



Legislation Text

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CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM

ACTION REQUESTED:

Receive the staff report and approve the recommendations regarding creating a Public Art program administered by the City of Naperville

DEPARTMENT: City Clerk's Office

SUBMITTED BY: Pam Gallahue, PhD, Director-City Clerk

BOARD/COMMISSION REVIEW:

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BACKGROUND:

At its February 4, 2020 meeting under New Business, the City Council directed staff to discuss the future of public art with the SECA Commission, Century Walk, community members, and other interested parties and to bring back recommendations for developing a public art strategic plan. As a follow-up, on June 16, 2020 under New Business, the City Council asked about the status of the February 4 direction. The city manager responded that staff from the City Clerk's Office and members of the SECA Commission began meeting in February to discuss the development of a public art strategic plan, but challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic forced the initiative to stall until just recently. He said that staff will bring an update to the Council on July 21.

DISCUSSION:

The Vision

Public art is how a municipality can showcase its heritage, values, and vision. Over the years, advancements in art mediums have generated opportunities to expand beyond murals, sculptures, and reliefs. By embracing new media and technology, and taking a wholistic approach as to how the City views and approves art, Naperville can position itself to challenge and surprise the public while providing an intersection between the past, present, and future.

The Need

Even prior to the recent national events, the City of Naperville realized it had a responsibility to advocate for, and be the leader of, a more diverse and strategic art program. The spring incidents of civil unrest only reinforced the urgency to apply the city's goals of innovation and inclusivity to a public art program. Furthermore, the City is currently aware of disparate, and potentially competing, projects. Having one program administered by the City will not only bring independent oversight, but also much needed coordination and vetting of art proposals.

The Collaboration

To ensure the views of stakeholders were incorporated, staff and commission members have

included representatives from Century Walk and other area experts in the art field in conversations regarding this initiative. Topics included strategic planning, funding, applications, different art mediums, installation locations, potential artists, and program goals. The consensus was to solicit what the community's vision is and create a plan to consolidate proposals for, and the application and funding of, art projects on public property that support that vision.

The Research

Staff surveyed municipalities via the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) resource and found that, for a municipality the size of Naperville, it is odd to not have a strategic plan as well as a city commission responsible for vetting, prioritizing, and funding public art installations. Staff is currently reviewing the program of each of the following cities that utilize some form of municipal commission oversight:

El Cerrito, CA
Boise, ID
Rockford, IL
Auburn, WA

Loveland, CO
Flossmoor, IL
Des Moines, IA
Roanoke, VA

East Lansing, MI
Tacoma, WA
Wichita, KS

The Recommendation

Given the interest and momentum to create a public art program, as an initial step, staff and the SECA Commission recommend releasing an RFP for a consultant to assist with not only developing a long-term strategic plan, but also guiding the City on best practices to establish a group to coordinate public art initiatives in Naperville. The consultant would be managed by staff and members of the SECA Commission. However, we anticipate Century Walk representatives, members of the art community, and residents being included during the different phases of the project.

At this time, based on initial research, we estimate the cost of a consultant to be approximately \$20,000-\$25,000. Staff is requesting the Council concur with the recommendation to release the RFP in 2020. The 2020 SECA Grant Fund underspend may be used to award the contract and work would be set to begin in January 2021. This schedule would allow for the project to be established and ready to accept applications later in the year. Going forward, the public art program would be funded as a part of the annual SECA Grant Fund awards.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The 2020 underspend from the SECA Grant Fund will be used to fund the consultant and the public art program awards will be funded as part of the annual SECA Grant Fund awards.