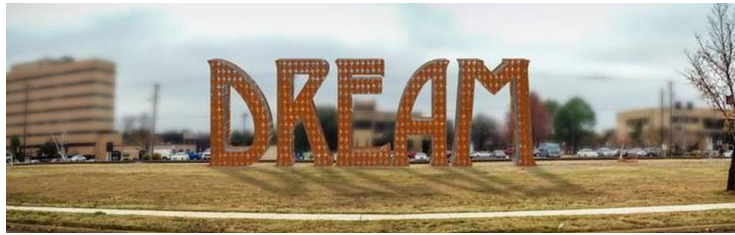


'Dream' sculpture planned for downtown Arlington

BY SUSAN SCHROCK - SSCHROCK@STAR-TELEGRAM.COM

01/20/2015 8:40 AM | Updated: 01/20/2015 8:40 AM



Bob Pruitt created this concept image to show what the proposed Dream sculpture could look like in downtown Arlington. A location for the planned public art piece has not been officially identified but downtown leaders are hoping to unveil the sculpture as early as September.

BOB PRUITT / HAND OUT PHOTO

ARLINGTON — Bob Pruitt has a big dream for downtown Arlington.

A 54-foot long, 12-foot tall dream.

With backing from the Downtown Arlington Management Corp. (<http://downtownarlington.org/>), Pruitt is raising \$75,000 to commission a custom sculpture by artists Laura Kimpton and Jeff Schomberg, who are known for their large word sculptures. Pruitt's vision is to spell out the word "DREAM" in towering steel letters lit from within by color-changing LED lights. The public art could arrive in downtown as early as September.

"I think it's going to be an iconic figure, a defining figure for Arlington for a generation or more to come," said Pruitt, a photographer and longtime marketing businessman with clients in downtown. "I dream of the possibilities of what downtown Arlington can become. Arts and cultural arts will be a big part of the future."

Pruitt began pursuing the project after photographing Kimpton (<http://laurakimpton.com/>) and Schomberg's (<http://www.jeffschomberg.com/>) *Believe* word sculpture in Nevada's Black Rock

Desert at the Burning Man (<http://burningman.org/>) festival in 2013.

“It was bigger than life. The whole event left such an impression on me,” Pruitt said. “I thought it would be so cool if we could bring pieces like that to downtown Arlington.”

Downtown Arlington officials agreed, voting in November to put \$25,000 toward the public art project.

“It’s something that’s been important to our organization. How do we incorporate more public art in our community? Cultural arts is critically important for any city. It distinguishes us from other places,” DAMC President Tony Rutigliano said.

Now Pruitt and downtown leaders are working to raise the additional funding for the sculpture, which would be transported to Arlington after first being unveiled at this year’s Burning Man festival. Though a location hasn’t been finalized, Pruitt and downtown leaders hope to unveil the sculpture to Arlington residents during the South Street Arts Festival in September.

If commissioned, the DREAM sculpture would be the seventh word in Schomberg and Kimpton’s Large Word Series, which also includes *Mom*, *Love* and *Ego*. It would also be the couple’s first word sculpture installation in Texas.

“The word dream is a very important word to me,” Kimpton said. “I believe if you want something in your life, you have to see it over and over again. I’m the best dreamer.”

Schomberg said it takes about one month to fabricate each letter, which features the couple’s distinct repeating bird pattern. The cut-out bird silhouettes allow light to shine out from inside the letters.

One idea, Pruitt said, is to change the color of the lights to coordinate with special events, such as University of Texas at Arlington’s Homecoming Week.

Public art not only benefits the community, but also it gives tourists another reason to visit the city beyond sports venues or theme parks, said Ronnie Price, Arlington Convention & Visitors Bureau president and chief executive officer.


“Any type of outdoor art, whether it be a sculpture or mural, helps the city. It helps promote cultural tourism, which is a growing segment of tourists,” Price said. “By adding new attractions, it gives them an opportunity to stay another day. We want to be able to offer as much as we can to those

who travel.”

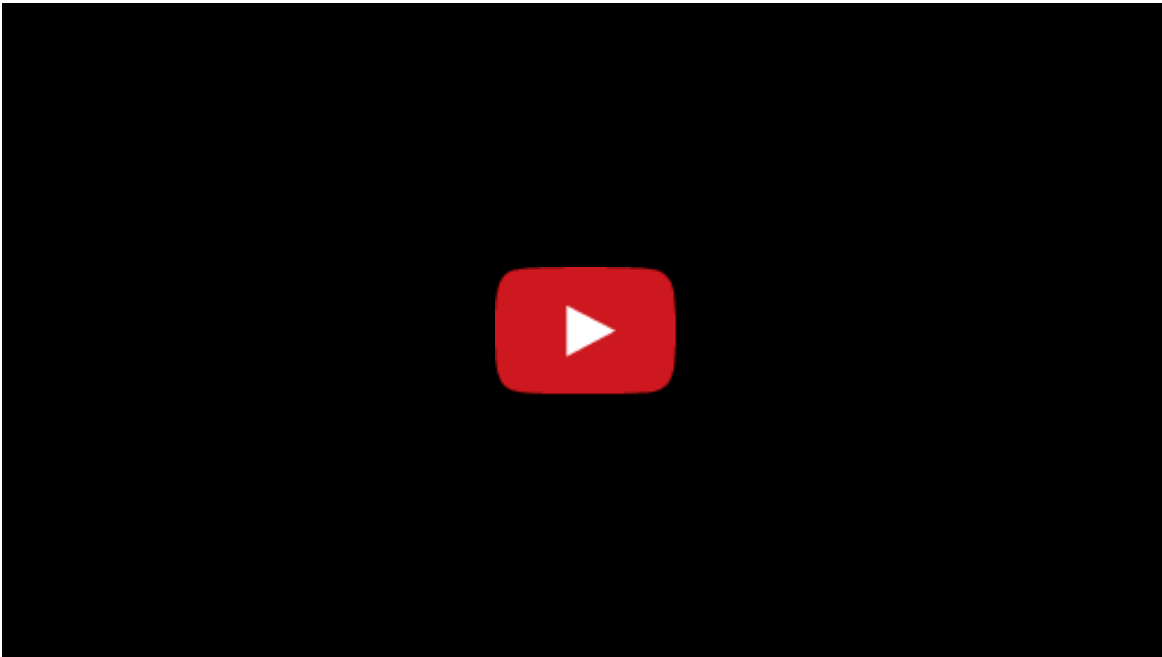
The lighted sculpture would also tie in nicely to Arlington’s “American Dream City (<http://www.arlington-tx.gov/americanreamcity/>)” slogan, which was adopted last year, Pruitt said.

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