



Frequently asked Questions about Percent for Art

Will Percent for Art increase the cost of new developments in the City of Newburgh? The cost is one percent of the construction budget—considerably less than the typical allowance for contingencies. Projects undertaken by the City are covered, as well as projects that use city land, or those sold or leased by the city. The Law does not apply to private developments on private land. Experience in over 400 communities nationwide that have Percent programs has shown that the economic return on investing in the arts is worth the small expenditure.

The city is taking a leadership role to improve the quality of its own development projects, with the hope that private developers might see the wisdom of it too. The preamble to the Percent for Art bill states, “The City Council, by example, intends to encourage private developers to implement their own public art in connection with their own developments...”

Will the Arts Commission work with developers to determine how the money is spent? The Arts & Cultural Commission will collaborate with architects and designers of projects that are covered by this bill to set up criteria for open and fair call for entries to select and commission work appropriate for a particular site. The Commission will then make recommendations to the City Manager and City Council.

Will Percent for Art help underserved areas and populations within the City? Yes. In every project, 70% of the allocation will be spent on the site, and the remaining 30% will be available for use throughout the rest of the City to fund community-based art and cultural projects. In most Percent for Art legislation, 100% of the allocation funds projects at the site only. In an effort to bring art to all areas of the city, NACC has proposed the 70/30 split. The spending of the 30% will be based on the recommendations of the Commission, with final approval reserved by City Council.

Will the Percent for Art requirement scare off developers? The hottest real estate markets in the country, such as . . . and . . . , all have Percent bills. Percent for Art legislation has not stopped or even slowed any development. On the contrary, a public arts program improves new developments, and by making the city more attractive, increases both the intrinsic value of new projects as well as their resale value.

How will Percent for Art expand the economy and create jobs? When communities invest in the arts, the economic payback is real and specific: jobs, economic growth and a higher quality of life. Artists and arts organizations are businesses that hire members of the community and spend money in the community. The arts draw art tourists who have been shown to spend more money per capita in the community than other tourists. Small expenditures often leverage a 7:1 return on investment in terms of jobs, increased revenue for other local businesses, and increased tax revenue. These figures are included in the study entitled “Arts and Economic Prosperity III” on the City’s website.