

City of Apache Junction Public Art Commission Workshop – Summary Memorandum

DATE: 6-9-2021

TO: PUBLIC ART COMMISSION

CC: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCILMEMBERS

BRYANT POWELL, CITY MANAGER

FROM: DIANNE CRIPE, ARTSPACE 6

LARRY KIRCH, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF ART COMMISSION WORKSHOP HELD MAY 8, 2021

Call to Order at 8:38 a.m.

Roll Call, quorum present with Chair Buys and Commissioner Coe Excused

On May 8, 2021, members of the Art Commission and City staff met to discuss the definition of public art, various types of projects, general locations for public art in Apache Junction, definition of terms used in the field, elements of an art plan, and what public art can do for a community. The Commission also determined priorities for future public art projects. The workshop was led by art consultant Dianne Cripe, Artspace 6 LLC.

Commissioners viewed a CBS News clip about a new airport public art project. The artist, Sarah Sze, emphasized that art doesn't need to be loved by everyone and that it shouldn't fade into the background, becoming "wallpaper" for the public. Challenging public art can also be rewarding.

Public Art, in its broadest sense, celebrates the city's unique history, landscape, cultures and collective memory. It is accessible to the public either indoors or outdoors and in addition to enhancing public spaces, can define and promote the City's identity. At its best, public art is site specific, connects people to place, and becomes landmarks for those who view it. A successful public art program involves input by a variety of stakeholders. Artworks could be small in scale, such as road medians, or large-scale statement pieces. Public art can also contribute to community revitalization, promote cultural tourism and illustrate that art matters to the community. Several examples of this were given at the workshop.

Workshop attendees reviewed examples of other city public art plans, all of which had similar elements:

Mission/Vision/Goals, Funding Streams, Assessment of the current public art collection and document condition, Communicate and Educate residents about the collection, Develop goals and strategies for key points of the plan and Determine locations for projects.

Based on the examples, public art plans follow several steps to ensure public input:

- Assess community needs
- Seek input from art commission, council staff, neighborhood groups, others
- Review upcoming capital projects and private development to determine projects

- Determine tentative budget for each project
- Present plan to staff, Art Commission, and Council

Art Commissioners discussed their hopes for the public art program. They then paired off in small groups to review several city locations for future public art projects, including the Dog Park, Prospector Park, East Lost Dutchman and Goldfield, Multi-Gen Center, Library, Flatiron Park, Fourth and Goldfield Intersection, Silly Mountain Park, Superstition Shadows Aquatic Center, and Highway 60 and Idaho Intersection. Aerial and individual site views were provided.

Commissioners reviewed each location for:

- Feasibility: Can the City place a work of art on the land? Is the land owned by the City?
- Accessibility: Is this site highly visible and accessible to the public?
- Function: Does this artwork reflect the City's landscape, history, cultures, aspirations and/or values?
- Value: Will artwork at these locations add value to the site? Will artwork at the site reinforce other city efforts in the proximity of the installation?

Commissioners agreed that a call for artist (Request for Qualifications) selection process, where project opportunities are broadly advertised, would work best. They agreed to include on the artist selection committee art professionals and/or neighborhood stakeholders. Artist selection committees typically have five to seven members. Each selection panel would include two to three commissioners in addition to other stakeholders; and each project would have its own selection panel. A successful program requires community involvement and adding community stakeholders to panels broadens program outreach.

The Commission unanimously decided on the following project locations and order of project commission.

1. Dog Park: With the pairing of funds from Parks and Recreation, the Commission would like to issue a call for artists for this location in the amount of \$50,000. Each Commissioner cited that this was a great place to start the program and would be well received by the residents.
2. Roundabout: This site is highly visible to residents, winter visitors and those traveling through the City towards recreational areas. This project would be considered a Statement Artwork due to its size and location. Project Budget: Minimum \$100,000.
3. Silly Mountain Park: A well-used recreational area with high visibility potential. Artwork would reflect the surrounding landscape and area history. Budget: TBD

Staff was asked what project components, such as lighting, could be funded by the City so it would not be taken out of the artist's budget.

Consultant Recommendation: Instead of a Public Art Master Plan, which involves considerable community outreach through public meetings and surveys, consultant recommends that at this time a twelve-month Public Art Project Plan would suffice. This plan would include a general introduction with program history, a description of each project location, art project function and goal and timeline.