

## **PORTSMOUTH SQUARE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT PUBLIC ART PROJECT PLAN**

For presentation to Visual Arts Committee May 15, 2024



### **BACKGROUND**

Centrally located in San Francisco's Chinatown, Portsmouth Square is one of the City's most significant historic, cultural, and civic spaces. The park, located above the Portsmouth Square parking garage, will receive a complete renovation with funding from the 2020 Health and Recovery Bond. The new park design is the result of a robust community engagement and participatory design process and reflects the significance of the neighborhood while addressing programmatic challenges unique to Chinatown. The development of the Art & Interpretive Master Plan was also born out of the community engagement process and will inform the goals and themes of the new public artwork commissions at Portsmouth Square. This interpretive planning process was led by San Francisco Recreation & Parks Department and design consultant Clearstory with input from SF Planning Department, Arts Commission, project architects, and community stakeholders and scholars. Additional funding from Supervisor Peskin's office was granted to the Chinese Culture Center of San Francisco to continue meaningful community outreach efforts throughout the artist selection process.

The renovation of Portsmouth Square generates an Art Enrichment (AE) budget of \$104,000. The Arts Commission, under Resolution 1102-20-189, approved the use of these funds for the conservation of the existing artworks in the Civic Art Collection in the square. In response to feedback from Commissioners and community stakeholders, and with the approval of the City Administrator's Office, the Arts Commission has identified an additional \$104,000 of Art Enrichment funding for the commissioning of a new artwork at Portsmouth Square. In addition, \$500,000 was generously funded by California State Assembly Member Phil Ting's office to be used for culturally significant public art components and maintenance for this project. Moreover, San Francisco Recreation & Parks Department has committed an additional \$317,000 in funding to support a second public art commission for the park project.

## ART OPPORTUNITIES

1. **Sculpture Opportunity:** Located at the corner entrance of Walter U Lum and Washington Street. Artwork will be a human-scale sculpture and may be comprised of durable, sustainable materials intended for exterior use, such as stone or metal.
2. **Art Wall Opportunity:** Located on the large interior wall of the clubhouse and the adjacent exterior wall by the building entrance from the plaza. Artwork will measure approximately 606 square feet and may be comprised of a durable material, such as mosaic or ceramic tile.

## PROJECT GOALS

1. **Sculpture Opportunity:**
  - a. Acts as a welcoming beacon to the Portsmouth Square Plaza
  - b. Is highly visible from the street and draws people into the park space
  - c. Celebrates the people, history, and values of San Francisco's Chinatown communities
2. **Art Wall Opportunity:**
  - a. Reflects community culture and community service in San Francisco Chinatown
  - b. Creates an impactful indoor and outdoor narrative experience
  - c. Bridges and enhances the connection between Portsmouth Square and its new community clubhouse
  - d. Involves a component of community engagement programming led by the selected artist

## AE and ARTWORK BUDGET

Total Art Enrichment Amount: \$921,000

Total Artwork Budget Amount: \$544,000

- **Sculpture: \$340,000**, inclusive of all artist fees, as well as associated expenses for artwork design, fabrication, insurance, transportation, and artist's consultation during installation.
  - Sculpture Installation Budget to be managed by SFAC: \$23,000
- **Art Wall: \$151,000**, inclusive of all artist fees, as well as associated expenses for artwork design and associated community engagement programming, fabrication, insurance, transportation, and artist's consultation installation.
  - Art Wall Installation Budget: \$30,000

Artwork footing and art wall structural backing to be provided for and covered by the Capital Improvement Project budget.

## ARTIST RECRUITMENT APPROACH AND ELIGIBILITY

Arts Commission staff, in partnership with the Chinese Culture Center of San Francisco, will recruit artists for the opportunity through the Arts Commission's upcoming Chinatown Artist Registry Pre-qualified Pool. Professional practicing artists residing in the United States are eligible to apply. Arts Commission staff may also select artists from other prequalified artist lists to be considered.

Recruitment will focus on artists with a meaningful connection to San Francisco Chinatown, which may include if the artist currently resides, has resided in Chinatown, or has another significant connection to Chinatown. Artists will be asked to address their connection as part of the application process, and the review panel will be instructed to consider this connection as part of their scoring criteria.

## ARTIST SELECTION PROCESS

After the application deadline the Arts Commission staff will screen applications to establish the pool of artists meeting the minimum eligibility requirements, which are professional practicing artists who reside in the United States.

The eligible applications will be presented to an artist qualification panel consisting of 2 arts professionals and 1 SFAC staff, who will review and score the applications to add to the Chinatown Artist Registry Pre-qualified Pool. SFAC will create two qualified artist shortlists for each artwork opportunity from this Pool for consideration by the Artist Review Panel.

The two artist shortlists will be presented to the Portsmouth Square Improvement Artist Review Panel consisting of 1 representative of the client agency, 4 arts professionals, and 1 community member. The panel will identify 3 finalists for each artwork opportunity who will be invited to develop conceptual site-specific proposals after attending an orientation session with the project team and key stakeholders. These finalists will be paid an honorarium of \$3,000 plus travel reimbursement for development of a proposal.

The Portsmouth Square Improvement Artist Review Panel will reconvene to consider the finalists' proposals in an interview format and will select one artist for each artwork opportunity for recommendation to the Art Commission.

**COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

- SFAC staff presented an overview of the public art project in conjunction with the CIP presentation to the community on July 22, 2022, December 2, 2022, August 4, 2023, and February 9, 2024.
- SFAC staff presented updates to the public art project in conjunction with the Art & Interpretive Program presentation to the community on March 29, 2023, October 19, 2023, and January 30, 2024.
- SFAC staff will partner with Chinese Culture Center (CCC) for artist outreach of the Chinatown Artist Registry. CCC will also support artists as a community liaison throughout the Artist Selection Process.
- A community representative will serve on the Portsmouth Square Improvement Artist Review Panel and will participate in the Artist Orientation.
- The finalists' proposals will be on display for public comment near the project site and on the SFAC website for two weeks prior to the final review panel meeting.
- All review panels, Visual Arts Committee (VAC) and Commission meetings are open to the public.

**TIMELINE (Subject to change)**

Project Plan Approval (VAC)	May 15, 2024
RFQ Issued	June 10, 2024
Artist Application Workshop	July 2024
RFQ Deadline	August 12, 2024
Qualification Panel	Week of August 26, 2024
First Project Artist Review Panel	Week of September 16, 2024
Artist Finalist Orientation	Week of September 23, 2024
Finalist Proposals Due	November 22, 2024
Public Display of Proposals	December 2 – December 16, 2024
Final Project Artist Review Panel	Week of January 6, 2025
VAC Approval	January 15, 2025
Arts Commission Approval	February 3, 2025
Artist Under Contract	March 2025

**FURTHER INFORMATION**

Contact Aleta Lee, Public Art Project Manager at (415) 252-2251 or by email at [aleta.lee@sfgov.org](mailto:aleta.lee@sfgov.org).