

Step by step



JOHN GIBBINS / Union-Tribune

The site is bounded by 14th Street, 15th Street, Island Avenue and J Street.

How do you create public art for a public park? The Union-Tribune is following one project from beginning to end.

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In this occasional series, the *Union-Tribune* is following the process of creating public art for a soon-to-be-developed park in East Village.

In many places, public art has become a lightning rod for controversy. Even the term raises questions: How broad or narrow is the audience? Should taxpayers automatically pay for it? And what is art, anyway? How do these artworks - inspired or boring, bland or complex - turn out to be the way they are?

Sometimes a traffic engineer - and rarely the artist - has the final say.

The Union-Tribune has been tracking this process, including progress and pitfalls, of commissioning, creating and installing public art for a new park that seems likely to become a downtown San Diego landmark.

April 30: The process begins With 22 teams qualifying to apply for the \$160,000 commission, the panel meets for the first time and narrows the field to three teams.

June 4: Reaching a consensus After hearing presentations from the three teams, the panel makes an adventuresome team its first choice.

August 27: Forming a collaboration The team expects to begin working with the landscape architect and community representatives in July, once the artists sign a contract.

Fault line key element in new park design

A new, 1.3-acre East Village park is designed to appeal to all ages for active play, dining or people-watching. Its design meshes with Pinnacle, a residential development planned for the eastern half of the same "super block." Landscape architects turned the site's earthquake fault into a key design feature, a diagonal walkway.



SOURCES: Spurlock Poirier Landscape Architects; CCDC

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