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***For Immediate Release:***

**City Seeks Members for New Public Art Task Force**

Hastings, MN:

The Arts movement in Hastings continues to gain momentum: from the formation of the Hastings Prescott Area Arts Council and Black Dirt Theater, to the grand opening of the [Hastings Arts Center](#) this weekend. Projects continue to emerge with the [Artspace](#) project to develop live/work artist units moving forward and the recently announced [BreakAway Arts Café](#), a “fitness center for creativity”, to open downtown this summer. The City of Hastings recognizes this energy and the City Council recently approved plans for a Public Art Grant program to support public art that is free and accessible to everyone.

The City is forming a Public Art Grant Task Force to support and promote public art within Hastings, and is seeking citizens to help shape this pilot program. We are looking for up to seven members with diverse personal and professional backgrounds who reflect the community and have a passion for the arts. The Task Force will be given a basic framework to work with, but will be asked to determine the best way to use grant funding to benefit the entire community. The initial wave of events and funding will run through December of 2016.

Goals of the Task Force:

- Expand framework for public art grant pilot program.
- Solicit requests for and award public art grant(s).
- Prepare a report for City Council which will review and provide recommendations on the grant process, the impact of the public art projects supported, the quality of the proposals submitted, and future considerations relating to public art in Hastings.

It is expected that the Task Force will conduct 3-5 meetings in 2015, with the objective of recommending award of public art grant(s) by January 2016. \$10,000 is currently allocated to these efforts in 2015. City staff will assist in facilitating these meetings.

Those who are interested in learning more or applying to be a member of the Hastings Public Art Grant Task Force, should go to the city website at [www.hastingsmn.gov](http://www.hastingsmn.gov). Click on Volunteer under the Residents tab. The City will begin reviewing applications on May 1, 2015. Contact Melanie Mesko Lee, City Administrator, at 651-480-2326 or [mmesko\\_lee@hastingsmn.gov](mailto:mmesko_lee@hastingsmn.gov) with questions.

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