

June 6, 2022
Item 5

**TITLE: REVIEW AND RECOMMEND THE TEMPORARY INSTALLATION AND
 LOCATION OF PUBLIC ART MURALS**

SUMMARY

The Pleasanton Cultural Art Council (PCAC) is proposing the temporary placement of two rotating public art murals, pieces that were selected by the Pleasanton community and funded by the City's Community Grants for Civic Arts in fiscal year 2021/22. The Public Art Selection Subcommittee (PASS) met on May 9, 2022, to discuss the artistic merit, installation, location, and maintenance of the murals. PASS is recommending mural placement at the entrance of the Cultural Arts building on Black Avenue. The temporary murals would be installed in a metal frame and would be rotated during the course of the year. The murals would be enjoyed by community visitors and program participants at the City's Cultural Arts building.

RECOMMENDATION

Review and recommend the temporary installation and location of public art murals.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The murals have been purchased and commissioned by PCAC. The City will fund the installation of the pieces in the amount not to exceed \$5,000 through the Public Art Installation Fund in account #50550110-430107.

BACKGROUND

In fiscal year 2021/22, PCAC received a Civic Arts Community Grant for their “Rebuilding Community Through Art” project in the amount of \$6,189. The grant covers project costs for the facilitation of the public input process, design work, artistic materials, and artist payments for two public art murals on plywood that could be slid in and out of a 4’x6’ metal frame.

The stated goal of PCAC’s project was to engage in an interactive community building dialogue to celebrate diversity and mutual respect. Two murals titled “Joy” and “Gentle Beauty” were selected through a public input process held at locations in downtown Pleasanton, the Pleasanton Public Library, Pleasanton Senior Center and online.

Subsequently, PCAC reached out to staff with a proposal for temporary placement of the public art murals at one of two locations in the City (Attachment 1). PCAC requested to meet with the Public Art Selection Subcommittee (PASS) and to present their project at a Civic Arts Commission meeting.

PASS Meeting

On May 9, 2022, PASS met virtually to explore and discuss the PCAC proposal for a temporary installation of public art murals. PASS meets on an as-needed basis to discuss public art proposals. PASS members include representatives from the Civic Arts Commission, the Parks and Recreation Commission, as well as City staff from Civic Arts, Landscaping (Engineering), and Operation Services. PASS discussed the murals and frame for their artistic merit, installation, location, and maintenance.

- Artistic Merit

PCAC presented PASS with images of the mural paintings titled “Joy” and “Gentle Beauty” and discussed their individual artistic merits. The pieces were selected through a community engagement process. The murals were commissioned to be painted by local artists. Each mural is unique and distinct in its design—one is abstract, and the other is representative in style.

The quail that sits as the subject of “Gentle Beauty” was chosen by the artist because of its vibrant colors and the importance of the quail as a California bird in the Northern area of the state. PASS commissioners commented that while it was difficult to identify the figure of the quail due to the abstract nature of the painting, they felt that the piece had tremendous beauty and value.

The “Joy” mural design was chosen by the artist for its representation of the PCAC theme of celebrating diversity in the community of Pleasanton. PASS commented on the beauty of the figures and the joy expressed in the piece. Commissioners suggested that the artist may want to consider that some figures in the painting have their back turned to the viewer, while other commissioners appreciated that the figures’ placement represented the depth of the people in the painting.

- Location, Installation and Maintenance
PCAC presented their proposed design plans for the metal frame construction and mural placement. The frames would be constructed of aluminum and powder-coated to protect from moisture damage. The pieces of the frame are welded together so that the frame remains a flexible, moveable item. The metal frame can be either hung from a building with ground anchoring, or placed free-standing with ground stakes. The mural measures 4'x 6' and would be painted on plywood with a UV-resistant paint and treated with a graffiti-resistant film. The murals would slide in and out of the sides of the frame for rotating exhibits.

The first location proposed by PCAC was Rotary Park, with the metal frame installed as a free-standing piece with ground anchoring at the base of the frame. The Rotary Park location is at Santa Rita Street and Del Valle Parkway, in a small park path adjacent to the creek. While Rotary Park is in view of a busy street, it was mentioned that this park is set back, and its location does not have significant foot traffic and visibility. Staff shared that a free-standing metal frame in a public park raises safety concerns, and the initial design drawings do not indicate that the anchoring tubes are strong enough to support the “wind load” on the piece. Additionally, staff mentioned that there may be irrigation and electrical systems underground that could interfere with securing the piece into the ground adequately. PCAC mentioned that Rotary Park could be considered for a future Rotary grant installation.

The second location proposed by PCAC was outside the main entrance door to the Cultural Arts building on Black Avenue, with the metal frame installed as a hanging feature from the building soffit and anchored to the ground below to prevent swaying. This location is at the main, parking side entrance door that is used by summer program participants, facility renters, art group attendees, and studio art students, and would provide for community visibility in the summer months and during fall facility use.

DISCUSSION

To provide optimal visibility for the community murals, and in consideration of the stability and safety of the installation, PASS recommends placement of the framed mural piece at the main entrance to the city’s Cultural Arts building, rather than at the Rotary Park location. The rotating public art murals would highlight works of art selected in a community engagement process and provide visual interest at the facility.

Installation of the piece would be managed by the City, through a contract for public art installation with Suarez & Munoz Construction Inc. Staff indicated that PCAC would need to share the height, weight, size, materials, and artist information on how it would be hung and displayed.

PCAC began planning the murals project in 2021 with a goal to engage in an interactive community-building dialogue to celebrate diversity and mutual respect. Themes of cultural diversity in the mural “Joy” align with the 2014 Pleasanton Cultural Plan’s goal

nine to “celebrate cultural diversity and enhance connections among disparate populations in Pleasanton, including diverse racial/ethnic groups, national origin/heritage, and age/generation”. The proposed murals “Gentle Beauty” and “Joy” each reflect the community’s choices and the artists’ representation of these goals.

Submitted by:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lia Bushong". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lia Bushong
Assistant Director of Library and Recreation

Attachments:

1. Temporary PCAC Murals and Locations