



MEMORANDUM

P.O. Box 4100 ♦ FRISCO, COLORADO 80443

TO: MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL
FROM: VANESSA AGEE, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR
RE: ARTS AND CULTURE DISCUSSION
DATE: NOVEMBER 9, 2021

Summary and Background:

In the 2020 budget, Town Council approved \$25,000 for public art, and subsequently starting in October 2019, a group of artists, makers, art-minded community members, Town staff, and one councilmember began meeting to strategize on the formation of a community arts group. The MakeFrisco arts group grew out of this with approximately eight local artists, including painters, a photographer, a milliner, a landscape architect, musicians, a furniture maker, sculptors, and illustrators who are all based in Frisco, attending most meetings. The MakeFrisco group quickly identified that they intended to bring the community together around art, as art was recognized as integral to Frisco's culture and vibrancy. Concurrently, Town staff inventoried the 11 existing public art pieces and created a brochure to highlight the public art already in the Town.

This MakeFrisco group expressed a desire to create art in the community and find a way to provide opportunities for art to thrive in Frisco. Three central goals emerged from the MakeFrisco meetings and were presented to Town Council during a January 14, 2020 presentation: create community art projects, secure space for making and exhibiting art, and form an arts group.

Frisco Public Art Accomplishments

- MakeFrisco implemented their first goal around community art projects by creating an interactive art exhibit, Frozen Frisco on February 1, 2020 at the Summit Nordic Ski Club's Eat, Ski and Be Merry event and at the corner of Main Street and 3rd Avenue.
- In May 2020 in response to the pandemic, the public art budget supported the installation of Hope Hearts in Frisco on public and private spaces, as part of the Summit County Hope Project, which was a collaboration between local street artist and social justice activist Shannon Galpin and Denver-based artist Koko Bayer.
- In July 2020, the Black Lives Matter mural was installed on Main Street at the direction of Town Council to echo the commitment to have public art reflect current culture, important moments in time, and encourage community conversation. The public art budget was utilized for supplies, several MakeFrisco members participated in creating the mural, and this mural was primarily an expression of support from the Town of Frisco as a whole.

- In January 2021, the group installed another Frozen Frisco display in the Frisco Historic Park and at the intersection of Main Street and 3rd Avenue.
- In June 2021, MakeFrisco recommended a mural design/artists to Town Council and advised the selected artists regarding design modifications, which resulted in a commissioned piece which better reflected the community's aesthetic.
- Summer 2021 MakeFrisco artists were also featured on large prints, which were placed on the white plastic barricades throughout the Frisco Pedestrian Promenade.

Analysis:

Art is intended to honor a community's culture, enhance and express character, spark conversation, celebrate art and artists, and add to a thriving economy. The MakeFrisco group has engaged in creating community art and in commissioning a piece of art, which have fulfilled those intentions, and over two years, the group, projects, and budget have evolved.

Frisco Arts Commission

Art commissions are a part of the evolution into a more formed and strategic approach to visual and performing arts. Art commissions are typically appointed by a governing body, such as Town Council, and make spending and programming recommendations to that governing body. Commissions are typically comprised of creatives, residents with interest in advocating for the arts, business owners, arts administrators, and not-for-profit leaders. A group of this type can set its mission and lead in the development of a strategic arts and culture plan. In Frisco, there are opportunities for a commission of this type to weigh in on visual and performing arts.

Town Council would appoint the Frisco Arts Commission. Seven to nine members are typical for arts commissions, and should reflect a diversity of experiences, interests, and backgrounds. Often public arts committees will include one or two council members and a non-voting staff person. Also, there is an opportunity to designate that one commission seat be held for a high school student to introduce even more diversity of perspective. If there are seven members, then it would be most prudent to appoint four members to a three year term and three members to a two year term in order to stagger turnover. Members would need to demonstrate a commitment to the arts, the ability to attend meetings, and an understanding of the Frisco community and character. Many commissions require that members live or work within town limits.

The commission would meet once monthly for one to two hours, depending on project load. The commission would first be responsible for leading a strategic planning process, presenting that plan, developing a mission and vision statement for the commission, and establishing the protocols for how the group will interact and make decisions. Going forward, the commission would issue Requests for Qualifications or Requests for Proposals for public art projects; lead on matters pertaining to the selection, siting, restoration, and maintenance of public art; provide guidance on the acceptance and disposition of gifts of art to the town; advise council on art and culture events, policies, strategies, and programs, including any live/work artist spaces or exhibit spaces; establish a local arts and culture grant program, review applications, and make grant funding recommendations; propose a yearly budget to Town Council; and assist Town staff in identifying and pursuing other funding sources.

The commission would also have the ability to create advisory committees that assist with focused initiatives. As members of the MakeFrisco group have expressed an interest in continuing to create community art and securing space for creating and exhibiting art, there is

great benefit to MakeFrisco continuing as an advisory committee that supports Frisco's goals around community art and creative spaces; they would receive funding and guidance through the Frisco Arts Commission. Several MakeFrisco members have stated an intention to apply to the commission if one is formed, but not all are interested in being part of a more formal commission and would prefer to continue on this "working group".

Strategic Planning

There are many examples in surrounding communities of how art is embraced and honored, and those communities have grown their programs for many years by defining their mission, vision, and path to implementation through planning; the [Silverthorne Arts and Culture Strategic Plan](#) from January 2016 is a particularly relevant and excellent example. It is likely time for Frisco to set its own course through a strategic plan, which reflects Frisco's unique needs and character.

A commissioned five-year arts and culture strategic plan would set a course for Frisco's long-term investment in the arts, which would respect the community's values and vision with an approach that would deepen the sense of place and support economic development. The planning process would be led by the Frisco Arts Commission with the support of staff and would be informed through a robust community engagement process with input from community members, business owners, and creatives.

This strategic plan would look at arts and culture through the lens of the Town of Frisco's strategic priorities to determine how to incorporate visual and performing arts throughout the community. Resource allocation, including suggested staffing and funding would be defined in the plan, along with the programs that would further implementation of the plan, including events; community art projects; live/work spaces for makers; exhibition and creative spaces; and opportunities to purchase, commission, and acquire art. The plan would then need to be updated every five years to reflect plan progress, evolving realities, and community values.

Financial Impact:

The 2022 approved budget includes \$50,000 for public art in the capital improvement fund.

Alignment with Strategic Plan:

Public Art supports an inclusive community where diverse ideas and interests are welcome and vibrancy is valued and grown.

Public art also encourages a thriving economy by encouraging economic activity and supporting economic diversity.

Environmental Sustainability:

Public art may be used to express community values around environmental sustainability, and making decisions about art and culture through this lens can support what kind of art, events and materials are selected and supported.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Town use the 2022 public arts budget to create a five-year strategic arts plan to provide an arts and culture road map that aligns with the Town's priorities, values, and character. The employ of a third party would be achieved through a RFP process.

Staff recommends the formation of a seven person Frisco Arts Commission, which would be appointed by Town Council. All members would be required to either live or work in Frisco, except for a possible exception for a high school student. If Council gives direction to form a Public Arts Commission, staff requests that Council provide guidance on term lengths, any residency or work requirements, and the possibility of setting aside one seat on the commission for a high school student.

Staff also recommends that the MakeFrisco group continue as an advisory group to the Frisco Arts Commission and continue to be supported in their goals to create community art and to secure space for creating and exhibiting art. They would continue to take on projects of their own and to be funded through Frisco's art budget in consultation with the Frisco Arts Commission. Also, the members of MakeFrisco would be invited to apply for the Frisco Arts Commission and participate as stakeholders in the strategic arts plan process.

Reviews and Approvals:

This report has been reviewed and approved by:

Tony O'Rourke, Town Manager
Leslie Edwards, Finance Director