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Art in the Park

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Recommendations for Spring Lake's Art in the Park Project

Sustainable paint

One of the main objectives for our project was finding sustainable paints that could be used in the mural. One of the most influential sources I found was by Rochikashvili & Bongaerts (2016), which discussed three types of sustainable paints used to cover walls, and the benefits of each. This is where I learned about the emission of VOCs, or volatile organic compounds, that are found in many traditional paints and the harmful effects they can have on the environment. The authors of this paper discussed the benefits of finding low-VOC paints, as well as other sustainable paint alternatives like tung-oil and milk paint. Another study by Galvão et. al. (2018) discussed a new type of paint used in an industrial setting that reuses iron ore shavings to create paint pigments.

After working on my annotated bibliography, I continued this research by creating my own list of criteria for sustainable paint that could potentially be used in the mural. I wanted a paint that had low VOCs, was available in a variety of different colors, could stand up to weather and would not fade easily, and was preferably inexpensive and widely available. With this criteria in mind, I ruled out milk paint and tung-oil paints for being too easy to wear down, and the iron-ore paint because it was not available in a wide variety of colors and was meant for an industrial rather than an artistic setting. With all of this in mind, I began researching low-VOC sustainable paint for sale online. While I was not able to find any mainstream paint sellers, such as Sherwin-Williams, offering low-VOC paint designed for building exteriors, I had some luck with overseas sellers. I found a specific brand, ECOS, that seemed to meet a majority of my requirements, which was incredibly exciting. However, the one drawback was that it was relatively expensive, at \$71.45 per gallon. When I presented this to the class, Professor Parker commented that while the price might seem high, this may be something that can be looked into due to Art in the Park's relatively large budget.

Maintenance

Another area that my group members and I conducted research in was how to keep the mural beautiful over time, which is an important aspect of making sure that the mural was sustainable and can live on for many years. I found a source for our annotated bibliography by Motoyama & Hanyu (2014) that discussed how murals can enhance the beauty of a neighborhood when they are done correctly, but we also found plenty of examples provided by Professor Parker of the ways in which murals can fall into disarray and detract from a neighborhood—for example, the Funky Farm, where large parts of the mural were replaced with plywood or covered by graffiti.

To combat this problem, we looked at the process of choosing the art and the artist, making clear the responsibilities of each party involved in the mural, and allocating a budget for maintenance. We recommend that Spring Lake take into consideration the voices of community members when choosing art for the mural, and chose a work of art that will stand up to scrutiny over time. We also suggest allowing villagers to help out with creating the mural, as that civic engagement could foster a sense of ownership of the art and give citizens a reason to protect it.

We also recommend dedicating a budget for mural maintenance. We think that allocating around 10% of each art piece's budget-- depending on the size of the the artwork and materials used-- for future maintenance costs would help ensure that the art does not fall into disrepair. Some of the possible uses for the budget could be retouching the art, repairing the building, and removing trees, weeds, or graffiti obscuring the artwork.

Alternatives

As Art in The Park looks into its future endeavors we suggest that it expands the art forms to promote sustainability, educate the public, diversify the art and help gain acceptance from the community. Adding a variety of different art forms, like sculptures, mosaics, or topiaries, would help to keep public interest going over time. Additionally, these forms of art may be better adept at withstanding exposure and wear brought on by weather. By diversifying its portfolio, Art in the Park may be able to make this project more sustainable in the long run.

One suggestion is that Art in The Park incorporate nature into its future project. As global warming is becoming a more prevalent issue every day we must consider how we each play a role. Things such as rain gardens and edible landscapes serve not only as a sustainable form of art but also a reminder of the small things we can do to contribute to a more green future.

Another example of an educational form of art is the "Connect the Dots," in CO that was a posting of blue metal pieces to trees where flood water has reached. The education was to remind the community of the need for preparation. "The city is considered to be a high hazard zone where the question is not if there will be a flood but when will it happen." Spring Lake could look at options other than murals on their trails that may be interactive and serve more of a purpose than just visual pleasure. With diverse forms of art scattered throughout it would give more community members the opportunity to get on board and support the project!

Contracts

When it comes to making contracts, it is always important to lay out who has what rights and responsibilities. This can ensure that the mural is maintained and lasts. The contracts should include information that states what they can or cannot do with both the mural and the buildings that the mural is on. It also sets up an outline for who and how the art is maintained. This would make people responsible for the mural to make sure that the community can enjoy a beautiful mural for a long time.

Community support

To make sure that there is support for the mural, there should be a transparent selection process for the artist and the site. You want to make sure that where the art is going and who is doing the art is supported by the community. This could also be applied to what the mural looks like. Because this project is for the community, it is imperative that the majority of the community supports the mural. This can be through community voting. By allowing them to

vote, it makes sure that what is created is what is wanted by those that live around the mural. It could even go a step further by allowing the community to be involved with the creation of the mural. With this, it can be a way to increase acceptance but be a representation of the community.

Sources

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ECOS Paints. www.ecospaints.net