



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:18-2904

Agenda Item Number: 3.

Agenda Date: 4/17/2018

In Control: Arts, Culture and Heritage Committee

DEPARTMENT: Department of Arts & Culture

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Debbie Racca-Sittre

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: All

Briefing and possible action of the following items related to Public Art: (A) Adopting the Public Art Strategy; (B) Approving a Pre-Qualified List of Public Art Professionals to be available for selection by the San Antonio Arts Commission and/or contracting through the Department of Arts & Culture for projects that have available funding; and (C) Authorizing the submittal of, and acceptance upon award, of a 2018 Public Art Challenge grant application to Bloomberg Philanthropies, in an amount not to exceed \$1,000,000 for two years beginning late 2018, including up to \$2,000,000 in 2017 Bond Funds as match.

SUMMARY:

This item provides a briefing and possible action on the Public Art Strategy which will enhance public art policies, prioritizes community input on public art project development, expands the artist selection process and proposes neighborhood and signature projects that align with community desires. Additionally, the Department of Arts & Culture is requesting approval to submit a grant application to Bloomberg Philanthropies.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Cul-TÚ-Art Plan is a coordinated planning document that will be used to guide the City of San Antonio's investments in the arts to provide equitable opportunities that encourage San Antonio's arts community, residents, and visitors to thrive in a culturally inclusive environment that celebrates San Antonio's identity.

There are six components to the Cul-TÚ-Art Plan: Film, Centro De Artes, Arts Funding, Music, Cultural Districts, and Public Art. The public outreach for the Cul-TU-Art Plan was extensive and included a Community Wide Survey, seven public meetings, stakeholder briefings, and meetings in each Council District. The most recent component of the Plan to be completed was the Public Art Strategy.

The San Antonio Arts Commission and Curatorial Committee served as the Steering Committee for the Strategy with policy direction from the Arts, Culture, and Heritage Council Committee. Additionally, the City benchmarked other cities to include Houston, Dallas, San Diego, Austin, Phoenix, and Chicago.

ISSUE:

This item provides a briefing and possible action on the Public Art Strategy which will enhance public art policies, prioritize community input on public art project development, expand the artist selection process and propose neighborhood and signature projects that align with community desires. Additionally, the Department of Arts & Culture is requesting approval to submit a grant application to Bloomberg Philanthropies.

Public Art Strategy: Enhance existing art policies and streamline processes.

Throughout the course of the next several months, the department will be working with the community, stakeholders and other departments to develop mural policy. We will refine the maintenance strategy to ensure proper care of our existing public art assets. Additionally, through the use of process maps and best practices we will develop updated and streamlined procedures within an open transparent process which will result in including public art language in Unified Development Code.

Public Art Strategy: Expand the Artist Selection Process.

Artist selections and new art commissions and/or acquisitions will follow best practices for public art administration, including using recommendations of expert curators to explore potential artists; including, but not limited to, the City's annual open call process which is a tool to allow local artist access to opportunities and mentorship.

As recommended by consultant and best practices, the San Antonio Arts Commission has created a Curatorial Committee composed of the chief curators from various local arts institutions such as the McNay, Blue Star, Carver and Mexican Cultural Institute. The Curatorial Committee makes recommendations to the Arts Commission with regard to artists and art work and has recommended eighteen curated artists as a part of the pre-qualified list.

The Department of Arts & Culture issued an Open Call for Artists as part of competitive and curated process to update the City's pre-qualified list of Public Art Professionals. This year, nearly 300 submittals were reviewed and scored in the categories of public artist, public art support services, and collaborative partners. In March, the San Antonio Arts Commission approved a list of 195 recommended public art professionals based on the open competition process and recommendations of the Commission's Curatorial Advisory Committee.

The City may contract with these prequalified art professionals such as art handlers, conservators, installers, documentarians and arts non-profits that can assist with project oversight and logistics. The prequalified list of artists allows the City to contract for design services, selection, acquisition, fabrication, installation, conservation, and display of artworks. Inclusion in the pre-qualified list does not guarantee a contracting opportunity. Final artist selections for projects are a result of close coordination with City departments, community members, local art professionals and the Public Art Committee of the San Antonio Arts Commission and are reviewed and approved by the San Antonio Arts Commission.

Public Art Strategy: Enhance Community Input for Neighborhood Projects.

The department will host regional meetings and provide maps of existing public art overlaid with locations of 2017 bond projects as potential opportunities. This process will build relationships between community, projects and locations. We will listen to diverse voices and narratives to develop sense of neighborhood identity. Local area artists and others can be engaged to create public art that will connect city-wide to tell the stories of their neighborhoods and provide them with visibility to wider audiences.

Public Art Strategy: Develop Signature Projects.

The department will collaborate with partners to develop a new downtown public art garden “The T” on the river walk that will connect neighborhoods with downtown. This curated site will be connective, artist driven, accessible, dynamic and innovative. Three garden areas within the project footprint will be developed as spaces for large-scale character-defining artworks. An additional 5-7 locations have been identified for wall-mounted or free-standing three-dimensional works. These locations will be employed to debut artworks from the neighborhood projects. After their debut at the T, artworks will be relocated and sited in public spaces throughout San Antonio.

Bloomberg Public Art Challenge Grant

The Department of Arts and Culture is seeking authorization to submit a Public Art Challenge grant application, and authorize the acceptance of funds if awarded, from Bloomberg Philanthropies. Bloomberg Philanthropies’ Public Art Challenge is a component of the American Cities Initiative, which helps U.S. cities generate innovation and advance policy. The Public Art Challenge encourages cities to partner with artists to access the value of the creative sector in developing solutions to significant urban issues. The program supports temporary public art projects that celebrate creativity, enhance urban identity, encourage public-private collaborations, and strengthen local economies.

The Department of Arts and Culture proposes to partner with San Antonio River Authority, Luminaria, and other artists and arts non-profits, to implement a program of temporary, pop-up activations, and festivals to engage and connect neighborhoods in all ten City Council Districts with the San Antonio river downtown. The goal of the program is to create a respectful, yet celebratory, connection between the community and the river to engage the community through public art to recognize the importance of sustainability of our creeks and rivers.

ALTERNATIVES:

If the Arts Culture and Heritage Committee does not approve the Public Art Strategies, the department will delay work on 2017 bond projects until a suitable plan can be development. Additionally, the City may choose not to apply for and accept Public Art Challenge funding, however, the City would need to explore other funding sources for temporary art and activations or focus only on permanent public art.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The pre-qualified list of public art professionals whose services may be contracted to implement public art projects established by the public art plan in an amount not-to-exceed the eligible budget allocation. There is no fiscal impact to the Department of Arts & Culture encumbered by this ordinance. All contracts are subject to the Public Art Policy adopted by City Council in 2011, as may be subsequently amended, and to the availability of

funds in the adopted city budget.

This item also authorizes the Department of Arts and Culture to submit a grant application to Bloomberg Philanthropies' Public Art Challenge and to accept resultant funds up to \$1,000,000 over two years. The City would use up to \$2,000,000 in Public Art Funds from the 2017 General Obligation Bond to implement the Public Art / bond eligible portions of the project. Grant funding would be used for temporary art, art activations and to hire a curator.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff and the San Antonio Arts Commission recommend approval of the Public Art Strategy and approval to go to City Council for consideration of the Pre-Qualified List of Public Art Professionals and authorization to submit a grant application to Bloomberg Philanthropies' Public Art Challenge.