

TO: CITY ARTS COMMISSION

FROM: Library Services Department
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PREPARED BY: Tim Hetherton

TITLE: Art Site Suitability

RECOMMENDATION:

Because the purpose of the Art Site Suitability Ad Hoc Subcommittee is encompassed by the Arts Master Plan, Staff recommends that the City Arts Commission sunset the Art Site Suitability Ad Hoc Subcommittee. The Art Site Suitability Ad Hoc Subcommittee's conclusions will be memorialized and submitted to the Arts Master Plan Steering Committee to help inform their ongoing work.

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS:

No funding requirement.

DISCUSSION:

The City Arts Commission tasked the Art Site Suitability Ad Hoc Subcommittee (Commissioners Magrutsche (chair), Ware, and Logan) to identify and assess potential sites for public art placement. However, the newly formed Arts Master Plan Steering Committee's work will encompass much of what the Art Site Suitability Subcommittee has focused upon. Therefore, the City Arts Commission should sunset the Art Site Suitability Ad Hoc Subcommittee and provide the team's resulting work to the Arts Master Plan Steering Committee.

BACKGROUND:

In March 2014, the Subcommittee commenced to prepare a study to evaluate public places within the City for appropriateness to host public art within the context of an overall vision for public art in the City. The Subcommittee established the following methodology for completing a site suitability study:

1. Stakeholder information gathering (*What People Think*) – the Subcommittee planned to solicit input from key stakeholder groups (Recreation and Senior Services, Public Works, Library Services) on how to facilitate implementation of a Council-sanctioned vision.
2. Nurture vision, aligned with Key Organizing Principles (*the Big Idea*) – The Subcommittee would evaluate resident and guest demographics and inclinations; analyze neighborhood and district development; study the relationship between venues, ventures, and promotions, i.e., performing arts, film, visual art, etc.
3. Determine suitability criteria (*What We Need*) – The Subcommittee established the following criteria for suitable art sites:
 - A.) Visibility, civic presence, and public exposure;
 - B.) Active or passive site;
 - C.) Public Use Level;
 - D.) Security;
 - E.) Scale and Contrast;

- F.) Exposure to weather;
 - G.) Susceptibility to vandalism.
4. Inventory potential locations and assign attributes (*What We Have*) – Determine space or building type, designate area size, describe locations, and impose suitability criteria. Evaluate, categorize, and rank locations per criteria.
 5. Identify process for actual art site selection and design review (*How to Implement*) – test the process with a trial application.
 6. Document and package report (*The Suitability Analysis*) – The report was to include an online database of sites and their suitability for specific types of art.

After establishing this methodology, the Art Site Suitability Subcommittee met in April 2014. This group requested the assistance of Fong Tse of Public Works, and Janet Cates of the Recreation and Senior Services Department Dept. Initial discussions revealed that there are a limited number of sites that provide the required exposure for public art. In addition, these sites lack the required infrastructure to display art appropriately and in a manner that would make artwork the most enjoyable. The Committee is wary that placing art in spaces without considering their suitability amounts to “plop art”, the pejorative term for public art that connotes that the work is inappropriate to its surroundings and thoughtlessly “plopped” where it lies. Therefore, the biggest challenge for the City is to add art to public locations that were initially planned without art. The team also suggested pursuing interns with either an urban planning or public art background to assist with the project.

CONCLUSION:

Upon dissolution, the Art Site Suitability Ad Hoc Subcommittee believes their work on the project should serve to inform the consultant and Master Arts Plan Steering Committee. Commissioners Ware, Magrutsche, and Logan urge Arts OC and the Master Plan Steering Committee to review and integrate their Committee work so as to maximize the effectiveness of the City Arts Master Plan.

NOTICING:

This agenda item has been noticed according to the Brown Act (72 hours in advance of the meeting at which the City Arts Commission considers the item).