



Administrative Report

J.1., File # PA24-0721

Meeting Date: 4/26/2024

To: PUBLIC ART COMMISSION

From: GARY MARGOLIS, CULTURAL ARTS MANAGER
HAUSE, INTERIM COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR ELIZABETH

TITLE

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING A REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ) FOR A PUBLIC ART CONSULTANT TO SUPPORT THE ARTESIA PUBLIC ART PROJECT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On January 9, 2024, City Council approved the staff recommendations for a creative placemaking project along Artesia Boulevard between Inglewood Avenue and Aviation Boulevard. Included among the staff recommendations was “conceptually approve the utilization of a Public Art Consultant to support the Artesia Art Acquisition effort, not to exceed 10% of the total project budget.” Attached to this report is the first draft of a “Request for Qualifications for a Public Art Consultant,” which the Public Art Commission discussed at its March 27, 2024 meeting. Among the questions raised by commissioners at that meeting were 1) Why is a consultant needed when the City has a Public Art Commission? and 2) If a contractor is hired, how will the valuable expertise of the Commission continue to be used? At the conclusion of their discussion, the commissioners directed staff to set a date for a special meeting of the Public Arts Commission in April to continue discussing this item and engage the grant writing consultant to explore availability of art grants along Artesia and Redondo Beach to present to the Commission at an upcoming meeting. This item is the continuation of that discussion.

BACKGROUND

City Council has a long history of pursuing economic and social development projects for the Artesia Boulevard corridor, a major east-west thoroughfare through Redondo Beach. Most recently, on December 8, 2020, City Council approved the “Artesia & Aviation Corridors Area Plan,” a long-term comprehensive strategy for the development of a corridor that includes sections of both Artesia Boulevard and Aviation Boulevard. Included in that plan are recommendations that strongly encourage the use of works of public art in multiple ways.

The City Council has also expressed its desire to use public art along Artesia Boulevard in its May 2023 Strategic Plan when it identified the following objective: “Provide a report to Council on the feasibility of an archway on Artesia Boulevard and the process to invite design ideas for a public art archway project.” At the January 17, 2023 meeting, the City Council considered the item and directed staff to broaden the scope of the creative placemaking project by including as much public art in as many locations along Artesia Boulevard as possible (the Project).

At its January 9, 2024 meeting, the City Council approved the staff-recommended procurement process and a Phase 1 funding scenario, which, when formally approved (a 4/5 Budget Modification Resolution is required), will appropriate \$400,000 to the Project. In addition, City Council approved the utilization of a public art consultant to support the project at a cost not to exceed 10% of the total project budget, and in consideration of the procurement process for the Consultant, City Council approved the application of RMBC 2-6.09 which states that “bids need not be received in any case where the City is depending upon the skill, integrity, judgment, and ability of the service rather than the dollar cost of the direct labor and material going into the service.”

As a first step in the process to identify and select a Public Art Consultant for the Project, staff developed the attached first draft of a “Request for Qualifications.” At their March 27, 2024 meeting, the commissioners discussed the “Scope of Work” and asked why a consultant was needed when there are commissioners who can do the work? The main reason why staff believed a consultant was necessary is to expedite the achievement of the project’s goals, i.e. the installation of as many works of public art along Artesia Boulevard as possible. While the Commission does, in fact, include seven individuals, all possessing skills critical for a public art consultant, history has shown, that even with the addition of paid staff (who have responsibilities other than public art), public art projects were not being completed. Indeed, other than the wrapping of utility boxes, the City has not completed a public art project since 2018 when Gordon Huether’s “Waves” was installed on the Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center. It takes a tremendous amount of dedicated focused time to research, procure and present a cohesive art project. A consultant can do that in an expedited manner.

Following are the ways the commissioners could collaborate with a consultant, both individually and collectively:

Task 1: Existing Conditions Assessment - Commissioners could do the following:

- Help the consultant identify the existing examples of public art along the Boulevard.
- Explain their history and their significance to the area (placekeeping).
- Arrange for meetings between the property owners and the consultant.
- Share with the consultant examples of untried ways that public art could be integrated into the site, for example:
 - partnerships with businesses to install storefront murals and sculptures
 - grant programs for businesses to install storefront murals and sculptures
 - temporary art installations in the medians or along the sidewalks
 - permanent art installations in the medians
 - benches, bus shelters, poles/signage, trash receptacles, bicycle racks, pet stations, lighting and/or sound installations
 - incentives to attract arts-centric business and nonprofits, etc.

Task 2: Visioning and Engagement - Commissioners could do the following:

- Help the consultant identify key stakeholders who have important information to share and/or who could be critical in helping to build a coalition of voices who will ultimately support the project when it goes to City Council.

- Invite the consultant to make regular presentations at Commission meetings so that they can learn what the Consultant is learning and provide perspective.
- Provide feedback to the Consultant as they begin to narrow the list of possible sites for public art.
- Speak at City Council meetings and council members' district meetings in order to keep support and excitement for the Project high.

Task 3: Artists Selection - Commissioners could do the following:

- Review and make recommendations for the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for artists, the submissions received, the Request for Proposals (RFP), selection of finalists and the review of those submissions.
- Help the Consultant prepare successful presentations for City Council by offering constructive suggestions and recommendations at Commission meetings.
- Identify a diverse group of residents who have the potential to become good review panelists and Public Art Commissioners, and begin mentoring them.

Task 4: Installation of Artworks - Commissioners could do the following:

- Volunteer to be a "goodwill ambassador" to one or more of the selected artists, especially if they'll be travelling a long distance to work here. Show them how hospitable Redondo Beach can be. Invite them to your home, and help them solve the everyday problems they'll face like where to buy groceries, do laundry, shop, dine, etc.
- For those selected artists who have agreed to mentor a local studio artist interested in becoming a public artist, help identify those studio artists who would make the most of the experience.
- Visit the artists as they're installing their pieces. Take pictures and post them to your social media. Build excitement around the project, and help build a large network of supporters.

Staff is requesting that the Commission review the attached RFQ, provide recommendations for any edits or updates to the criteria, and approve staff bringing the RFQ to the City Council for discussion and possible action.

COORDINATION

The Request for Qualifications was prepared by Community Services Department staff.

FISCAL IMPACT

Pending formal approval by City Council, an agreement with a public art consultant to support the Artesia Public Art Project will be for an amount not-to-exceed 10% of the total project budget. Given the current allocated budget of \$400,000, this amount will be no more than \$40,000.

ATTACHMENTS

Draft "Request for Qualifications for a Public Art Consultant"