

ERIN MENDENHALL
MAYOR



LORENA RIFFO-JENSON
DIRECTOR

DEPARTMENT of ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Salt Lake Art Design Board Meeting

Wednesday, January 8th, 2025

5:30 – 8:00 pm

PRESENT:

Meggie Troili
Michael Mejia

Colour Maisch
Nate King

Jen Lopez

STAFF MEMBERS

Felicia Bacca, Executive Director, Arts Council
Renato Olmedo-González, Public Art Program Manager, Arts Council
Amy Childress, Public Art Program Coordinator, Arts Council

EXCUSED:

Tiffini Porter

GUESTS:

Nancy Monteith, Senior Landscape Architect, SLC Public Lands
Kat Andra, Public Land Planner, SLC Public Lands
Jamie Fogle, Design Workshop, Contracted Landscape Architecture
Consultant for Pioneer Park
Jeff Gulden, Transportation Engineer, SLC Transportation
Sooz Lundmark, Transportation Planner, SLC Transportation
Jennifer Ortiz, Society Director, Utah Historical Society
Don Redman, Finalist
Scout Invie and Jiyouon Lee-Lodge, Finalist team
Jennifer Tran and James Shen of People's Architecture Office, Finalist
team

Mission: To amplify art in Salt Lake City to enrich, enhance, and build a dynamic city where art and artists thrive.

AGENDA

I. Call to Order, Introductions, and Welcome

Ms. Colour Maisch welcomed everyone to the meeting and stated the Art Design Board's mission.
Mr. Renato Olmedo-González asked everyone in attendance to introduce themselves to the Board's newest member, Nate King.

II. Approval of December 11th, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Ms. Colour Maisch put forward a motion to approve the December 11th, 2024 meeting minutes, Mr. Michael Mejia seconded the motion; all Board members present voted in favor.

III. FY24-25 CIP/Percent-for-Art Site Selection

The Board discussed the possibility of combining the Fairmont Park project (Public Lands) and the McClelland Shared Trail project (Transportation) as a combined site for the FY24-25 CIP/Percent-for-Art public art allocation. This item was thoroughly discussed during the December 2024 meeting, but the Board wanted to wait for making a decision, pending further conversations with the Finance Department regarding funds usage for public art.

Mr. Olmedo-González provided an update on discussions between Finance, Transportation, and Public Lands regarding this proposed combination. Mr. Jeff Gulden confirmed that \$90,000 from the McClelland Trail CIP funds could be used for public art and activation, though using it for temporary street art is uncertain and will require further conversations. If selected, the Public Art Program would work with Public Lands and Transportation to develop a cohesive public art structure, with potential temporary activations. The \$90,000 in Transportation funds can only be used in the area between 2100 South and Sugarmon Avenue. Additionally, \$140,000 is available for the Fairmont Park project from CIP/Percent-for-Art funding, and the Board can choose to include the Fairmont Park basketball court in the project structure if funding is sufficient to support an entryway sculpture to the Park and the inclusion of the basketball project.

Ms. Maisch made a motion to approve \$140,000 in FY24-25 CIP funding for a combined project at Fairmont Park. This includes the potential commissioning of a basketball court project and the McClelland Shared Trail, with an additional \$90,000 from transportation's CIP funding, Mr. Michael Mejia Seconded. All Board members present voted in favor.

IV. *Pioneer Park* finalist presentations

During the meeting, the three finalists for the Pioneer Park public art project, selected by the Art Design Board in October 2024, will present their site-specific proposals. The selected finalists, Don Redman, Jiyou Lee-Lodge and Scout Invie, and James Shen and Jennifer Tran of People's Architecture Office, were given three months to develop their proposals with guidance from the Public Art Program. Each finalist received site-specific information and supplemental documents to aid in their proposal development. The \$140,000 commission for the project will cover all costs related to creating the artwork, including artist fees, supplies, and materials. The goal is to finalize the design by May 2025 and begin construction in the fall, with completion expected by fall 2026. The Pioneer Park public art project aims to highlight the diverse narratives surrounding Pioneer Park, encouraging the artists to create site-specific artworks that go beyond the park's singular historical identity. Some of the goals for the project include enhancing placemaking and helping define the character of downtown Salt Lake City's primary green space. The artwork aims to be inclusive, accessible, and welcoming to individuals of all abilities, incomes, ages, genders, and cultural backgrounds. It also recognizes Pioneer Park's significance as a daily gathering place that fosters connections among individuals from both the greater Salt Lake metropolitan area and the downtown urban core. Four areas in the northern part of the park have been identified as suitable for the artwork: near the playground, around the north or northeast entrance of the park, or within the footprint of the future misting fountain. The Art Design Board's goal for this meeting is to select a finalist to recommend to the Mayor for the project commission. Each artist will have 20 minutes to present their proposal followed by a 10-minute questions and answers exchange.

Mr. Don Redman presented his proposal titled "Trajectory's Bloom" for the Pioneer Park public art project. He explained that while his previous works involved kinetic and light-based elements, they required too much maintenance, so he now focuses on creating static sculptures with longevity. The sculpture, an hourglass shape, approximately 17 feet tall and weighing 20,000 pounds, is designed to catch and play with sunlight, casting dynamic shadows that shift with time, season, and weather,

symbolizing the past, present, and future of Pioneer Park. The hourglass shape serves as a metaphor for time, representing the various cultures that have passed through and shaped the park's landscape. His proposed material is CorTen steel, which will oxidize to a purple-brown color inspired by the sweet gum trees on the east side of park.

Redman also emphasized his intent to make static pieces appear as if they are moving, a key goal for his current art practice. He discussed the potential for fabricating the piece himself or with the help of external fabricators, depending on costs. The sculpture will be lit from within using flood lighting, and it will sit on a concrete base in the northeast corner of the park. During the presentation, the board raised questions about the sculpture's interaction with light. Redman displayed how light would interact with the piece using the model he brought. The Board also had concerns about sharp edges, and potential issues with people climbing on the sculpture as well as within it. The board was interested to know how his artwork would address site-specificity. Redman explained his work is site-specific to Pioneer Park, aiming to highlight the area's history without focusing on its violent past while using light to explore new perspectives of the park's story.

Jiyoun Lee-Lodge and Scout Invie presented their proposal titled "Full Frame" for the Pioneer Park public art project. Both artists, based in Salt Lake City, have extensive backgrounds in public art, with Jiyoun focusing on identity and social influence, and Scout working in textiles, performance, and community engagement. Their proposal aims to align with the project's core values of placemaking and inclusivity and responds to the park's layered history as a central gathering place. Inspired by the idea of a frame enhancing the subject within it, "Full Frame" is an 11-foot tall by 12-foot wide freestanding stainless steel frame with intricate design cutouts that represent water, railroads, and human connection. The frame is designed to be interactive, allowing viewers to engage with the park's history while framing themselves within the park's future narrative.

The sculpture will be fabricated by Metal Arts Foundry, with smooth, rounded edges to ensure public safety. The design features three key sections: the outer frame symbolizing water, the inner rim representing the railroad and travel that brought diversity to the area, and the center highlighting human connection. The artists drew inspiration for the cutouts from community activities like markets, performances, and social movements, which have long been associated with Pioneer Park. The frame itself is meant to serve as a new landmark for the park, allowing visitors to take photos within the frame, making them part of the park's history. The square shape of the frame is a tribute to Utah's grid system and the shape of the park itself, and its highly visible location in the northeast corner of the park, where the original freshwater spring was located, is intended to create a gateway to the park.

The artists also discussed practical aspects of their proposal, such as the durability of stainless steel, which is resistant to graffiti and wear, requiring minimal maintenance. They proposed solutions for potential issues with lawn maintenance if the frame is installed on grass. Concerns were raised by the Board regarding the possibility of people sitting on the sculpture to take photos and the impact of wind on the structure. In response, the artists explained that the thickness of the frame should deter people from comfortably sitting on the frame. The natural light interacting with the sculpture will create dynamic shadows, adding another layer of engagement for visitors.

Ultimately, Lee-Lodge and Invie envision "Full Frame" as a symbol of inclusivity and a key landmark for Pioneer Park, where people can place themselves at the center of the park's evolving story. They believe that their frame will serve as a welcoming, interactive, and visually impactful piece that honors the park's past while looking forward to its future.

James Shen and Jennifer Tran of People's Architecture Office presented their public art proposal, "Common Roots," for Pioneer Park, drawing inspiration from their backgrounds as the children of refugees. Tran, a Canadian artist, focuses on themes of language, text, and family narratives, while Shen's work is centered on connecting people through different pathways. Both artists, who are based in Long Beach, CA, felt a personal connection to the park's identity as a gathering space for new immigrants, mirroring their families' journeys. Shen explained that the term "pioneer" resonates with him as it reflects the experience of those who have migrated to or through the area, seeking to create new futures, as both of their families did from their home countries.

The concept for "Common Roots" was inspired by migration routes and mycorrhizal trees, which share a network of interconnected roots, symbolizing community and mutual support. Their proposal features groupings of painted steel columns that rise vertically, branch into arches, and reconnect with the ground, mimicking a root system. The columns then rise back up from the ground and are twisted into abstract forms that, when viewed from a particular angle, create letters that spell out the words "Pioneer Park." The installation, measuring 40 feet wide, 14 feet tall, and 7 feet deep, invites interaction by encouraging visitors to walk through and engage with the space, symbolizing nature, migration, and community ties.

The installation is inspired by the many languages spoken in the Pioneer Park Neighborhood, including Chinese, Hebrew, Japanese, Arabic, Korean, and Greek. It was designed to be open to interpretation, featuring forms that resemble cursive writing, highlighting how the shapes of handwritten letters across different languages often appear similar, creating a sense of universality. They envisioned the twisting forms of the columns as abstract representations of cursive letters or words, allowing viewers to interpret them in various ways and connect them to different languages. They proposed placing the installation at the north entrance of the park for its high visibility but were open to other location options and presented renderings of their installation at all four possible sites within the park. The artists presented two height options for the lettering on the columns: placing them higher for visibility from a distance or lower for more intimate engagement. They expressed concern about safety and climbing risks if the letters were placed too low, favoring the higher placement for its placemaking potential.

The installation's colorful columns, inspired by the seasons, were designed to create a friendly, inviting atmosphere that reflects the park's diversity. Shen and Tran also addressed practical concerns such as durability and maintenance, explaining that the columns would be made of strong, painted steel and could be lit from below at night. They assured the board that the materials would withstand wear and tear and require minimal maintenance but would most likely need to be repainted in the future due to sun exposure. Overall, "Common Roots" aims to be a vibrant, engaging landmark for Pioneer Park that reflects the park's history and the diverse stories of those who pass through it.

The Board and Stakeholders discussed the finalist's proposals. The Board felt that Don Redman's proposal was the outlier among the three finalists, as it had a more solemn tone compared to the other submissions. Redman's proposal did not exude the warmth or welcoming presence the board was looking for in a site-specific piece for Pioneer Park. His focus on the park's history of violence during his presentation surprised the Board, especially since his application letter mentioned the park's layered history, demonstrating thorough research. Although the materials he chose were appreciated, city stakeholders expressed concerns that his sculpture might invite unintended usage.

In contrast, community stakeholder Ms. Jennifer Ortiz was impressed by the research conducted by Scout Invie and Jiyoun Lee-Lodge for their proposal. She praised how their work demonstrated an

understanding of the landscape and the site's history, while also incorporating various cultures. She felt their proposal stood out, encapsulating both the beauty and significance of Pioneer Park. The Board appreciated how Invie and Lee-Lodge's submission captured the cultural history and seriousness of the park while maintaining a thoughtful, engaging approach.

Shen and Tran's proposal was well received by the Board for its playful, joyful, and welcoming presence. The installation was seen as dynamic and visually accessible to a wide audience while still retaining layers of complexity. The Board liked how their piece occupied a large space in the park and could be viewed from a distance, creating a strong placemaking feature. There were some concerns about mowing around the installation, but overall, the Board liked how people could interact with the piece and move through it, enhancing the park's atmosphere.

While the Board liked Invie and Lee-Lodge's proposal, some members felt that the park needed a larger statement piece, which Shen and Tran's design provided. The Board appreciated the migration theme in Shen and Tran's piece, which was seen as timely and relevant. In response to Ms. Ortiz's inquiry about prioritizing local artists, Ms. Felicia Baca of the Arts Council explained that the Arts Council's Public Art Program evaluates projects on a case-by-case basis, aiming to balance local and national representation. Some projects are open only to local artists, while others welcome national talent, ensuring Utah artists have opportunities to work out of state. The Board did a straw poll to see how many members were in favor of Shen and Tran's proposal, "Common Roots," with all Board members present voted in favor.

Ms. Meggie Troili made a motion to recommend James Shen of People's Architecture Office and Jennifer Tran's proposal for commission to the Mayor. All Board members voted in favor. The board choose not to put forward an alternate proposal.

V. Public Comment

No public comment was received.

VI. Other Business / Adjourn

At the meeting, Ms. Troili was recognized, as it was her final meeting as an Art Design Board member, and she will be missed. The Board was updated on the "Wake the Great Salt Lake" project, with the Arts Council currently in discussions with two artists to create proposals for the signature commission part of the project. There may be an additional board meeting scheduled in February to discuss further developments.

Additionally, there are vacancies on the Art Design Board for Districts 1 and 6. The "Life on State" neon signs are scheduled to be installed along State Street between 600 and 700 South during the second week of January. Lastly, Ms. Baca and Mr. Olmedo-González presented to the city council on the topic of public art maintenance.

Ms. Troili made a motion to close the meeting and all Board members present voted in favor.