

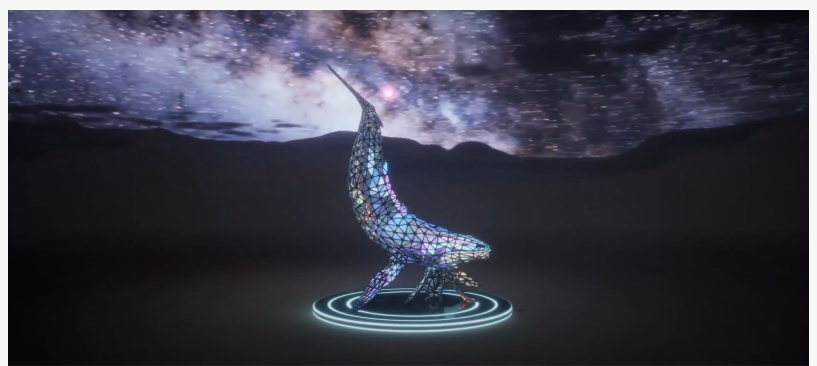
Reno, Nevada Devises Novel Plan to Restore Beloved Local Landmark

The city has partnered with L.A.-based design firm Speakerhead to create NFTs

RENO, NEVADA, UNITED STATES, July 11, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The city of Reno, Nevada has devised a novel plan to restore a beloved local landmark. The Space Whale, a piece of public art appropriated from the Burning Man festival and exhibited publicly in Reno, has been transformed into an iconic NFT (non-fungible token) and installed in its new digital residence in the metaverse. This innovative project is part of an effort by the city to brand itself as a future-forward city and attract businesses and residents with its cutting-edge technologies.

Los Angeles-based design firm [Speakerhead](#) was recently engaged to turn the city's dream into reality. The entire piece was modeled in Unreal Engine 5, and Speakerhead CEO Karriem Muhammad said, "Many of our most current projects are being developed for crypto, NFT and metaverse applications. The Space Whale project presented a rare opportunity for us to illustrate how complex pieces can be accurately modeled for these new spaces."

Matt Schultz is an artist who specializes in large-scale sculptures. In 2016, he created Space Whale, a massive sculpture designed for the Burning Man festival. The sculpture was made from



recycled materials and stood more than 30 feet tall. After the festival, Schultz attempted to sell the sculpture for more than \$1 million, with all of the proceeds going to his team of artists and the Generator, the local arts and maker space where it was built. However, he was ultimately unable to find a buyer for the piece.

In October 2021, the Reno City Council approved \$137,500 to purchase and repair the sculpture that has been in City Plaza since 2017. The price includes \$62,500 to buy the sculpture and \$75,000 for repairs.

Reno Mayor Hillary Schieve sees this project as an important first step in raising funds for a variety of public projects and hopes to digitize more public art for this purpose.

The Space Whale project presented some unique challenges for the Speakerhead team. The team's first approach was to gather all of the available photographic assets related to the piece. Both daylight and night views were acquired to assist in lighting the environment accurately. They then accessed the original CAD design data and reengineered it.

"Since Reno's natural desert environment provides spectacular mountain views by day and equally impressive constellation views by night, we determined that an alternating day and night environment was the perfect setting for the piece," Muhammad said.

This move by Reno is just one example of how cities are beginning to experiment with blockchain technology to improve efficiency and transparency. Reno also revealed it is developing its own DAO and NFT system on top of the Tezos blockchain network. With the help of DAOs and NFTs, cities can tap into new markets and create new economic opportunities. As more cities begin to explore these possibilities, we will likely see even more use cases for blockchain technology in the years to come.

Reno was also in the headlines last month when it hosted the U.S. Conference of Mayors' 90th annual meeting, which featured an appearance and speech by Vice President Kamala Harris.

To learn more about The Space Whale project, visit <http://www.speakerhead.com/work--spacewhale.html> or check out vimeo.com/728160054 and vimeo.com/725913016.

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