



# Cultural Arts Programs

*Cultural Arts & Marketing Division*

TO: Public Art Advisory Committee  
ATTN: Judy Moran and Andrew Woodd, Co-chairs  
FROM: Steven Huss, Cultural Arts Manager  
DATE: April 8, 2013

SUBJECT: Review and Take Action on Final Design Proposal by Artist Alan Leon for Murals on Caltrans Columns at Shattuck Avenue near 54<sup>th</sup> Street, and Recommend that City Council Approve the Project by City Resolution

## SUMMARY

At its meeting of January 7, 2013, the Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC) accepted the conceptual design direction of artist Alan Leon's proposal to paint 14 Caltrans underpass columns at Shattuck Avenue near 54<sup>th</sup> Street in north Oakland. Mr. Leon was asked to further refine the design proposal and return to the PAAC for a final review. The revised, final proposal develops the project's focus on tree imagery, adds text elements, and reflects additional community input. The PAAC's acceptance of the final proposal will constitute a recommendation to City Council to pass a resolution approving the project and directing City staff to submit an application to Caltrans to approve placement of the mural project on Caltrans property.

## BACKGROUND

In 2012, Alan Leon completed "Temescal Flows," a painted mural on the underpass of State Route 24 at 52<sup>nd</sup> Street & Shattuck Avenue. The mural was sponsored by the Temescal-Telegraph Business Improvement District and was partially funded by a Public Art Program "Open Proposals" commission as well as a Cultural Funding Program Individual Artist project grant. In response to community requests for an artistic treatment to the 14 oval support columns on the west side of Shattuck Avenue near 54<sup>th</sup> Street, also a part of Caltrans' Highway 24 infrastructure, Mr. Leon developed the "Shattuck Avenue Gateway" proposal. The intent of this project is to provide life-enhancing, colorful patterns to 'light up' the dark underpass, and to extend the aesthetic established on nearby 52<sup>nd</sup> Street with coordinated designs. A thematic focus on local trees emerged from the artist's dialogue with community.

Mr. Leon has a pending \$20,000 grant from the Open Circle Foundation in support of this project. If the project is approved, he will seek additional funding from community members and organizations to round out the budget.

In December, 2012, Mr. Leon held a community meeting at the Telegraph Avenue Branch Library, with 15 neighbors of the proposed site attending. The theme of trees was supported at this meeting. Following the January 7, 2013 PAAC meeting, at staff's request, Mr. Leon held a second community



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meeting on February 5, also at the branch library. Nine community participants attended and were very supportive of the project.

Mr. Leon has provided a more detailed proposal that includes color illustrations of specific design concepts for the 14 columns and a list of tree-related quotations to be integrated with the artwork treatments.

If the final proposal is accepted by the PAAC, staff will prepare and submit a resolution to Oakland City Council to approve the proposed project and authorize staff to submit an application to Caltrans.

## RECOMMENDATION

Public Art staff recommends that the PAAC review and consider acceptance of Mr. Leon's final proposal, and consider recommending that City Council pass a resolution approving the "Shattuck Avenue Gateway" project and authorizing staff to apply to Caltrans on the City's behalf to approve the project.

Respectfully submitted,



Steven Huss, Cultural Arts Manager