

Culver City Equity and Human Relations Advisory Committee
Report from Diversity Awareness Projects Ad Hoc Subcommittee

December 13, 2022 Committee Meeting

Members of the Diversity Awareness Projects Ad Hoc Subcommittee: Chair Carlos Valverde, Vice Chair Anissa DiVincente, members Haifaa Moammar and Rebecca

Significant progress by June 30th The ad hoc subcommittee agrees that it is important to make significant progress on the Diversity Awareness Projects by June 30th.

Necessary for all awareness projects The necessary components of all the individual projects are: a mini website or webpage on the city website dedicated to the projects; “kiosks,” and QR codes. Each kiosk would bring awareness of a different segment of the Culver City community, and would incorporate a QR code linked to the mini website or to a webpage or section on the city’s website.

Similar, not identical features All projects would include a kiosk with a small amount of text, possibly a few photos, and a QR code leading to a mini website or city webpage. Some kiosks would be situated near a work of art, such as a mural or sculpture; others would not.

Advantages of the mini website or webpage on City website. This would house all the material related to each of the Diversity Awareness Projects. These may be: a historical account, photographs, oral histories, videos, newspaper articles, and any other material related to the subject of a particular Diversity Awareness Project.

A series of projects Members of the Diversity Awareness Projects Ad Hoc Subcommittee are not suggesting that the committee choose one or two from among the ideas that follow. Rather the committee, in conjunction with the City and other entities, would create an entire series, to include all the ideas below and, further into the future, possibly more.

Locations of DAP kiosks. Whenever possible, a kiosk would be placed in a location that is related to the subject matter.

Financing In the case of a few of the projects, it is relatively easy to identify people or companies who would finance the art. With other projects this is not the case.

Questions about financing We need to determine who would pay for the kiosks, mini website and the remaining art. We may need public/private partnerships, which we will investigate. We will look into the possibility that the Culver City Art Foundation will help us finance any art that has not yet been financed.

Idea #1 Create a kiosk focused on history of the Kunisawa family and the Kunisawa Farm, a working farm. This family resided in Culver City, was interned in Manzanar, and returned after the war to Culver City. Chair Valverde has already researched the family and was videotaped interviewing the Kunisawa grandchildren. He suggests locating the kiosk near the intersection of Sepulveda Blvd. and Braddock Ave., where there is a lot of foot traffic.

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Idea #2 Feature a mural about breaking down walls between people located at the Wende Museum. This would be painted on a wall of the Wende Museum that faces the parking lot, which could be accomplished if a few plants were removed. In front of the mural would be one of our kiosks, with a small amount of text and a QR code. There's a relationship between the Wende Museum and our issues: the breaking down of the Berlin Wall. We expect that Justin Jampol, the museum founder, will appreciate this concept and be interested in raising funds to cover the cost of commissioning a fine muralist.

Idea #3 Commission art depicting the Tongva people, to be situated at City Hall. This could be a sculpture, a mural or some other art form. Again, there would be a Kiosk that included text, a QR code and possibly a photograph or two. We would like to interview three local Tongvas: Angie Behrns, her brother, Robert Durame, and Robert's daughter, Mercedes Dorame. Angie, 85, is very knowledgeable and enjoys sharing what she knows, which includes much about the Tongva people as well as her family. She enjoys dressing in Native clothing. Her talented brother, Robert, is a sculptor, and his daughter, Mercedes, is an articulate and impressive artist who teaches at UCLA.

Idea #4 Feature history of area Latinos with a focus on the Mexican labor camp formerly in Culver City. We would feature an interview with Amanda Chacon, daughter of a gentleman who resided there for many years. The site of that labor camp is next to the company that employs Amanda Chacon. We will investigate the possibility of that company commissioning a piece of art.

Idea #5 Describe history of Black people in the area with a focus on Louis Armstrong and jazz. Louis Armstrong and other jazz musicians often performed at Sebastian's Cotton Club, formerly located at or near the corner of National and Washington boulevards, where a new Apple campus will be built. We will investigate the possibility of Apple commissioning a work of art that would be situated in front of its campus.

Idea #6 Interview "elders" of all ethnicities We could place the kiosk in front of the Senior Center. All seniors are "the other" to an extent, are a protected class, and have much knowledge and many stories to share.