



CITY OF PHILADELPHIA



August 23, 2017

William Burke, Jr., Director  
The Philadelphia Art Commission  
One Parkway, 1515 Arch Street, 13<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Dear Bill:

This letter is regarding the Art Commission's directive that the City undertake an assessment of the Chestnut Street bus shelters' conditions and report back to the Commission with the information. The Office of Transportation and Infrastructure Systems (OTIS) has completed this assessment and wishes to share the information with the Commission. With this letter, we are also requesting inclusion on the September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017 Art Commission agenda.

On August 6<sup>th</sup>, the 12<sup>th</sup> and Chestnut Street shelter was taken off-site for disassembly and inspection/evaluation. A metal frame had to be welded on to the shelter structure as, after initial visual inspection, the contractor, Northeast Fence and Iron Works Inc, did not believe the structure would survive removal and transport. Once transported off site, Northeast Fence and Iron Works and Materials Conservation LLC, performed a thorough evaluation of all aspects of the shelter structure and the artwork by Pablo Tauler. The 12<sup>th</sup> Street shelter was chosen for evaluation as its condition was average and therefore seemed likely to be representative of conditions of the series of eleven shelters, and because Drexel University was willing to pay the costs associated with removal, disassembly, and assessment. The artist was made aware of the inspection prior to the removal of the shelter.

Northeast Fence and Iron Works inspection indicated that the supporting and structural components of the shelter are seriously deteriorated and compromised. The vertical "legs" of the shelter were filled with water causing the interior to rust. Significant corrosion had cause clogging of the weep holes as well as fusion of base plate to the leg, creating a receptacle for water. Similarly, the base beam supporting the 300-pound art panel has endured excessive rusting. Since this part of the frame is made of substantially thinner metal than the legs and is responsible for supporting the art, its erosion poses a significant safety risk to the public. It has been determined that repair of the shelter frame is not an option due to the advanced state of deterioration. Materials Conservation reported that the artwork is in "fair" to "good" condition. The consultants' reports on the condition of the shelter and the artwork are enclosed.

OTIS is requesting Art Commission approval for the removal of the other ten Chestnut Street shelters due to their deteriorated condition and declared risk to the public. Upon removal of the shelters, all salvaged artwork will be stored by the City and alternatives for their re-use will be sought with Septa and the artist.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Should you require any additional information please do not hesitate to call me at 215.686.4596 or Patricia Ells-Dinatale at 215.686.4419.

Sincerely,

Margot Berg, Public Art Director  
Office of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy

Patricia Ells-Dinatale, Transit Policy & Planning Adviser  
Office of Transportation & Infrastructure Systems



# Evaluation of the Chestnut Street Art Shelters



# Chestnut Street Art Shelters

- Commissioned by the City of Philadelphia Percent for Art Program
- Created by artist Pablo Tauler
- 11 shelters between 7<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> Streets
- Shelters originally installed in 1990
- Art work added to shelters in 1999
- January, 2017, City submitted request to Art Commission to replace the Chestnut St Art Shelters along with the other 300 shelters in the city as part of the City-wide Street Furniture Contract. 27 years is considered past the useful life of the bus shelters (20 yrs ).
- Art Commission asked for an evaluation of the Chestnut St. shelter structures and art work
- August, 2017 – Chestnut & 12 St shelter removed & evaluated (\$8,150)

Chestnut & 7<sup>th</sup>



Chestnut & 8<sup>th</sup>



Chestnut & 9<sup>th</sup>



Chestnut & 10<sup>th</sup>



Chestnut & 11<sup>th</sup>



# 11 Chestnut St Art Shelters

Broad & Chestnut



Chestnut & 12<sup>th</sup>



Chestnut & 13<sup>th</sup>



Chestnut & 15<sup>th</sup>



Chestnut & 16<sup>th</sup>



Chestnut & 17<sup>th</sup>



8/29/2017

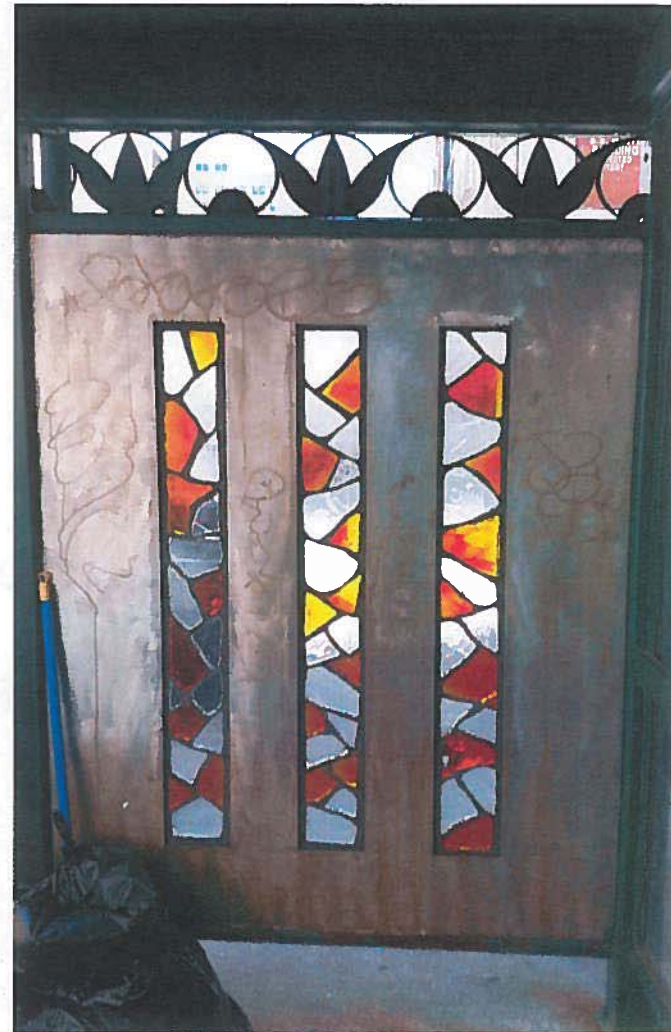


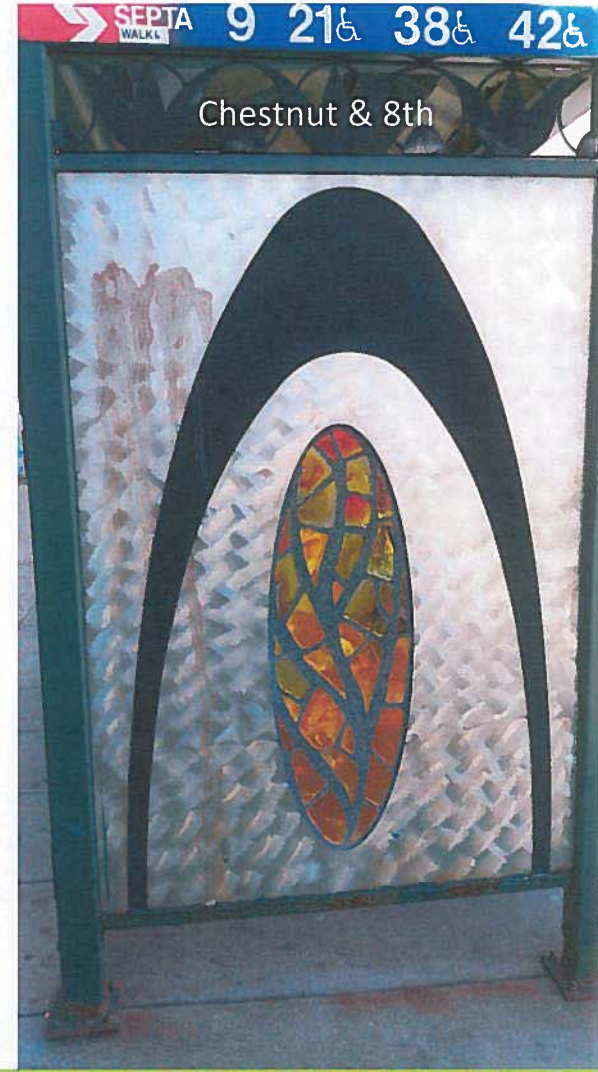
# Chestnut & 12<sup>th</sup> St. Shelter

Removed for conditions analysis August 2017

Typical condition of the Art Shelters

**Staining**







## Chestnut & 12<sup>th</sup> Base beam corrosion





## Chestnut & 12<sup>th</sup> Leg Support Rusting



Chestnut & 13<sup>th</sup>



Chestnut & Broad

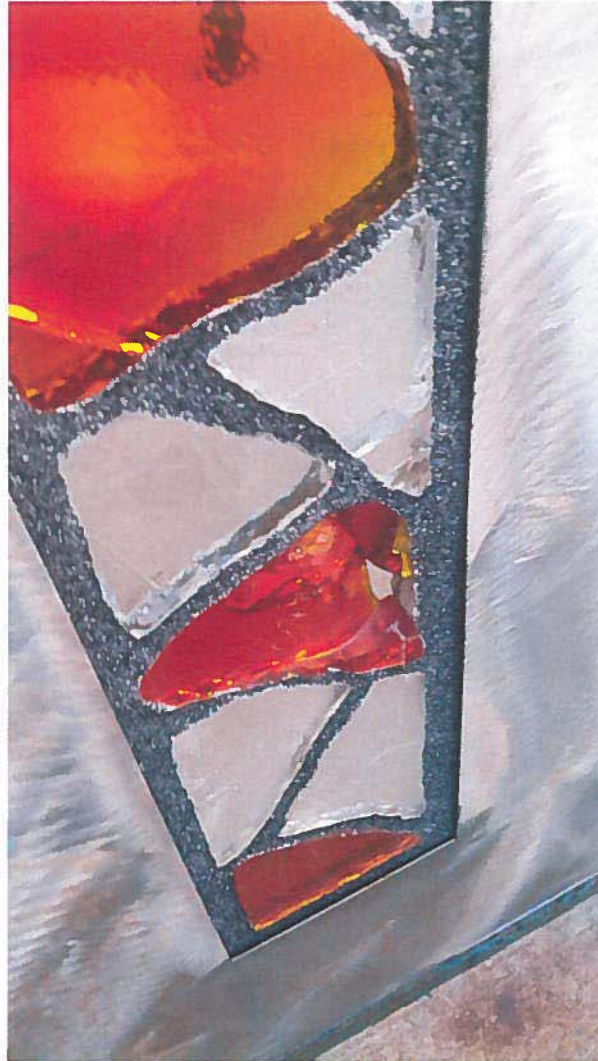


Chestnut & 15<sup>th</sup>



Chestnut & 16<sup>th</sup>

Chestnut & 12<sup>th</sup>  
Broken mosaic  
glass



Chestnut & 13th



Chestnut & Broad









**Condition of the shelter  
structure after Disassembly:**

***Severe Rusting of base leg support  
columns***



***Rusting of weep  
holes allowed for  
water and debris  
to fill legs***





## **Condition after Disassembly:**

***Severe Rusting of stained glass panel  
support beam***

***Stained glass panels weigh 250-300 lbs***





## **Assessment by Northeast Fence & Iron Works, Inc:**

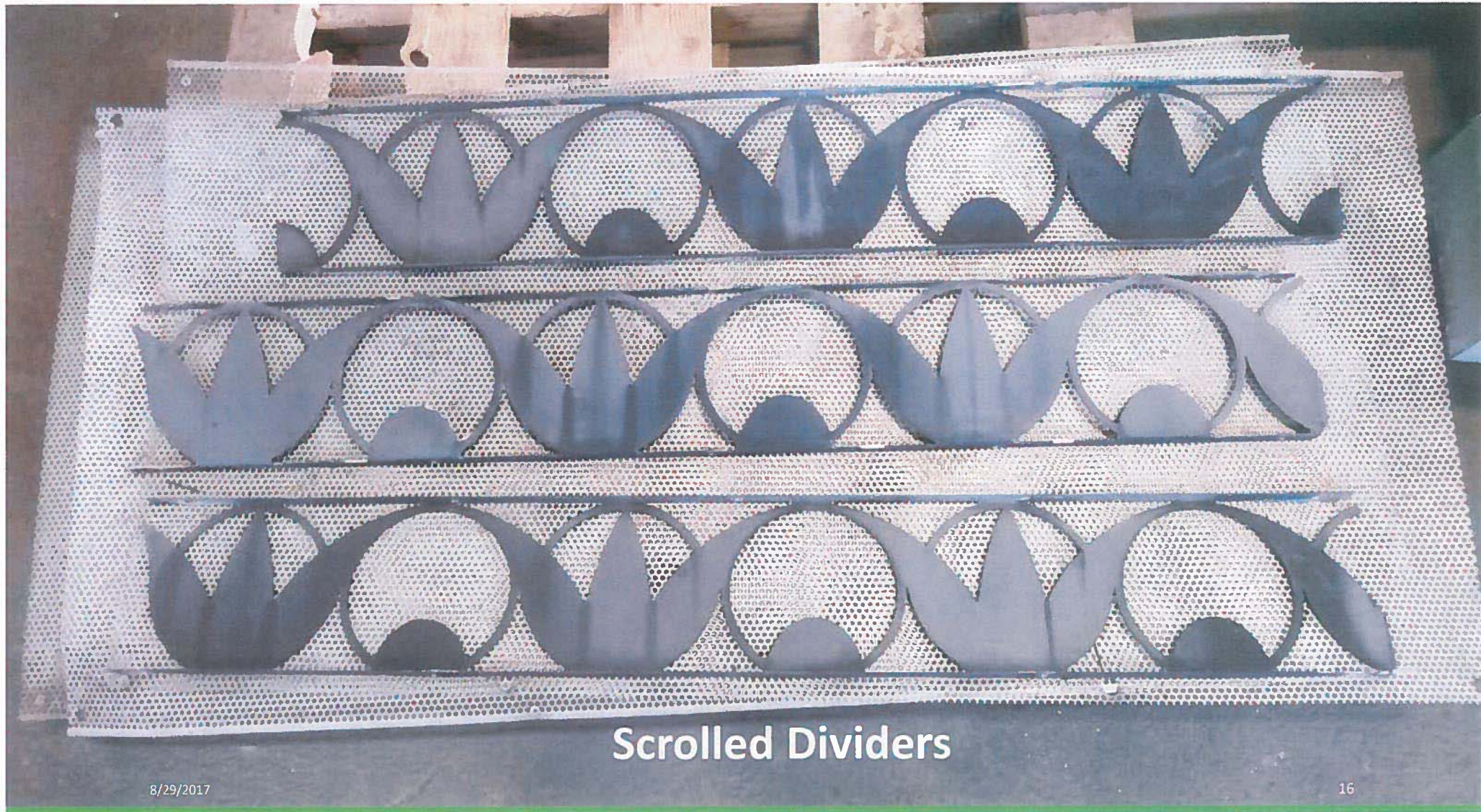
*“The main support structure should be replaced due to rusting...”*

**Conclusion: The corrosion of the base beam could lead to failure of the beam. The failure of the beam would leave the 250-300 lb mosaic art panel unsupported. The risk associated with the beam failure and art panel destabilization is a public safety hazard.**





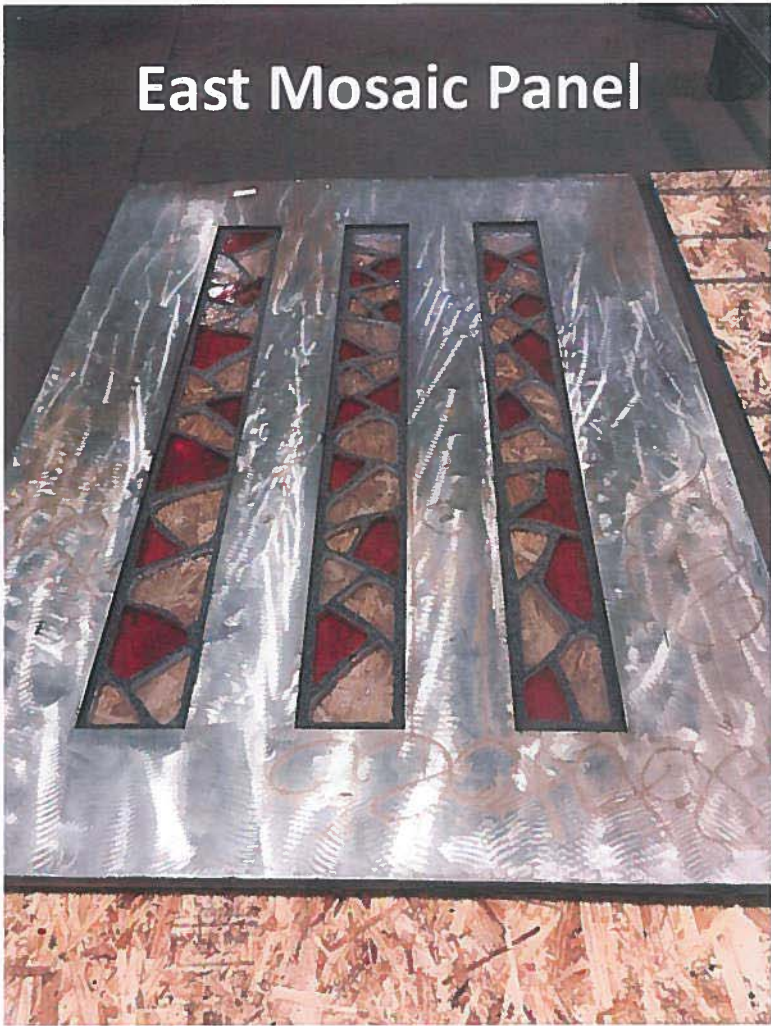




Scrolled Dividers



**East Mosaic Panel**



**Fanlight**





## The Cap





## **Assessment by Materials Conservation:**

*“The artwork is in generally good condition. The sealant at the joints between the bus shelter structure and the art work has failed. The east base rail of the structure exhibits corrosion where it intersects with the panel, the result of moisture becoming trapped at this location.”*

**Conclusion: With financial support, the art work can be restored and reused.**

# Conclusion

- Evaluation from both reports show that the 11 Chestnut Street Art shelters pose a safety risk to the public due to severe corrosion of the base shelter structure. Therefore the shelters must be removed.
- Next Steps:
  - Remove shelters and place in temporary storage
  - After storing, work with the Art Commission and partner agencies to determine next steps for rehabilitation and reuse of artwork



**NORTHEAST FENCE & IRON WORKS, INC.**

8451 Hegerman Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19136

(215) 335-1681 Fax: (215) 743-7112

[www.northeastfence.net](http://www.northeastfence.net)



**August 21, 2017**

After removal of components from the bus shelter this is what was determined:

The four main support columns were filled with water, rust and debris. See attached pictures of column bases.

The stainless steel paneling holding the stained glass was filled with water due to no caulking being applied which in turn thoroughly rusted the associated support base. This should be of concern at all shelters as these panels weigh between 250-300 pounds and may cause serious bodily injury once failure occurs.

The main support structure should be replaced due to rusting and should be fabricated from either galvanized steel or stainless steel to remedy the possibility of structural failure. The existing drainage design has failed and is basically just allowing water to completely fill the structural support columns. This should be remedied via column drainage holes and elbows being placed in the drainage tube bases allowing for proper water run-off.

The roof components were in decent shape and can be cleaned, painted and re-used.

The plexi-glass panels and associated frame should also be replaced due to discoloration of plexi-glass and dry-rot of rubber glazing.

Steve Vendetti  
General Manager





August 24, 2017

Margot Berg, Public Art Director  
Office of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy  
116 City Hall  
Philadelphia PA 19107

**Re: Condition assessment and treatment recommendations for the 12<sup>th</sup> Street Bus Shelter Artwork**

Dear Ms. Berg:

Materials Conservation Co, LLC is pleased to present this condition assessment and treatment recommendation for the 12<sup>th</sup> Street Bus Shelter.

***Scope of the Study***

Materials Conservation Co., LLC has been retained to complete a condition assessment of the artwork on a bus shelter which is one in collection of 11 shelters along Chestnut Street in Philadelphia, completed in 1999 by artist Pablo Tauler. Tauler's artwork includes a glass mosaic panel on the east face, three scrolls at the top, a stainless-steel cap, and a glass mosaic fanlight centered in the north face of the cap. The frame of the bus shelter was not included in this assessment. At the time of the survey, the shelter had been disassembled and was being stored in a warehouse.



Looking northwest

*Credit: <http://pablotaulerpublicartwork.blogspot.com/>*



Looking southeast

*Credit: Google Maps*

### ***Condition Assessment and Treatment Recommendations***

#### ***Overall***

**Condition:** The artwork is in generally good condition. The sealant at the joints between the bus shelter structure and the art work has failed. The east base rail of the structure exhibits corrosion where it intersects with the panel, the result of moisture becoming trapped at this location.

**Note:** Review all treatments to the artwork with the artist prior to implementation.

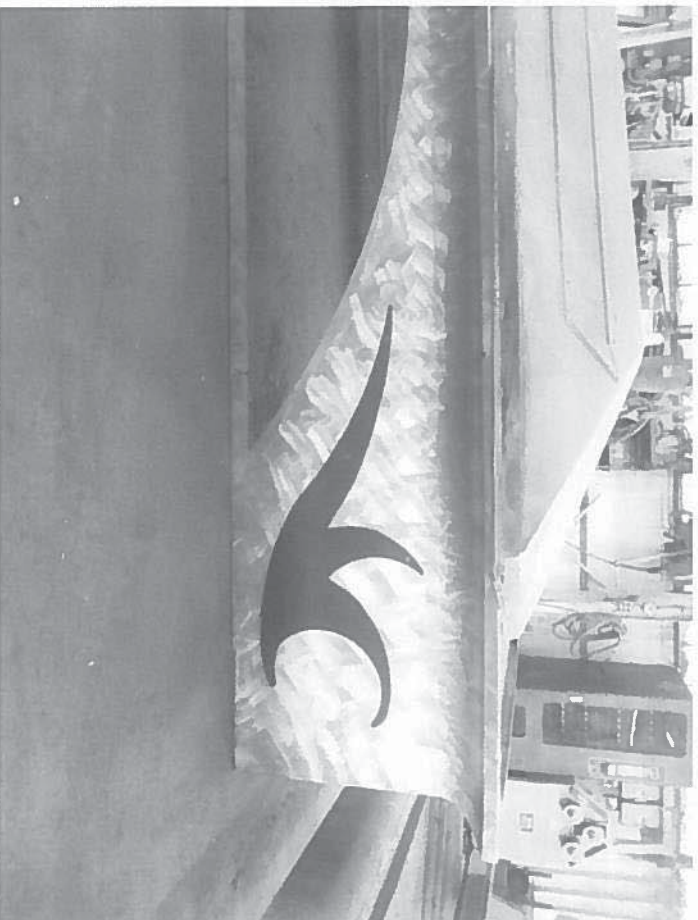
**Treatment:** Install drainage weeps between the panel and the bottom rail of the structure. Prior to reinstalling the artwork, clean all old deteriorated sealant from the edges of the artwork and the structure and install new sealant.

#### ***Cap***

**Description:** The cap is constructed of brushed textured stainless-steel and is approximately 18" high, finished with a concave molding at top. The north face has curved mild-steel detailing finished with black paint.

**Condition:** The cap is generally in good condition but the painted finish on the north side detailing is chalking. The stainless steel is soiled but in good condition.

**Treatment:** Clean the surface to remove soiling. Remove the paint finish to prepare the surface for refinishing. Apply a high-performance paint system including a rust-inhibiting primer and two-coats of finish paint.



*The edge of the cap and a detail of the scroll detailing*



**Fanlight**

**Description:** 13-1/2" x 82" (approx.) The fanlight is a glass mosaic in a low arch that is centered on the north side of the cap. The glass is set in embedment material, the composition of which is unknown.

**Condition:** The glass and embedment material are soiled. The glass is cracked in some areas, but this appears to be an intentional aesthetic.

**Treatment:** Clean soiling from the glass and the embedment material.



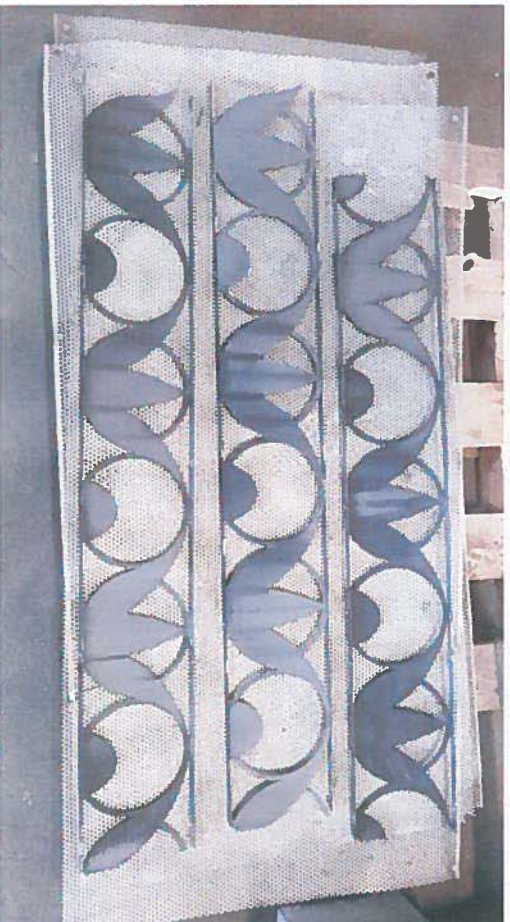
*Fanlight – note the discoloration due to soiling at the base*

**Scrolled Dividers**

**Description:** Two @ 55" x 7-3/4" (approx.) and One @ 48" x 7-3/4" (approx.) The three scrolls are constructed of mild-steel and painted. They serve as a frieze on the south and east elevations and allow air movement at the ceiling level of the shelter.

**Condition:** The scrolls are in good condition but the paint finish is chalking and discolored.

**Treatment:** Remove the paint to prepare the surface for refinishing. Apply a high-performance paint system including a rust-inhibiting primer and two coats of finish paint.



*Scrolled dividers exhibiting chalking paint*

**East panel**

**Description:** 51"x70" (approx.) The east panel is created by two sheets of brushed textured stainless steel with three rectangular glass mosaics set within. The panel is approximately one inch in thickness. The glass is set in embedment material, the composition of which is unknown.

**Condition:** Substantial areas of the metal surface have halos of old graffiti. The glass and embedment material for the glass is soiled. There is cracked, broken and missing glass in one section. Other areas also have cracked glass but this appears to be an intentional aesthetic. There are no noticeable problems on the exterior of the panel. The interior was not accessible.

**Treatment:** Remove graffiti with a chemical cleaning solution. If etching of the surface is discovered, resurface the metalwork.  
Replace the damaged piece of glass with matching material.  
Clean soiling from the glass and embedment material.  
Clean the edges of the panel of all old sealant material.



*Stainless steel panel with the glass mosaic inset*





*Edge of the panel with deteriorated sealant*



*Grffiti*





*Broken glass unit*

**Cost Estimate**

Cap .....	\$650.00
Fanlight .....	\$850.00
Scroll Dividers.....	\$925.00
Panel* .....	\$1,975.00
<i>*If refinishing is required for removal of graffiti, add \$1,000.00</i>	
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Total Cost for conservation of the bus shelter artwork.....	\$4,400.00

