



SERVING COMMUNITIES. ENRICHING LIVES.



October 23, 2009

Dr. Carol Damian
Coral Gables Cultural Development Board
City of Coral Gables
1115 North Greenway Drive
Coral Gables, FL 33134

Dear Dr. Damian,

The city of Coral Gables has a very successful history of implementing public art projects and is situated as a cultural destination in this country. Americans for the Arts applauds Coral Gables for seeking and approving funds to work with a public art master planning consultant and strongly encourages the City to amend the percent-for-art ordinance to allow for the collection of the percent-for-art funds to be used toward the master planning process and to ensure project art funding is available.

The Americans for the Arts Public Art Network (PAN) works with local arts agencies to establish public art best practices nationwide. Last year, the Public Art Network presented a two-day knowledge exchange workshop entitled: "Public Art Master Planning, Developing a Plan for Your Community". The exchange discussed the best practice of integrating public art into cities' overall master plans and ensuring funding mechanisms are in place to implement public art projects. The exchange cited that successful visioning goals in public art master plans incorporate place-based enhancements that strengthen a community's cultural and economic resources.

It is important to note that public art projects create numerous jobs for architects, engineers, fabricators, suppliers, installers and other professionals. Given current municipal budget challenges, cities are competing to attract tourism dollars to maintain tax revenues and local jobs. Many cities are expediting public art funding and approvals, signing artist contracts and moving projects forward to ensure their city remains attractive and thus, economically competitive. Furthermore, Coral Gables benefits from Florida's outstanding public art leadership statewide. The state has received forty PAN Year in Review Awards over nine years, twelve projects of which are sited in Miami-Dade County. This outstanding regional art collection is inextricably linked to economic success through cultural tourism revenue.

I look forward to hearing that the ordinance is implemented as soon as possible. Good art is good business. Art is what cities need most right now.

Sincerely,

Robert Lynch
President and CEO

cc: Coral Gables Cultural Development Board c/o Catherine Cathers