City of Sunnyvale

Agenda Item-No Attachments (PDF)

File #: 21-0652, **Version:** 1

REPORT TO ARTS COMMISSION

SUBJECT
Approve Art in Private Development Project - Google Humboldt Campus/242 Humboldt Court

BACKGROUND
Under the City's Art in Private Development Ordinance (Sunnyvale Municipal Code (SMC) Chapter 19.52), the Google Humboldt Campus project at 242 Humboldt Court is required to provide public art. This project was permitted in 2019 prior to the adoption of the Master Plan for Public Art in 2020. Therefore, it is subject to a minimum requirement of 1% of the project's construction valuation or $315,904.

The procedure established for reviewing the artwork is:
1) Review the artist's background, including their experience and ability to design, fabricate and install large-scale artwork(s).
2) Review the artwork to determine whether the nature and style of the artwork is appropriate for the site.
3) Determine whether the proposed artwork is appropriate in scale for the overall development.
4) Review the location of the artwork for accessibility to the public.
5) Review the maintenance and durability of the artwork.

The purpose of this report is to request the Arts Commission review and approve the proposed artwork. Under the Art in Private Development Ordinance, the Arts Commission is authorized to make a final determination on the proposed artwork and the City Council is not scheduled to consider this item.

EXISTING POLICY
Sunnyvale Municipal Code 19.52 - Art in Private Development

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW
The underlying project was for ministerial design review only, and therefore not subject to CEQA review.

DISCUSSION **Project Location:** The Google Humboldt project is located at 242 Humboldt Court, within the Moffett Park Specific Plan (MPSP) area (Attachment 1-Vicinity Map). It is east of Borregas Avenue, west of Innsbruck Drive, south of E. Java Drive, and north of Moffett Park. The site is encompassed by general office uses and research and development facilities.

Project Description: The new campus consists of four parcels equaling approximately 19.4 acres (Attachment 2-Site Plan). The original site included ten single-story structures totaling approximately 267,677 square feet. These existing structures have been demolished to allow for construction of

four two-story buildings with partial mezzanines intended for general office uses by Google. Extensive landscaping and gathering spaces, as well as 800 parking spaces are also included. The total square footage across the four buildings is approximately 400,199 square feet.

The buildings' exterior skin consists of precast concrete panels and a glass curtain wall. The buildings are configured on site to create an interior, fenced courtyard intended to provide a secure outdoor area for employees.

Artwork Location: The proposed location for the art is near the main visitor entrance to the campus along Humboldt Court, adjacent to, but outside of the fenced employee gathering area (Attachment 3 -Site Plan with Art Location). Although portions of the campus are located along what could be considered more heavily traveled roads (Borregas Avenue, Gibralter Drive and Innsbruck Drive), these frontages are lined with trees limiting available locations for artwork that would be visible to vehicular traffic. Additionally, the nature of the artwork concept, calls for a quieter, more tranquil area so that viewers can interact with the artwork as the artist intends.

Selected Artist: The selected artist for this project is Berkeley based interactive artist Po Shu Wang (Attachment 4-Artist's Resume). Mr. Wang has been creating temporary and permanent large-scale sculpture installations and public art since 1990, including national and international commissions.

Permanent installations by the artist can be viewed locally at Calabazas Library, San Jose; Sacramento Airport, Sacramento; Laguna Honda Hospital, San Francisco; Berkeley Downtown, Berkeley; Moscone Convention Center, San Francisco; and California Avenue, Palo Alto.

More information on the artist and visuals of his work can be found at livinglenses.com.

Artwork Proposal: The artist has designed an interactive, site-specific sculpture that resembles a scaled-up sheet of crumpled paper (Attachment 5-Renderings of Artwork). The viewer's movement, as they approach and move around the sculpture, will directly trigger an interactive aesthetic display of lights, accompanied by music and voices. A strategically placed plaque will invite interaction, without providing specific instructions.

Standing 14-feet high by 8-feet wide by 4-feet deep, the sculpture will be made of hand forged stainless sheets, layered over an engineered internal structure and finished with a highly durable dark gray paint. It will be anchored onto a concrete foundation below grade and centered within an 11 -feet diameter circle of lava rock gravel.

Just to the outside of the circle of lava rock gravel is an 8-foot wide circular concrete pathway or "tone ring." Visitors entering (from up to 9-foot away) or moving around the "tone ring" will trigger a hidden proximity sensor and will switch on the audio-visual display system. The display begins in the "ring light" encircling the sculpture at ground level. When idle, the ring light will continually emit a white ambient light that fluctuates according to environmental electro-magnetic activity at the site. When there is motion or the viewer stands in the concrete "tone ring" for more than three seconds in any of the 12 unmarked "color spots" a colored light corresponding to that invisible spot will circle around the outside of the ring light and an assigned musical note will sound (Attachment 6-"Tone Circle" Layout).

At the same time, a corresponding tongue-twister spoken in one of dozens of languages will be

triggered to play, first quietly and then more loudly, over the musical notes. Continued movement around the sculpture will cause changes in the light, musical notes and tongue-twisters, allowing the viewer to create their own individual experience or composition. The various "color spots" that activate the sensory changes are unmarked for the purpose of creating a continuous process of discovery and collaboration.

Inspired by a quote from Google's first corporate mission statement, "...to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful," the artist concludes that "all that has come and is coming into being, including us, can be considered to be parts of the continuous evolution of the information universe. And for our social purpose, only what we recognize as humanly useful is categorized as information, the rest is ambient noise… The sculpture's interactive loop puts us in contact with the (usually taken for granted) ambient noise and the influence of our own presence, creating a unique information output...where meaning is created out of chaos."

Lighting Plan: There are no additional lighting fixtures for the artwork. At night the site will be illuminated by nearby light poles and the artwork will be illuminated from the "ring light." When there is no one interacting with the art, the ring light will continually emit a white light, but when there is interaction, the light ring will adjust to the data stream being provided by the artwork's sensors and turn the corresponding color.

Maintenance: The sculpture is designed to be highly durable outdoors and easy to maintain. It will require periodic rinsing with water to remove dust and an application of a high-performance car wax hybrid every 9-12 months. The wax will also make graffiti removal easy if needed. The LED lights will be an outdoor architectural type silicone sealed strip light with a life expectancy of six to eight years and can be easily replaced using off-the-shelf lighting.

All electrical elements have been designed with minimal, inexpensive and easy to find components. The elements create a standalone unit that requires no upgrade or web connectivity. A detailed maintenance manual will be provided to Google's facilities department.

The property owner is responsible for the on-going maintenance and associated costs of the artwork. As with all private development artworks, if the artwork falls into disrepair, or does not perform properly, staff will work with the property owner to address this concern. If the artwork is not properly maintained there is the potential for fines to be imposed.

Art Bond: The City has collected a security in the form of a bond to guarantee installation of the art. The bond will be held until completion of the public art requirement, consistent with SMC Chapter 19.52 (Art in Private Development). The requirement will be deemed complete when the following conditions are met:

1. Installation of the art.
2. Installation of a plaque identifying the artwork and artist.
3. Registration of the artwork, and the property owner's obligation to maintain the artwork, with the County of Santa Clara.
4. Verification that the 1% expenditure has been met.

FISCAL IMPACT
If approved, the developer will be responsible for the design, fabrication, and installation, as well as ongoing maintenance costs of the artwork. There is no fiscal impact on the City's operating budget

other than incidental staff time to monitor the project, which is budgeted in the Art in Private Development Program.

PUBLIC CONTACT
Public contact was made through posting of the Arts Commission agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board, on the City's website, and the availability of the agenda and report in the Office of the City Clerk.

ALTERNATIVES
1. Recommend approval of the artwork as it is proposed.
2. Do not recommend approval of the artwork as it is proposed.

RECOMMENDATION
1. Recommend approval of the artwork as it is proposed.

Prepared by: Kristin Dance, Recreation Services Coordinator II
Approved by: Trenton Hill, Recreation Services Manager

ATTACHMENTS
1. Vicinity Map
2. Site Plan
3. Site Plan with Art Location
4. Artist's Resume
5. Renderings of Artwork
6. "Tone Circle" Layout