

CITY OF COOS BAY CITY COUNCIL
Agenda Staff Report

MEETING DATE July 19, 2016	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER
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TO: Mayor Shoji and City Councilors
FROM: Eric Day – Community Development Director
THROUGH: Rodger Craddock – City Manager
ISSUE: Public Art Policy – Discussion

BACKGROUND:

One of the City Council Goals was to create a public arts program to enhance areas within the urban renewal districts by promoting integrated arts and culture. Such programs have been initiated in numerous cities of all sizes throughout the United States and abroad with much success. One of the great things about such a program is that it is never too late to get started and be successful. All it takes is a commitment to promote arts and culture in your own community and create a local acceptance of how art and culture can promote inspiration, engagement, uniqueness, diversity, and livability.

In looking at other art programs throughout Oregon and the Western U.S., it is pretty clear that they all contain many of the same components. The most important factors to consider seem to be:

1. Financing – Whether the program is a 501(c)3, financed through either City or URA funds or financed by new development; a stable funding source is needed to support the efforts of local artists in creating the program.
2. Organization – There are many different types of organizations which can lead City sponsored art programs. The City and/or URA can run the program or they can set-up a board or commission to run it for them. Whoever ends up leading the program, they will need to make many different decisions such as what type of art to sponsor, where to locate the art, communication about the program and marketing the different events and installations.

Staff did some research into some examples of art and culture programs that are currently in place in other cities throughout the Western U.S. As mentioned above, there are many different ways to organize and finance the program. Some of the programs that we looked into below have been in place for decades while other are just beginning. They all can provide some good ideas of what may work for Coos Bay.

Public Arts Programs	
<u>Cities</u>	<u>Description of the Program</u>
Portland, Oregon	Since the 1980's Portland has had a "1% for art" program. Any commercial or industrial development is required to pay 1% of the final construction cost into the City's public arts program or provide a comparable value of artwork on the development's site. All art
Grand Junction, Colorado	Grand Junction has a Main Street art program which started in the late 1960's after the local shopping mall was built away from the city's core and was drawing business away from the traditional commercial district. The city leaders started by incorporating artistically designed sidewalks, benches, trash receptacles, parking bump-outs, mid-block pedestrian crossings, and street trees for shading. They also went the extra step and included areas where future art sculptures could be placed and be highly visible for both pedestrians and motorists. Today, in addition to having a permanent collection of sculptured artwork in its downtown, there is also room for artists to display their work
Bend, Oregon	Bend's art program called Pillars of Art is designed to showcase Bend's arts and culture scene. Local artists are chosen on a rotating basis to create chalk drawings on two cements pillars in the lobby of the Bend Visitor Center. The selected artist, in addition to having the opportunity to showcase their imaginative work, is allowed to display their other art work as a means of finding interest for their purchase. This program provides both exposure and opportunity for each artist as a means of supporting their creative and
Hood River, Oregon	Hood River's public arts program includes is a very mature vision which includes information about different types of public art, the public art plan process, and the City
Pendleton, Oregon	Pendleton appears to be in its infancy for initiating a public art program. The purpose of the program is to provide guidelines to the Arts Commission for their selection process. They hve a detailed City ordinance that defines the composition of the Arts Commission and also is sensitive to issues such as cost, maintenance responsibilities, history, cultural diversity, as well as broader effects such as visual accessibility, enhancement of space, scale of artistic pieces, and appropriateness in terms of surrounding architecture and design. If Coos Bay continues down the path of creating a public art program, this would be a good ordinance to use as a blueprint. Pendleton is in the midst of trying to expand its population base and be more attractive to both retirees and millennials. The arts
Lake Oswego, Oregon	The Arts Council of Lake Oswego, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, was created in 1999 to ensure the arts are an integral part of the lives of the citizens of Lake Oswego. The Arts Council was formed by members of The Lake Oswego Arts Commission, a City Commission, to ensure a continuation of support for arts education, present exhibits,

Conclusion

There is a vast selection of public art programs out there. Coos Bay seems to already have a very strong arts community and there is a great opportunity to tap into it to get to another level. Forging ahead with a public art program makes a lot of sense for Coos Bay and it is never too late to get started. It is recommended that one or two public meetings/open houses kick start the process not

only to engage the public but to create a positive force from those wanting a public art program to come forward and get involved.

Many communities have used public art displays and programs as an economic tool, in association with other improvements, and to entice residents and visitors to a city or district. Hood River, OR has used public art in supporting the local artists, enhancing the city's quality of life, and providing another reason for people to come to the city and spend both time and money. Likewise, Grand Junction, CO uses its rotating art display to give fresh looks at the vast variety of art produced by creative minds. This change-over gives visitors a reason to keep coming back and see what is new.

For Coos Bay, a well-developed public art program would provide an added dimension to attracting visitors, in addition to the positive effect it would have on our quality of life, and would support previous efforts of the local art community.

ACTION REQUESTED:

This is an item for discussion only at this time. Staff is looking for direction from the City Council in moving forward.