



**BREMERTON ARTS COMMISSION**  
Sheridan Park Community Center  
680 Lebo Boulevard, Bremerton, WA 98310

## **Public Murals: Helpful Guidelines and Links**

### **Initial considerations on design:**

We encourage you to hire a professional artist to design and paint your mural, unless the specific intent of the project is to be a community or student effort. A contract clearly outlining the scope of the work should be drawn and agreed to. If you decide to design your own mural, be sure give special consideration to the following:

- The design should be clear to an observer from a distance. Elements should be arranged so that they contribute to this important objective.
- Avoid too many small elements which overwhelm the viewer or create visual clutter which detracts from the larger design, unless they can be incorporated in such a way that they become a cohesive whole when viewed from afar
- Think about how the mural will transform and interact with the space around it. Public art is frequently created as a dialogue between the work and its viewers. What will your mural say about the place, or Bremerton itself? Do you want it to create a dialogue, and if so, how will it engage its audience?

### **Surface considerations:**

The wall that will be used should be in a satisfactory condition. Any masonry repairs should be made by a qualified professional prior to beginning work on the mural. Provide adequate time for masonry repairs to cure before you begin.

You should remove any old, loose layers of paint from the wall. Ideally, as much prior paint as possible should be removed, and edges of any remaining paint should be thoroughly smoothed with sanding blocks to prevent lifting.

### **Painting the mural:**

Before beginning, prime the entire surface that is to be painted with a good-quality acrylic gesso. This will ensure your paints spread evenly and colors and brightness are consistent across the entire area.

There are specific acrylic paints that are designed for outdoor mural work—check with a local art supply store for brand recommendations. Pay careful attention to the lightfastness ratings for each color selected, and select colors that will not quickly fade in the constant sunlight.

### **Sealing and maintaining the mural:**

A frequently-noted benefit of public murals is that they help to discourage graffiti. But you may also want to consider an acrylic varnish that will help to protect your finished mural from graffiti by creating a layer from which graffiti may be removed without destroying the artwork beneath.

A schedule and budget should be established for inspecting the mural regularly and tending to any repairs needed to keep it in good condition. The schedule should take into consideration the natural "life span" of the mural, which may be 5-15 years or longer, depending upon the amount of maintenance and restoration that you are willing to invest in it. It should also establish when the work should be decommissioned, i.e., removed or replaced with another mural.

### **Sources and helpful links (active as of August 2016):**

Fresno Arts Council. "Mural Guidelines." <http://fresnoartscouncil.org/resources/mural-guidelines/>.

Golden Artist Colors. "Painting Exterior Murals." [https://www.goldenpaints.com/technicalinfo\\_murals](https://www.goldenpaints.com/technicalinfo_murals).

— — — . "Heritage Preservation: Rescue Public Murals." <http://www.justpaint.org/heritage-preservation-rescue-public-murals/>

Pomerantz, Joel. "Making Your Mural Last: Graffiti, Varnish & Wall Chemistry." <http://www.bikemural.org/muralprotection.html>.

Rex Art. "Mural Painting: Applications & Techniques." <http://www.rexart.com/appmuralprep.html>

Williams, Bernard. "Techniques of Community Murals." [http://www.cpag.net/guide/2/2\\_pages/2\\_1.htm](http://www.cpag.net/guide/2/2_pages/2_1.htm).