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## Arts & Culture

8:00 AM THU JULY 3, 2014

# Public Art Commission Awarded To Iowa Artist Sparks Discussion

By [LAURA SPENCER](#) ([//PEOPLE/LAURA-SPENCER/](#))

More than 200 cities across the United States have a percent-for-art ordinance, calling for a portion of construction project budgets to be set aside for public art.

Kansas City's one percent for art ordinance has been in effect since 1986. The first installation: "Bull Wall" by Kansas City native Robert Morris in the West Bottoms in 1992.

But during the last decade, there have been grumblings when commissions have gone to artists from outside the area — especially larger ones, such as the \$1.3 million [Sprint Center commission in 2006 to New York-based artist Chris Doyle](#) (<http://chrisdoylestudio.com/the-moons1/>).

Most recently, Kansas City's [Municipal Art Commission](#) (<http://kcmo.gov/generalservices/municipal-art-commission-2/>) selected Des Moines-based artist David Dahlquist of [RDG Planning & Design](#) (<http://www.rdgusa.com/>) for a \$425,000 commission. The artwork is proposed as a colorful tiled gateway to the Kansas City Police Department's East Patrol Division and Crime Lab at Prospect Avenue and 27th Street.

The project was open to all artists in the United States, but out of 61 applicants, only one had ties to the area.

"I think when we have only one local artist submit on a significant project, that is a concern," said Councilman John Sharp during a City Council committee meeting last week.

Sharp suggested the Municipal Art Commission should work with the arts community



(<http://mediad.publicbroadcasting.net/p/kcur/files/201407/DahlquistRendering650.jpg>)

A rendering of David Dahlquist's artwork at the KCPD East Patrol.

*Credit courtesy of the artist*

to prepare them to competitively bid and to "strengthen the business side of their practices." The agreement to award Dahlquist the commission later [passed in the full Council](http://cityclerk.kcmo.org/liveweb/Documents/Document.aspx?q=HUwcy22fLUwYo%2B9H1ev9LdUUTzjKQ1skxDIb%2BCrxhgf5f%2Bo9lqSEGnrXp8%2BccX13) (<http://cityclerk.kcmo.org/liveweb/Documents/Document.aspx?q=HUwcy22fLUwYo%2B9H1ev9LdUUTzjKQ1skxDIb%2BCrxhgf5f%2Bo9lqSEGnrXp8%2BccX13>).

According to public art administrator Porter Arneill, one applicant from the region for a project is much smaller than the average; it's usually 5 to 10 percent of applications. The [city's website](http://kcmo.gov/generalservices/public-art-faq/) (<http://kcmo.gov/generalservices/public-art-faq/>) states that "of the thirty-six public art projects completed to date, twelve have included local and regional artists."

**TAGS:** [public art](/term/public-art) (</term/public-art>)

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Susan · 5 months ago

David Dahlquist does outstanding work. Congratulations upon securing his services.

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