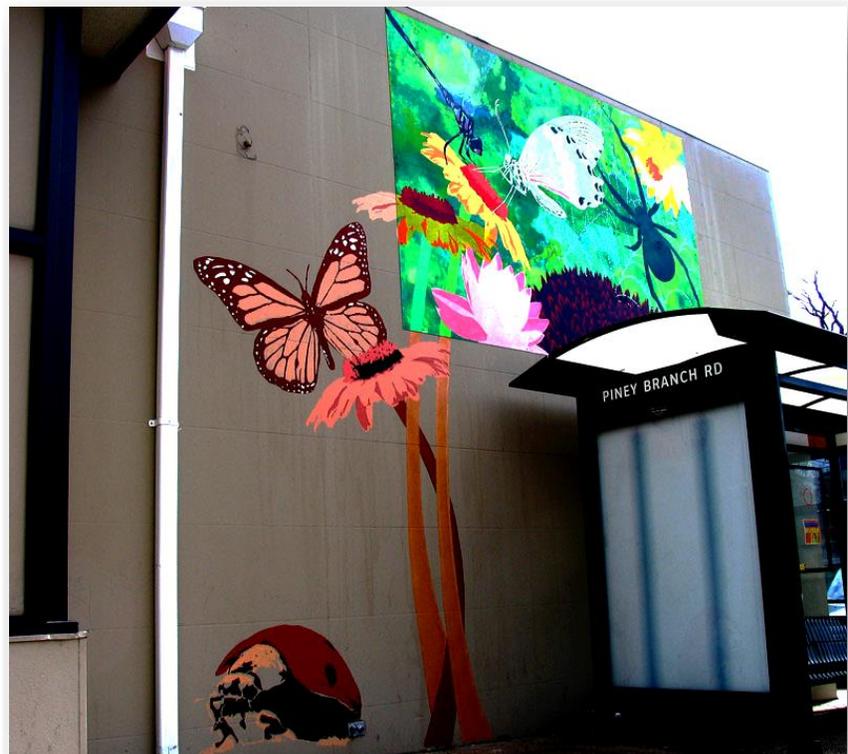


“My Toucan” by Peter Krsko

“Toucans are fascinating creatures and a significant cultural symbol for many people throughout Central America. I appreciate the opportunity to create the mural in collaboration with El Golfo, MHP and the Long Branch Business League. While painting the piece, it was great to see such busy foot traffic at this corner, especially families with young children. Besides endless compliments, the most frequently-expressed comment from the local residents was that they love seeing the street scape being refreshed and that they would love to see more art, benches and flowers all over Long Branch.”

“Flower Dreams” by Class Acts Arts, Alicia Cosnahan, & Peter Krsko

This was the first ‘trial’ mural created for the commercial area of Long Branch. It was created under the guidance of the non-profit Class Acts Arts, which worked with artists affiliated with Albus Cavus (Alicia Cosnahan and Peter Krsko) to guide the design and production, while the mural itself was co-designed and created by young men in the County correctional facility. The process was extremely positive and created a burst of pride both among the young artists – some of whom have roots in Long Branch – and from the community itself.



Community Favored Styles (Based on Workshop):

