

# Policy Briefing Summary

## City Council



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<b>Regarding:</b>	<b>Resolution Authorizing a Temporary Installation of Art on the Downtown Mall by Service Dogs of Virginia</b>
<b>Staff Contact(s):</b>	Brenda Kelley, Redevelopment Manager
<b>Presenter:</b>	<b>Brenda Kelley, Redevelopment Manager</b>
<b>Date of Proposed Action:</b>	April 20, 2026

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### Issue

Service Dogs of Virginia ("SDV"), an IRS 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, has requested approval from the City of Charlottesville, Virginia ("City"), to temporarily display artwork on the Downtown Mall during their *Art Unleashed* fund-raising Campaign ("Campaign"):

- One (1) life-sized, fiberglass Labrador dog statue in front of Magpie Knits (111 West Main Street) from July – September 2026; and
- Possible additional Downtown Mall location near the CODE building (240 West Main Street) from late September through October 2026, for the display of all twenty (20) dog statues prior to the auction event (pending confirmation that the CODE building private property has sufficient space for the full installation of all the dog statues).

### Background / Rule

SDV is planning a fund-raising public art display of twenty (20) life-sized, fiberglass Labrador dog statues to be sold at an auction on October 24, 2026. In advance of the auction, these dogs will be on display around the City from July through September. All auction proceeds will go towards helping SDV build a new facility, allowing for the increased number of service dogs that will be placed annually.

The mission of *Art Unleashed* is to unite art, community, and purpose in support of SDV's life-changing work. Through the transformation of plain fiberglass dog statues into vibrant works of art by talented local artists, this Campaign will showcase the power of creativity, while raising critical funds to help build a new campus for SDV.

SDV proposes to display one (1) of these dogs on the Downtown Mall in front of Magpie Knits, a sponsor of the Campaign. SDV will be responsible for properly placing and securing the stand and statue and not encroaching into the public fire lane. The overall approximate dimensions of the stand and statue are 15" deep x 40" wide x 60" high. Local Virginia artists have been selected following a request for artists. A picture is attached as an example of the dog statue.

In addition, additional space on the Downtown Mall may be needed during display of all twenty (20) dog statues at the Code Building prior to SDV's auction, if there is not enough room on the Code Building property to display all the statues. In this case, City Staff will work very closely with the City's Fire Department to ensure appropriate and safe citing of the dog statues.

Security of the dog statues is the full responsibility of SDV, at all times.

Please find more information here: <https://www.servicedogsva.org/art-unleashed-2026>

### Analysis

City Council may, on a limited and case-by-case basis, authorize the use of City property for artwork or commemorative displays. The Downtown Mall is City property.

**Financial Impact**

None.

**Recommendation**

City Staff recommends City Council adopt the attached Resolution approving a temporary art display on the Downtown Mall for SDV's Campaign

**Recommended Motion (if Applicable)**

"I make a Motion to adopt the attached Resolution approving a temporary installation of art on the Downtown Mall for SDV's Campaign."

**Attachments**

1. Service Dogs of VA July2026
2. RESOLUTION Service Dogs of VA Apr2026jvhedits