



# Cultural Arts Programs

## *Cultural Arts & Marketing Division*

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TO: Cultural Affairs Commission  
ATTN: Lori Zook, Acting Chair  
FROM: Steven Huss, Cultural Arts Programs Coordinator  
DATE: April 27, 2009  
RE: Public Art Advisory Committee Recommendation to Commission the Artist Team of Ene Osteraas-Constable & Scott Constable a Contract for the Measure DD: Watershed Art Markers Project In An Amount Not to Exceed \$92,000

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC) recommends that the Cultural Affairs Commission approve Ene Osteraas-Constable & Scott Constable of Oakland, California, as the artist team to create a prototype of the art marker and to fabricate and install the first series of markers based on this prototype at various key locations in the Oakland watershed systems. The PAAC also recommends Mark Brest van Kempen of Oakland as the alternate artist for the project.

### **SELECTION PROCESS**

Artists residing and working in the nine San Francisco Bay Area counties were eligible to submit their qualifications for the opportunity to design an interpretive public art marker that would interpret and celebrate the role of the watershed systems of Oakland, including creeks, lakes, and the estuary. The selected artist team will create a prototype art marker, will fabricate a first series of markers based on this prototype, and will install this series of markers at various key locations in the Oakland watershed systems.

The City received a total of 77 applications to this public art project. Staff reviewed all applications and forwarded the 59 eligible applications to the selection panel. The panel met on February 20, 2009 to review applications, and selected five finalists that were approved by the PAAC on March 2, 2009. The selection panel met again on March 20, 2009 to interview the finalists: Mark Brest van Kempen (Oakland), Sheila Ghidini (San Francisco), Ene Osteraas-Constable & Scott Constable (Oakland/North Bay), Collette Crutcher (San Francisco) and Troy Corliss & Elin Christopherson (Oakland/Truckee). On April 6, 2009, the PAAC approved the panel's recommendation to award the project commission to the team of Ene Osteraas-Constable & Scott Constable, and to designate Mark Brest van Kempen as the alternate artist for the project. In the event that the selected artist team cannot accept the commission, or, if artwork concepts developed by the team fail to meet the standards and vision for the project held by Public Art staff, Watershed Program staff and the PAAC, Public Art staff will have the option to terminate the relationship with the selected team and to invite Mr. Brest van Kempen to take on the project.



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### **FISCAL IMPACTS**

The Measure DD Oakland Watershed Art Marker project is fully funded through City of Oakland percent for art funds (per Ordinance Number 11066 C.M.S.). Once approved by the Cultural Affairs Commission and City Council, the selected artist team will be contracted for design development of an art marker prototype, and fabrication and installation of the first series of art markers, in an amount not to exceed ninety-two thousand dollars (\$92,000).

### **OAKLAND WATERSHED BACKGROUND**

With funds authorized through the voter-approved Measure DD Oakland Trust for Clean Water & Safe Parks, money is allocated for Oakland Watershed improvements, including creek renovation and water quality projects. Oakland is home to 15 main creeks and over 40 smaller tributaries, all of which play a vital role in the city's health and well-being. These waterways provide plant and wildlife habitat, stormwater transport, flood management and water cleansing functions as well as valuable recreational and aesthetic benefit for Oakland residents. Although historically contiguous from the Oakland Hills to the San Francisco Bay, all of Oakland's creeks are now partially or extensively buried or diverted into culverts and storm drains. Their lack of visibility in certain areas of the city reduces overall understanding of their role and value.

To enhance the historic, cultural, aesthetic and interpretive potential of the often-overlooked creeks system and the city's "crown jewel," Lake Merritt, a total of \$92,000 (\$72,000 from Creeks Restoration and \$20,000 from Lake Merritt capital projects) was allocated to commission an artist or artist team to create a prototype of an interpretive artwork marker that would identify the location of creek nodes and draw attention to the value of the creek habitats that exist throughout the city. The selected artist or team would also fabricate and install a series of three to five markers based on the prototype at various key watershed nodes in Oakland. Encompassing the built environment as well as open creek locations, the placement of each marker should invite discovery of the next while building watershed awareness.

The intention of the project is that the artwork marker design will become an iconic symbol representing the citywide watershed awareness program. The artwork prototype will be owned by the City of Oakland and may be replicated in future series as funding becomes available for the identification of additional creek habitats and nodes throughout the city.

The selected artist team will consult and collaborate closely with the project stakeholders from the Oakland Watershed Program, the Public Art Program and the greater community to develop an art marker that truly celebrates and identifies the Oakland Watershed systems.

### **PROCESS REVIEW**

For the Measure DD Oakland Watershed Art Marker Project, the Public Art Program released a Request for Qualifications seeking a qualified artist or artist-team. The selection panel met in a two-phase process. The first phase included selection of five finalists and one alternate from the eligible pool of 59 applicants and the second phase included interviews with the five finalists and a commission recommendation.



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Voting members of the selection panel were local arts professionals Winifred Day (art consultant) and Edina Tanovic (artist and design company owner) and community representative Richard Kaufman (Friends of Sausal Creek and former art dealer). Chairing the meeting (a non-voting function) was PAAC member Deborah Lozier. The other non-voting advisors to the panel were Lesley Estes and Kristin Hathaway from the City's Oakland Watershed Program and Public Art Program project managers Christin Hablewitz and Kristen Zaremba.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The PAAC recommends that the Cultural Affairs Commission approve the selection of artist team Ene Osteraas-Constable & Scott Constable of Oakland, California, to create an art-marker prototype and to fabricate and install the first series of markers based on this prototype at various key locations in the Oakland watershed systems. The PAAC also recommends Mark Brest van Kempen of Oakland, California as the alternate artist for the project. The selected artists will work with the project stakeholders to develop a prototype design and will work together to present design concepts to the community for input and collaboration.