



## Recommendation for Action

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**File #:** 20-3485, **Agenda Item #:** 24.

12/10/2020

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### **Posting Language**

Approve the recommendation of the Arts Commission to deaccession “Republic Square Fountain” by James Turner, formerly located at Republic Square Park, donated to the City as part of the Art in Public Places public art collection.

### **Lead Department**

Economic Development Department.

### **Fiscal Note**

There is no fiscal impact.

### **For More Information:**

Sylvia Holt-Rabb, Acting Director, Economic Development Department, 512-974-3131 and Susan Lambe, Art in Public Places Program Manager, 512-974-7852.

### **Council Committee, Boards and Commission Action:**

On August 3, 2020, the Art in Public Places Panel appointed members to serve on a Special Jury required to make recommendations for deaccession of Art in Public Places collection artwork, per the Art in Public Places Program’s Acquisitions and Deaccessioning Policy, adopted by the Arts Commission on December 15, 2008.

On August 26, 2020, the Arts Commission initiated the deaccession process for this artwork, one of five under consideration.

On September 28, 2020, the Arts Commission appointed a Special Jury member.

On November 16, 2020, the Arts Commission approved the deaccession of “Republic Square Fountain” on consent on Vice Chair Polgar’s motion, Commissioner Fonte’s second on a 7-0 vote. Absent: Commissioner Mok, Commissioner Van Dyke, Commissioner Garza (one vacancy).

### **Additional Backup Information:**

The Art in Public Places program’s Acquisitions and Deaccessioning Policy recommends best practices for regular assessments of the public art collection, and establishes criteria, policies and procedures regarding removing an artwork from the collection, or deaccessioning.

The Arts Commission received requests for the deaccession of five (5) artworks at their regular monthly meeting on August 26, 2020, and approved initiation of the deaccession process for these five artworks, including “Moments” by Carl Trominski, 2003, at the Lamar Underpass; “Republic Square Fountain” by James Turner, 1988, at Republic Square Park; “LAB” by NextProject, 2009, along the bikeway from MOPAC to Airport Blvd.; “Bicentennial Fountain” by Ken Fowler, 1976, at Auditorium Shores and “Karst Circle” by W. Gary Smith, 2004, at Austin Fire Station 43/EMS Station 31.

Per the Deaccession policy, the Arts Commission and the Art in Public Places Panel appointed a Special Jury

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of qualified members to assess the question of deaccessioning and make recommendations to the Arts Commission (jury membership listed below). The Deaccession Special Jury met on November 12, 2020, to review and make the recommendations for each of the five artworks. The Special Jury recommended to deaccession "Republic Square Fountain".

Donated in 1988 by James Turner, "Republic Square Fountain", was not funded by the City of Austin. This artwork is proposed for deaccession as "Republic Square Fountain" was accidentally removed during the demolition phase of the new Republic Square Park. After being reviewed by experts, this artwork was approved for deaccession. This problem is specifically noted in the deaccession policy as a reason to remove the artwork. This is a normal part of the public art process and helps maintain a safe and high-quality art collection. The Special Jury recommended unanimously that "Republic Square Fountain" be deaccessioned.

The Arts Commission voted unanimously at their November 16, 2020, meeting to approve the deaccession of "Republic Square Fountain". In addition, the Parks and Recreation Department has stated their support of the deaccession. To finalize the deaccession of "Republic Square Fountain", in accordance with Deaccessions Policy, City Council must now vote on the item.

If City Council votes to accept the recommendation of the Arts Commission to deaccession "Republic Square Fountain", the artwork will officially be removed from the city's active public art collection and the record of this artwork will be archived.

#### **MEMBERS OF SPECIAL JURY**

Elaine Shen, appointed by the Art in Public Places Panel

Jade Walker, appointed by the Arts Commission

Tammie Rubin, Chair, Art in Public Places Panel

Sarah Carr, Art in Public Places Panel member

J Muzacz, Art in Public Places Panel member

Brett Barnes, Arts Commissioner and liaison to the Art in Public Places Panel.

**CLL 3** - Strengthen our portfolio of culture and lifelong learning programs, events and facilities by engaging and building trust with the community to ensure equitable access and participation, and that services are aligned with community expectations.

**CLL 4** - Maintain a mapped inventory of City and non-City cultural and historical assets to identify and address service gaps while accurately recognizing, preserving and, elevating the profile of place-based and underrepresented histories, narratives, and gathering spaces.

#### **Strategic Outcome(s):**

Culture and Lifelong Learning