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REPORT TO COUNCIL

SUBJECT
Approve an Allocation from the Public Art Acquisition Fund for up to $100,000 for Prefabricated Sculptures Modified by Artists

BACKGROUND
In November 2020, City Council adopted the Master Plan for Public Art (RTC No. 20-0865). The goal of the plan was to enhance the visual landscape of the community by broadening the scope of existing public art programs. The plan also provides specific goals and resource allocation procedures to guide short and long-term decision-making for public art, including expenditures from the Public Art Acquisition Fund. Currently, the Public Art Acquisition Fund has approximately $622,000 from donations, in-lieu fees, and earned interest.

Staff is requesting City Council allocate up to $100,000 from the Public Art Acquisition Fund for temporary prefabricated sculptures modified by artists. Once funding for this project is approved, staff will further define the project and establish a selection committee to begin artist selection. The Arts Commission will review and make recommendations, and the City Council will have final approval of each design concept.

EXISTING POLICY
Council Policy 6.04.01 Arts - Goals and Policies (Policy A.1, A.2, B.3, E.1.)
Council Policy 6.04.04 Art in Public Places
Municipal Code Chapter 19.52 - Art in Private Development
General Plan, Chapter 4, Community Character - Design (Policy CC 1.1, 1.1c, 1.1d, 1.4, 1.8a/b/c/d/e/f, 6.1, 9.1, 9.1c)

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW
Approving an allocation from the Public Art Acquisition Fund does not constitute a “project” with the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378 (b) (4) in that is a fiscal activity that does not involve any commitment to any specific project which may result in a potential significant impact on the environment. CEQA review for individual art projects will be completed as design is determined and projects are brought forward for approval; staff anticipates that the projects contemplated for this fiscal year will qualify for exemptions.

DISCUSSION
The Master Plan for Public Art provides a resource allocation procedure for utilizing the Public Art Acquisition Fund, which currently has approximately $622,000 that is earmarked for public art projects.

As part of the Master Plan engagement process, a survey identified the top two public art categories

preferred by the community as (1) art that is functional and (2) small scale, whimsical art. Additional study sessions and brainstorming meetings with City Council and Arts Commission also identified projects that are considered temporary in nature as a priority. Based on this feedback, staff defined possible art projects and developed a community survey asking the public to identify their preferred public art concept in the areas of (1) art that is functional; (2) small scale, whimsical art and (3) temporary/rotating art (Attachment 1 - Public Art Projects Survey).

In May 2021, the Arts Commission reviewed the public survey results and provided their rankings (Attachment 2 - Arts Commission Project Rankings). Staff is now requesting funding to begin implementing the top ranked project in the temporary category:

Temporary or Rotating Art: Placement of prefabricated sculptures altered by artists throughout City spaces (Attachment 3 - Examples of Prefabricated Sculptures Altered by Artists)

- Estimated costs: between $2,000 and $5,000 per sculpture (depending on number of sculptures and size), for a maximum of $100,000.
- Goals: To create an iconic program that is distinctly Sunnyvale, provide fun and unexpected discoveries, invite exploration of Sunnyvale, and establish a distinctive Sunnyvale icon.

Once City Council has allocated Public Art Acquisition Funds, the project will go through the public art review process outlined in Council Policy 6.4.4-Art in Public Places:

1) Distribute a Request for Qualifications/Call for Artists.
2) Establish a Review Committee to shortlist qualified artists.
3) Invite selected artists to develop and submit conceptual proposals.
4) Arts Commission review and recommendation of artists for each project.

City Council review of Arts Commission recommendation and final approval of the artists and their design concepts.

Following artist approval by Council, staff will work with the selected artist to further define their concept, execute their approved design, and install the completed art piece.

FISCAL IMPACT

Funding will be allocated through the Public Art Acquisition Fund with no fiscal impact on the City's General Fund. As of the end of FY 2020/21, there is an estimated balance of approximately $622,000 available in the Public Art Acquisition fund that is collected as an in-lieu on eligible non-residential developments. The 1.1% in-lieu fee collected from private developments also includes an additional 0.1% fee to help defer future maintenance costs associated with works commissioned through the Public Art Acquisition Fund.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Council agenda on the City's official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall, Sunnyvale Public Library and Department of Public Safety. In addition, the agenda and report are available at the Office of the City Clerk and on the City's website.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Approve an allocation from the Public Art Acquisition Fund for up to $100,000 for prefabricated sculptures modified by artists.
2. Approve an allocation from the Public Art Acquisition Fund for a different dollar amount for prefabricated sculptures modified by artists.
3. Do not approve funding from the Public Art Acquisition Fund at this time.
4. Other alternative as provided by Council.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Alternative 1: Approve an allocation from the Public Art Acquisition Fund for up to $100,000 for prefabricated sculptures modified by artists.

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Reviewed by: Cherise Brandell, Director of Library and Recreation Services
Reviewed by: Chip Taylor, Director of Public Works
Reviewed by: Tim Kirby, Director of Finance
Reviewed by: Teri Silva, Assistant City Manager
Approved by: Kent Steffens, City Manager

ATTACHMENTS

1. Public Art Projects Survey
2. Arts Commission Project Rankings
3. Examples of Prefabricated Sculptures Modified by Artists