



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:20-5820

Agenda Item Number: 3.

Agenda Date: 10/5/2020

In Control: Culture and Neighborhood Services Committee

DEPARTMENT: Arts & Culture

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Debbie Racca-Sittre, Director

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT: Briefing and possible action on policies related to Public Art, Design Enhancement, and Art in Private Development.

SUMMARY:

Briefing and possible action on policies related to Public Art, Design Enhancement, and Art in Private Development.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

On July 22, 2020, Councilman Treviño submitted a Council Consideration Request (CCR) requesting the creation of a comprehensive Art WORKS Program in San Antonio. This program includes three policy components: 1) Increase City investment in Public Art from 1% to 2% of all eligible capital projects; 2) Develop a Design Enhancement policy; and 3) Develop an Art in Private Development policy.

1. Public Art Funding: For over twenty years, the City of San Antonio has allocated public art funding as part of its capital improvement program's strategy and to take into consideration when art and cultural opportunities can enhance our city's infrastructure projects, such as streets, drainage, parks, libraries, community facilities, and many more significant capital projects throughout all council districts.

City Council first adopted a policy to fund Public Art at 1% of eligible capital projects in 1996. The policy was rescinded in 1997 and the program was moved from the Department of Arts & Cultural Affairs to Public Works as a design enhancement program. In 2001, City Council approved Public Art & Design Enhancement as a part of the Unified Development Code (UDC) project funds along with all other staff managing the capital program. In 2011, City Council adopted a policy designating 1 % of all

eligible capital projects to be set aside for Public Art and the program was moved from Public Works to the Department for Culture and Creative Development (now called the Department of Arts & Culture). Budget for staff of the Public Art Program remained allocated within Public Works capital project funds as a transfer to the Arts & Culture Fund. The 2012 General Obligation Bond was the first time the 1% public art funds were pooled by proposition to allow for larger art projects.

2. Design Enhancement: Design Enhancement policy would create a program that results in elements of projects designed by an artist/craftsman or an artist/craftsman in collaboration with the project architect, landscape architect or engineer. Artists would inform and help guide the design of a capital project with the purpose of making ordinary components of the capital project more beautiful, artistic and culturally significant.
3. Art in Private Development: The goal of the Art in Private Development Policy is to provide enhanced property values, and an improved appearance of the community through creative and properly maintained privately owned art in public view and provide more economic opportunity for artists. Art in Private Development policies exist in other cities mostly in California. The CCR notes that given the uncertainty caused by COVID-19, this portion of the policy should include ample stakeholder involvement and only go into effect after emergency orders are lifted.

ISSUE:

1. Public Art: This policy would amend the current Public Art policy to increase the city's investment in public art from 1% to 2% of all capital improvement projects contained in the City's capital improvement program. Policy would be applicable to all eligible capital projects approved on or after January 1, 2021 and would also include TIF collections. The current Public Art policy would also be updated to include changes in names of departments, commissions, committees and streamlined processes that promote equity, diversity and transparency. The policy would also create a process for the review and permitting of art projects on City property or right of way when requested by community groups.

There are two options being presented to the Committee for consideration and relate to the funding of Public Art project management staff within the capital program. Option A keeps the staff who manage the public art program funded within the larger pool Public Works funded projects as is done today and Option B moves the funding for staff into the 2% allocation for public art.

2. Design Enhancement: The Public Works Department and the Department of Arts & Culture have started work on a pilot Design Enhancement program. There are nineteen projects identified by Public Works which will be reviewed for feasibility for this program with the goal of developing parameters for projects that would be appropriate for design enhancement as well as an implementation process. A twentieth project is being reviewed currently.
3. Art in Private Development: This policy is not yet ready for review by the Committee. Governance Committee has voted to have this program vetted through the UDC amendment process and reviewed by the Culture & Neighborhood Services and Planning & Community Development Committees after community engagement.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Public Art: Staff recommends that the policy discussion on Public Art investment proceed to the full City Council.
2. Design Enhancement: Staff recommends to continue with the pilot project and return to Culture & Neighborhood Services Committee with an update on the status of the pilot and recommendations at a later date.
3. Art in Private Development Policy is much of a larger conversation within the confines of the UDC and should be done as a part of the UDC amendment process.