



Staff Report

RESOLUTION CREATING A TASK FORCE TO FACILITATE THE BEAUTIFUL BELMONT ARTWAY PROJECT

Honorable Chair and Board Members:

Summary

Staff seeks direction from Council on the establishment of a Beautiful Belmont Artway Task Force to facilitate the selection and placement of public art improvements at each entryway to the City and develop a plan for that process.

Background

This item originated from the Priority Calendar process as part of Council's desire to improve the aesthetics of the City's entryways.

Public art has the power to create and instill a sense of community pride, improve physical continuity within the city, and provide distinct landmarks at our entryways denoting arrival to the city limits. By establishing the Beautiful Belmont Artway Project, staff hopes to increase the artistic richness of the City and the public experience. The project seeks to add a new layer of culture to Belmont's community by placing public art monuments at each of the City's entryways that capture the spirit of Belmont and makes each visitor's experience in Belmont a memorable one.

Discussion

It is at the Council's discretion as to how to approach the process of facilitating the Beautiful Belmont Artway Project. Staff has provided two options for Council to consider:

Option 1 (recommended):

If Council believes that, because this Artway Project will embrace Belmont's character, the process of selecting that art should be community-driven, then the creation of a Task Force would be an ideal way to accomplish that. The Task Force would focus solely on this issue in order to best determine how the art for this Citywide project should be selected and where it should be placed.

As proposed, the Task Force will be composed of nine members total, seven of which will have voting rights. The nine members are suggested to include a member from City Council, Planning

Commission, and the Parks & Recreation Commission, a Neighborhood Association representative, a Fine Arts scholar within the education community, a hired art consultant (non-voting), a staff member (non-voting), an individual representing the arts community within Belmont, and a member at large. (Please see Exhibit A for a diagram of the Task Force structure.)

Staff proposes that City Council, the Planning Commission and the Parks & Recreation Commission appoint their selected representatives and then conduct an application and interview process for the selection of the remaining Task Force members. The application will include a written statement as to why the individual wants to serve on the Task Force, and staff will assist with scheduling individual interviews for those candidates that may be best suited for the Task Force.

Staff will work with: (a) the Parks & Recreation Commission to distribute applications to the art community; (b) the public and private schools to notify art scholars of this opportunity; and (c) the Neighborhood Association Presidents to recruit candidates from that community. A press release will be issued and posted on the City's website to advertise applications for the member at large. The Chair of the Task Force will be selected from the ranks of the voting members (staff and the hired art consultant are not voting members). Lastly, based on qualifications determined to be important to the Task Force, staff will submit proposals from qualified art consultants to be interviewed and selected.

By creating a Task Force comprised of individuals with different backgrounds and expertise, it allows for a diverse blend of partnerships, ideas, energies and resources working together towards the common goal – creating beautiful entryways that make an impact to our visitors and improve the look and feel of our City overall.

The Task Force will be charged with the challenge of fleshing out key decisions, which include, but are not limited to:

- Which and how many City entryways should be included?
- Public art can take variety of forms from the sculptural to integrated, functional art and can also be grouped in a number of ways, from classical to contemporary, to abstract, each of which share common characteristics. What type of art is best suited for Belmont?
- Should there be a common theme among the entryways?
- Should the City take the opportunity to inspire and include neighborhoods around this effort and decision making?

As mentioned above, in order to work out the details of the above issues, staff will assist the Task Force in engaging a hired art consultant who is an expert in the field and will act as a sounding board on how to narrow down the options for the Selection Committee's final choice in public art. Staff further proposes that the art consultant will also develop the process the Task

Force will follow and provide invaluable feedback on what will and will not work in Belmont.

The first assignment for the Task Force would be to review responses to a Request for Proposals (RFP) for selection of an art consultant from the options provided by staff. Once selected, this art consultant will work with the Task Force on an assessment that involves evaluating some of the key decisions listed above. The final approval of the RFP and consultant selection will be made by Council after receiving the Task Force's recommendation.

The selected art consultant and staff will then work with the Task Force to schedule and conduct regular meetings to discuss some of the key decisions at hand and provide the opportunity to express the various ideas and options that are involved in selecting the location for this art, and the type of art that best suits each entryway and Belmont as a whole.

Once decisions have been discussed and finalized among the Task Force, this information will then be translated into a schedule and cost analysis. The Task Force will make a recommendation to the City Council on how to proceed with the completion of each project.

If Council is interested in proceeding in this manner, the following would be a basic timetable:

May 12, 2009

Council approves the establishment of a Task Force and requests that the Planning and Parks & Recreation Commissions provide the names of one member from each group to serve on this Task Force. Council appoints one of their own members at the July 14, 2009 meeting. These three members will form the Preliminary Task Force.

August – September 2009

Applications will be distributed and advertised as described in this staff report and those who are interested in serving will submit applications to the preliminary Task Force for their review.

October 2009

The Preliminary Task Force will make appointments to the Beautiful Belmont Artway Task Force. The Artway Task Force will schedule their first meeting for September. Future meeting dates will be determined by the Task Force based on their schedules.

November 2009

The Task Force will determine those qualifications that are important in the selection of a hired art consultant. Staff will prepare a RFP and submit responses to the Task Force for the selection of the hired art consultant.

Option 2:

Alternatively, if Council is inclined to direct the Beautiful Belmont Artway Project rather than allow community representatives to do so, then Council should direct staff to prepare a RFP for

the selection of an art consultant. Staff will then work directly with the hired art consultant to bring a recommendation back to Council for the preferred locations and art selection for the entryways.

General Plan/Vision Statement

As part of Belmont’s Vision Statement, the City is defined by a distinctive community character, natural beauty, a flourishing culture, a thriving economy and easy mobility. Public art is one way to embrace those elements and set Belmont apart as a City distinguished by those characteristics.

Fiscal Impact

City Council has allocated \$400,000 for this project with funding from 351-4610-9059 – Artway Improvements.

Public Contact

Posting of City Council agenda.

Recommendation

Approve the creation of a Beautiful Belmont Artway Task Force, appoint a Council Member to serve on the Task Force, and direct the Planning Commission and Parks & Recreation Commission to appoint representatives.

Alternatives

1. Continue the item to allow more time for consideration.
2. Direct staff to prepare a RFP for the selection of an art consultant.
3. Give staff further direction.

Attachments

- A. Implementing Resolution
- B. Exhibit A – Proposed Task Force Organization Chart

Respectfully submitted,

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REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY RESOLUTION NO. _____

**RESOLUTION OF THE REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF THE CITY OF BELMONT
CREATING A TASK FORCE TO FACILITATE THE BEAUTIFUL BELMONT
ARTWAY PROJECT**

WHEREAS, City Council has made it a Citywide Priority to improve the aesthetics of the City’s entryways; and,

WHEREAS, by establishing a Beautiful Belmont Artway Project, Council hopes to increase the artistic richness of the City and the public experience; and,

WHEREAS, the process of facilitating this effort should be driven by community members represented on a Task Force; and,

WHEREAS, the Task Force will be composed of nine members total, seven of which will have voting rights: a member from City Council, Planning Commission, and the Parks & Recreation Commission, a Neighborhood Association representative, a Fine Arts scholar within the education community, a hired art consultant (non-voting), a staff member (non-voting), an individual representing the arts community within Belmont, and a member at large; and,

WHEREAS, the Neighborhood Association representative, Fine Arts scholar, the arts community representative and the member at large shall be selected through an application and interview process conducted by the Task Force; and,

WHEREAS, the Task Force will be responsible for the hiring of a professional art consultant to facilitate the process of selecting the art for this project;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Redevelopment Agency of the City of Belmont does hereby establish a Task Force to facilitate the Beautiful Belmont Artway Project.

* * * * *

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was duly and regularly passed and adopted by the Redevelopment Agency of the City of Belmont at a regular meeting thereof held on May 12, 2009 by the following vote:

AYES, DIRECTORS: _____

NOES, DIRECTORS: _____

ABSTAIN, DIRECTORS: _____

ABSENT, DIRECTORS: _____

Secretary, Redevelopment Agency

APPROVED:

Chair, Redevelopment Agency

Exhibit A

Proposed Beautiful Belmont Artway Task Force Organization Chart

