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In 2008, Agnes Bourne worked with the Center for the Arts to temporarily install "Patience," a bronze sculpture by Deborah Butterfield, on the center grounds. The center is one possible site for one of three permanent concrete pads that would display a rotating exhibition of museum-quality work.

## Open-air exhibition gets official support

### Idea for installations of museum-quality public art wins approval from Jackson Town Council.

By Katy Niner

On Aug. 15, the Jackson Town Council unanimously approved allowing a rotating exhibition of museum-quality work in public spaces.

The Jackson Hole Public Art Initiative received permission to install three permanent concrete pads on public property to use for displaying the artwork.

At its core, the project makes fine art free and accessible to all.

"This will impact people every day," said Carrie Geraci, director of the Public Art Initiative.

The on-loan artwork, curated by arts professionals and approved by a panel of community stakeholders, will change every 18 months and will be administered by the initiative.

Citing large and small communities across the country that have adopted such public art exhibitions, the proposal outlined potential benefits — economic, educational and civic.

The town council approved the concept. Councilors also OK'd in-kind support from town staff to aid the installation and including artwork in the town's property insurance policy.

The town planning department is providing a map of public sites that would be suitable for large pieces of art.

Geraci has already met with staff from planning, parks and recreation, and public works. Together, they will clarify the details of the program, in-

cluding contracts and locations.

In terms of locations, the current priority is to stay within walking distance of Town Square.

"The idea is to really make the downtown area a vibrant, exciting cultural district with walkable museum-quality art," Geraci said.

Potential sites include entrances to parking areas on Center Street, the Center for the Arts and North Cache Street.

The initiative will create a public art map, available at downtown retail locations and online. Information about the work will be accessible through technology — QuickReader tags and smartphone applications — and through educational outreach in schools and beyond.

"We will make major efforts to ensure that the community has access to education and information about each one of these pieces," Geraci said.

The first exhibition will be installed next summer, provided funding comes through. The cost of the project is comparatively low, since the work is on loan, Geraci said.

"We hope this will become self-sustainable through the sale of the artwork, but it will take some investment the first couple of years," she said.

Many details must still be worked out. Geraci is researching other programs and how they are administered, pulling the best ideas for use in Jackson.

Above all, the project, and councilors support of it, writes large the value of arts and culture in the valley.

"The exhibition sends a strong message to cultural visitors that Jackson Hole is an arts and culture destination," the proposal said.