

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: **PURCHASE OF THE SCULPTURE "A BIG HELLO" BY CRAIG SNYDER**

BACKGROUND:

One of the signature programs hosted by the Public Art Commission (PAC) is the Ames Annual Outdoor Sculpture Exhibition (AAOSE). Each year, sculptures exhibited through AAOSE are available for purchase by private individuals. Additionally, PAC typically acquires several sculptures each year into the City's permanent art collection through the Neighborhood Sculpture Program.

One of the sculptures entered into AAOSE this year is "A Big Hello" by Craig Snyder. The Ames Regional Economic Alliance (AREA) has offered to contribute the funds to purchase this vibrant sculpture and place it permanently downtown. The City has received a signed pledge agreement from AREA (attached), which commits to reimbursing the City for the purchase price of the sculpture in two installments during the current fiscal year.

The City will enter into a contract with the artist to purchase the sculpture under the same terms typically utilized for Neighborhood Sculpture Program acquisitions. This will ensure that the City is the beneficiary of the warranties provided by the artist, and may work with the artist directly to address future maintenance or repairs.

It is the intent for the sculpture to remain in its current exhibition location on the east side of Main Street at the gateway to Downtown Ames. The Risk Manager and Traffic Engineer were previously consulted about the proposed location and had no concerns regarding the placement.

At its meeting on December 2, 2025, the PAC reviewed the proposal and voted unanimously to accept the donation to purchase "A Big Hello" and recommend accession of the piece into the City's permanent art collection. The PAC is continuing to evaluate applications received this year for the Neighborhood Sculpture Program and will make recommendations for the City Council for other works in January.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. The City Council can do the following:
 - a. Accept the letter of donation pledge from the Ames Regional Economic Alliance for the donation of funds to purchase the sculpture "A Big Hello"
 - b. Award the contract with Craig Snyder of Plymouth, MN, in the amount of \$7,840 for the purchase of the sculpture "A Big Hello" for placement at the Main Street Gateway
2. Refer this item back to staff or the Public Art Commission for further information.
3. Do not approve the purchase.

CITY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

"A Big Hello" by Craig Snyder has drawn positive attention and engagement from the community. The donation offer provides the opportunity to purchase this sculpture in addition to other works that will be acquired this year through the Neighborhood Sculpture Program. This action aligns with the City Council's value of a fun, vibrant community that attracts and retains people. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative #1, as described above.

ATTACHMENT(S):

[Contract for "A Big Hello" by Craig Snyder.pdf](#)

[Pledge Agreement Letter for Donation to Public Art Commission.pdf](#)