



County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
DISTRICT 4
File #: 22-233

Board Meeting Date: 4/5/2022

Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors

From: Supervisor Carole Groom, District 2
Supervisor Warren Slocum, District 4
Robin Rodricks, County Executive Office/Office of Arts and Culture

Subject: Adoption of Public Art Policy

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution to approve the San Mateo County Public Arts Policy.

BACKGROUND:

We envision a county with vibrant public spaces where artwork is celebrated and expresses the diversity of our communities. The County has several buildings and facilities now under construction in which permanent artworks will be included.

The proposed Public Art Policy creates an inclusive process that equitably engages the public and local artists in the process of procurement of public art works. The policy is in accord with the County's work on diversity, equity and inclusion, and with the vision, mission, and goals of its Arts Commission's Strategic Cultural Plan approved by the Board of Supervisors on February 22, 2020.

DISCUSSION:

The policy establishes standards and a public process for decisions about adding works of art in public spaces that celebrate and reflect the diversity of our county, and promote a stimulating cultural environment reflecting the mission and values of the Strategic Cultural Plan.

1. Goals: The policy will build relationships with artists in our County - in particular from underserved communities that may not be connected to traditional networks, and promote a rich and stimulating cultural environment enhancing vitality of our communities.

2. Definition of Art: The policy defines public art as objects of art placed permanently in a shared and accessible location, indoors or out, and freestanding or integrated into the architecture of

buildings or landscapes. The art can be of any media which has the physical integrity of materials and constructions for endurance, and includes functional, expressive, or ornamental.

3. Funding: The policy outlines that funding of public art can be from various sources, including the General Fund, inauguration of a percent-for-arts, grants, or private funds and donations.

4. Criteria for approval (of Site and Artwork): County Departments will work in consultation with the Office of Arts and Culture (OAC) after a decision has been made to pursue public art on an upcoming project. Prior to approving a site for an artwork and prior to approving the artwork itself, the OAC shall take into consideration:

- Relationship of proposed artwork to architectural features, natural features, (landscaping, etc.), and urban design;
- Public Access, visibility, and safety of artwork;
- Aesthetic merit and ability to enhance the public's experience of the site, including relationship to artworks within the site's vicinity;
- Appropriateness in scale, media, and context of the artwork;
- Supporting inclusive and diverse cultural representations;
- Building and code requirements, and physical integrity of materials for endurance.

5. Artist Selection Process and Criteria: The OAC will use either:

- an open call for artists, or
- hold a limited invitational competition

To ensure fairness and equity, both processes will use standards outlined in the Art Commission's Cultural Equity Statement and County Galleries "Call for Artists."

The OAC will assemble a diverse committee of knowledgeable people in the arts/culture sector, including public art experts and County Arts Commissioners. A minimum of one Supervisor shall participate in the process. After an artist, proposal, and project site has been selected, the OAC may conduct community meetings for input and feedback.

The committee's selection of artist(s) will be based on artistic body of work, positive community impact, record of commitment, appropriateness and feasibility of artist's proposal, and a vision that promotes a sense of belonging for our diverse communities.

6. Decommissioning/relocation/alteration of public art: The OAC reserves the right to relocate, remove or decommission artworks for security, damage, or determined to be fraudulent or in violation of copyright law.

7. Maintenance: The County is responsible for maintenance of public artworks; if repair is needed, reasonable effort will be made to return the artwork to its original condition.

8. The County intends to obtain ownership of rights of the art for publication, promotion and reproduction to publish and display. This policy in no way intends, however, to abrogate any rights of the artists to use and promote their work consistent with intellectual property rights they may have.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no direct fiscal impact from the adoption of the Public Art Policy.