

https://madison.com/ct/news/local/govt-and-politics/madison-artists-losing-income-due-to-pandemic-could-receive-funding-for-city-projects/article_78580d63-7312-55b9-835c-a0023ada1e16.html

Madison artists losing income due to pandemic could receive funding for city projects

Abigail Becker | The Capital Times

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An image of a butterfly brightens the wall as part of the Willy St. Co-op North mural in Madison.

MICHELLE STOCKER

Madison artists could receive grants from a city fund dedicated to supplement lost income due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The city's Finance Committee signed off on a **resolution** directing up to \$80,000 in the capital Municipal Art Fund for the Art in Public Places initiative.

The resolution recognizes that the funds could be used to commission artists who are financially burdened due to COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus, and that projects created with the funds would be “designed to promote positivity in neighborhoods.”

“During this time of a global public health emergency, the importance of arts and culture to our mental health and well-being has become even more apparent,” the resolution states. “Timely support could also help prevent irreparable economic and social damage enabling this fragile sector’s ability to continue to provide cultural enhancements to our community’s health as we collectively recover from this crisis.”

Because the pandemic has changed the way city boards, commissions and committees are operating, city staff will temporarily change how funding is allocated.

The resolution authorizes the arts program administrator to issue a call for artists who have lost income due to COVID-19. Applicants will be ranked by the Madison Arts Commission and reviewed by the commissions chair, at least one staff member from the Planning Division’s Neighborhood Planning, Preservation, and Design team, and the arts program administrator. The planning director will then review proposals for approval.

City staff will coordinate public art and placemaking projects under \$10,000 to take place in five areas of the Madison, including north, south, east, west and central.

[*Photos: Diversity of Scientists Mural*]

Once the Madison Arts Commission is allowed to again hold regular meetings, it will resume the role of vetting applications and proposals.

The Planning Division's Municipal Art Fund capital program has approximately \$427,000 available in spending authority, so no additional money is required for the proposed resolution.

Also, the Finance Committee accepted the Madison Arts Commission's recommendation for the **2020-2021 Arts Grants awards**.

The commission received 68 applications, totaling \$136,436 in requests, and recommended funding 68 projects totaling \$97,050. The Planning Division's 2020 Adopted Operating Budget includes \$107,500 to fund the grants, meaning that no additional money is needed.

Share your opinion on this topic by sending a letter to the editor to tctvoice@madison.com. Include your full name, hometown and phone number. Your name and town will be published. The phone number is for verification purposes only. Please keep your letter to 250 words or less.

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Abigail Becker joined The Capital Times in 2016, where she primarily covers city and county government. She previously worked for the Wisconsin Center for Investigative Journalism and the Wisconsin State Journal.

