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Mayor



DEPARTMENT of COMMUNITY  
and NEIGHBORHOODS  
TAMMY HUNSAKER  
Director

## Salt Lake Art Design Board Meeting

Wednesday, August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025

5:00 – 6:25 pm

**PRESENT:** Tiffini Porter                      Nate King                      Michelle Buhler  
Jenn Lopez                                  Michael Mejia                      Wisam Khudhair

**STAFF MEMBERS**                      Laurel Cannon-Alder, Deputy Director, Arts Council  
Renato Olmedo-González, Public Art Program Manager, Arts Council  
Amy Childress, Public Art Program Coordinator, Arts Council

**EXCUSED:**                                  Colour Maisch,

**GUESTS:**                                  Adam Kuby, Commissioned Artist, Donner Trail Park

*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

Mr. Nate King, Art Design Board Vice Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting and read the Mission.

#### II. Approval of July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025

Ms. Tiffini Porter made a motion to approve the July 2<sup>nd</sup> 2025 minutes, and Ms. Jenn Lopez seconded. All members in attendance voted to approve.

#### III. *Journey Lines* artwork discussion

Mr. Renato Olmedo-González introduced Mr. Adam Kuby (commissioned artist for Donner Trail Park) and had everyone in attendance introduce themselves.

Mr. Adam Kuby revisited his initial proposal, *Journey Lines*, for the Donner Trail Park public art project, approved for commission in April 2025. Mr. Kuby began by explaining how his concept has evolved through collaboration with the project's landscape architects and is proposing changes he would like to make to the artwork, which are subject to the Board's approval. The central theme of his design is to represent the journeys people took to reach Salt Lake City throughout history to the present day. In his original plan, artwork elements such as berms and stones were dispersed throughout the park, creating passages that evoke movement through mountains, canyons, and narrow spaces. There would also be tree groupings that would heighten the sense of moving through landscapes, while walls and stones would align with existing walkways to guide visitors' experiences.

Kuby's initial concept featured Corten steel walls engraved with abstract journey lines, complemented by stones with etched markings that doubled as seating elements. The berms in

this design were placed across different areas of the park, framing experiences of passage and transition. While working with the landscape architects, the plans shifted to concentrate the berms across from each other along the park's main concrete pathway. The steel walls and stones were also repositioned closer to these walkways, helping to create a more integrated and cohesive visitor experience.

In refining the mark-making approach, Kuby considered moving away from traditional engraving and sandblasting for the journey lines on the stones. Instead, he introduced the idea of using solar lens technology to burn designs directly onto basalt stones. This method involves using a Fresnel lens to concentrate sunlight, melting the stone's surface into obsidian and creating unique, organic lines. Although he sourced basalt from Utah, he found it unsuitable due to its darkness and air pockets, and is exploring alternative stone sources from outside the state. This technique appealed to Kuby because it felt original to the western landscape and evoked natural imagery such as canyon walls.

In regards to the Corten steel walls to make them more cohesive with the stones, Kuby outlined several options for integrating these solar-marked stones into the design. The solar-marking process is only feasible on stone and not on metal, bringing challenges to the overall aesthetics of the artwork and continuity of the artwork. One approach Kuby proposes is to embed a single large solar-marked stone into a berm in place of the originally planned steel walls. Another is installing multiple solar-marked stones within the berm wall to create continuity, with journey lines running across them. A final option is to retain the original plan by engraving or cutting journey lines into the steel walls. The board noted that the solar-etched lines appeared more organic and less refined compared to the engraved designs in his original proposal.

The Board expressed concern about mixing two different mark-making techniques, which could disrupt continuity and deviate from the original proposal. Mr. Olmedo-González questioned whether using both engraving and solar marking would be consistent with the project's intent. Kuby responded that visitors would not experience the berms and rocks together, suggesting the techniques might still feel cohesive in practice. Despite these concerns, he reaffirmed his preference for solar marking, believing it better captured the uniqueness of individual journeys and reflected the spirit of the western landscape.

Mr. Kuby exited the board meeting, and the Board discussed his proposed changes. During the discussion, Ms. Porter and Mr. Olmedo-González emphasized that the changes Mr. Kuby proposed were significantly different from what the Board originally commissioned. While Mr. Olmedo-González acknowledged the importance of respecting the artist's process, he also noted the need to remain true to the original concept. Mr. Michael Mejia raised the question of community input, prompting Olmedo-González to explain that the Salt Lake City Arts Council had been in communication with community members who expressed concerns after the commission and artwork were announced to the public. Most of the public feedback expressed concern about changes to the park itself, while Ms. Cannon-Alder added that maintenance of the artwork was also a key issue raised by the community.

Several board members then shared their concerns about the design revisions. Mr. Mejia felt that inserting stones into the berms created unnecessary complexity, drifting away from the simplicity and precision of the original proposal. He found the solar mark-making technique interesting but not well-suited for this project, and he objected to the stones being sourced from

out of state. Mr. Nate King agreed, sharing his disappointment about changes to the berms' placement and the complications introduced into what was originally a cohesive vision. Ms. Childress also pointed out that cut-out steel could pose maintenance challenges.

The Board considered whether a hybrid approach might work—retaining sandblasted or cut-out Corten steel berms while allowing solar-marked stones elsewhere in the project. However, concerns persisted about continuity, sourcing, and alignment with the community's desire for local identity. Ms. Lopez read survey results from a survey conducted by the Public Lands department, which emphasized that residents valued the park's tranquility, scenic views, and incorporation of local identity and wildlife into design decisions. These points reinforced hesitations about sourcing materials from outside the region.

The Board conducted a straw poll: three members supported continuing with the original commission, two supported blending Corten steel walls with solar-marked stones, and one remained undecided. Given the lack of clarity and unresolved concerns, the Board agreed to delay the final decision until September's meeting. In the meantime, Mr. Olmedo-González will request updated renderings from Mr. Kuby and ask for further details about maintenance considerations.

#### **IV. 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue Futsal Court**

Mr. Olmedo-González introduced a proposed temporary surface mural at the newly completed 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue Futsal Sports Court. In line with the City's Public Art ordinance, the Board is required to approve artwork incorporated into city infrastructure or projects. This project is a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) effort, led by Public Lands in collaboration with Calle, an organization known for organizing street soccer tournaments. Calle has partnered with artist Mark Romney to develop a community-led design for the mural.

Mr. Olmedo-González presented three renderings of possible designs, noting that the mural would be temporary (five years) and that Calle would be responsible for its maintenance. The Board was not tasked with selecting a design, only with approving or denying the proposal for a mural on the sports court. After discussion, Mr. Mejia made a motion to approve, Ms. Porter seconded, and all members present voted unanimously in favor.

#### **V. Public Comment**

No Public Comment was received.

#### **VI. Other Business / Adjourn**

Mr. Olmedo-González gave the Board Public Art Program updates. Mr. Olmedo-González and Board members present thanked Ms. Lopez for her time serving on the Salt Lake Art Design Board. This meeting will be her last.

Engagement for the new mural on *Out of the Blue* aka the "Whale" opened on Monday, August 5<sup>th</sup>. The city has already received over 700 survey responses. The Survey will be open for 5 weeks and close on September 15<sup>th</sup>. The call for artists for the next muralist will be in November, and artist selection will happen in February. The new Mural will be painted by next summer.

Fleet Block Open Space engagement will open Monday, August 11<sup>th</sup>, and will remain open through the end of the month. This is in partnership with Public Lands and the process is being

led by the design consultants Sasaki and their sub-consultant for community engagement, Rhodes Heritage Group.

The Board received the final draft of the 2026 -2028 Pre-Qualified Artist Pool Request for Qualifications (RFQ). The board will have two weeks to provide any feedback.

The Public Art Program is working with the CRA for their Ballpark Mural program. There will be 10 murals with a budget of \$150,000. 10 artist were selected from the Pre-Qualified Artist Pool and

Matthew Mazzotta will be presenting his updated proposal at the September Art Design Board meeting.

Ms. Porter made a motion to close the meeting, Ms. Lopez seconded, all members voted in favor.