

Cultural Affairs Division
Economic & Workforce Development Department



Public Art Advisory Committee Meeting
Monday, September 8, 2025
5:30 - 7:30 pm
Oakland City Hall
1 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, Oakland CA 94612
Council Chambers, 3rd Floor

There are two opportunities to make a comment during meetings– Public Comment and Open Forum. Zoom participation is strictly for viewing only. Comments will no longer be accepted via Zoom or telephone. How to Make a Comment:

There are two opportunities for the public to address the Committee and City staff. The first opportunity is during the "Public Comment" period. The second opportunity is during the "Open Forum" period. Dialogue during the meeting with Commissioners, City staff, or its guest speakers is not permitted outside of the two comment periods.

RE: ZOOM PARTICIPATION + COMMENT PERIODS

All Commission meetings will be conducted in-person. The Public Art Advisory Committee is no longer accepting public comments via Zoom or telephone. Therefore, live comments must be made in-person. An alternative option is to submit a written comment by 4:00 PM BEFORE the meeting starts to kzaremba@oaklandca.gov. Any comments received via email during the duration or after the meeting may not be entered into public record but will be shared with the Committee at a later time.

Please click the link below to view the webinar. **Zoom participation is strictly for viewing only.** Comments will no longer be accepted via Zoom or telephone. Please click the link below to join the webinar:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88632456644>

Meeting ID: 886 3245 6644

- 833 548 0276 US Toll-free
- 833 548 0282 US Toll-free
- 877 853 5257 US Toll-free
- 888 475 4499 US Toll-free

Find your local number: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/kbm2Svwko1>

Public Art Advisory Committee Meeting
Monday, September 8, 2025
5:30 - 7:30 pm
Oakland City Hall
1 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, Oakland CA 94612
Council Chambers, 3rd Floor

AGENDA

- I. Welcome/Call to Order/Roll Call**
- II. Land Acknowledgment**
- III. Public Comment**
- IV. Action Item: Adopt the June 2, 2025 and August 4, 2025 Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC) Meeting Minutes**
- V. Action Item: Review and approve Vanessa “AGANA” Espinoza’s conceptual designs and award a \$5,000 design honorarium for the DeFremery Park – Measure WW “Snack Shack” Public Art Project, located at 1651 Adeline Street (D3)**
- VI. Informational Item: Public Art Program Coordinator Updates**
 - a. CIP Program**
 - b. Public Art for Private Development**
 - c. Artist-Community Initiated Projects**
 - d. Program Activities/Administration**
- VII. Open Forum**
- VIII. Announcements**
- IX. Agenda Building for October 2025**
- X. Adjourn**

♿ This meeting location is wheelchair accessible. To request disability-related accommodations or to request American Sign Language (ASL), Cantonese, Mandarin, or Spanish language interpreter, please email KZaremba@oaklandca.gov or call (510) 238-2155 Or 711 (for Relay Service) at least five (5) business days before the meeting. Please refrain from wearing scented products to this meeting as a courtesy to attendees with chemical sensitivities.

Esta reunión es accesible para sillas de ruedas. Si desea solicitar adaptaciones relacionadas con discapacidades, o para pedir un intérprete de en español, Cantones, mandarín o de lenguaje de señas (ASL) por favor envíe un correo electrónico a KZaremba@oaklandca.gov o llame al (510) 238-4949 o al 711 para servicio de retransmisión (Relay service) por lo menos cinco días hábiles antes de la reunión. Se le pide de favor que no use perfumes a esta reunión como cortesía para los que tienen sensibilidad a los productos químicos. Gracias.

會場有適合輪椅出入設施。需要殘障輔助設施, 手語, 西班牙語, □ □ 或國語翻譯服務, 請在會議前五個工作天電郵 KZaremba@oaklandca.gov 或致電 (510) 238-4949或 711 (電話傳達服務)。請避免塗搽香氛□品, 參加者可能對化學成分敏感。

Địa điểm tổ chức cuộc họp có đường dành riêng cho xe lăn. Để yêu cầu các phương tiện hỗ trợ phục vụ người khuyết tật hoặc yêu cầu thông dịch viên ASL, tiếng Quảng Đông, tiếng Quan Thoại hoặc tiếng Tây Ban Nha, vui lòng gửi email đến địa chỉ KZaremba@oaklandca.gov hoặc gọi đến số (510) 238-4949 hoặc 711 (với Dịch vụ Tiếp âm) ít nhất năm (5) ngày làm việc trước khi cuộc họp diễn ra. Vui lòng không sử dụng các sản phẩm có mùi thơm khi tham gia cuộc họp này như một phép lịch sự đối với những người tham dự nhạy cảm đối với các chất hóa học.

Cultural Affairs Division - Economic & Workforce Development Department
Public Art Coordinator – Kristen Zaremba
Phone: (510) 238-2155
Recorded Agenda: (510) 238-2386
Telecommunications Relay Service: 711

Land Acknowledgement

On behalf of the Cultural Affairs Commission & Public Art Advisory Committee:

We want to take a moment to honor the traditions and territory we are a part of. Those of us on the land we now know as Oakland and lands all the way up to Albany are in Huichin (*Hooch-yoon*), the unceded territory of the Chochenyo (*Cho-Chen-yo*)-speaking Confederated Villages of Lisjan (*Lih-Shawn*) Ohlone. We stand with the Lisjan people and their right to legal recognition and benefits from the US Government.

Cultural Affairs Division

Economic & Workforce Development Department



Public Art Advisory Committee

(PAAC)

June 2, 2025

1 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza

Hearing Room 1

Minutes

Members Present: Sarah Miller (Co-Chair), Eric Murphy (Co-Chair), Mario Navasero, Katerina Leventi

Excused: Marcus Guillard, Kaitlin Kushner

Staff Present: Kristen Zarembo, Public Art Coordinator; Josie de Mira, Assistant Public Art Coordinator

Guests: Quincy Williams, Assistant Capital Improvement Projects Coordinator, Oakland Parks, Recreation & Youth Development (OPRYD); David Burke, Artist; Veronica Garcia, Melrose 27X Neighborhood Council Chair

Meeting Chair: Sarah Miller

- 1. Welcome/ Roll Call / Meeting called to order at 5:35 p.m.** PAAC Chair Sarah Miller called the meeting to order and performed roll call.
- 2. Land Acknowledgment:** E. Murphy recited the Cultural Affairs Commission/Public Art Advisory Committee Land Acknowledgment.
- 3. Public Comment:** No comment was provided.

Action Item: Adopt the April 7, 2025 Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC) Meeting Minutes. E. Murphy moved to adopt the April 7, 2025 minutes, K. Leventi seconded; M. Navasero

Aye; S. Miller Aye. Motion passed unanimously.

Action Item: Review and Approve the proposed wall mural design by artist David Burke for a retaining wall owned by the property owner of 4598 Fairfax Avenue, located in Courtland Creek Park, and funded through an approved Oakland Parks, Recreation and Youth Development (OPRYD) Gift in Place (District 5). Quincy Williams, Assistant Capital Improvements Project Coordinator for OPRYD, introduced a new mural project located adjacent to 4598 Fairfax Avenue within Courtland Creek Park. Williams explained that artist David Burke, in partnership with the Melrose 27X Neighborhood Council, was commissioned for this mural. The project received approval from the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC) on May 14th. The mural's purpose is to celebrate the East Oakland community and invite broader Bay Area engagement within the space. Williams clarified that this mural is a component of the larger Courtland Creek Restoration Project, an Oakland Measure DD initiative led by Oakland Public Works and represents one of several community-supported improvements throughout the park. Following his introduction, Williams then introduced artist David Burke to the committee. Burke provided an overview of the mural development process, a collaborative effort with the Melrose 27X Neighborhood Council, led by Veronica Garcia. He detailed the extensive community engagement, which included multiple rounds of brainstorming sessions, design submissions, and iterative feedback and editing. Burke explained that the mural's design draws inspiration from the four earth elements, telling the story of the district's flora and fauna, and featuring wildlife from the area's past and present. He highlighted the wall's long-standing significance within Oakland's graffiti culture and expressed his deep respect for this community. This led to the decision to involve local elder graffiti writers, who will contribute their pieces to each section of the mural, complementing the overall design and paying homage to the wall's history. Burke clarified that the mural wall is approximately 16 by 300 feet in dimension and acknowledged the modest budget relative to the mural's size, but affirmed his strong commitment to the project and future fundraising efforts led by Veronica Garcia. Public Art Coordinator Kristen Zarembo highlighted the project as an excellent example of public-private collaboration, noting that while the City controls the public right-of-way and adjacent wall, the wall itself is privately owned. She commended the project team for their persistence in bringing the project to fruition. Committee Member Miller inquired about future maintenance and restoration responsibilities. Veronica Garcia, Melrose 27X Neighborhood Council Chair, emphasized the community's strong commitment to neighborhood upkeep and beautification. Zarembo confirmed that a written agreement with the private property owner, which addresses access for maintenance and requires notification for any significant changes to the wall, would mitigate potential unintended consequences. Williams directed attention to the maintenance plan included in the provided packet, noting that the Public Works Division and Real Estate Department could assist in addressing future needs as part of the collaborative effort. Burke added that a UV and anti-graffiti coat will be applied to the finished mural. Miller suggested adding contract language to ensure the artist is notified before any major structural or maintenance work that could affect the mural. Committee members Navasero and Leventi praised the collaboration with graffiti artists and the overall design of the project. Garcia clarified that the wall's location along a trail means only City of Oakland

vehicles are permitted, ensuring it remains primarily a pedestrian experience. **M. Navasero motioned to approve the proposed wall mural design by artist David Burke for a retaining wall owned by the property owner of 4598 Fairfax Avenue, located in Courtland Creek Park, and funded through an approved Oakland Parks, Recreation and Youth Development (OPRYD) Gift in Place (District 5) ; K. Leventi; E. Murphy Aye; S. Miller Aye; Motion passed unanimously.**

- 4. Action Item: Motion to Approve Zoe Boston, David Burke, Joshua Mays, Vanessa Solari Espinoza and Rachel Wolfe-Goldsmith as finalists; and Taylor Smalls and Jessica Sabogal as alternates; and to award a design proposal honorarium of \$1,000 to up to five participating finalists, for the DeFremery Park – Measure WW Public Art Project.** Kristen Zaremba, Public Art Coordinator, introduced the DeFremery Park "Snack Shack" mural project, highlighting it as one of a number of upcoming OPRYD opportunities. Funding for the mural comes from an East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) grant. Zaremba described the "Snack Shack" building as primarily used for maintenance storage. She noted the building is slated for a roof replacement and will also likely support food distribution and the Panther Skate Plaza. Public Art staff are collaborating with Public Works and OPRYD to initiate the project. A community-based artist selection panel was assembled by staff with additional recommendations from Recreation Center Director Greg McClain. The panel comprises community members, City staff, and a Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC) member. Assistant Public Art Coordinator Josie de Mira shared that four of the recommended artists are graduates of the Cultural Strategist in Government Public Art workshops, and all recommended artists are Oakland residents. de Mira outlined the next steps for the project: a site visit and orientation for all finalists, followed by the submission of proposals. Each artist will receive a \$1,000 honorarium to develop their conceptual design and community outreach approach. Zaremba confirmed that there is a healthy budget for the mural, with the possibility of extending the artwork to adjacent walls in the park. de Mira then introduced the committee to the panelist names and affiliations, noting their specific connections to the park where applicable. Committee Member Navasero, who served on the artist selection panel, affirmed that the panel was well-rounded and provided valuable input. Committee Member Miller inquired why the panelists favored figurative work over abstract designs. Zaremba and Navasero clarified that there was a strong desire for the artwork to reflect the park's history and current activities, attracting the panelists to artists who work more figuratively. **E. Murphy motioned to approve Zoe Boston, David Burke, Joshua Mays, Vanessa Solari Espinoza and Rachel Wolfe-Goldsmith as finalists; and Taylor Smalls and Jessica Sabogal as alternates; and to award a design proposal honorarium of \$1,000 to up to five participating finalists, for the DeFremery Park – Measure WW Public Art Project.; K. Leventi seconded; M. Navasero Aye; S. Miller Aye. Motioned passed unanimously.**

5. Informational Item: Public Art Program Coordinator Updates

- a. CIP Program and Public Art Plan** de Mira reported on recent community outreach activities for the Mosswood Park project. Input was gathered during an Earth Day park clean-up event at Mosswood Park. Additionally, staff engaged with neurodivergent young adults and youth at a social event hosted with OPRYD Inclusion Services, where

the project was shared, and valuable feedback was collected. Staff also collected input for the Mosswood Park project via a survey shared with Youth Alive. Zaremba reported that the project is experiencing delays due to understaffing in the City Attorney's office, which has held up the artist contract. The project is currently on hold until the contract with artist Adia Millett can be finalized. Staff is now exploring alternative contracting avenues through Public Works.

Zaremba reported that the Public Art Plan was presented to the Life Enrichment Committee on May 13th and approved by the full City Council on May 20, 2025. The next step involves the budget process for fund appropriation. Cultural Affairs is also scheduled to present on the division's work to the Life Enrichment Committee on June 24th. This presentation will primarily focus on proposed changes to the Cultural Funding Program, planned work on cultural districts, and ongoing efforts concerning the City's cultural facilities, in addition to an annual update of Public Art Program activities. Zaremba noted staff plans to provide more information to community and Council members regarding the process for completing community-initiated public art projects. This goal is to provide more equitable access process information to support projects of this type across all council districts. Finally, Zaremba shared that she continues to work with property owners, Public Works, BART and EWDD Director Ashleigh Kanat to complete the removal of the 17th Street BART Gateway public art before the next rainy season.

- b. Public Art for Private Development** Zaremba presented images documenting the ongoing work for Phase 2 of the Samuel Merritt University public art project by Adrien Segal. The tentative installation date is set for August 2025. The project includes a sculptural bench with protective sealants and a tarmac application featuring an abstract design by the same artist. Samuel Merritt University will be responsible for maintaining the artwork.
- c. Program Activities/Administration: Celebration of Arts, Culture & Creativity Month Event in Oakland, April 18, Oakland Museum of CA** Staff shared updates from the convening for Arts, Culture, and Creativity Month on April 18th at the Oakland Museum of California (OMCA). Zaremba noted that the Mayor's office presented a proclamation read by Cultural Affairs Commission chair Vanessa Whang, which was also brought before the City Council, emphasizing the importance and investment in Oakland's arts and culture community.

- 6. Open Forum:** No Speakers
- 7. Announcements:** No announcements
- 8. Agenda Building:** Summer scheduling, progress updates and/or action for Mosswood Park
- 9. Adjournment:** **K. Leventi moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 PM. M. Navasero seconded; S. Miller Aye; E. Murphy Aye. Motion passed unanimously.**

Cultural Affairs Division

Economic & Workforce Development Department



Public Art Advisory Committee

(PAAC)

August 4, 2025

1 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza

Hearing Room 1

Minutes

Members Present: Sarah Miller (Co-Chair), Mario Navasero, Kaitlin Kushner, Marcus Guillard

Excused: Eric Murphy (Co-Chair), Katerina Leventi

Staff Present: Kristen Zaremba, Public Art Coordinator; Josie de Mira, Assistant Public Art Coordinator

Guests: None

Meeting Chair: Sarah Miller

1. **Welcome/ Roll Call / Meeting called to order at 5:36 p.m.** PAAC Chair Sarah Miller called the meeting to order and performed roll call.
2. **Land Acknowledgment:** K. Kushner recited the Cultural Affairs Commission/Public Art Advisory Committee Land Acknowledgment.
3. **Public Comment:** No comment was provided.
4. **Action Item: Adopt the June 2, 2025 Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC) Meeting Minutes.** The June 2nd meeting minutes could not be adopted due to a lack of quorum from members present at that meeting. The committee will review and approve the June 2nd minutes at the September 8th meeting.
5. **Action Item: Review and approve the selection panel's recommendation to award a contract to Vanessa "DJ AGANA" Espinoza, and Rachel Wolfe-Goldsmith as the alternate, for a public**

art commission of up to \$155,000 for design and on-site mural installation for the DeFremery Park – Measure WW “Snack Shack” Public Art Project, located at 1651 Adeline Street (D3). Public Art Coordinator Kristen Zaremba introduced the DeFremery Park mural project, providing details on the mural’s location within the park, key park activities, and the selection of the "Snack Shack" building. The public art project is funded by a Measure WW grant from East Bay Regional Parks. Zaremba reviewed the artist selection process, noting that five finalists attended a site visit and orientation, and received an honorarium to develop preliminary conceptual proposals. She shared images from the proposals, showcasing the range of artistic styles presented. Assistant Public Art Coordinator Josie de Mira then presented images from the recommended artist, Agana's, proposal. The proposal highlights themes of resistance, healing, and community building. de Mira shared designs for each side of the Snack Shack, including the handball courts and windows, emphasizing how Agana’s work connects historical significance with present-day community and family life. Future community engagement plans will be implemented throughout the design process. Committee Member Mario Navasero, a non-voting member of the selection panel, shared his experience, praising the panel’s decision-making process and the unique concepts presented by each finalist. He noted that Agana’s personal connection to the park resonated strongly with the panel and voiced his support for her as the recommended artist. Staff shared feedback on Agana’s proposal from other panelists’ score sheets. Committee Member S. Miller complimented the mural's design for its gradient, flow, and integration of both abstract and figurative elements. Zaremba clarified that the City will secure permission from any non-fictional people featured in the mural. Committee Member M. Guillard praised the design and expressed curiosity about the painting technique for the embroidered elements. Zaremba also noted the Park center director’s enthusiastic support for the artist. S. Miller concluded by asking staff to provide more information on the structure for incorporating additional artists into the lead artist’s team. **K. Kushner motioned to approve the selection panel’s recommendation to award a contract to Vanessa “DJ AGANA” Espinoza, and Rachel Wolfe-Goldsmith as the alternate, for a public art commission of up to \$155,000. for design and on-site mural installation for the DeFremery Park – Measure WW “Snack Shack” Public Art Project, located at 1651 Adeline Street (D3). M. Guillard; M. Navasero Aye; S. Miller Aye; Motion passed unanimously.**

6. Informational Item: Public Art Program Coordinator Updates

a. CIP Program

i. Mosswood Community Center

Zaremba provided updates on the Mosswood Community Center's Public Art project. The project has faced licensed contractor and project coordination roadblocks due to recent changes to staff in Public Works and the City Attorney offices. Staff are now making a plan to contract with the artist under an on-call licensed contractor. The artist, Adia Millett, will not be asked to begin work until she can be compensated. Staff has processed a design honorarium for the artist, which will be issued to her shortly, and allow design work to resume

ii. Lincoln Square Recreation Center

Staff shared renderings for the new Lincoln Square Recreation Center, which is in development. The team includes City staff and engaged community stakeholders, and the project will pick up in the fall. There are a number of opportunities to incorporate public art into the development, and existing artwork at the site will also be documented to inform new works and possibly restored and relocated with other private funds.

iii. Brookdale Park

Zaremba introduced PAAC to the multi-phase redevelopment project at Brookdale Park that will include a public art component. The first phase will focus on open space park improvements and the second phase will include new community center facilities. Designs for the new buildings have been created, designed around a protected public plaza, and staff is monitoring the progress to determine how to integrate the art opportunities. Zaremba attended a community engagement barbeque on July 12 to learn more about the project and meet community members. Committee member Kushner noted that many neighborhood residents are concerned with parking in the area and expressed enthusiasm for a new art opportunity at the park.

iv. 17th Street BART Gateway

Staff has been working with Public Works to issue an RFP (Request for Proposals) to a list of on-call contractors for the 17th Street BART Gateway public art deaccession and removal. The goal is to have the work completed by late fall, before the rainy season.

v. Fire Station 4

There is an upcoming pre-application design review meeting for a new Fire Station 4 in the San Antonio neighborhood. Staff will provide input on public art requirements and suggest opportunity sites.

b. Public Art for Private Development

- i. The public art commissioned for 1510 Webster has been installed. The commissioned artists are Shogun Shido and Isadora Gullov-Singh, both of whom participated in the Cultural Strategists in Government public art workshops. Staff shared images of the finished work.
- ii. 2201 Brush Street, a new affordable housing development, recently celebrated its ribbon cutting. Public art for this project includes glass frit work by artist Tommy Wong on the front facade
- iii. The artist credit plaque for 1900 Broadway was recently installed, which acknowledges the bronze sculptures by artist Woody De Othello set in the pocket plaza off Broadway.
- iv. The East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation (EBALDC) recently issued an RFQ (Request for Qualifications) for permanent public art at a new housing development at 3431 San Pablo Avenue. They are seeking an artist to create metalwork for a vertical design on the building's facade.
- v. Additional public art projects are nearing completion and/or launch at Samuel Merritt University in downtown Oakland; Phoenix apartments and

1707 Wood Street in West Oakland.

- c. **Program Activities/Administration:** Community members and the Cultural Arts Commission have been holding rallies and making public comments to express their disapproval of cuts to city-funded arts grants and the elimination of the Cultural Affairs Manager position in the recently adopted FY 2025/27 City budget. Councilmember Fife recently stated publicly that she is working with the Mayor's office and City Administrator to find funds to reinstate the position this fall. The Mayor's Office recently hired Carlos Uribe as the community engagement manager for arts and culture.

Additionally, Zaremba was contacted by representatives from Let's Glow events, which specializes in architectural mapping and projection work. They are interested in bringing their projections to Oakland and are looking for potential partners.

de Mira shared that staff is in the process of recreating the artist roster, as it did not transfer to the new website. Staff is also working on an improved layout for the roster, which will be built out soon. The roster remains public information and can be shared upon request.

- 7. **Open Forum:** No Speakers
- 8. **Announcements:** Black Spaces: Reclaim and Remain exhibit has opened at Oakland Museum of California. The Mills College Art Museum is celebrating their Centennial this year and will have a celebration party on October 4th. The Pacific Rim sculptors will be doing a studio visit at One Hat One Hand on August 10th.
- 9. **Agenda Building:** Project progress updates and DeFremery conceptual design presentation
- 10. **Adjournment:** M. Guillard moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:02 PM. K. Kushner seconded; S. Miller Aye; M. Navasero Aye. Motion passed unanimously.

Cultural Affairs Division
Economic & Workforce Development Department



TO: Public Art Advisory Committee

ATTN: Eric Murphy and Sarah Miller, Co-chairs

FROM: Kristen Zaremba, Public Art Coordinator

DATE: September 8, 2025

RE: DeFremery Park – Measure WW “Snack Shack” – Public Art Project Conceptual Design Review and Honorarium

SUMMARY

Staff recommends that the Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC) review and approve the conceptual designs by Vanessa “AGANA” Espinoza for the DeFremery Park “Snack Shack” project. Approval will include a \$5,000 design honorarium to allow the artist to proceed with further community engagement and final design development, prior to on-site mural installation for the DeFremery Park – Measure WW “Snack Shack” Public Art Project.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Oakland Public Art Program agreed to commission an artist, as required through Ordinance 11066 C.M.S. to enhance the DeFremery Park - Measure WW project located at 1651 Adeline St, Oakland, CA 94607.

Staff worked with Oakland Parks Recreation and Youth Development (OPRYD) and Oakland Public Works (OPW) staff to identify public art opportunity types and sites. This new hand-painted mural will cover the building façade, and the adjacent handball court walls, and will be thoughtfully designed to harmonize with the vibrant street art and graffiti already present in the Town Park skateboard area.

Vanessa “AGANA” Espinoza was presented to the PAAC and approved as the recommended artist for the commission on August 6, 2025.

On September 4th, 2025, the artist and Public Art Program staff facilitated an art activation at DeFremery Park during the weekly Panther Skate Plaza gathering, where she engaged with multi-generational community members, shared her designs, and provided art activities to gather input for design development of the mural. Of the hundreds of participants at the Skate Plaza, approximately seventy-five participants either provided input or came to the art activation table to view the conceptual design and speak with the artist and staff about the project. These included community panel members and past, current and future OPRYD staff with long ties to the park. The conceptual designs were well received and community members provided feedback and showed enthusiasm for the future mural.

PAAC 9-8-25 Item V

Going forward, the artist has scheduled sessions to photograph community-identified leaders in the neighborhood who have played a significant role in the culture and care of the park, such as past and present recreation center directors and Panther Skate Plaza founders. These photographs will be used as a reference for mural portraits, and everyone will sign a City of Oakland Image and Media Release Form prior to their image being included in the mural design.

On September 10, 2025, the project commission, artist and conceptual design proposal will be presented to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission for approval.

Additionally, AGANA is currently coordinating an art activation with organizers of the annual Life is Living Festival, which will be held at DeFremery Park on October 11, 2025 and related community events as appropriate during the month of October.

The artist's core artistic themes center on food justice, multicultural solidarity, intergenerational unity, and Black and brown liberation through a social justice lens, while incorporating elements representing the park's diverse current uses such as the Town Park skateboard park, Panther Skate Plaza, and the Black Cowboy Association's activities, spaces integral to her own intimate family history. She aims to create a visual story that invites future movement leaders to contribute to its rich legacy.

Agana will develop final designs with community input in the fall of 2025, for final design review and approval by the PAAC in November 2025, prior to mural installation. The artwork is planned for installation in December 2025, to be coordinated with OPRYD and OPW.

FISCAL IMPACT

The DeFremery Park Public Art Project is funded through City of Oakland percent for art funds (per Ordinance Number 13562 C.M.S) by Measure WW (East Bay Regional Parks grant program). The artist will be contracted for design development, including community outreach, and on-site installation of the final artwork in an amount of up to one hundred fifty-five thousand dollars (\$155,000). A portion of the budget, to cover on-site mural installation, will be administered through a licensed contractor, to be determined later in coordination with OPW.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC) review and approve conceptual designs by artist Vanessa "DJ AGANA" Espinoza, and award a progress design development honorarium of \$5,000, for the DeFremery Park – Measure WW “Snack Shack” Public Art Project.

Respectfully submitted,



Kristen Zaremba, Public Art Coordinator



Josie de Mira, Assistant Public Art Coordinator

PAAC 9-8-25 Item V

DeFremery Park Mural Proposal:

"Justice Everywhere"

Artist AGANA

Large scale mural and contemporary street artist from Oakland painting prolific calls to action.





Artist Journey Map: Vanessa Espinoza

Pinpoint important moments in your twisting creative journey.

Few and Far Women

Joined all female street art crew where my art finally began to get recognition with paid travel gigs.

The Dream Krew

Joined Mike Dreams crew where I met my mentor Vogue, one of the best aerosol artists in the world.

Franklin Elementary

Painting murals for steph curry, finally getting paid what I'm worth.

Visual Element

East Side Art Alliance mural graffiti program as a youth, eventually teaching the workshop.

Traveling Artist

Painted in mural festivals in Switzerland, Senegal, Spain, France, art Basel Miami, and met artists from all over the world.

Brava Theater

Artist in residency painting murals and designing signage and window installations.

Sf Giants

Painting murals for their games and campaigns, getting paid well, appreciated with all the perks.



Conceptual Design

The mural centers on Martin Luther King Jr.'s powerful declaration: **"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."** This foundational quote drives a visual narrative that connects historical liberation movements with contemporary struggles for justice woven together by personal experience and community history. The design bridges the Black Panther Party's Oakland legacy with the Zapatista movement indigenous resistance, creating a "Zapantera Negra" aesthetic that honors both movements' revolutionary art traditions.

The composition flows like water across the Snack Shack, featuring interconnected portraits of key figures from the community, including Lil' Bobby Hutton beneath an oak tree symbolizing continuous growth and rebirth. The design incorporates transparent paint on windows to create stained-glass effects while maintaining privacy, transforming the building into a beacon of hope and resistance.

Conceptual Design

Background

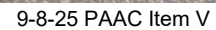


Imagery













The Core Artistic Idea or Theme

The core theme centers on **food justice, multicultural solidarity, intergenerational unity, and black and brown liberation** through a social justice lens. The mural serves as a prolific call to action for self-determination and collective liberation, emphasizing that "no one is free until we are all free."

The artwork honors the land while igniting hearts toward action, collective healing, and life celebration. It weaves together the aesthetic languages of Emory Douglas's Black Panther art with Zapatista women's embroidery and Mayan cultural motifs, creating a unique visual dialogue between movements separated by geography but united in struggle.

The Core Artistic Idea or Theme Continued...

The murals highlight Black Panther leaders Lil Bobby Hutton, Kathleen Cleaver, Bobby Seale, Ericka Huggins alongside Oakland swimmer Hilton Woods, Panther Skate Plaza and Emani White, Black Cowboy Association's Wilbert McAlister, my niece, son and daughter, the SF Skater Sisters, more.

Depending on community input we can highlight NBA's Bill Russell, NFL's Marshawn Lynch, local leaders in tennis and sports. Picket signs being held by additional Black Panther members such as Huey P. Newton, Angela Davis, Eldridge Brown, Elaine Brown, Fred Hampton, Assata Shakur and many more. The goal is the uplift intergenerational healing through services provided and those whom have benefited by the programs started by the Black Panther Party.

How the Design Responds to Site and Community Context

The design directly responds to DeFremery Park's role as Oakland's first municipal playground and its transformation into a sacred space for the Black Panther Party. Research reveals the park's origins from James de Fremery's Victorian mansion, whose interracial family's courage in standing up for their beliefs established the park's legacy of resistance, honoring the park's evolution from the Playground Movement through its role as a Black Panther meeting place, where over 65 survival programs were created. The design acknowledges the 2016 official naming of Bobby Hutton Grove and incorporates elements representing the park's diverse current uses—from the Town Park skate area to the Black Cowboy Association's activities—spaces integral to my own intimate family history.

Visual elements flow seamlessly between the park's existing activities, from skateboarding and swimming to tennis and basketball, creating unity between historical significance and contemporary community and family life.



Intended Impact and Message

The mural aims to position the Snack Shack as an integral part of the park's public art installation, creating a visual story that invites future movement leaders to contribute to its rich legacy. The artwork addresses the interconnection between police brutality against Black people and ICE enforcement, showing how systemic racism manifests across different systems of oppression.

Rather than dwelling solely on injustice, the mural focuses on solutions and hope, inspiring change while acknowledging struggle. It celebrates the 65+ survival programs created by the Black Panthers during the largest global social justice rebellion in history, emphasizing love as a guide for serving the people.

The intended impact extends beyond park users to the wider community, fostering spaces where people can engage with art meaningfully while learning about overlooked histories and voices.



Site-Specific Context

The "Snack Shack" serves as a visual bridge between graffiti and traditional mural art, reflecting and interacting with DeFremery Park's immediate surroundings. The building's position allows the mural to flow organically with existing park elements—skateboarding, swimming, tennis, and basketball areas—creating visual continuity across the space.

The design can includes designated legal wall space for rotating graffiti pieces and a small production area near the Town Park where artists can sign up and follow agreements to paint respectfully under curatorial guidance. This approach honors the park's role as a creative hub while providing structured opportunities for artistic expression.

The building windows will be painted on the outside with transparent paint so that the light shines through and gives a stained glass effect to the inside ambiance while also providing privacy. This allows the mural to be enjoyed by those inside as well as outside the Snack Shack.

Example of windows painted with transparent paint, outside and inside



33



Historical & Community Context

DeFremery Park's history as a predominantly Black neighborhood hub, particularly after railroad connections to San Francisco in the late 1860s, informs the mural's multicultural approach. The area became home to Oakland's first Mexican and Latino community, building cultural unity through shared American experiences.

West Oakland's identity as a center for African American workers during and after World War II, combined with its vibrant music scene and businesses on Seventh Street, provides rich source material for the mural's community narratives. The neighborhood's experience with urban renewal displacement—including I-980 and I-880 freeway construction—and the community activism that created Mandela Parkway demonstrates ongoing resistance to harmful infrastructure decisions.

Collaboration with organizations like West Oakland Community Collaborative, Mandela Partners, West Oakland Cultural Action Network, and West Oakland Stories Positive Feeling Movement ensures authentic community voice integration and oral history preservation.

Thematic Tone

The research directly strengthens the artistic theme by revealing DeFremery Park's continuous role as a space for resistance, healing, and community building. The historical context of the Black Panther Party provides concrete examples of the "injustice anywhere" principle in action—showing how local organizing creates far-reaching impact.

Intergenerational connections emphasized throughout West Oakland's narratives inform the mural's approach to connecting elders' experiences with contemporary struggles. My personal history in the community around the park, ensures the artwork reflects authentic community identity while fostering pride and belonging through culturally relevant symbols and stories pulled from this research. For example: in 2013 I was invited as one of 16 individual artists and the only woman in the Life is Living Estria Invitational Graffiti Battle at Defermery park. Later, in 2022 I was chosen to paint a portrait of a local activist, journalist and filmmaker Jean Malasine for Brett Cook's Gardeners of Belonging exhibit. That portrait earned a place on display at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, a proud and monumental moment in my career in art and activism.

Thematic Tone Continued....

I also helped my niece into horse therapy to cope with the grief of losing a parent—her first love was the horse she rode at Defermery Park. She has since joined Horses With Styles and accomplished her dream of riding in the parade. I would like to add her to the mural as a symbol of resilience and self-determination.

Even closer to my heart, my two children were born and grew up on Linden Street, around the corner from Defermery Park. My husband, their father, also grew up and lived in West Oakland before passing two years ago. Today, my kids' favorite memories—riding horses with the Black Cowboy Association and playing frisbee in the park with their father—are forever tied to this place. We continue to frequent the Town Park and hold sacred and brave spaces throughout the park to cry, laugh, and share memories of their father as we keep his legacy alive. These personal experiences set a universal, driving tone of contemporary community care and inclusion integral to the space's history.

Community Engagement Plan



Objectives

The community engagement plan aims to create an educational storytelling space where community members contribute input, ideas, photos, and drawings for potential inclusion in the mural composition. Each ideation session features organizational representatives presenting facts, sharing stories, and educating participants about DeFremery Park and West Oakland's history.

The process emphasizes shared decision-making, allowing community voting on themes and 2-3 design options before final rendering. This approach ensures the artwork reflects community identity while fostering inclusivity, togetherness, and belonging. The engagement serves as advocacy and awareness-raising about important issues while building relationships between community members and organizations.

Target Audience

The engagement targets local youth, seniors, park users, adjacent community organizations, and cultural groups connected to past and present social justice movements. Specific outreach includes Panther Skate Plaza users, Town Park artists, Life is Living participants, Black Cowboy Association members, and regular park attendees. The approach remains open to the public while prioritizing input from regular park attendees to ensure the imagery reflects the audience and fosters a sense of pride and purpose through participation in the decision-making process.

Methodologies

Methodologies include ideation sessions, community workshops, online surveys, and volunteer paint days. Public workshops provide opportunities for community members to voice opinions about local issues and collaborate on imagery, colors, and composition. The process incorporates both in-person park meetings and online platforms to maximize accessibility and participation.

Volunteer painting days engage community members across age groups in the actual creation process, providing paint-by-number opportunities for simple shapes during early mural stages. This hands-on participation ensures community members feel genuine ownership of the final artwork. The collaborative planning process works with community members to develop strategies for ongoing engagement, partnering with local organizations to deliver ideas that can organically evolve into imagery reflecting community needs.