

Want to Design an Artistic Bike Rack?

BY ELLEN GRAVES

The warm spring weather is here, the flowers are blooming, and it's the perfect time for all of us to get out and enjoy our beautiful community. For many Restonians, biking is their favorite way to get around, and soon they'll be able to secure their bicycles in new racks, designed by artists, to complement the specific location in Reston.

Spearheading this project is the Initiative for Public Art — Reston (IPAR). IPAR is partnering with Reston Association, RA's Multimodal Transportation Advisory Committee (MTAC), Friends of Reston and Reston Bicycle Club on this public art initiative.

IPAR recently received a \$3,750 grant from the Virginia Commission for the Arts (VCA) "to commission a new public artwork," and the Reston Bicycle Club and Friends of Reston generously matched the grants. The initial grant will be used to design and build the first three racks to be located at Walker Nature Center, Lake House (formerly the Tetra building) and the Pony Barn Pavilion. IPAR and MTAC hope other businesses and community organizations will participate in this and future projects.

The concept of artistic bike racks started in the summer of 2014 when IPAR and the former RA Pedestrian and Bicycling Advisory Committee (PBAC) came together to discuss areas of common interest, including the design and commissioning of artistic bike racks. The project aligns with and complements

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the current MTAC's goal of increasing the number of multimodal transportation facilities and improving bike friendliness throughout Reston. It also supports IPAR's mission "to inspire an ongoing commitment to public art and create a new generation of artworks in Reston."

Bike racks are a form of street furniture that is considered an integral part of the field of public art. The racks will enhance the Reston streetscape and landscape in a manner that uplifts the appreciation of functional art. This project represents IPAR's first attempt to commission artists to design street furniture. It also supports IPAR's vision that "imagines public art throughout Reston that inspires the community and engages the mind and senses."

Soon, IPAR will be sending out a Call for Artistic Bike Rack Designs



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seeking design proposals for these permanent, artistic outdoor bike racks. This is a great opportunity for our local artists to design functional art that represents Reston's unique aesthetics, and natural and cultural identity. Winning bike rack designs will be both imaginative and provide safe bike parking for cyclists throughout Reston. Here is your opportunity to bring to life Reston's philosophy of "Live, Work, Play and Get Involved" through art.

Details on the Call for Artistic Bike Rack Designs and the selection

process will be available in late April on the RA (www.reston.org) and IPAR (www.publicartreston.org) websites.



Ellen Graves is the president of Reston Association.