



# The Oswego Aesthetic



# Part I: About Aesthetic

# What is the Oswego aesthetic?

The Oswego aesthetic is a cohesive look that makes Oswego instantly identifiable and gives visitors a sense of connection to the community

It includes, but is not limited to, repeating colors, shapes, patterns and other design elements in the built environment

# Where is the Oswego aesthetic implemented?

Built environment:

- Public art
- Holiday decorations
- Façade program
- Signage, including wayfinding

Elsewhere:

- Festival design
- Echoed or complimented in promotional materials

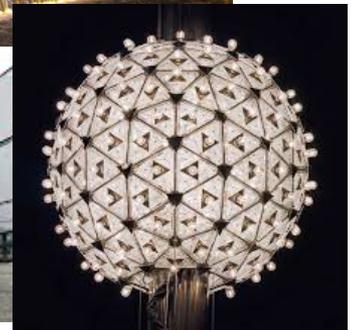
# Why do we have an Oswego aesthetic?

- The aesthetic is designed to evoke positive, memorable feelings about Oswego for residents and visitors.
- It creates a sense of belonging and connectedness for residents.
- It create a sense of place for visitors, a feeling that “sticks” after they leave.
- An aesthetic makes a community feel distinct from its neighbors.
- It makes a place, event, or publication instantly recognizable.

# Example: New York City



- Steel
- Skyscrapers
- Straight lines and rigid structures
- High contrast
- New
- Big
- Fast paced
- Exciting and "in your face"
- Glittering



**NYC**

# Example: Geneva



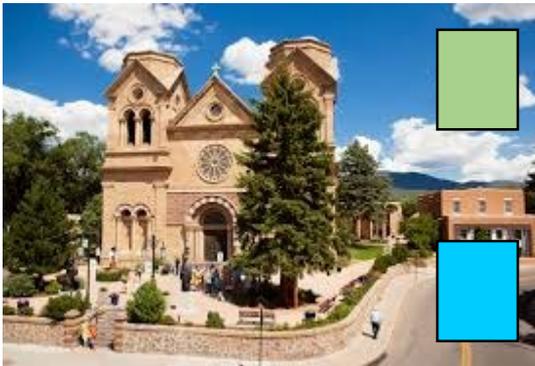
- River
- Midwestern elegance
- Brick
- Classic and charming
- Peaceful
- Traditional



# Example: Santa Fe



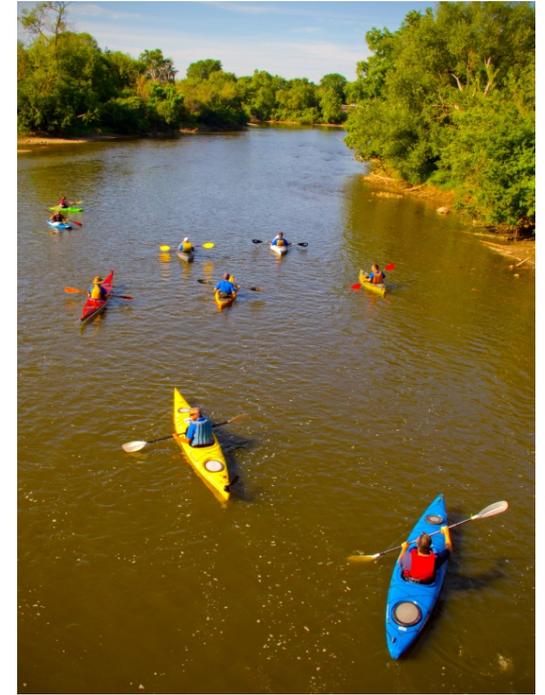
- Pueblo construction
- Soft edges
- Pottery
- Spanish and Mexican history
- Desert / natural materials
- Weathered and worn lines
- Handmade



# Part II: Current state

What we have upon which we would like to build.

# Current Oswego Built and Natural Environment



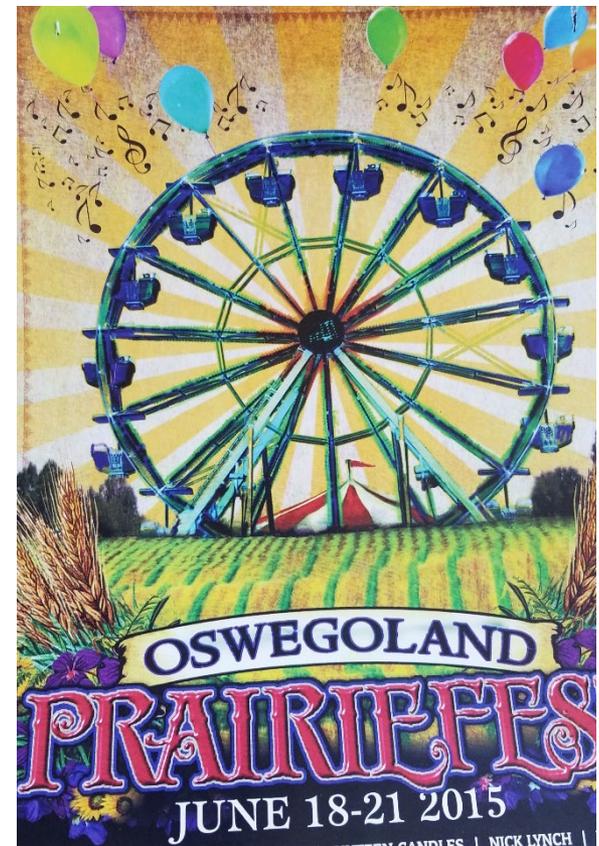
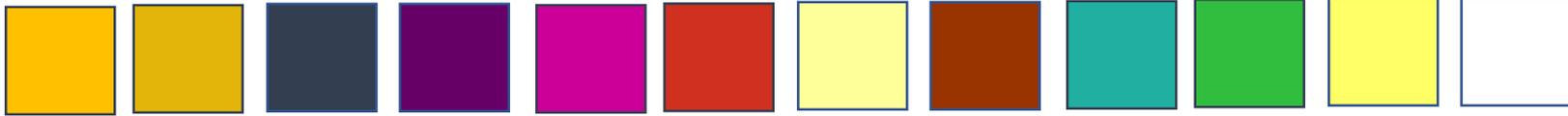
# Current Oswego branding



Both the municipal and marketing identities include:

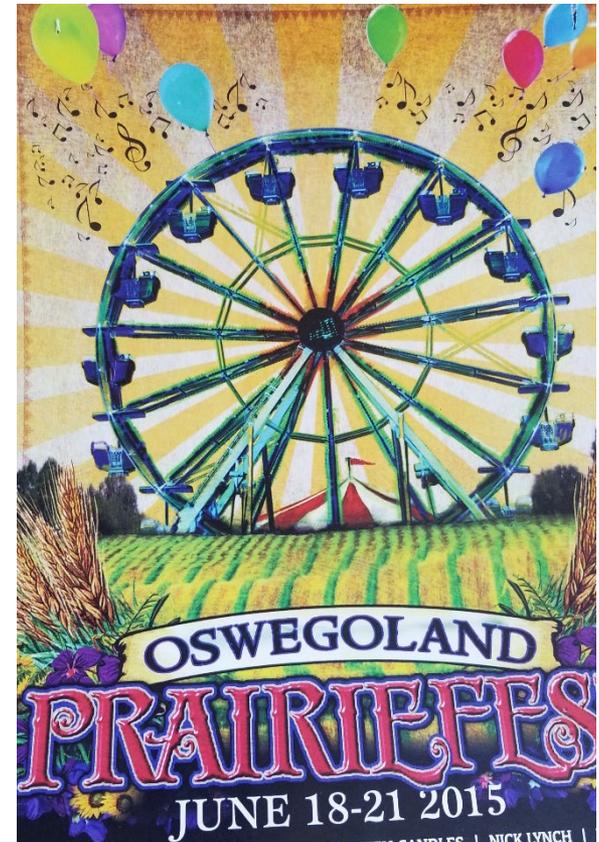
- Similar colors
- Reference to river, specifically its bend
- Reference to natural elements

# Repeating colors in community events



# Repeating themes in community events

- Alternating gold and off-white starburst background
- Wheels feature heavily, whether a Ferris wheel, flower petals around dark center, or the Beats & Eats seal
- Evoke a sense of suspended celebration and nostalgia
- Botanical and agricultural themes include wheat, hops, and flowers
- Curved lines in the stem of flower, banners, or waving cornfield visually dominate



# Repeating themes in community events



# Repeating themes in community events



# Current advertising campaigns

- Warm and playful
- Lots of white and gold
- Movement



# Current descriptors

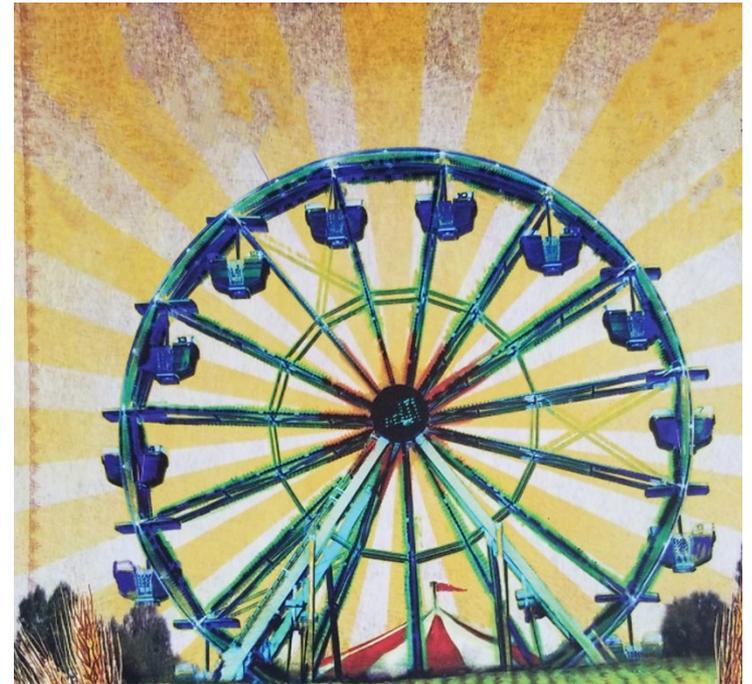
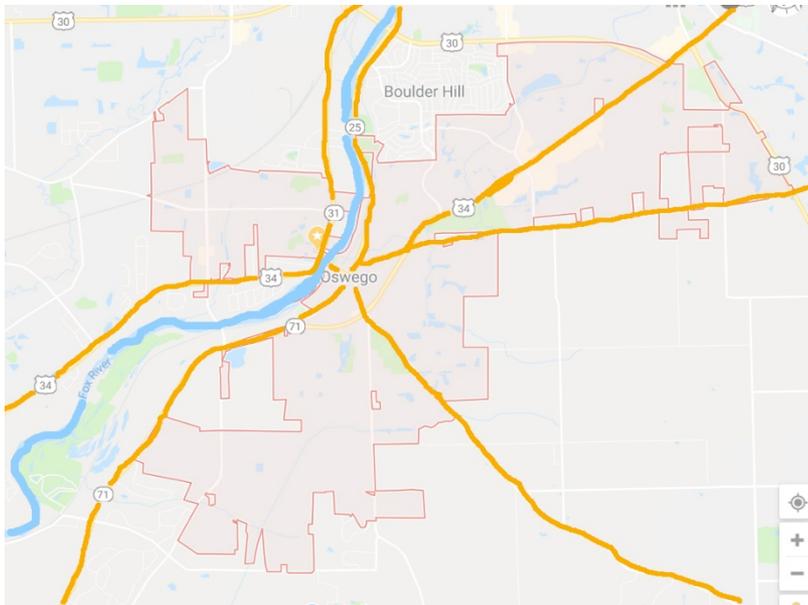
- River, especially the bend or curve
- Natural setting
- Warm
- Gathering, community
- Evoking curiosity, exploration
- Friendly
- Casual
- Old is new again (vintage, chalk paint, reclaimed wood)
- Flowing, organic, fluid
- 'Modern rural'

# Part III: Aspirations and Inspiration for Aesthetic Development

Ideas to develop in future additions to the built environment

# The Hub and Spokes

Oswego is and historically always has been a place of connection, and downtown Oswego aspires to be the hub. This appears in our art, in our geography, and in our strategies for economic development and public art that start with a strong, lively downtown presence, then reach outward to our other corridors and neighborhoods. This idea is particularly important to building an inclusive community that brings all Oswegoans together to interact, regardless of neighborhood or generations in Oswego.



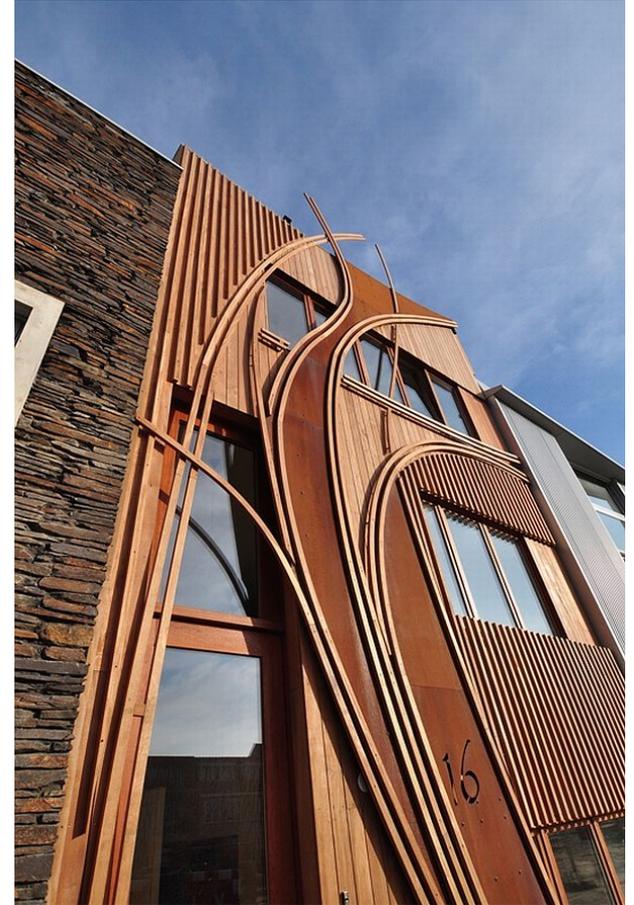
# Evoking curiosity and playfulness

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# The Built and Natural Environment

The best built environments relate to, interact with, and enhance the natural environment.



# Color Story

A more refined take on the colors already present in the build environment.

Colors draw heavily from an 'updated art nouveau' that also incorporates many free-flowing curves and botanical themes.

1890: Innovation, Gilded Age, Art Nouveau, Mauve, Cobalt Blue.



1900: Bungalow Movement, Silent Movies, Immigrants, Cubism, Organic/Simple Décor, Frank Lloyd Wright.



1910: Grand Central Station, Norman Rockwell, WWI, Working Women, Craftsman Style, Home Magazines (E.G., Good Housekeeping), Use Of Bolder, Richer T



# Probably not a fit

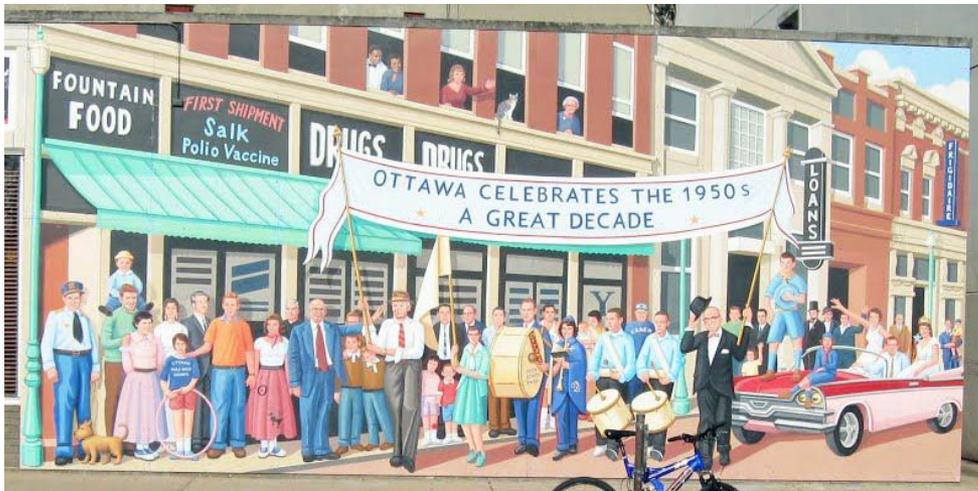
The following are examples of art that may be an excellent fit in other communities' public arts programs but probably do not achieve our current aesthetic goals



Pieces that only depict a moment in the past can feel too static...



Strictly representational art can blend into the background and fail to engage viewers or evoke emotion.



...and can fail to include diverse perspectives.



# We believe public art should...

- Tell a story or convey an idea
- Evoke an emotion
- Be aesthetically interesting: Make viewers pause and engage
- Include different people and perspectives
- Inspire and educate
- Be bold, transformative, and include new ideas, materials and technologies when appropriate