



# CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT



**DEPARTMENT:** Community Services

**MEETING DATE:** August 6, 2024

**STAFF REFERENCE:** Tina Cherry, Community Services Director

**AGENDA LOCATION:** AR-1

**GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 84308 APPLIES:** Yes

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**TITLE:** Commission of Public Art by Daniel Stern and Lost Men Productions, Inc., for Monrovia Canyon Park as Part of the Monrovia Canyon Park Infrastructure Improvement Project in an Amount Not to Exceed \$285,000.00

**OBJECTIVE:** To approve a public art project to be installed in Monrovia Canyon Park

**BACKGROUND:** On March 19, 2024, the City Council awarded a contract to Pokrajac Corporation for the Canyon Park Infrastructure Improvement Project (“Project”) and other necessary contracts related to project management, engineering, and contingency. The total amount authorized for this Project is \$15,391,163.77. Work commenced immediately and the contractor is well underway with infrastructure repairs.

As part of the Project, the City identified several enhancements to Monrovia Canyon Park (“Park”). These enhancements ensure the City is not only repairing damaged infrastructure, but also making necessary park improvements that generations to come can enjoy. These enhancements include:

- Enclosing the entrance kiosk
- *Adding public art to the park entrance*
- Expanding parking in some areas, including addition of ADA accessible spaces
- Providing fiber conduit throughout the project, ensuring fiber/wifi connectivity
- Adding a gazebo near the streambed
- Adding a public education center, similar to a small outdoor “amphitheater”
- Enhancing the public lookout at the top of the park
- Upgrading signage, parking areas, and picnic areas
- Making necessary design changes to ensure the park is prepared for future effects of climate change

The Project design includes widening the small island at the entrance to the park to serve as an improved gathering area for residents entering the park. The City planned to install public art at this location and began discussing possible art installations this summer.

**ANALYSIS:** Actor Daniel Stern, whose reputation as an artist has distinguished him in the San Gabriel Valley, was identified as a possible partner for the public artwork component of this Project. Monrovia is already home to one of his distinguished pieces, “Action,” a City-commissioned bronze statue in Old Town Monrovia. This artwork was commissioned in 2015 using Art in Public Places funding and is deeply appreciated for being interactive, for telling stories through art, and for honoring Monrovia’s past.

Staff met with Mr. Stern on several occasions to see the Park, to discuss the Park’s history, and to identify what types of stories the City wanted to tell through public art. Staff requested Mr. Stern provide a few concepts for consideration, which will be presented as part of the August 6, 2024, City Council meeting. These concepts include three (3) sculptures (Attachment A) which all tell a unique story. All three

sculptures are interactive and meant to be used for gathering spaces, pictures, and for public education. These statues are:

1. Firefighter Statue  
Name: "Always Ready"  
Theme: This piece honors the service of firefighters, rangers and trail crew volunteers for their work and dedication in protecting Canyon Park against the Bobcat Fire (2020) and always being on the lookout to protect our community, our park, and our cherished public spaces. More importantly, they also keep watch by protecting our homes and our community
2. Trail Crew Statue  
Name: "Clearing the Way"  
Theme: The Bobcat Fire (2020), December Rainstorm (2021), and January Rainstorm (2023) all caused catastrophic damage to the park, resulting in countless trees lost, damaged public lands, and washed out trails. Trees have now been cleared and buried deep in the hillsides of Canyon Park to provide nutrient-rich soil that will help the land recover in time. The fallen trees tell a story of recurring damage, but also a story of building anew, of creating new life and growth. The volunteers who make up the Canyon Park Trail Crew have played an important role in clearing the trails following the Fire and the subsequent Rainstorms.
3. Park Naturalist Statue  
Name: "Precious Cargo"  
Theme: Canyon Park's history includes generations of park naturalists and volunteers who care for the park, flora and fauna found within, and provide public education and outreach to all. Park naturalists are knowledgeable about the local environment and are known for helping all in times of need, including animals. This piece, which depicts a park naturalist carrying a small animal over a fallen log, is intended to be an interactive piece for family photos and a gathering space.

Each of the rough designs provided to the City are conceptual only. They are all designs of life-size bronze statues, which take significant time to create. Should the City Council decide to proceed with this vision of the public artwork, the City will work closely with Mr. Stern to formalize all necessary agreements, provide input/feedback on final sculpture design and location, and work quickly to see that the artwork is installed as soon as possible.

Due to the size of the three large bronze statues, Mr. Stern anticipates 6-8 months is necessary for the artwork to be created and delivered to the Park. The Project has an anticipated completion date of December 2024, so the City is moving expeditiously to commission public art as quickly as possible. It is most likely the public artwork will not be complete until after the Park reopening.

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT:** There is no environmental impact associated with the approval of this agreement.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** The total cost for this commissioned artwork will be \$95,000 per sculpture, with a total amount not to exceed \$285,000. This includes the costs to design, create, cast, and deliver the large sculptures to the park. In recent years, when the City has solicited cost information for large bronze artwork, prices for full-size pieces range from \$80,000-100,000 for the artwork alone. Because public art is highly specialized and unique in nature, this contract award is an exception to bidding and quotation requirements per the Monrovia Municipal Code (Section 3.24.120(A)(13)).

Funds for this artwork will come from monies set aside for "Contingency and Allowances" previously approved with the Project. On March 19, 2024, City Council approved a contingency amount of \$1,209,521.71, and a cash allowance of nearly \$800,000. These funds were budgeted to account for unforeseen costs and possible changes/additions to the overall Project.

If authorized to proceed, the City and Artist will work together on an itemized cost for the entire project, understanding the maximum budget will not exceed \$285,000. Should the City choose to install smaller sculptures, the price will be reduced.

**OPTIONS:** The following options are presented for consideration:

1. Approve the commission of Public Artwork by Daniel Stern and Lost Men Productions, Inc., for Monrovia Canyon Park as part of the Monrovia Canyon Park Infrastructure Improvement Project in an amount not to exceed \$285,000.00.
2. Do not approve commission of Public Artwork by Daniel Stern and Lost Men Productions, Inc., and provide staff with additional direction.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Staff recommends Option 1.

1. **COUNCIL ACTION REQUIRED:** If the City Council concurs, the appropriate action would be a motion to approve the commission of Public Artwork by Daniel Stern and Lost Men Productions, Inc., for Monrovia Canyon Park as part of the Monrovia Canyon Park Infrastructure Improvement Project in an amount not to exceed \$285,000.00, and authorize the City Manager to execute necessary Agreements on a form approved by the City Attorney.

# CANYON PARK SCULPTURES

SCULPTURES

FIREFIGHTERS— “ALWAYS READY”

TRAIL CREW — “ CLEARING THE WAY”

RANGERS — “ PRECIOUS CARGO”

HONORING THE SERVICE OF THE FIREFIGHTERS,  
RANGERS AND TRAIL CREW VOLUNTEERS FOR THEIR  
WORK IN SAVING AND RESTORING CANYON PARK.

THE TREES LOST IN THE BOBCAT FIRE AND FLOOD  
ARE NOW THE NUTRITION FOR ALL THE NEW  
GROWTH THAT IS HAPPENING IN THE PARK. MY HOPE  
IS THAT THE FALLEN TREES IN THE SCULPTURE HELP  
NURTURE A NEW ECOSYSTEM TO THIS AREA OF THE  
PARK.

THEY WILL BE A PLACE TO SIT, TO PLAY, TO LISTEN TO  
THE RIVER RUNNING BY AND HOPEFULLY ENJOY  
THESE SCULPTURES AND REMEMBER ALL OF THE  
EFFORT THAT THE COMMUNITY OF MONROVIA HAS  
INVESTED IN THIS IMPORTANT, NATURAL WONDER.





