



MEMO

DATE: February 8, 2021
TO: San Francisco Arts & Culture Communities
FROM: Ralph Remington, Director of Cultural Affairs, San Francisco Arts Commission
Sheryl Davis, Executive Director, Human Rights Commission
Phil Ginsberg, General Manager, Recreation & Park Department
RE: San Francisco Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee Now Accepting Applications

San Francisco's Arts Commission, Recreation & Park Department and Human Rights Commission are launching a citywide community engagement initiative to establish criteria to determine the future of historic monuments in the Civic Art Collection.

The San Francisco Arts Commission is seeking qualified candidates to participate in the Monuments and Memorials Advisory Committee (MMAC), a body that will host hearings with community members and establish the criteria and guidelines by which to determine the future of historic monuments in the City's art collection. This initiative is a partnership between the San Francisco Arts Commission (SFAC), the Human Rights Commission (HRC) and the Recreation and Park Department (RECPARK).

The MMAC's charge is to examine the history of monuments in the public realm in San Francisco, the individuals, events and ideals they venerate, and how the narratives associated with these monuments align—or do not—with San Francisco's values today. This advisory body will focus their research on the monuments and memorials within the Civic Art Collection.

The MMAC will be conducting an open, public process, convening hearings that center community voices with a diversity of expertise and lived experience. The goal is to ensure a robust public process and ensure equitable community engagement.

The MMAC is being convened by a directive from Mayor London Breed as a response to three statues in Golden Gate Park that were brought down by demonstrators in June 2020 who were protesting our nation's history of white supremacy and the racism we continue to encounter today. (Please see page 3 for statements from the Mayor and other municipal entities.) Based on the criteria and guidelines released by the MMAC, the Arts Commission will determine the final disposition of the monuments in the Civic Art Collection.

As a City, we must reckon with our own participation in historic oppression, must call out our own inherent biases that influence how we still function today, and begin to repair our relationship with San Francisco communities that have long felt alienated, marginalized or assaulted by these sanctioned images in open spaces.

Seats on the MMAC will be filled by community members, selected based on a range of expertise: that of U.S. history centered on Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities; San Francisco history; historic preservation; public art; deep experience and knowledge of BIPOC histories, art and cultural issues; and racial justice and reparation.

The three documents that are part of this packet constitute the full application:

- 1) This Cover Memo
- 2) Scope of Work for the Advisory Committee (which details the expertise required for the committee, its time commitment and compensation)
- 3) [Application Link](#)

The deadline for the application is Wednesday, March 17, 2021, 11:59 p.m.

There will be an information session for applicants on **Friday, February 19, 2021, 12-1 p.m.** [To register for the information session, click on this link.](#)

We estimate the Advisory Committee will begin meeting in April 2021; this timeline is subject to change.

Please review the Advisory Committee's Scope of Work if you are interested in applying. Please also visit the MMAC FAQ for answers to any questions you may have. If you have additional questions, please email ART-info@sfgov.org no later than February 25, 2021 at 5 p.m. We cannot guarantee the ability to answer questions about the application after that time.

**MUNICIPAL STATEMENTS PERTAINING TO REPRESENTATION IN PUBLIC ART
RELEASED FOLLOWING JUNE 2020 EVENTS**

Mayor Breed Statement Following Ulysses S. Grant, Junípero Serra and Francis Scott Key Monuments Being Brought Down in Golden Gate Park

There is very real pain in this country rooted in our history of slavery and oppression, especially against African Americans and Indigenous people. I know that pain all too well....Every dollar we spend cleaning up this vandalism takes funding away from actually supporting our community, including our African-American community. I say this not to defend any particular statue or what it represents, but to recognize that when people take action in the name of my community, they should actually involve us. And when they vandalize our public parks, that's their agenda, not ours....If we are going to make real change, let's do the work with our impacted communities to make that change....Who and what we honor through our public art can and should reflect our values.

Arts Commission Statement

At this important time in our country, we are all examining the ways in which institutional and structural racism permeate our society. Public art is no exception. In cities across the U.S., many historic monuments are being taken down because the actions and ideas symbolized do not deserve to be venerated. Representation matters. That is why we can and should continue to create artwork that reflects our values and the diverse communities we serve.

Joint Statement from Supervisors Peskin and Stefani and Mayor London Breed Upon Removal of Christopher Columbus Statue

The statue of Christopher Columbus has been removed from its position near Coit Tower and placed in storage. At a time of great unrest and deep reflection both locally and nationally, we recognize that Christopher Columbus is a deeply polarizing figure in our history and a symbol of pain and oppression to many, including and especially to Indigenous people. Public art can and should honor the heritage of all our people, including our Italian-American community, and in doing so we should choose symbols that unify us. The Arts and Recreation & Parks Commissions will engage in a public process to determine what artwork should go in that space near Coit Tower.

Recreation & Parks Department Statement

Coit Tower is an emblem of the San Francisco skyline, beloved by visitors for its panoramic views. Racism has no place in that view, or in ours. The Christopher Columbus statue is a symbol of centuries of oppression targeting Native Americans. It is at odds with the Recreation & Parks Department's values of access and inclusion and our prioritization of parks and open space for marginalized communities. We are grateful to the Arts Commission for removing it from our property.

ABOUT MMAC PARTNER AGENCIES

About the San Francisco Arts Commission

The San Francisco Arts Commission is the City agency that champions the arts as essential to daily life by investing in a vibrant arts community, enlivening the urban environment and

shaping innovative cultural policy. Our programs include: Civic Art Collection, Civic Design Review, Community Investments, Public Art, SFAC Galleries and Art Vendor Licensing. To learn more, visit sfartscommission.org.

About the Human Rights Commission

For over 50 years, the Human Rights Commission has grown in response to San Francisco's mandate to address the causes of and problems resulting from prejudice, intolerance, bigotry and discrimination. We: 1) Advocate for human and civil rights; 2) Investigate and mediate discrimination complaints; 3) Resolve community disputes and issues involving individual or systemic illegal discrimination; and 4) Provide technical assistance, information and referrals to individuals, community groups, businesses and government agencies related to human rights and social services.

About the Recreation & Park Department

The San Francisco Recreation & Park Department currently manages more than 220 parks, playgrounds and open spaces throughout San Francisco, including two outside city limits—Sharp Park in Pacifica and Camp Mather in the High Sierras. The system includes full-complex recreation centers, swimming pools, golf courses, sports fields and numerous small-to-medium-sized clubhouses that offer a variety of sports- and arts-related recreation programs for people of all ages. Included in the Department's responsibilities are Golden Gate Park, Coit Tower, the Marina Yacht Harbor, the San Francisco Zoo and Lake Merced. In 2017, San Francisco became the first city in the nation where all residents have access to a park within a 10-minute walk, a direct result of the Department's commitment to increasing and improving parkland in the city.