

Information Item

Date: October 9, 2017

To: The City Manager

From: A. Paul Norby, Director of Planning and Development Services
David Finn, Chair, City-County Public Art Commission

Subject:

Citywide Public Art Project

Strategic Focus Area: Livable Neighborhoods

Strategic Objective: Support Public Art/Community Appearance

Strategic Plan Action Item: No

Key Work Item: No



Based on feedback from the CD/H/GG Committee at its August meeting, City-County Public Art Commission (PAC) members will present a revised proposal for the “Winston-Salem Portrait Project,” a City-funded public art project. The project will be a photographic portrayal of our community: a portrait made of our many faces, with artwork displayed Downtown and each City ward.

The Commission’s selection process will give a heavier weight to artists or artist teams who:

- Live in or closer to Winston-Salem (20% weight).
- Make a good-faith commitment to utilize the services of local contractors and minority and women-owned business enterprises in printing and installation (20% weight).
- Make a proposal that includes vision for a permanent aspect that would become part of the city’s public art identity (10% weight).

Additional requirements to be included in the Call to Artists will include the following. The chosen artist or artist team will:

- Work with a local coordinator to manage a community engagement process that helps select individuals to be photographed and locations to display images. Teach a community workshop that is free and open to the public. Possible topics could include lighting techniques, creative marketing strategies, or professional development.
- Lead an open studio session for the public, particularly emerging artists, to demonstrate the techniques used to create the project.

Budget:

The project would include three phases executed over two years, beginning in 2018. The total budget of \$200,000 is available in the City's public art fund, which has \$50,000 added to it each year. The PAC anticipates that \$60,000 would be reserved for the artist fee with the remainder of the budget being disbursed for image printing, other production costs, and local coordinator fees.

Phase 1: Conception, Planning, Prototyping (Spring – Summer 2018)

- With guidance from the Public Art Commission, the artist(s) will design a “citywide portrait” of Winston-Salem;
- The artist(s) will work with a local coordinator to manage a community engagement process that helps select individuals to be photographed and locations to display images. The local coordinator will be paid separately from the main artist(s);
- The artist(s) will create a prototype of the project on a limited scale.

Phase 2: Production (Fall 2018 – Winter 2019)

- Photographic portrait sessions in multiple locations throughout the city;
- Image preparation and design work;
- Community workshop and open studio session.

Phase 3: Rollout (Spring 2019)

- Coordinate display of images for a synchronized project rollout.

Medium:

The artist(s) will ultimately choose the medium(s) for the project, but staff anticipates images will be printed on a variety of materials, including fabric, vinyl, and paper. Images may also be projected on surfaces for short-term exhibitions. Images are not likely to include words or names; however, the PAC would like to keep the project flexible for the chosen artist(s).

Locations:

The PAC anticipates that this will be a citywide project that will include several large-scale displays Downtown as well as at least eight displays throughout the city in neighborhood settings and other high-visibility areas. Locations will be determined as part of the community outreach component of the project in collaboration with City residents. Examples of locations include the Downtown Transportation Center, bridge underpasses, and neighborhood activity centers. The duration of each display would range from temporary (such as a light projection lasting days or weeks) to semi-permanent (a fabric or vinyl image lasting for years).

Photographic Subjects:

In addition to choosing locations, the artist(s) would also work with the community to choose the subjects of the images to be displayed. The artist(s) could use photo booths at community events to make portraits of large numbers of individuals. It is also possible that the project could include a component where city residents submit their own portraits through social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.