



COUNCIL REPORT

DATE: May 14, 2024
CATEGORY: Consent
DEPT.: Community Development
TITLE: **Public Art for Evelyn Park, Project 21-60**

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the revised Looking Up Arts' monarch butterfly sculpture entitled "Butterfly Reflect" for Evelyn Park, Project 21-60, for \$30,000.

BACKGROUND

The 0.68-acre park site located on Evelyn Avenue, near the border of Mountain View and Sunnyvale, was dedicated to the City for park use by the 525 East Evelyn Avenue development project. On [May 9, 2023](#), the City Council approved a Conceptual Plan and selected the park name "Evelyn Park."

The Conceptual Plan (Figure 1) includes the following elements:

- A lawn with mound;
- A raised seat wall planter with specimen oak;
- Log piling climbing structure, raised hut play structure, and log stepper;
- A plaza area; and
- Picnic tables and benches.

Council Policy K-5 (Attachment 1) requires 2% of the construction budget to be set aside for public art, which in this case is \$30,000. The project budget is all-inclusive of project costs, including artist's fees and expenses, taxes, materials, permit fees (except City building permit fees), travel, shipping and crating, insurance fees, permitting, site preparation, and fabrication/installation or execution of the artwork.



Figure 1: Evelyn Park

At the Visual Arts Committee (VAC) meeting on November 8, 2023, after issuing a Call for Artists (Attachment 2) for public art proposals and scoring and jurying the applications, the VAC selected Looking Up Arts' proposal for a monarch butterfly sculpture entitled "Butterfly Reflect" (Figure 2).



Figure 2: Looking Up Arts Original Concept—“Butterfly Reflect”

The original concept included an LED panel located on the underside of each butterfly that mimicked a visual of monarch butterflies migrating or flying.

On [February 27, 2024](#), the City Council discussed the VAC-recommended “Butterfly Reflect” art for Evelyn Park and referred the item back to the VAC to address concerns about the LED lighting and the implications for the preservation of dark skies as well as the park-goer experience related to the underside of the butterflies. (The City Council Strategic Work Plan currently includes a project to develop a Dark Skies Ordinance.)

Council also directed staff to explore ways to have the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) project budget fund City building permit fees for City-commissioned art. In response, staff is making an administrative revision to the standard artist contract terms to exclude City building permit fees from the artist’s costs.

ANALYSIS

At the March 13, 2024 VAC meeting, staff shared Council's feedback and direction and asked the VAC to consider the following questions:

1. What should the park-goer experience look and feel like at ground level, underneath the butterflies? What elements of the piece can be improved at ground level?
2. Should lighting be incorporated into the piece? What does the piece look like with reduced lighting or no lighting?

Following discussion, the VAC directed staff to work with the Looking Up Arts team to address lighting that is consistent with other lighting standards in Mountain View parks.

Staff researched lighting standards in Mountain View parks and other practices or policies around lighting. The operational hours of Mountain View parks and facilities, per [Chapter 38, Section 38.13](#), of the Mountain View City Code, are between 6:00 a.m. and one-half hour after sunset (unless otherwise authorized by the City Manager or through another permit). Typically, parks are not lit outside of operational hours except for safety lighting and facilities and park amenities that are specifically designed for evening use with appropriate lighting or activities authorized by the City Manager. While Mountain View does not have a dark-sky ordinance at this time, staff used the City of Cupertino's Dark Sky Ordinance as a reference and shared this information with the Looking Up Arts team to inform best lighting practices that could be complementary to a future dark sky ordinance.

The Looking Up Arts artist team shared a revised sculpture concept based upon Council's feedback (see Attachment 3). The revised concept (shown in Figure 3) includes the following changes:

1. Tinted top panels (polycarbonate) will allow natural light to come through the top of the butterflies during the day and limit upward LED light transmission at night.
2. Rather than using an LED panel display, LED lights will be affixed internally to the butterfly wings which will illuminate the butterflies from within.
3. The removal of the LED panel results in a 75% reduction in the LED light count and overall brightness. Each butterfly will produce less than 100W.
4. Updates to controller software will allow for remote adjustments to colors, patterns, brightness, and scheduling.

5. The top and bottom polycarbonate panels will allow for a unique viewing experience from a distance and from below.

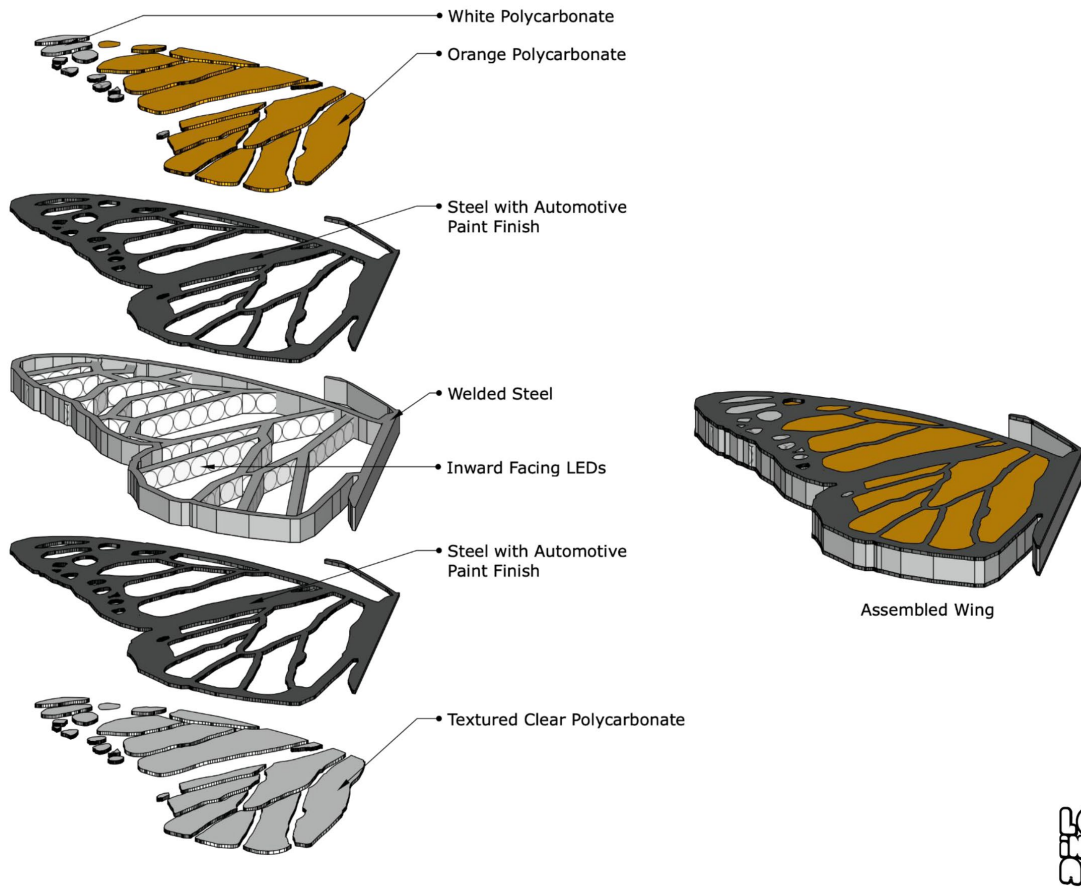


Figure 3: Revised Butterfly Reflection by Looking Up Arts

For the ground-level experience and activation of the walkway, Public Works project staff indicated that the art would need to be placed within the plaza at Evelyn Park (Location No. 1 in Figure 3), and to maintain consistency throughout the plaza, pavers will need to be placed around the concrete base of the art. Looking Up Arts will work with staff to determine feasibility to customize the pavers with butterfly outlines underneath the art to further enhance the ground-level user experience and stay within the project budget and timeline.

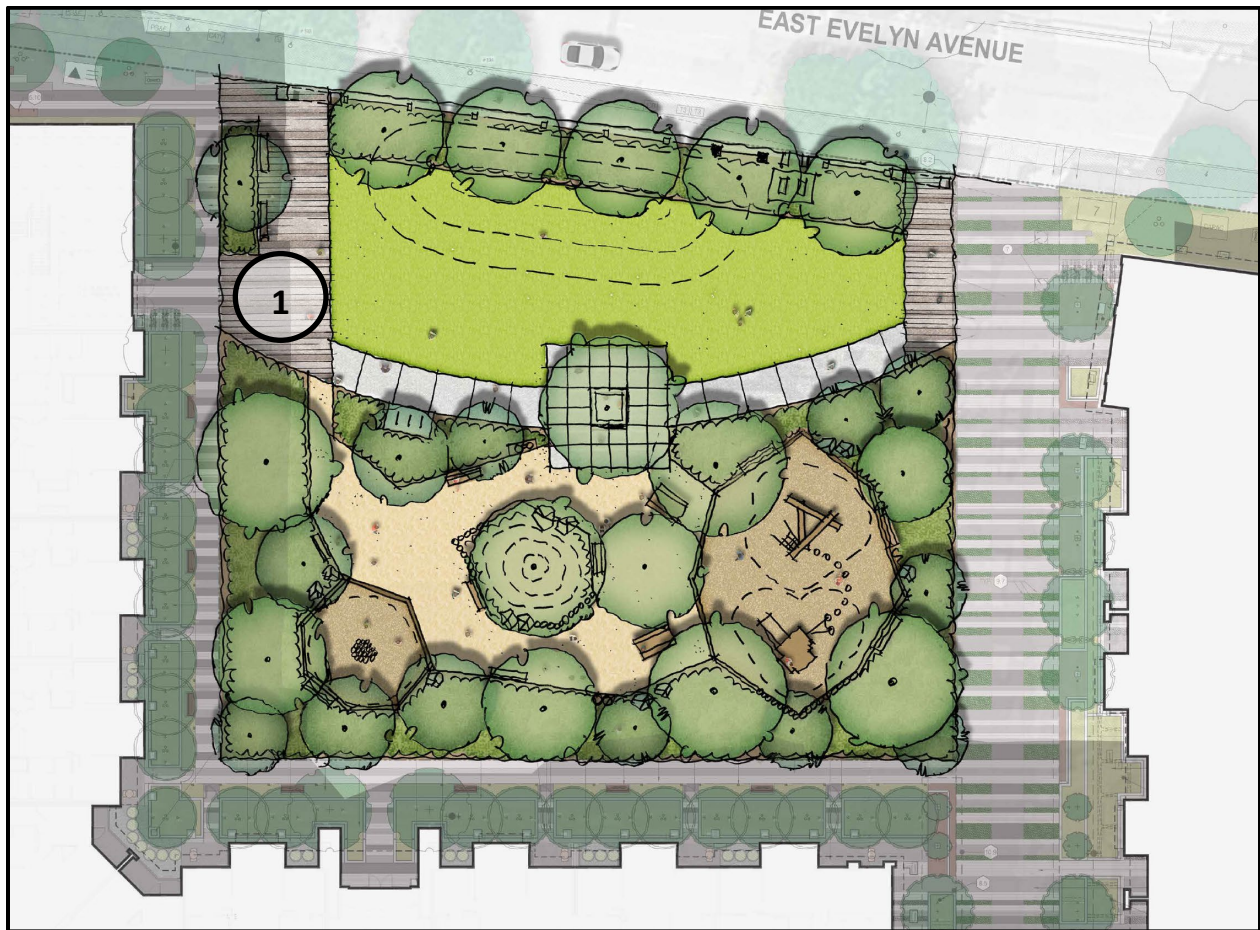


Figure 3: Evelyn Park—Location No. 1

At their April 10, 2024 meeting, the VAC recommended that the City Council approve the revised sculpture, “Butterfly Reflect,” by Looking Up Arts, allow the LED lighting to remain on between 6:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m., and permit the artist team to pursue the stamping of the pavers if it fits within the project budget.

A public comment received at the March 13, 2024 VAC meeting voiced a desire to have the metal support structure appear more like branches or reeds that support a butterfly. An additional public comment was made at the April 10, 2024 VAC meeting in opposition to the sculpture for Evelyn Park. During the VAC meeting, staff received one written comment via email in support of the sculpture.

FISCAL IMPACT

The public art budget is \$30,000 and is included in the project budget for Evelyn Park, Project 21-60. The recommended artist contract is for \$30,000. Since there is sufficient funding in the project budget, no additional appropriation is required at this time.

NEXT STEPS

If Council approves the recommendation, staff will execute an agreement with Looking Up Arts, and the installation will be completed in time for the opening and dedication of the new park, which is anticipated to be late 2024/early 2025.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Do not approve the proposed art and either direct staff to work with the artist to modify the art or to issue a new Call for Artists to obtain additional art options for the VAC to review and recommend to Council.
2. Provide other direction.

PUBLIC NOTICING

The Council meeting agenda and Council report have been posted on the City's website and announced on Channel 26 cable television. An email notification was sent to the Visual Arts Committee about this agenda item.

Prepared by:

Kirstin Hinds
Economic Development Strategist

Reviewed by:

John Lang
Economic Vitality Manager

Approved by:

Dawn S. Cameron
Acting Assistant City Manager/
Community Development Director

Audrey Seymour Ramberg
Assistant City Manager

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- Attachments:
1. Council Policy K-5
 2. Call for Artists—Public Art, Evelyn Park, Project 21-60
 3. Looking Up Arts Evelyn Park “Butterfly Reflect” Lighting Revision