



Agenda Report

20-1426

Agenda Date: 1/6/2020

REPORT TO CULTURAL COMMISSION

SUBJECT

Discussion of the Utility Box Art Program

BACKGROUND

In 2012, the Santa Clara Cultural Commission began a pilot Utility Box Art Program (Program) to deter graffiti and add art to approved utility objects throughout the City. The program was put on hold in early 2018 to address program concerns. At a joint dinner meeting of the Cultural Commission and City Council on September 11, 2018, the Cultural Commission and City Council discussed the status of the Program. The Cultural Commission shared an interest in reinstating the Program upon review and revision by the City Attorney's Office.

At the December 3, 2018 Cultural Commission meeting, Deputy City Attorney Diana Fazely presented an update and recommendations on how to proceed with the Utility Box Art Program. The Commission approved a motion to "accept the City Attorney's Office recommendation and defer program guideline revisions to the Cultural Commission's Arts in the Public Spaces subcommittee". Subcommittee members met in January 2019 and drafted new program guidelines. After City Attorney review, a new application, guidelines and artist agreement for the Program were created.

On April 1, 2019, subcommittee members reviewed the Program application and presented the Cultural Commission with an update as part of the Commission's Work Plan agenda item. On April 15, the 2019 Utility Box Art Program application was released to the public and art community. By the May 13, 2019 due date, nineteen (19) applications were received and were eligible for Commission consideration.

At the June 4, 2019 meeting of the Commission five (5) artist applications were approved. At the time of this report, two artists have completed the artwork on the utility boxes, and three artists are in process and should be completed by the end of January 2020.

Five (5) traffic control signal boxes were approved by Public Work Department and Silicon Valley Power for use in the 2019 Utility Box Art Program. The box location, project status and themes are:

- Lafayette/Lexington - Completed - *Frida*
- Lafayette/Franklin - Completed - *Happiness Around the World*
- Benton/Pomeroy - In Process - *Representation*
- Monroe/Chromite - In Process - *Santa Clara Looking into the Past*
- Monroe/Meadowbrook - In Process - *Saving Water*

DISCUSSION

The Commission will review the 2019 Utility Box Art Program and discuss potential next steps for the

Program. The Commission could consider developing a marketing piece that could highlight the artists, boxes and provide additional informational about the program. Other aspects of the Program consideration and discussion could include identifying additional utility box locations and call for artists in 2020, matching existing 2019 artist applicants with new utility box locations, or initiate the study of a new public art program for 2020 different than the utility box program which may require additional research, review and separate Council approval from the existing Program.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The action being considered does not constitute a “project” within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines section 15378(b)(5) in that it is a governmental organizational or administrative activity that will not result in direct or indirect changes in the environment.

PUBLIC CONTACT

Public contact was made by posting the Cultural Commission’s agenda on the City’s official-notice bulletin board outside City Hall Council Chambers. A complete agenda packet is available on the City’s website and in the City Clerk’s Office at least 72 hours prior to a Regular Meeting and 24 hours prior to a Special Meeting. A hard copy of any agenda report may be requested by contacting the City Clerk’s Office at (408) 615-2220, e-mail clerk@santaclaraca.gov or at the public information desk at any City of Santa Clara public library.

RECOMMENDATION

There is no staff recommendation.

Reviewed by: Kimberly Castro, Recreation Manager

Approved by: James Teixeira, Director of Parks & Recreation