



CITY OF
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City of Palo Alto Staff Report to Public Art Commission

Meeting Date: February 15, 2024

RE: Agenda Item 2 - Approval of funding for a new temporary mural to be painted at the Cubberley Campus at the intersection of the U and H wings facing Middlefield Road in Palo Alto.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends that the Public Art Commission (PAC) approve funding in the amount of up to \$12,000 from the Art in Public Places Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) Fund to commission a temporary mural to be painted at the Cubberley campus, at the intersection of the U and H wings, located at 4000 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto, CA.

Discussion:

Guided by the PAC 2024/25 working priorities to expand the temporary murals program to Palo Alto neighborhoods and commercial corridors, the commissioners highlighted the priority to expand the murals program to new locations throughout the City. The Public Art Program staff has shared with the Commission community feedback regarding an expressed desire to see the Cubberley campus activated through murals reflecting the variety of dynamic programming and community partners based there. The Cubberley Community Center, located in south Palo Alto an important facility housing numerous non-profit organizations and groups that provide services to the community in areas of education, health, childcare, dance, and music instruction, as well as the Cubberley Artists Studio Program with twenty-four artists. The mural painted at the intersection of the U and H wings facing Middlefield Road will have high visibility and be experienced by pedestrians, cyclists and drivers entering the campus.

The publicly available muralist roster of 218 artists will be used by City staff for commissioning City funded murals.

Once the funds are approved, staff will initiate an artist selection process and reach out to artists in the Muralist Roster appropriate for the commission who may be interested in creating a site-specific mural for Cubberley. Staff will assemble a selection panel of community stakeholders to evaluate and rank applicants according to their qualifications. The artists will be selected based on their demonstrated artistic excellence and skillset provided in the samples of previously completed murals. The selected artist will be provided with the Palo Alto Master Plan and input from the community stakeholders as part of their design brief to inform their design development. A finalized conceptual design will be presented to the Public Art Commission for approval before the painting onsite may begin.

Timeline, Resource Impact, and Policy Implications:

The artist selection is anticipated to take place in Spring 2024 and the mural is anticipated to be painted in early Summer 2024. The mural will be temporary in nature due to the aging nature of the campus and any potential need for maintenance or upgrades done on the premises. Staff has a muralist consultant to advise them as to the best surface preparation and types of paint appropriate for the project. The mural will be funded through the City's Art in Public Places CIP fund.

The City of Palo Alto Public Art Program operates in accordance with Chapter 2.26 Visual Art in Public Places Policy of Palo Alto Municipal Code. The [Municipal Percent for Art Policy](#) specifies that the City will budget one percent (1%) of its construction costs to include public art for City capital improvement projects that have a visual impact on the surrounding environment by altering a site through new construction or reconstruction, at the initial stages of design, thereby ensuring that art elements become an integral part of the overall design. In 2015, in order to strengthen its ongoing commitment to the City's municipal public art program, the Palo Alto Council amended the Palo Alto Municipal Code to add Section 2.26.070 "[Public Art for Municipal Projects](#)" to Chapter 2.26 (Visual Art in Public Places). The Ordinance enhanced the funds available for public art and increased flexibility to provide art experiences that are timely and relevant throughout the community. According to the Ordinance, one percent (1%) of the City's annual Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budget devoted to public art is deposited into the Public Art Fund. Funds may be used at any appropriate site within Palo Alto for permanent or temporary public art projects. Additionally, funds from two or more CIP projects may be pooled to fund a single work of art.

Attachments:

Attachment 1: Staff Presentation for the approval of funding for a new temporary mural to be painted on site of the Cubberley Community Center located at 4000 Middlefield Road in Palo Alto.

RECOMMENDATION

- Approval of funding in the amount of up to \$12,000 to commission a temporary mural to be painted at the Cubberley campus, at the intersection of the U and H wings, located at 4000 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto, CA.

PROCESS & TIMELINE

- Guided by the PAC 2024/25 working priorities to expand the temporary murals program to Palo Alto neighborhoods and commercial corridors;
- Driven by desire to see the Cubberley campus activated through murals reflecting the variety of dynamic programming and community partners based there;
- Spring 2024 – Artist Selection & Outreach (Conceptual design to be presented to PAC for approval)
- Early Summer 2024 – Mural is painted onsite.



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