



Cultural Arts Programs

Cultural Arts & Marketing Division

PUBLIC ART ADVISORY COMMITTEE AGENDA ITEM IV.D.

Title: Final Artist Selection for Measure DD Oakland Watershed Art Marker Project

Submitted by: Steven Huss, Public Art Coordinator

Committee Date: April 6, 2009

SUMMARY

Staff recommends that the Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC) accept the selection panel's recommendation of Ene Oстераas-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 panel also recommends Mark Brest van Kempen of Oakland as the alternate team 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 celebrates and identifies the role of the watershed systems of Oakland, including creeks, lakes, and the estuary. The selected artist or artist team will create a prototype of the art marker and will fabricate and install the first series of markers based on this prototype 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 to review applications on February 20, 2009 and selected the five finalists that were approved by PAAC on March 2, 2009. The five finalists interviewed were Mark Brest van Kempen (Oakland), Sheila Ghidini (San Francisco), Ene Oстераas-Constable & Scott Constable (Oakland/North Bay), Collette Crutcher (San Francisco) and Troy Corliss & Elin Christopherson (Oakland/Truckee). The selection panel then met for phase-two panel review on March 20, 2009 in Hearing Room 4 of Oakland City Hall to interview the five finalists, and reached the above recommendation.

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 PAAC, the Cultural Affairs Commission and City Council, the selected artist will be contracted for design development, fabrication and installation of the final artwork in an amount not to exceed ninety-two thousand dollars (\$92,000).



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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) has been allocated to commission an artist to create a prototype of an interpretive artwork marker that will identify the location of creek nodes and draw attention to the value of the creek habitats that exist throughout the city. The selected artist will also fabricate and install a series of three to five markers based on the prototype at various celebrated locations 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 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.

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.



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RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that PAAC accept this recommendation and approve the panel's selection of artist team 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 panel 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.

Respectfully submitted,

Steven Huss, Public Art Coordinator

Prepared by Christin Hablewitz, Measure DD Public Art
Project Manager