



CITY OF APPLETON

MEMORANDUM

Date: April 22, 2026
To: Public Arts Committee
From: Steph Lynaugh, Economic Development Specialist
Subject: Review Edits to Selected Photos to be Displayed on Houdini Welcome Tower

GENERAL INFORMATION

Owner: City of Appleton

Address/Parcel Number: Welcome Tower in Houdini Plaza, 121 W. College Avenue (Parcel #31-2-0065-00)

Request: The Public Arts Committee should review the edits to the selected images for the 2026 Update to Houdini Tower.

PROJECT DETAILS

At the March 4 Public Arts Committee meeting, the Committee decided to pursue the “Year of Houdini” theme. Creative Downtown Appleton Inc., in cooperation with the *Year of Houdini* volunteer group, are proposing to install photos of Harry Houdini to honor the 100th anniversary of Houdini’s passing. 2026 is being dubbed the “Year of Houdini” and the Society of American Magicians are hosting a convention in Appleton the first week of July. The panels will be paid for by private funds through Creative Downtown Appleton Inc. and installed by the City. The panels will be given to the Committee for future use. An agreement will need to be drafted between the City and Creative Downtown Appleton Inc. to memorialize the arrangement.

At the April 1 Public Arts Committee meeting, the Committee reviewed the 30+ Houdini images submitted by Creative Downtown Appleton Inc., the *Year of Houdini* volunteer group, and Alderperson Alex Schultz. The Committee selected 12 images with one alternate option (organized from top to bottom: NW: 37, 5A, 17; NE: 4 (alternate 8), 26, 16A; SW: 1, 38, 2A; and SE: 19A, 6, 30). The Committee moved that the images were to be cropped square, the resolution enhanced, and a black border added, which was completed by Committee member Jake Bauer. The edited images would be brought back to the committee for final review and consideration.

Appleton Public Arts Committee Action:

Review the edited images. Whatever the determination of the Committee, that decision should be recommended to the Parks and Recreation Committee.

Next Steps:

- March 4th, 2026 – Houdini theme chosen by Appleton Public Arts Committee

- April 1st, 2026 – Committee selects images and any edits to tiles proposed by Creative Downtown Appleton Inc., *Year of Houdini* volunteers, and Alderperson Alex Schultz
- April 22nd, 2026 – Committee reviews edits made to selected images and recommends decision to Parks and Recreation Committee (P&R)
- April 27th, 2026 – P&R reviews APAC recommendation and forwards to Common Council
- May 6th, 2026 – Common Council approves recommendation
- May-June 2026 – Production / Installation of updated photo tiles
- Photo tiles to be installed by **June 30th, 2026**