



**ART REVIEW BOARD
STAFF REPORT
May 20, 2020**

Proposal:

PUBLIC ART FOR METRO CROSSING RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT URBAN PLAZA SITE IN WARM SPRINGS INNOVATION DISTRICT – To receive a presentation with artwork submissions, provide feedback, and select finalists for new public art installation located at the Metro Crossing Urban Plaza site at the southeast corner of Warm Springs Boulevard and Tom Blalock Street Boulevard in the Warm Springs/South Fremont Community Plan Area as part of the Warm Springs Innovation District Art Work Plan, and to consider an exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), General Rule, which states that, where it can be seen with certainty that the activity will not have a significant effect on the environment, that activity is not subject to CEQA.

Recommendation:

Receive presentation, provide feedback, and select finalists

City Staff:

Aki Snelling, Project Manager, 510-494-4534, asnelling@fremont.gov
Luciana Torres, Management Analyst, 510-494-4553, lutorres@fremont.gov

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

City of Fremont staff is requesting that the Art Review Board receive a presentation with artwork submissions for a new public art piece to be located in the public right-of-way at the corner of the 0.60-acre Metro Crossing Urban Plaza, a privately-owned, but publicly-accessible passive common open space area on the southeast corner of Warm Springs Boulevard and the new Tom Blalock Street which provides the main entrance into the Metro Crossing development site located at 44960 Warm Springs Boulevard. The artwork would essentially flank the entrance to the Metro Crossing development site across the street from the Warm Springs/South Fremont BART Station.

Staff is requesting that the Art Review Board provide feedback and select up to five finalists to move forward in the artwork selection process. The new public art piece will be publicly owned and located in the public right-of-way at the entrance to the Metro Crossing Urban Plaza. The 0.60-acre Metro Crossing Urban Plaza is part of the common open space for the Metro Crossing development that includes 1,001 residential units, 132 units of which will be affordable rental units owned and developed by Eden Housing, with 6,000 square feet of neighborhood commercial tenant space in one of the Eden Housing affordable rental buildings that faces Tom Blalock Street across from the Metro Crossing Urban Plaza. The Metro Crossing Urban Plaza is adjacent to a six-story, 136-unit market-rate condominium project as part of the Metro Crossing residential development site, called Westbourne Park.

Prior to issuing a call for artists through CaFÉ (an online national call for artists application tool), during the Art Review Board meeting on July 17, 2019, the Board provided direction to staff on the type of artists and artwork desired for the site, determined using the CaFÉ system as a means to solicit artists to submit proposed artwork for the site, and established a budget of \$400,000 for the installation of the artwork, which is approximately half of the developer's art fees for the project. The budget for the design, fabrication, and installation of the artwork for Urban Plaza was finalized at \$320,000. Per the City's Art in Public Places Program Policy, up to 20 percent can be deducted for administrative costs.

A call for artists was announced on CaFÉ on February 10, 2020 for conceptual artwork designs for the site. A total of 57 artwork entries were received at the close of the call on March 2, 2020, and a total of 56 were considered qualifying entries.

Due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and Alameda County Shelter in Place Order, the initial reviews for the artwork entries were delayed. However, on May 5, 2020, via a video conference call, City staff reviewed the 56 qualifying entries and is providing the Board with the recommended entries to move forward in the artwork selection process. These entries are presented in Informational Item No. 1 and were selected based on the artwork scale, durability, ease of maintenance, interactive nature, and innovative style. City staff is providing all 56 qualifying entries for the Board to review in Informational Item No. 2.

Staff is recommending that the Art Review Board:

1. Receive a presentation of the City's recommended finalists for the Metro Crossing Urban Plaza.
2. Provide direction and select up to five entries to move forward as finalists in the artwork selection process.

BACKGROUND

The proposed artwork has been envisioned for this particular location as part of the Warm Springs TOD Village Master Plan that was prepared by Toll Brothers for its 34-acre residential development site, with 6,000 square feet of neighborhood commercial on the ground floor of the Eden Housing affordable housing rental building that is across from the Metro Crossing Urban Plaza site on Tom Blalock Street. The Master Plan was approved by the City Council in July of 2015. The Warm Springs TOD Village Master Plan covers the Warm Springs Innovation District Area 9, which is west of Interstate 680, east of Warm Springs Boulevard, south of South Grimmer Boulevard, and north of research and development buildings and Reliance Way.

The Master Plan provided for the 0.60-acre long common open space area to be part of a spacious, walkable plaza (See Informational No. 3) where residents and the public could enjoy passive recreational areas to sit or landscaped areas to walk across. The plaza is currently under construction and will feature a walking pathway, meandering seating walls, cascading tiered landscaping along the south perimeter of the plaza next to the Westbourne Park building that is approximately 12-feet higher than the plaza, heavily landscaped areas, playful granite stone seating areas, and bike racks.

At the entrance to the Metro Crossing Urban Plaza on the southeast corner of Warm Springs Boulevard and Tom Blalock Street, there will be a large circular decorative paved area predominantly within the public right-of-way, with a small portion within the private plaza area, which will feature the proposed artwork in the center of the circular pattern within the public right-of-way.

The 34-acre Metro Crossing residential project involves the development of 1,001 residential units, including two buildings that Eden Housing will own and operate with a total of 132 affordable rental units, 608 market-rate residential condominiums within five residential complexes, and 261 market-rate rental units. One of the Eden Housing affordable housing buildings will have a 6,000 square-foot ground floor neighborhood commercial tenant space area that will provide two to three commercial tenants. These spaces will be located directly across Tom Blalock Street from the Metro Crossing Urban Plaza, at the corner of Warm Springs Boulevard and Tom Blalock Street.

Per the City's Art in Public Places Program Policy, Toll Brothers has paid 100% of its art fee into the City's Warm Springs Innovation District Public Art Fund, which is approximately \$777,335. The City will own, operate, and maintain the Urban Plaza artwork in the public right-of-way. The maintenance of the artwork will be funded through the Warm Springs Innovation District Public Art Fund. Around the public artwork there will be circular concrete benches that would allow for an artwork base of approximately 9-feet in diameter; however, should artwork be considered that requires a larger diameter, the concrete benches could be removed and/or modified to create this larger space. Due to maintenance issues, there will be no water features; however, Toll Brothers will provide for an electrical connection that would allow the City to consider artwork which could be kinetic and/or lit.

The intent of the Warm Springs Innovation District Art Program is to promote the arts in the Warm Springs Innovation District in order to create a source of pride for the community. It will also provide art education, spur innovation and creativity to attract visitors, encourage a pleasant experience for visitors and residents, and improve the quality of life for the community.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

As public artwork in the Warm Springs Innovation District is essential to spur innovation and creativity, attract visitors, and encourage a pleasant walking experience in a newer District within the City, receiving direction from the Art Review Board on the artwork entries received for the Metro Crossing Urban Plaza will allow for the project to move forward and for the selected artwork to be installed close to the completion date of the development.

PUBLIC ART SCHEDULE

The following schedule is proposed to move the Metro Crossing Urban Plaza public art project forward:

- March 2020: Complete call for artists
- May 2020: Art Review Board reviews artist entries and selects finalists
- Summer 2020: Art Review Board interviews finalists and makes recommendation to the Fremont City Council

- Fall 2020: Fremont City Council awards contract to selected artist
- Spring 2021: Artist completes artwork

ENCLOSURES

- [Informational Item 1](#) – City of Fremont Staff Recommended Finalists for Metro Crossing Urban Plaza Artwork
- [Informational Item 2](#) – All Artwork Entries for Metro Crossing Urban Plaza
- [Informational Item 3](#) – Urban Plaza Site Plan

RECOMMENDATION

1. Receive a presentation of the City's recommended finalists for Metro Crossing Urban Plaza Artwork.
2. Provide direction and select up to five entries to move forward as finalists in the artwork selection process.



**AGENDA
ART REVIEW BOARD
PUBLIC HEARING MEETING
CITY OF FREMONT, CALIFORNIA
3:30 P.M.
VIRTUAL MEETING
MAY 20, 2020**

1. PRELIMINARY

1.1 CALL TO ORDER

1.2 ROLL CALL

1.3 APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Special meeting of February 26, and Regular meeting of April 15, 2020

1.4 DISCLOSURES

2. PUBLIC/ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

3. PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

Item 1. [PUBLIC ART FOR METRO CROSSING RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT URBAN PLAZA SITE IN WARM SPRINGS INNOVATION DISTRICT](#) – To receive a presentation with artwork submissions, provide feedback, and select finalists for new public art installation located at the Metro Crossing Urban Plaza site at the southeast corner of Warm Springs Boulevard and Tom Blalock Street Boulevard in the Warm Springs/South Fremont Community Plan Area as part of the Warm Springs Innovation District Art Work Plan, and to consider an exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), General Rule, which states that, where it can be seen with certainty that the activity will not have a significant effect on the environment, that activity is not subject to CEQA.
Project Planner – Aki Snelling, (510) 494-4534, asnelling@fremont.gov

Recommended Action:

Receive presentation, provide feedback, and select finalists.

4. MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

Information from Board and Staff:

- Information from staff: Staff will report on matters of interest.
- Information from Board: Board members may report on matters of interest.
- Art Liaison Update – Christina Valdez

5. ADJOURNMENT