

## City of Melrose

### Wayfinding & Creative Placemaking Initiative

Please note:

**Based on community feedback we have expanded our call-for-artists to Massachusetts artists, preferably within a 50 mile radius.**

**The deadline has been extended to Sunday, June 28 at midnight.**

Because we wish to maintain an authentic connection with the Melrose community, we are asking artists to consider how they might involve the public in the design or implementation of their work.

Likewise, we invite Melrose students, residents, organizations, and businesses who would like to be paired with an artist to [contact us](#), explaining how they might like to partner. If you can offer labor, space, funds

## Community Meeting - FAQ

**Zoom Webinar – 7pm, June 3, 2020**

**61 attendees:**

- 87% resident
- 31% artist
- 11% business owner
- 11% employee
- 4% visitor or other

### GENERAL QUESTIONS

**Will the public outside of this group be able to vote or provide input on signage concepts?**

The City is open to additional voting opportunities. We will put the options on the website and have people email their vote in.

**Very few people under the age of 30 answered the survey. What steps will you take to find out how this project might serve the youngest people in our community?**

It's hard to cover an entire demographic with surveys like this, but we have reached out to groups and included a high school student and elder services representative in our Focus Groups.

**How might diversity be included in this endeavor? Encouraging openness to all people?**

We're encouraging diverse project teams and hope to support public art projects that highlight diversity and current events.

**Who is jurying the projects selected? How many people?**

The Placemaking & Wayfinding Committee will be the jury for the submissions. There are 9 members of this committee. We may add a few people that were part of our Focus Groups.

**Is this at all informed by the master plan or the open space plan? do they intentionally connect?**

Yes, this initiative is informed by the Melrose Forward master plan. It is an intentional connection and expansion on that work meant to guide public art and wayfinding efforts.

## **SIGNAGE & WAYFINDING**

**What about gateway signage on the right (East) of the map?**

Our team did studies based on traffic patterns and we're addressing the main point of vehicular traffic entry with landmark signage (big "Welcome to Melrose" signs). For the eastern and southern entries, we are suggesting smaller gateway signage due to smaller traffic volume (granite pillars, etc.). Feel free to reach out to the city team for more information on our approach.

**Can we use this as an opportunity to remove unnecessary signage too? I'm thinking off all of the signs on the poles at gateway points. They are very cluttered.**

Yes, ideally we would redo most signage but may need to be a phased approach as funding is available.

**Any plans to encourage diversity in signage (historical)?**

Yes, the historical society will be included in directing that part of the process and we understand the UU church is working on a POC history project and would like to be paired with an artist.

**Will the Planning Board have to approve the final design of the signage?**

This effort is being done independent of the planning board, but we will likely interface with them as the project develops. This signage effort is preliminary, and designed to start the conversation with the residents.

**Diversity walking trail? (highlighting Hebrew cemetery, Chinese laundromat on Essex St, others...)**

This is a wonderful idea, but may require more planning than we are able to accomplish in Phase 1.

**How will you resolve the fact that Modern and Victorian styles got similar number of votes tonight? Does the committee have an opinion?**

These are preliminary concepts and will likely be need to be developed much more before we see production. The two concepts would be evolved and shown again to a wider audience to get more feedback. The committee does help steer the overall design.

**Are you thinking of putting historical neighborhood signage in each area and have them refer to each other?**

That is a great idea that could be incorporated. The historical society will partner up with our team to develop that content if it is selected to be part of the pilot.

**Seems that you can take elements of Modern and Victorian (e.g., colors/rainbow idea of Victorian).**

Yes, that is what we tried to do.

**Could we see prototypes of the signs before picking a final design option?**

Signage concepts shown this evening are very preliminary and were used to gauge both interest in revitalizing the signage across the city, as well as identifying stylized elements that the residents find identifiable to Melrose. Full size mockups would likely occur if the project continues development based on the community response.

## **PUBLIC ART**

**What are the reasons to have temp art versus permanent, especially if money is limited?**

Temporary art will be more budget friendly, but it also allows for a better variety. One commenter mentioned that if temporary art is repeated in the same location, it starts to become a destination – We couldn't agree more.

**Is the alleyway at Starbucks available for a mural on the wall? I imagine that's private property.....**

No, as it's private property. Given the timeline we selected only City owned locations for a more streamlined process.

**Is there an end date for the implementation of the work to be done (if chosen)?**

No but ideally the project would be completed and installed by the end of the summer. Participants are encouraged to propose realistic timelines in their response to the Call For Art.

**These are state funds, yes? We should ask ourselves who are these funds for public art designed to serve? The community broadly, or are they earmarked specifically for Melrose artists? Unless funds were stated to be earmarked for Melrose artists, I believe this committee has a responsibility to honor the calls for diversity and inclusion. We began the meeting with a moment of silence. We have an opportunity here to partner with diverse artists, but we will need to look outside the city limits to find the right partners. The arts can be a powerful vehicle for making a statement of our values. Can we please remove the residency requirement and seek a bonified public artist to help us?**

Fantastic point and submissions will be reviewed on a case by case basis. Project teams can include external-to-Melrose artists. UPDATE – we have updated the requirements.

**Are the project teams going to work with artists to incorporate some of the public space ideas into their designs (e.g. connectivity, a network, benches etc.) and does the city envision supporting a diversity of types of art (e.g. not only wall murals)?**

We're hoping to have a large response, and hope to have a diverse selection with different kinds of installations. Community events and temporary installations are also encouraged.

**This is another option- is there plans to paint the electrical boxes? This has been done in Malden & Medford.**

We're aware of the support for the idea to paint the city's electrical boxes. We encourage participants to apply to the call for art with this effort in mind.

**How does an artist get on your list to be partnered with others for a project?**

Please respond to the Call for Art stating your desire to be involved and potentially added to a project team, as well as your capabilities.

Likewise, we are asking that individuals, businesses, and organizations looking to get involved email us with their idea.

**By arts, do you mean the visual arts? What about drama or writing or music making?**

We are interested in a variety of artistic mediums. Community Events was very highly rated by survey respondents. Visual arts lend themselves to the Call for Art but we are open to ideas.

**Is the city interested in using this opportunity to pilot a parklet program, incorporating local art? These results make so clear how much people embrace a walkable downtown, but once you get there, there are very few actual community spaces. Installing a parklet, especially in conjunction with an "open streets" reopening event, seems like a very timely idea that would immediately add to the downtown character.**

The city is considering parklets as a way to support local restaurants as they slowly reopen. There is strong support for this idea and we expect it will happen soon.

## **PROJECT FUNDING**

**What are the other costs associated with the project? And, where will funds come from to pay for any additional costs?**

This placemaking and wayfinding initiative is entirely funded by the grant gifted to us by the state. No additional costs will be incurred to the city.

**You said the cost is \$30-35K for the public art portion of the project. That implies that there are other portions...or am I reading this incorrectly?**

The grant gifted by the state covers:

- The costs of the consultants brought in to assess current conditions and develop a research study, as well as organized outreach to the community.
- Development of a Call for Art
- Depending on the feedback from the community, a range of public art projects and pilot signage placed across the city.

**Are the grants expected to include the costs (1) for the art only or (2) all structures and costs associated with installation as well?**

We're expecting the grants to be all inclusive, so (2) responding directly to your question.

**Given the current climate, with covid-19 greatly impacting our local businesses and budget for Melrose schools/city services, is this the appropriate time to spend \$30-35K on this type of initiative?**

The funding for this project is sourced from a state grant, and is allocated for only for wayfinding and placemaking. We hope that this initiative will help people focus on a positive effort during this difficult time.

**What is the grant amount? Will the City cover any additional costs or will this initiative be kept within the grant budget parameters?**

We have about 30,000 for the public art portion of the project.