



INFORMATION REPORT

DATE: 6/26/13

TO: City Manager
DEPARTMENT: Economic Development
SUBJECT: Deaccession of Bear Spirit Sculpture

APPROVED: _____ DATE: _____

Artist Daniel Stolpe's *Bear Spirit* fiberglass sculpture was installed in Tyrrell Park in 1986. After 30 years exposure to the elements, the fiberglass material has reached the end of its lifespan and the sculpture is deteriorating. In a conservator assessment of the public art collection completed in November 2012 *Bear Spirit* was one of three artworks red-flagged for immediate attention due to safety concerns. At its January 2013 meeting, the Arts Commission directed staff to take steps to remove the artwork and deaccession the sculpture from the public art collection.

City Arts has a policy of offering artwork in the process of being deaccessioned back to the artist as an alternative to disposal. In February 2013 staff and Stolpe discussed transfer of ownership, however, Stolpe declined to accept ownership because he did not have ample space in his studio. The Santa Cruz Art League and the Natural History Museum were approached in the hope of finding an alternate home for the sculpture; but declined to take ownership of the sculpture. At the time of these discussions Stolpe expressed interest in spearheading a fundraising campaign to recreate *Bear Spirit* in bronze and requested the sculpture remain for a few months in order to support this undertaking. Staff confirmed the artwork would need to be removed no later than June 2013.

Bear Spirit is now scheduled for removal. Natural History Museum and Parks staff has been notified of the planned approach and no additional concerns have been raised. The City does not have long-term storage facilities for artwork. In an offer to accommodate Stolpe's continued desire for additional time to fundraise, Public Works staff has offered a location at 605 Dimeo Lane for storage of *Bear Spirit* through the end of the 2013 calendar year, provided the City has no liability for the artwork and ownership which has been agreed to by the artist. A transfer of ownership agreement was mailed to Stolpe for signature on June 7, 2013. If the agreement is fully executed before removal, the sculpture will be held in temporary storage through the close of the calendar year to provide six additional months for fundraising by the artist.

City Arts is looking into collection policies that more accurately gauge the expected lifespan of materials.

Submitted by:

Bonnie Lipscomb
Director of Economic Development