



May 21, 2024

TO: Community Relations Committee

THROUGH: Stephanie Calvillo, Communications Coordinator

FROM: Carl Goldsmith, Director of Public Works

SUBJECT: Public Art – Union Pacific Right-of-Way

Background

The Department of Public Works has recently undertaken or is planning projects along the Union Pacific's (UPRR) right-of-way. In review of these projects it has been noted that there are concrete retaining walls within the UPRR right-of-way that could potential be improved aesthetically through the creation of murals or other public art. The area is referred to as the "gateway" to Lombard coming east from Glen Ellyn along Crescent Boulevard. The Public Works Department had previously brought this item to the Community Promotion and Tourism Committee in October 2015 and the Committee did not support the concept.

The UPRR has a formal mural/public art program that allows for public art displays on UPRR property. In 2015, the Public Works Department conducted a preliminary review of the process that would be required to obtain approval from the UPRR to paint or beautify the wall surfaces. A formal agreement is required to be executed prior to any work being performed on the walls. The agreement stipulates who is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the walls among other issues like liability. Adrian has expressed support for the project and will provide all necessary agreements and documents should there be support from the Village for this project.

The Village would be responsible for determining the content of the wall displays. Staff has discussed that the wall along Crescent Boulevard (shown in the pictures on the following page) could include a **Welcome to Lombard** message similar to Image #3. It could contain images of historical places and events in Lombard's rich history. There could be partnerships with the local civic clubs to have a panel of the wall display messages from each club. The other option is for the Village to hire a muralist to paint the entire wall. The Village would need to make sure that the material is appropriate and does not promote or advertise a specific business. Additionally, the Village would treat the entire surface with an anti-graffiti coating to address vandalism.

The costs associated with the public art projects could be supported by Hotel/Motel Tax Fund. At this time, staff is seeking support to continue to research the concept and take appropriate steps to secure approval from the UPRR for the project. It is anticipated that the Village could receive all necessary approvals by spring and begin the painting process in Fall 2024.

Image #1



Aerial view of Crescent Boulevard, west of I-355 (wall location highlighted)

Image #2



Crescent Road looking southeast

Image #3



Example of mural design

Image #4



Example from Woodstock, IL

If the Committee is favorable to the concept, staff can begin to engage the UPRR on the necessary agreements and secure artists to develop the design for the mural.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Community Relations Committee support the concept of the public art/mural for the specified locations and direct staff to work with UPRR staff to prepare the necessary agreements for consideration by the Village Board of Trustees.