



**Civic Arts Commission Meeting
Wednesday, August 13, 2025
6:00 PM**

**Meeting Location: Tarea Hall Pittman South Branch Library
1901 Russell St, Berkeley, CA 94703**

Agenda

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL

Jonathan Bachrach, District 1
Dana Blecher (Vice Chair), District 6
Lisa Bullwinkel, District 4
Devi Dutta-Choudhury, Mayor
Peter Montgomery, District 8
Eduardo Pineda, District 5
Sean Vaughn Scott, District 3
Cameron Woo (Chair), District 2
Vacancy, District 7

3. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The City of Berkeley recognizes that the community we live in was built on the territory of Huchiun (*Hooch-yoon*), the ancestral and unceded land of the Chochenyo (*Cho-chen-yo*) speaking Ohlone (*Oh-low-nee*) people, the ancestors and descendants of the sovereign Verona (*Vuh-roh-nuh*) Band of Alameda County. This land was and continues to be of great importance to all of the Ohlone Tribes and descendants of the Verona Band. We acknowledge and honor the original inhabitants of Berkeley, the documented 5,000-year history of a vibrant community at the West Berkeley Shellmound, and the Ohlone people who continue to reside in the East Bay. We recognize that Berkeley residents have and continue to benefit from the use and occupation of this unceded stolen land since the City of Berkeley's incorporation in 1878. As stewards of the laws regulating the City of Berkeley, it is not only vital that we recognize the history of this land, but also recognize that the Ohlone people are present members of Berkeley and other East Bay communities today. The City of Berkeley will continue to build relationships with the Lisjan (*Lih-Shawn*) Tribe and create meaningful actions that uphold the intention of this Land Acknowledgement

4. **PUBLIC COMMENT** (for items not on the agenda)

5. **COMMUNICATION** (received from the public for items not on the agenda)

6. **CHAIR'S REPORT**

7. **PRESENTATIONS, DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS** (All items for presentation, discussion, and possible action)

- a) **Presentation:** Jaslene Sanchez to present on summer Civic Arts internship project – Artwork Archive database updates (10 minutes)
Introduced by Jennifer Lovvorn, Chief Cultural Affairs Officer/Commission Secretary
Public Comment
- b) **Action Item:** Martin Luther King Jr. Youth Services Center/Young Adult Project
Public Art Commission: Panel-Selected Artist and Proposal (15 minutes)
Introduced by Mark Salinas, Public Art Program Lead (Attachment 1)
Recommendation: Approval of Martin Luther King Jr. Youth Services Center/Young Adult Project Public Art Commission: Panel-Selected Artist and Proposal (name to be announced at the meeting).
Public Comment
- c) **Action Item:** Referral Request to Council to Rescind Incorrect Information Related to Turtle Island Monument (30 minutes)
Introduced by Civic Arts Commissioner Lisa Bullwinkel (Attachment 2)
Recommendation: Approval of Referral Request to Council to Rescind Incorrect Information Related to Turtle Island Monument.
Public Comment
- d) **Presentation:** “Keeping Creativity Local: A Strategic Response to Affordable Housing for Artists” Final Report by the Housing Advisory Commission and the Civic Arts Commission, July 2025 (10 minutes)
Presented by Civic Arts Chair Cameron Woo (Attachment 3)
Public Comment

8. **STAFF REPORT**

- a) Civic Arts Program Updates, Jen Lovvorn (5 minutes)
- b) Grants Program Updates, Hilary Amnah (5 minutes)
- c) Public Art Program Updates, Mark Salinas (5 minutes)

9. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a) Grants

- Dana Blecher, Chair
- Lisa Bullwinkel
- Cameron Woo

b) Public Art

- Eduardo Pineda, Chair
- Jonathan Bachrach

c) Policy Subcommittee

- Lisa Bullwinkel, Chair
- Dana Blecher
- Cameron Woo

d) Joint Subcommittee with Housing Advisory Commission

- Cameron Woo, Chair
- Sean Vaughn Scott

e) Representative on Design Review Committee

- Cameron Woo

10. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a) Draft Minutes of July 23, 2025 Meeting (Attachment 4)

From: Commission Secretary

Recommendation: Approval of July 23, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Public Comment

11. COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS

12. ADJOURNMENT

Attachments:

1. Martin Luther King Jr. Youth Services Center/Young Adult Project Public Art Commission: Panel-Selected Artist and Proposal
2. Referral Request to Council to Rescind Incorrect Information Related to Turtle Island Monument
3. "Keeping Creativity Local: A Strategic Response to Affordable Housing for Artists" Final Report by the Housing Advisory Commission and the Civic Arts Commission
4. Draft Minutes of July 23, 2025 Meeting

Staff Contact:
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Berkeley, CA 94704
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jlovvorn@berkeleyca.gov

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ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION:

This meeting is being held in a wheelchair accessible location. To request a disability-related accommodation(s) to participate in the meeting, including auxiliary aids or services, please contact the ADA Program Coordinator by phone (510) 981-6418 or by TTY/TDD (510) 981-6347 at least three business days before the meeting date. Please refrain from wearing scented products to this meeting.



Civic Arts Program

August 11, 2025

To: Civic Arts Commission

From: Mark Salinas, Public Art Program Lead

Subject: Artist Recommendation for the Martin Luther King Jr. Youth Services Center/Young Adult Project Public Art Commission RFQ

BACKGROUND

On October 30, 2024, the Civic Arts Commission approved the *Martin Luther King Jr. Youth Services Center/Young Adult Project Public Art Project Plan*, which called for the commissioning of an 885 square foot mosaic artwork upon the exterior East wall, exterior North wall, and interior North wall of the Martin Luther King Jr. Youth Services Center/Young Adult Project Clubhouse in Grove Park.

On November 25, 2024, the Civic Arts Program issued the *Martin Luther King Jr. Youth Services Center/Young Adult Project Public Art Commission RFQ* (Specification No.25-11686-C). The total project amount of \$442,000 included all associated costs including, but not limited to, artist design fee, fabrication, transportation, and installation.

Practicing artists residing in the United States were eligible to apply; artists who belong to a historically underrepresented population were encouraged to apply. 139 applications were received at the close of the RFQ on January 31, 2025. All applications were reviewed through a selection process.

SELECTION PROCESS

Qualification Panel

This Panel, comprised of three Bay Area arts professionals, screened 139 applications and presented 26 applications (19%) to the Review Panel.

Artist Review Panel

This Panel was comprised of the Qualification Panel plus a Civic Arts Commissioner, a Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Commissioner, a member of the architect team, and a community member.

On April 25, 2025, using a scoring rubric provided on the RFQ, the Artist Review Panel convened to review 26 applications and identified the following five finalists: Elyse Pignolet (CA), Sorell Raino-Tsui (CA), Eric Okdeh + Monicka Mathieu (PA), Reginald C. Adams (TX), and Moses X. Ball (MO).

On June 6, 2025, the five finalists attended a mandatory site visit and Q+A session to develop detailed conceptual site-specific proposals. The finalists met with five City employees, five neighborhood stakeholders, one architect, and two Civic Arts project managers.

Once the five proposals were received, staff conducted extensive community outreach to elicit public input. A “Berkeley Considers” survey that invited respondents to provide feedback on each of the proposals was hosted on the City’s website from July 21 to August 1, 2025, and was widely distributed through a citywide community message yielding 669 survey responses.

On August 6, 2025, the *Artist Review Panel* was reconvened to consider the finalists’ proposals in an interview format. Staff thoroughly presented project background, agenda, timetable, scoring criteria, and possible rounds of scoring both in advance of the meeting and at the beginning of the actual meeting. After the five interviews, staff presented the public input survey summary. Panelists then discussed each presentation citing the strengths and weaknesses of each proposal before individually scoring the five proposals.

Sorell Raino-Tsui’s proposal, *South Berkeley Shines 2* and Moses X. Ball’s proposal *The Dreamers*, advanced in total numeric points from panelists, with only a 2-point difference between them. Staff guided panelists to discuss the narrow difference. Panelists expressed strong split decisions and seemed divided on any agreement. A round two vote followed defining a panel division between the total numeric points and the most panelist votes. Without clear panel consensus to choose one artist, staff adjourned the panel meeting. Later in the same day, staff requested panelists to examine the original proposals of the two artists, their budgets, all panelist comments, all public input, and the RFQ.

All seven panelists submitted a response directly to staff for the round three vote. Sorell Raino-Tsui’s proposal, *South Berkeley Shines 2*, was ultimately, and explicitly, selected by five of the seven Artist Review Panelists for final recommendation to the Public Art Subcommittee.

On August 11, 2025, the Public Art Subcommittee approved Sorell Raino-Tsui’s proposal, *South Berkeley Shines 2* for recommendation to the Civic Arts Commission.

MLK/YAP Public Art Commission Finalist	Total Score Per Panelist								ROUND ONE Total Numerical Score	ROUND TWO Panelist Vote	ROUND THREE Panelist Summary Statement + Vote
	Panelist 1 CD	Panelist 2 CR	Panelist 3 JB	Panelist 4 KR	Panelist 5 SA	Panelist 6 SI	Panelist 7 WD				
Maximum Score/Votes	20	20	20	20	20	20	20		140	7	7
1 Reginald Adams	14	16	13	15	16	15	18		107		
2 Sorell Tsui	18	19	20	18	19	12	15		121		
2 Round 2		1	1	1	1					4	
2 Round 3		1	1	1	1		1				5
3 Eric Okdeh + Monica Mathieu	16	15	14	14	17	19	18		113		
4 Elyse Pignolet	15	15	14	15	20	10	13		102		
5 Moses X. Ball	19	18	15	15	18	19	19		123		
5 Round 2	1					1	1			3	
5 Round 3	1					1					2

POSSIBLE ACTION

The Civic Art Commission approves Sorell Raino-Tsui’s proposal, *South Berkeley Shines 2* for the Martin Luther King Jr. Youth Services Center/Young Adult Project Public Art Commission.

Upon the Civic Art Commission’s final approval, staff will work with the artist to execute a contract immediately. The Martin Luther King Jr. Youth Services Center/Young Adult Project is tentatively slated for completion December 2026. The mosaic is tentatively slated for installation November 2026.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1) Berkeley Considers Public Survey Input Summary
- 2) Sorell Raino-Tsui’s proposal, *South Berkeley Shines 2* Full Proposal

Updated 8/5/2025

Does the proposed artwork provide an enriching welcome to teens, young adults, visitors, staff, and community members?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	%
Moses	275 (43.3%)	163 (25.7%)	113 (17.8%)	29 (4.6%)	27 (4.3%)	95.7%
Elyse	212 (33.4%)	140 (22.0%)	139 (21.9%)	62 (9.8%)	33 (5.2%)	92.3%
Sorell	189 (29.8%)	165 (26.0%)	153 (24.1%)	45 (7.1%)	37 (5.8%)	92.8%
Mon/Eric	164 (25.8%)	191 (30.1%)	145 (22.8%)	44 (6.9%)	34 (5.4%)	91%
Reginald	126 (19.8%)	181 (28.5%)	174 (27.4%)	62 (9.8%)	35 (5.5%)	91%

Does the proposed artwork promote neighborhood connections, a sense of belonging, inclusivity, and play?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	%
Moses	254 (38.6%)	163 (24.8%)	108 (16.4%)	38 (5.8%)	65 (9.9%)	95.5%
Mon/Eric	159 (24.2%)	182 (27.7%)	164 (24.9%)	49 (7.4%)	50 (7.6%)	91.8%
Sorell	157 (23.9%)	178 (27.1%)	144 (21.9%)	65 (9.9%)	64 (9.7%)	92.5%
Elyse	150 (22.8%)	143 (21.7%)	168 (25.5%)	81 (12.3%)	65 (9.9%)	92.2%
Reginald	101 (15.3%)	185 (28.1%)	183 (27.8%)	75 (11.4%)	52 (7.9%)	90.5%

Does this proposed artwork relate meaningfully to the project site. For example, by complementing the youth center's programming; responding to the building's architecture; reflecting on the surrounding community or culture; referencing the park's history; or harmonizing with natural environment?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	%
Moses	230 (34.7%)	170 (25.7%)	130 (19.6%)	47 (7.1%)	55 (8.3%)	95.4%
Elyse	217 (32.8%)	136 (20.5%)	154 (23.3%)	52 (7.9%)	53 (8.0%)	92.5%
Sorell	162 (24.5%)	153 (23.1%)	170 (25.7%)	65 (9.8%)	53 (8.0%)	91.1%
Mon/Eric	136 (20.5%)	190 (28.7%)	184 (27.8%)	52 (7.9%)	45 (6.8%)	91.7%
Reginald	98 (14.8%)	184 (27.8%)	202 (30.5%)	64 (9.7%)	53 (8.0%)	90.8%

Overall Comments (Positive)

- *Any one of them.*
- *All the artists did a beautiful job.*
- *All are terrific. Thank you, artists.*
- *Any of these would be lovely!*
- *Exciting & thx for letting us weigh in.*
- *Every piece of artwork is incredible.*
- *All would be wonderful to have on the building*
- *All gorgeous! Very thoughtful. I would be proud to have any one of them in my neighborhood.*

Overall Comments (Negative)

- *Each proposal is too busy, disjointed, and confusing.*
- *The others feel too busy to me and striving too hard to hit all the notes.*
- *Overall designs too busy and too flashy. Bright but not beautiful. Common.*
- *All of them feel a little too 'busy',*
- *Chaotic collages that just shoehorn in various concepts.*
- *In the effort to include everything, the result is that nothing is highlighted and it's a cacophony.*
- *Overstimulating*

1) Reginald C. Adams: “We Are the Dream”

- *Has a sophisticated and modern style; feels most formal and more institutional and is my least favorite for that reason.*
- *Has more ethnic representation but lacks youth playfulness.*
- *Makes me feel like these looming figures are watching us, and it's hard to tell who they are or their values at the outset.*
- *Too adult; looks like the adults are watching.*
- *The oversized faces feel intimidating, esp. w/ window placement.*

2) Moses Ball: “The Dreamers”

- *It feels current while highlighting all aspects of community. It mixes fun and meaning in 1 piece.*
- *Shows the heart of the Berkeley community; captures the essence of what we want this community center to be about.*
- *Fits the history of YAP the most in my opinion.*
- *Reflecting the actual users of the center and activities in a bright, colorful way.*
- *Is it a concern if someone who is depicted has a less desirable outcome in the future?*
- *Love the idea, style & imagery of "The Dreamers", but it shouldn't include current staff, it should really include several more historic people from the area like Philip Harper Collins, Rev. Michael Smith, and there are others. How do you choose who? It could be polarizing and contentious.*
- *The mirrors could be annoying in the sunlight.*

3) Eric Okdeh + Monica Mathieu: “Rhythmic Unity”

- *Feels happy and like a place kids would want to go.*
- *Best to scale with the building; an aesthetic that complements the structure; clear winners on use of color, line, and creative composition.*
- *Good colors, feels fun, welcoming, modern.*
- *Visually more appealing than the rest.*
- *Is better proportions to the building.*
- *Most inclusive, welcoming and inspiring.*
- *I like the wheelchair.*

4) Elyse Pignolet: “Neighborhood Roots, Tree of Life”

- *GORGEOUS and really stands out! Looks like an art piece and stands out.*
- *Succeeds by restrained use of color and composition; only unexpected proposal*
- *Unique, unconventional, refreshing, calm, peaceful place for the eye*
- *Timelessness (reaching into the past and growing into the future), its serenity, and impactful connection to nature; lasting power; will still resonate years from now*
- *Will look good for years to come; unique universal statement*
- *Welcoming and peaceful; calming inclusive; most contemplative*
- *Sense of beauty and peace; matches blue & black of building; combines nature to building; calm tranquility and subtle coloring*

5) Sorell Raino-Tsui: “South Berkeley Shines 2”

- *Best represents local activists and black history in south Berkeley, along with vibrant, playful, and energetic artistry.*
- *Reflect the rich history of the neighborhood; weaves in history.*
- *Highlights local heroes; lacks young people & families.*
- *Good design; welcoming; vibrant and beckons you to approach to see more of it, bright/colorful.*
- *Beautiful welcoming entry way design.*
- *Vitality, energy & spirit of youth.*
- *Vibrant and beckons you to approach to see more of it.*
- *Just a collection of another muralist’s ideas.*
- *Checks all the boxes and shares same vibrant palette as with most of the other applicants.*



MLK/YAP MOSAIC

Public Art Proposal - Sorell Raino-Tsui

CONTENTS

Sorell Raino-Tsui

01

MY BERKELEY LIFE

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Materials and Installation

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APPENDIX - Budget & Supporting Documents

A BERKELEY LIFE

My intimate connection to Berkeley and this
neighborhood

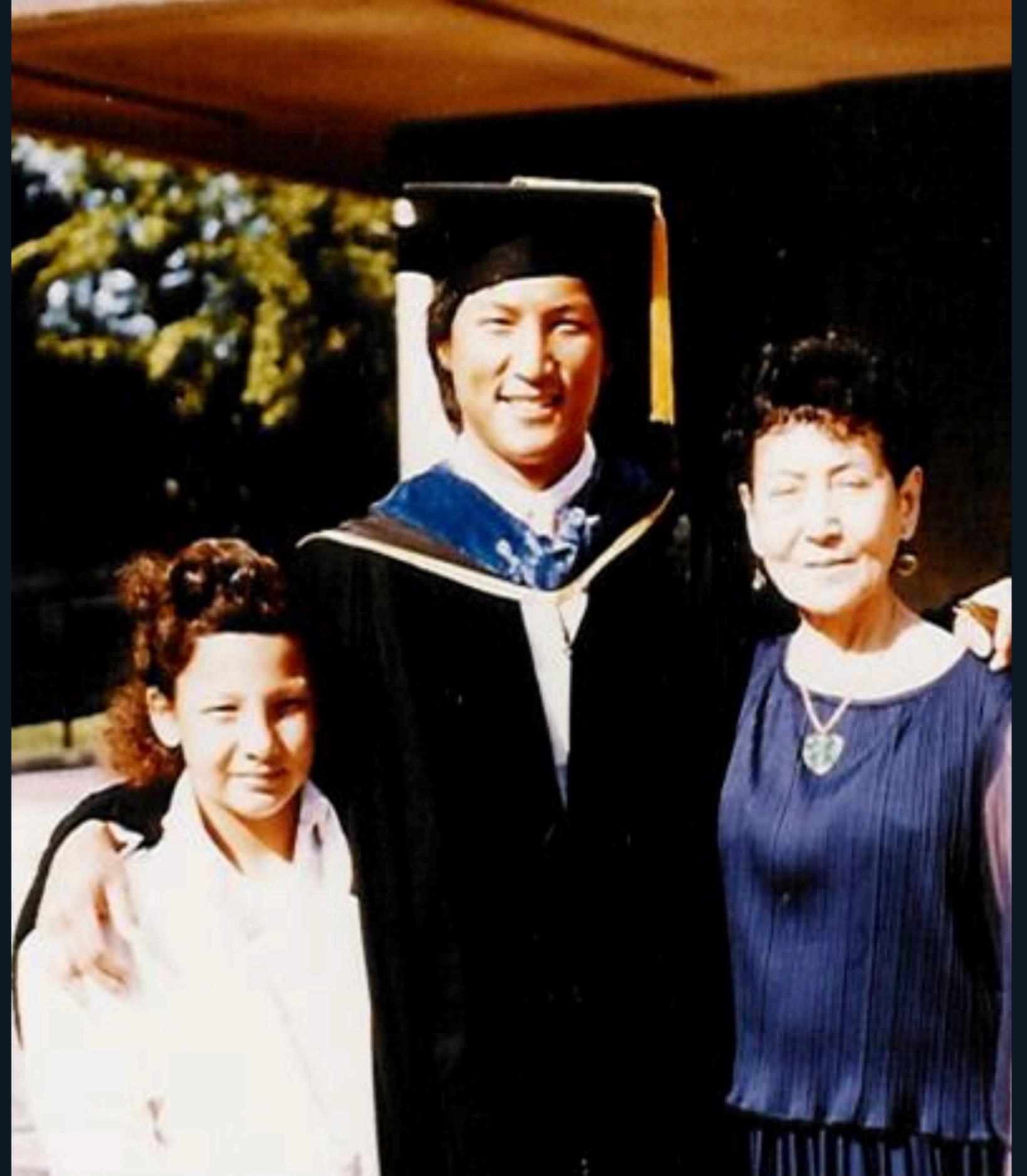
MY BERKELEY STORY

Sorell Raino-Tsui

THREE GENERATIONS OF BERKELEY ARTISTS & CITIZENS

My family is a multi-cultural, multi-generational group of Berkeley artists. Beginning with my father Eugene Tsui who graduated from Cal in the 80's. We lived for many years at the Cal international student housing at the top of Dwight Way.

CAL GRADUATION, 1987



I am a product of
Berkeley public
Schools, this is
my community



DR. RONALD
WILLIAMS



MRS. CHERYL
CHIN



AJA
STEVENS-BELL



SEPFHA
BANJO



LORENZO
BARNES



BELINDA
BIGBEE



FRANCESCA
DERBIGNY



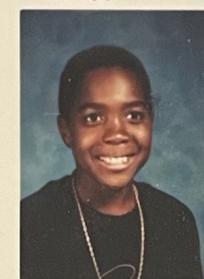
ISABEL
DOUGLASS



BRANDEE
GRANT



LAURIEL
EARLEY



LARRY
FIELDS



SORELL
TSUI



BERNARD
VINCENT



LANCE
WILSON



TANYA
GRILLO



SIBOUN
VONGPHACHAN



SHANNON
WINKS



RAMEL
DIXON



RONALD
WILLIAMS



EMONTE
LEONARD



JASON
ROBINSON



CHANEL
ADAMS



TIFFANY
PERVOE



ZORANA
ELIZANDO



ISAAC
HILL

MALCOLM X ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

DR. WILLIAMS, PRINCIPAL
MRS. CHIN, ASST. PRINCIPAL
MR. GRAHAM - GRADE 4

1988 - 1989

ECO ARCHITECT EUGENE TSUI

Architect, artist and champion of environmental policy, My father, Eugene Tsui designed and built the famous Berkeley 'Fish House' at 2747 Mathews St. In South Berkeley





Sorell Raino-Tsui

MY BERKELEY STORY

BERKELEY

From Malcom X to Berkeley Hlgh School, Berkeley raised me. It shaped my perspectives on social issues, diversity, culture and artistry.

Berkeley Hlgh School Senior Prom 'Make it Last Forever', 1997.

Sorell Raino-Tsui with his High School sweetheart Justina Blakeney.



The Next Generation

My son, Tai Raino-Tsui, is a product of Berkeley schools, graduating Berkeley High in 2021. Captain of the Varsity basketball team, who's offseason training was at the YAP gym.



Graduation 2021

PUBLIC ARTIST

SORELL RAINO-TSUI - RELEVANT WORK

EXPERIENCE

SORELL RAINO-TSUI

I have been producing public art for the last 15 years. Most known for my murals, which are predominantly in Oakland and San Francisco Chinatowns. My style often leans into my Chinese heritage, while fusing multicultural symbols into celebrations of diversity.



Oakland Chinatown

Mural



SAN FRANCISCO CHINATOWN

Mural



4200 GEARY SAN FRANCISCO

8 story mural for senior housing in the Richmond district, a predominantly Russian and Chinese neighborhood. A cultural fusion highlighting both countries.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY & REPRESENTATION THROUGH ART

As a Bay Area artist, I am often tasked with representing multiple cultures in a single piece. For this mural in Daly City I was asked to represent the cultural make up of the area, specifically highlighting the Pacific Islander, Filipino, Chinese, Latino, Middle Eastern and Palestinian peoples.



**THE HUB,
Community
Center,
SunnyDale SF**





A three dimensional relief fabricated in exterior grade HDU panels, and hand painted. This piece was part of the public art requirement for this new community development.



REPRESENTING THE HISTORY AND DIVERSITY OF SUNNYDALE

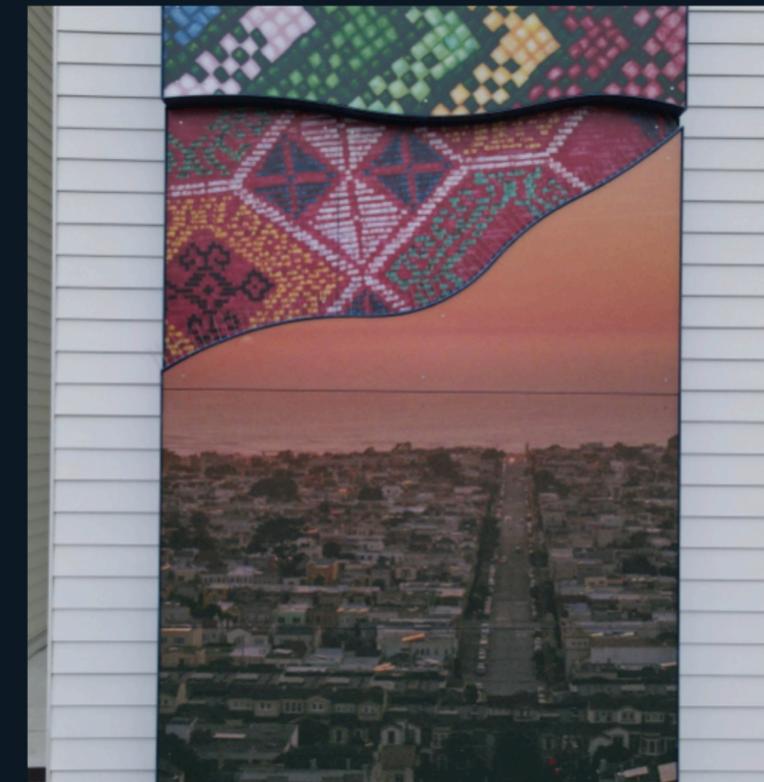




**SHIRLEY
CHISHOLM
VILLAGE,
Sunset SF.**

SCV Public Art Requirement

For the Shirley Chisholm Village project for MidPen Housing, I was tasked in creating a piece that represented the cultures of the district and the namesake Shirley Chisholm. This sculpted, three dimensional wall relief was fabricated out of 3Form, with an interior aluminum frame. This piece, and the previous SunnyDale piece, highlight my capabilities and experience in developing and producing large scale public art with complex engineering, fabrication and installation requirements.



Highlighting a hands on approach to production



HAND SCULPTED RETAIL INSTALLATION FOR 3319 MARCHE, LAKESHORE
AVE OAKLAND CA

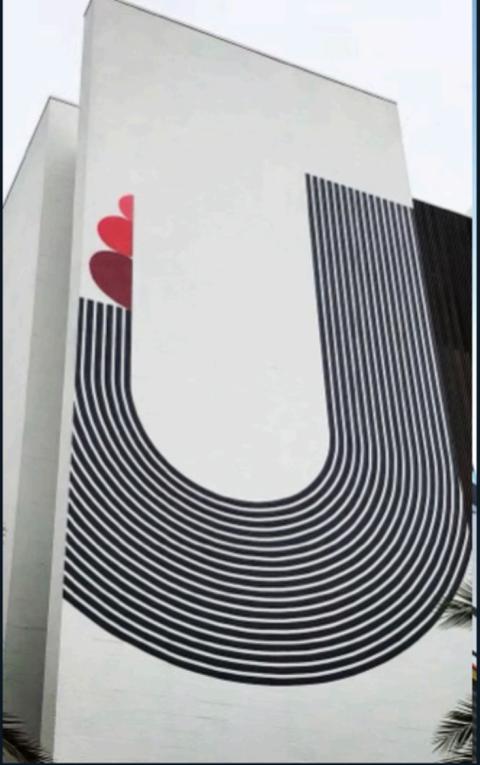


LYRIC SCULPTURES FOR THE UPTOWN/DOWNTOWN ASSOCIATION, 50TH
ANNIVERSARY OF HIP HOP POP UP MUSEUM, OAKLAND CA

ABG ART GROUP

A STAPLE OF PUBLIC ART PRODUCTION , COMMUNITY
LEADERSHIP AND ARTS EDUCATION IN THE BAY AREA.

SORELL RAINO-TSUI, FOUNDER & DIRECTOR



**DYNAMIC PUBLIC
ART**

ABG ART GROUP

**PRODUCTION &
COLLABORATION
EXPERTISE**



As director of ABG Art Group, I have worked in collaboration with local artists, curating, managing, engineering and producing countless high level public art works throughout the Bay Area. This experience gives me a wealth of knowledge in the very technical field of public art. Elite problem solving and practical execution expertise. Working with teams, architects, engineers, fabricators, installers and all aspects of producing public art.



A CASE STUDY OF EXPERIENCE

Public Art Requirement for a new housing development, Downtown Oakland



Sculpted relief work with collaborating design artist Jet Martinez. As producer of this piece I sourced and managed fabrication, production, engineering, transportation and installation. This piece highlights my deep understanding and well rounded abilities in producing public art.

SUMMARY OF EXPERIENCE

- ELITE UNDERSTANDING AND EXPERIENCE IN THE PROCESS OF
PRODUCING & EXECUTING PUBLIC ART
- EXPERIENCE WORKING WITH AND MANAGING TEAMS, INTERFACING
WITH ARCHITECTS, ENGINEERS, FABRICATORS & INSTALLERS
- ABG ART GROUP IS INSURED AND BONDED AND READY TO MEET THE
INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS PROJECT
- PROVEN TRACK RECORD OF DELIVERING PROJECTS ON TIME AND
ON BUDGET

PROJECT PARTNERS

MLK/YAP COMMUNITY CENTER

MOSAIC

MOSAIC FABRICATION PARTNER, TILE

MATERIAL PARTNER AND INSTALLATION

PARTNER

FABRICATION PARTNER

RACHEL RODI MOSAICS

VALLEJO CA



We are Rachel [Rodi](#) and Guy [Fuerte](#) - a husband and wife artist team. We design and create public art and site-specific mosaic installations, murals and sculpture for businesses, homes and public spaces. Based in the San Francisco Bay Area, we have created more than 70 art installations throughout the United States and abroad. We work closely with designers, architects, builders and diverse communities to design art that becomes integral to a site, and meaningfully connects with a community or location. Rachel [Rodi](#) has been a practicing artist for over twenty five years. Rachel has designed and created architectural mosaics since 2006, including large scale murals, sculptures, water features and plazas, where she expertly fuses her painterly aesthetic, sculptors sensibility and technical skill into moving works of art.

RACHEL RODI MOSAICS

HUSBAND AND WIFE TEAM RACHEL RODI AND GUY FUERTE
IN THEIR VALLEJO STUDIO



**RACHEL RODI MOSAICS PRODUCED THE PIECE ON MALCOM X
ELEMENTARY**



A HANDS ON, HAND MADE APPROACH

RACHEL RODI & SORELL RAINO-TSUI



WE WILL PRODUCE THIS MOSAIC IN STUDIO, BY HAND, ENSURING A
HAND CRAFTED ARTISTIC PRODUCT

MATERIALS PARTNER

MCINTYRE TILE INC.

HEALDSBURG CA

Evolving with artistry and quality built in.

When the use of color exploded in the industry during the 1980s, the McIntyre team created a pure white porcelain clay body to set the stage for new vibrant colors and clear glazes. As demand grew, so did the inventive, unique, and always beautiful product offerings. Along with its decorative tiles and hand-cut mosaics, McIntyre expanded its offerings to include special trim tiles and more shapes and sizes.



**ASSURED QUALITY &
EXPERIENCE**

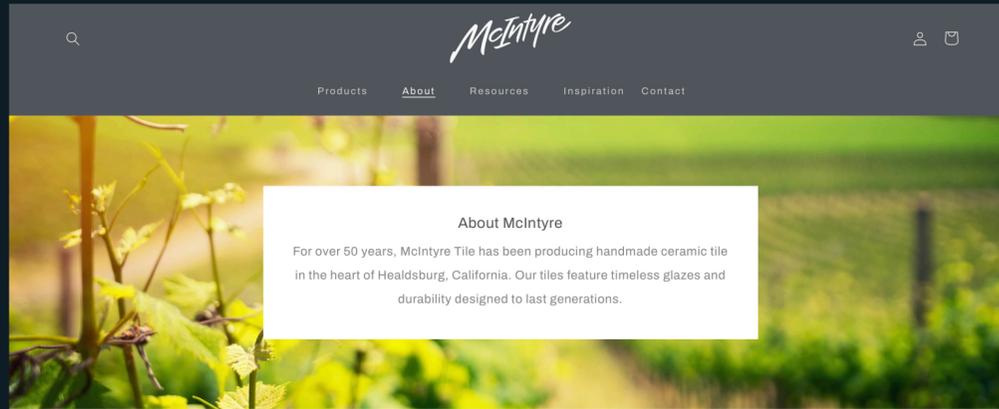
MCINTYRE TILE INC.

HEALDSBURG CA 95448

707-433-8866

INFO@MCINTYRETILE.COM

<https://mcintyretile.com>



INSPIRED BY ART AND NATURE

Dedicated to creativity and quality, we lead the industry through innovation, imagination, and attention to every detail. Our tiles are crafted using fine porcelain and stoneware clays, and our spectacular high-temperature ceramic glazes are unmatched in the industry. We are passionate about expressing the beauty of art and nature in every handmade tile.



TRUSTED EXPERIENCE

Drawing on more than 50 years of history and expertise, we proudly create made-to-order, handcrafted tiles that are beautiful, durable, and unlike any others.

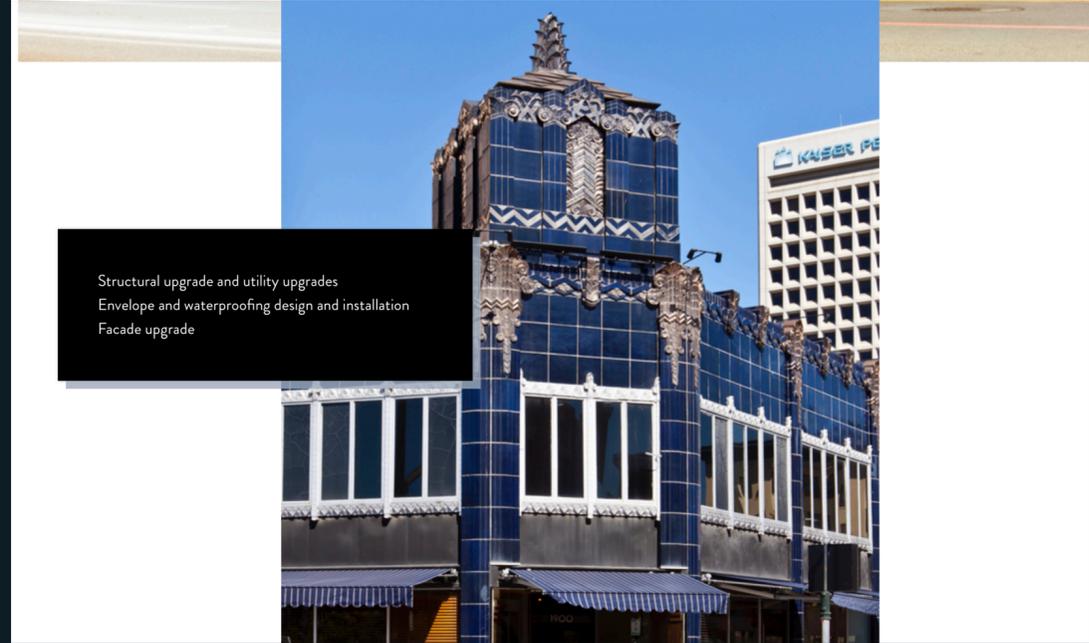


HAND CRAFTED

Hand made ceramic tiles produced in Healdsburg CA. Over 300 custom colors to choose from, and unique artisan series of tiles to enhance the artwork.

INSTALLATION PARTNER

ECO LOGICAL BUILDERS INC. RICHMOND CA



ECO LOGICAL BUILDERS INC

WILLIE LORD

LICENSE # 891525

5327 JACUZZI ST SUITE 4M

RICHMOND CA 94804

<https://ecologicalbuilders.com>

willie@ecologicalbuilders.com

415-823-5525

PROVEN EXPERIENCE,

INSURED, BONDED &

LICENSED TO PREFORM THIS

INSTALLATION

PROJECT PARTNERS

SUMMARY

- ALL PARTNERS LOCAL TO THE BAY AREA, KEEPING THE ECONOMIC VALUE OF THE PROJECT IN OUR LOCAL ECONOMY
- FABRICATION: RACHEL RODI MOSAICS, EXPERIENCED LOCAL TEAM WITH A PROVEN TRACK RECORD IN PUBLIC ART, HAS REVIEWED AND QUOTED THE PROJECT AND READY TO PRODUCE
- MATERIALS: MCINTYRE TILE, VETERAN OF CERAMIC TILE PRODUCTION, EXPERIENCED IN WORKING WITH ARTISTS AND MOSAICS, UNLIMITED COLOR AND CUSTOM MATERIAL OPTIONS
- INSTALLATION: ECO LOGICAL BUILDERS INC. , LICENSED, BONDED, EXPERIENCED, ESTABLISHED WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH ARTIST

PROPOSED ARTWORK

SORELL RAINO-TSUI

CELEBRATING THE CULTURES, DIVERSITY,
HISTORY & PEOPLES OF SOUTH BERKELEY

'SOUTH BERKELEY SHINES 2'





PORTRAITS

SYMBOLS OF PRIDE AND HISTORY FROM BERKELEY



RUTH ACTY

First African-American teacher in the Berkeley Unified School District



WILLIAM B. RUMFORD

Political pioneer, pharmacy owner. First African-American elected to state public office in Northern California.



DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR

Civil rights icon and location namesake



MAGGIE GEE

Chinese-American aviation pioneer, WWII pilot and member of WASP (Women Air-force Service Pilots). inducted into the Nevada Aerospace Hall of Fame in recognition of being one of the first women in history to American military aircraft in defense of America's freedom



CHARLES LEE AUSTIN

Local community organizer, fondly dubbed the 'President of South Berkeley'



MABEL HOWARD

Mable 'Mama' Howard, a humanitarian, political activist, union activist and civic leader. Mother of Berkeley artist Mildred Howard.



JOSEPH CHARLES

'The Waving Man', local icon of hospitality and kindness, representing the spirit of South Berkeley. . He won national fame and affection for the simple act of waving to the passing traffic from the front of his house every morning for 30 years

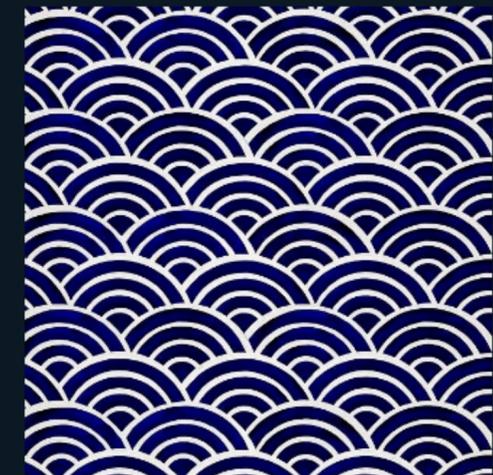
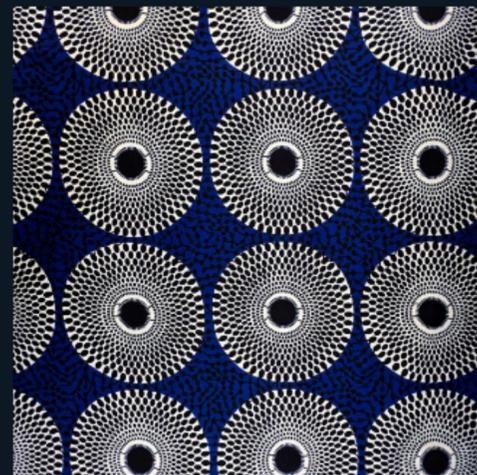
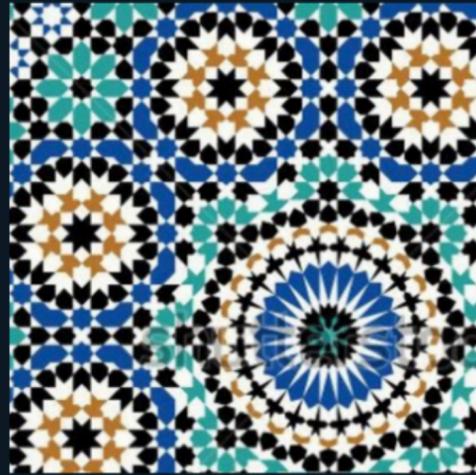


ASHBY FLEA MARKET & DRUM CIRCLES

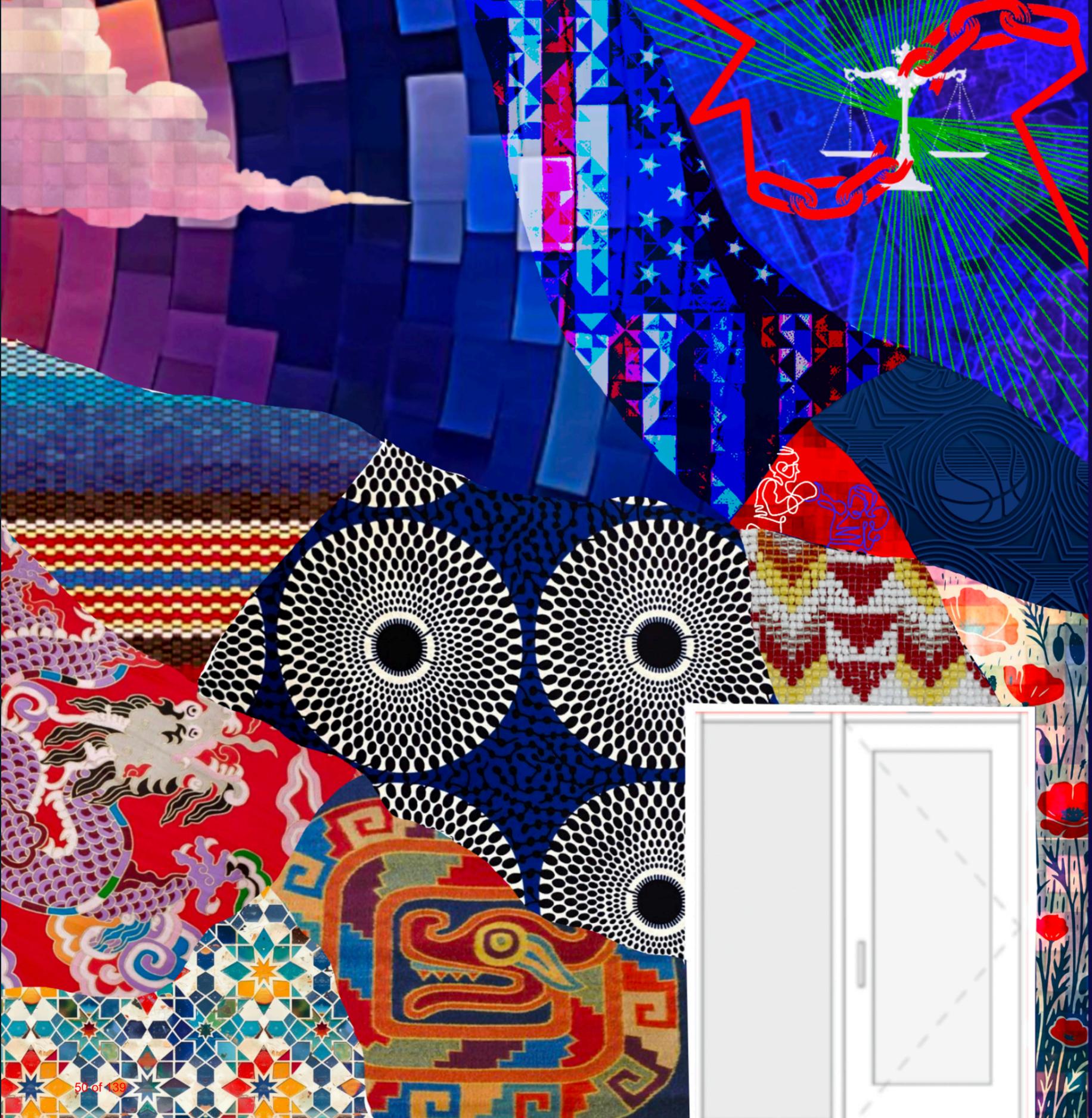
A staple of the community for decades, a symbol of cultural pride and entrepreneurship. One of the primary inspirations for this artwork.

CULTURAL PATTERNS

Textiles, ceramics and symbols from around the world



- Multicultural textiles, symbols and patterns are found throughout the piece. The patterns celebrate the cultures, diversity and my own lived experience in Berkeley. These gestures represent multiple nations of Africa, Latin America, China, Japan, the Middle East, America and the Berkeley Rose Garden



ENTRANCEWAY

Description of images

- Top Right: Restorative Justice through symbolism. This area depicts a map of Berkeley, and its traditionally redlined area. Smashing the chains of the redline are beams of green light and the symbol of justice. A metaphoric gesture that anything is possible when oppressive systems are destroyed. This area was specifically designed to be inside and visible to the student body, a historical teaching moment for the new generations.
- Middle Right: Boxing and Basketball, two of the primary sports and activities that take place at the YAP gym
- Bottom Right: California Poppies, symbolism of growth, potential and beauty. Anything can grow in a healthy environment.
- Bottom Left: A distinct cultural mash up, a celebration of diversity. Establishing a feeling that all cultures and peoples are represented and welcome in the primary entranceway.
- Top Middle: The American flag, while our current political climate may be unsettling, I believe it is important to still continue to instill a sense of pride and patriotism for our country. This piece celebrates all walks of life, while still representing our home country.

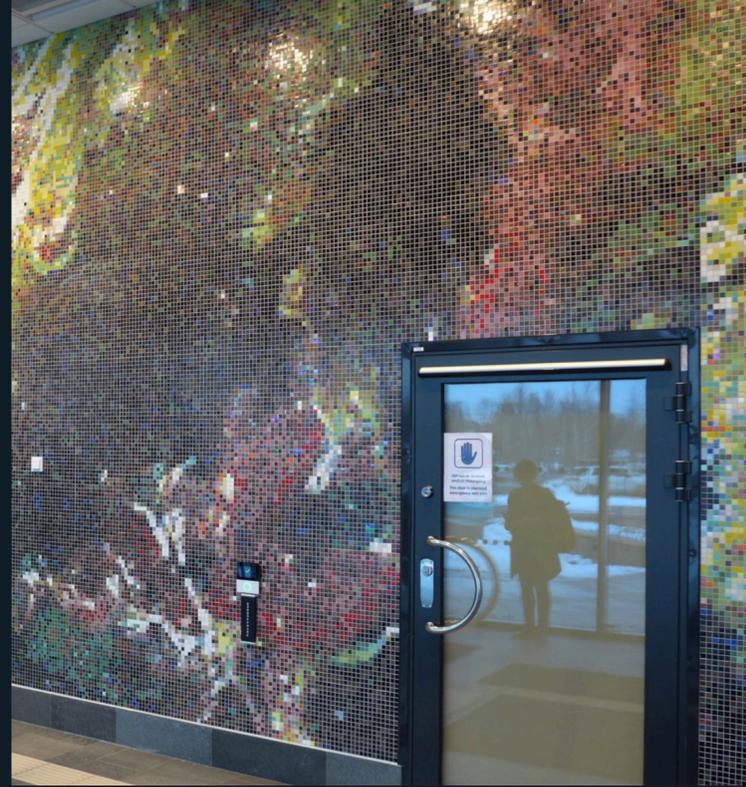


ENTRANCEWAY

OHLONE BEAD PATTERN



- Renee Ring is a local Lisjan Ohlone Native artist who designed and crafted this traditional Ohlone bead bracelet. She has agreed to collaborate and consult on this project, and supports the Ohlone artwork being included as an element of this multi-cultural piece.



MOSAIC PIXEL GRID

Many mosaic use a small tile grid system. This can be very effective, and time saving in creating large images with a pixelated style. However, due to the intricate complexity of our design we do not believe this is the best approach.

MOSAIC STYLING



STRUCTURED FLOW

For this project we propose a more free flowing style of mosaic that can move and curve with the design, hand cutting each tile to allow more depth of color and range of detailing.



APPENDIX



Supporting documents

ESTIMATED PROJECT BUDGET		
MLK Jr. Youth Services Center / Young Adult Project		
	Total Budget per RFQ:	\$442,000.00
ARTIST/TEAM NAME:		Sorell Raino-Tsui
ARTWORK TITLE:		South Berkeley Shines 2

INSTRUCTIONS: Provide item description and amount, adding lines if needed.

Item	Description	Budgeted Amount
Design		
Artist Fee	Lead artists & team compensation	88000
Digital/rendering services	Necessary shop drawings, detailed studies and file preparation	4000
Fabrication		
Labor	Physical production of mosaic	217,500
Materials	Tile and production materials	38,000
Rentals	Dedicated space for production and storage	5000
Delivery		
Packing/crating	Safe delivery to the install site	6000
Truck transportation	For delivery	1500
Air transportation	NA	NA
Installation		
Labor	Contractors install team	33500
Materials	Miscellaneous supplies and materials	8,000
Rentals	Lifts, Scaffolding, and necessary equipment	5000
Installer travel	NA	0
Artist travel	NA	0
Administration		
Documentation	Video and photo the process, installation, and final product	2500
Insurance	Necessary insurance policies	3000
Legal	Na	NA
Permits	NA	NA
Contingency	Ensuring on time and on budget delivery of the Artwork	30000
TOTAL		442000
		442000

BUDGET Page 1

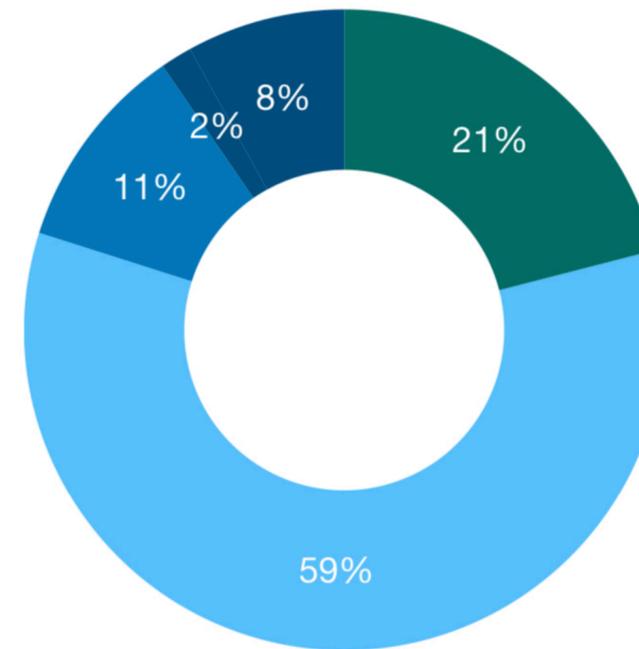
BUDGET Page 2 - Simplified Chart

MLK YAP

Estimated Budget Breakdown

Budget %	
Lead Artists and Design	21%
Fabrication & Materials	58.9%
Installation	10.5%
Delivery	1.6%
Administration	8%
Total expenses	100%

Overview Budget Breakdown



- Lead Artists and Design
- Fabrication & Materials
- Installation
- Delivery
- Administration

CONTACTS & INFORMATION LINKS

- Sorell Raino-Tsui: Lead Artist. sorell@abgartgroup.com <https://www.abgartgroup.com/home> <https://www.tsuixiaorui.com> 510-565-0130
- Rachel Rodi: Lead Fabricator. rachel@rachelrodi.com <https://www.rachelrodi.com> 510-301-8663
- McIntyre Tiles Inc.: Material Tile Supplier info@mcintyretile.com 707-433-8866
- Eco Logical Builders Inc.: Installation team willie@ecologicalbuilders.com <https://ecologicalbuilders.com>
415-823-5525

MATERIALS & MAINTENANCE PLAN

As this project is specifically designated as a mosaic, maintenance shall be relatively easy. Mosaic tile as a medium is one of the mostly durable and easy to maintain mediums in public art. If vandalized by graffiti the piece can be power washed at any time without disruption to the artwork.

Should the piece be damaged and tiles need to be replaced, our production partner McIntyre tile Inc. is local and available to supply any replacement tiles at any time. Both myself as lead artist, and our fabrication partner Rachel Rodi will be available for repairs, as we are both local to the Bay Area.

REFERENCES

- Kristen Zaremba , Public Art Manager-City of Oakland. KZaremba@oaklandca.gov
- Amber Evans, Economic Development, Pubic Art manager- City of Emeryville aevans@emeryville.org

THANK YOU !

SORELL RAINO-TSUI



Civic Arts Commission

[CONSENT OR ACTION]
CALENDAR
September 30, 2025

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Civic Arts Commission
Submitted by: Lisa Bullwinkel, Policy Subcommittee Chair, Civic Arts Commission
Subject: Referral Request to Rescind Incorrect Information Related to Turtle Island Monument

RECOMMENDATION

Refer to City Manager to draft a resolution to send to Council for adoption that would correct the historical record found in three Council Resolutions (attached). In the first of these resolutions issued in 2003 the City conducted a procurement process utilizing an artwork title "Turtle Island Monument" (an artwork concept originally created by Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson in the 1990s and recast as a new project by the City) resulting in another artist being contracted in 2006 to unwittingly create artwork for the City using this same title. The 2023 Resolution, related to an aspect of an attempted collaborative redesign of Turtle Island Monument involving the original artists, does not have an executed contract and should be rescinded.

Those three resolutions are:

- 2005 Contract Authorization for Scott Parsons (Contract executed and completed) Attachment 1
- 2006 Contract Amendment Authorization for Scott Parsons (Contract executed and completed) Attachment 2
- 2023 Contract Authorization for Scott Parsons (Contract never executed) Attachment 3

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

None.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Turtle Island Monument is a Strategic Plan Priority Project, advancing the City of Berkeley's goal to provide state-of-the-art, well-maintained infrastructure, amenities, and

facilities. Turtle Island Monument should be the centerpiece of Civic Center Park and instead has sat unused as a fountain and in a state of disrepair for over three decades.

BACKGROUND

In 1991, Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson, artists who are Native American, made a proposal to the City of Berkeley to create Turtle Island Monument in Civic Center Park at the historic fountain which had been broken for decades. The proposed monument was designed to recognize Native American history throughout the Americas commemorating the end of 500 years of resistance and the beginning of 500 years of rebuilding.

The fountain site was dedicated as the location for the future Turtle Island Monument by Council Proclamation (Attachment 4) during the first Indigenous Peoples Day in 1992.

During the 1990s, the monument proposal was reviewed by various Commissions and Council and was revised by the artists many times in response to those reviews, but the monument was never approved to be built and the artists were never placed under contract with the City during this time. The 1997 Historic Landmark Designation application for Civic Center Park included a written description of Turtle Island Monument as it would be installed at the fountain.

In 2003, without contacting the original artists, who had by then moved out of state, the City erroneously issued a Call for Artists (Attachment 5) to complete the project with elements not proposed in the original Turtle Island Monument design. Scott Parsons, a non-native artist, was selected through a competitive proposal process and was issued a contract to create eight medallions to represent different tribes of the Americas and four bronze turtles as part of the creation myth of Native American culture. Mr. Parsons's original proposal included snapping turtles (Attachment 6) however he was directed by the City to change them to sea turtles. Scott Parsons was not aware that he was producing artwork with an appropriated title because he was doing so in response to the Request for Proposals that the City issued. This is a mistake that the City of Berkeley made. Scott Parsons created the proposed art elements which were delivered to the City but not installed at the fountain. Instead, the medallions were placed in storage and the four bronze turtles were put on 'temporary' display in the Civic Center building at 2180 Milvia Street.

Years passed and in 2018 several community members, who were frustrated by the lack of a functioning fountain/sculpture in Civic Center Park, took it upon themselves to initiate yet another concept for the fountain. This triggered the realization that the City needed to resume contact with the original artists of Turtle Island Monument, Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson. City staff engaged the original artists in a listening session, after which they agreed to participate in a design charrette for the Turtle Island Monument project that would include artist Scott Parsons. On March 30, 2023, the City of Berkeley Landmarks Preservation Commission gave approval to the Turtle Island Monument design developed from the Design Charrette that included input from Lee

Sprague, Marlene Watson, Scott Parsons, and others. However, shortly after this approval, tensions emerged, missteps were made, feelings were hurt, and trust was broken.

It was in this context that the City of Berkeley determined that contract negotiations with the artists had reached an impasse and in July 2025 notified the Civic Arts Commission of its intention to cancel the project (Attachment 7). Members of the Civic Arts Commission as well as members of the Native American community who were present at that commission meeting expressed a desire to rectify these missteps and hurt feelings to see Turtle Island Monument through to completion by the original Native American artists, Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson. It is with this intention that this referral is requested. The artists have indicated the desire to go forward, if corrections are made. City staff have also indicated a desire to see this project to completion.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

None.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The Civic Arts Commission wants to foster a positive relationship with the Native community, and it is their intent is to have Turtle Island Monument completed in the heart of Berkeley's Civic Center.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

None.

CITY MANAGER

The City Manager [TYPE ONE] concurs with / takes no position on the content and recommendations of the Commission's Report. [OR] Refer to the budget process.

Note: If the City Manager does not (a) concur, (b) takes any other position, or (c) refer to the budget process, a council action report must be prepared. Indicate under the CITY MANAGER heading, "See companion report."

CONTACT PERSON

Jennifer Lovvorn, Civic Arts Commission Secretary, 981-7533

Attachments:

1. 2005 Contract Authorization for Scott Parsons (executed and completed)
2. 2006 Contract Amendment Authorization for Scott Parsons (executed and completed)
3. 2023 Contract Authorization for Scott Parsons (never executed)
4. 1992 Council Proclamation
5. 2003 Call for Artists
6. Parsons original proposal
7. July 2025 Information Report to Civic Arts Commission

RESOLUTION NO. 63,008-N.S

AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT AND ANY AMENDMENTS WITH SCOTT K. PARSONS FOR DESIGN, DEVELOPMENT AND INSTALLATION OF THE TURTLE ISLAND MONUMENT IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$34,000; AND ALLOW THE ARTWORK TO BE PUBLICLY DISPLAYED ELSEWHERE UNTIL THE FOUNTAIN IS RESTORED

WHEREAS, in November 1996, Berkeley voters adopted Measure S, which authorized Bond funds of \$4 million in public improvements in the Downtown Area, and a total of \$900,000 in Measure S funds was allocated toward the renovation of Martin Luther King Jr. Civic Center Park, including funds for the Turtle Island Monument; and

WHEREAS, a separate allocation of \$200,000 was made by Council using General Funds toward the project as part of the 2001 budget, for a total project budget of \$1,100,000; and

WHEREAS, a Call to Artist design competition was advertised nationwide in Fall 2003 and proposals were reviewed by a Selection Committee comprised of: two Civic Arts Commissioners, two Parks & Recreation Commissioners, two Landmarks Preservation Commissioners, two members of the Native American community and one Parks Recreation & Waterfront Department staff person; and

WHEREAS, on April 27, 2005, the Civic Arts Commission approved completing the public art historic turtles for the Civic Center Fountain by Scott Parsons with possible placement in City buildings for display until the fountain is functioning; and

WHEREAS, funds are available in the current year budget in the Measure S fund, budget code 653-5850-450-65.30-XX8P68 and the contract has been entered into the City contract database, and assigned CMS No. TBIDV.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City Manager is authorized to execute a contract and any amendments with Scott K. Parsons for design, development and installation of the Turtle Island Monument at the Civic Center Park Fountain in the amount of \$34,000; and allow the artwork to be publicly displayed elsewhere until the fountain is restored (Budget Code 653-5850-450-65.30-XX8P68). A record signature copy of said contract and any amendments to be on file in the Office of the City Clerk.

The foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Berkeley City Council on July 19, 2005 by the following vote:

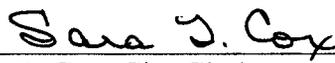
Ayes: Councilmembers Anderson, Capitelli, Maio, Moore, Olds, Spring, Worthington, Wozniak and Mayor Bates.

Noes: None.

Absent: None.



Tom Bates, Mayor

Attest: 

Sara T. Cox, City Clerk

RESOLUTION NO. 63,522–N.S.

EXECUTE AN AMENDMENT TO THE CONTRACT FOR THE DESIGN, DEVELOPMENT
AND INSTALLATION OF THE TURTLE ISLAND MONUMENT

WHEREAS, a Call to Artists competition was advertised nationwide in the Fall of 2003 and in April 20, 2005, the Turtle Island Monument Selection Committee chose Scott Parsons as the artist and this vote was unanimously upheld by a vote on April 27, 2005 of the Civic Arts Commission; and

WHEREAS, on July 19, 2005 by Resolution No. 63,008–N.S., the City Council authorized Contract No. 6979 with Scott K. Parsons for the design, development and installation of the Turtle Island Monument, in an amount not to exceed \$34,000 for the period of June 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007; and

WHEREAS, because of the delay in starting the project and the increase in the price of bronze over the last two years, and because the size to cast the turtles and maintain the 3 ft. lengths necessitates an increase of \$1800 (\$400 for each turtle and \$200 for the mold), an increase of the stone medallions from \$5000 to \$6400 (\$1,400), and \$500 in other projected increases; and

WHEREAS, funds are available to perform this work in the FY07 Public Art Fund budget code 657-8704-465-3038 and this contract amendment has been entered in the citywide contracts database, CMS number TBIDV.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City Manager is authorized to execute an amendment to the contract with Scott K. Parsons for the design, development and installation of the Turtle Island Monument, to increase the amount by \$3,700, for a total not to exceed \$37,700 budget code 657-9701-399-9901. A record signature copy of said contract to be on file in the Office of the City Clerk.

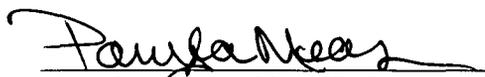
The foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Berkeley City Council on December 12, 2006 by the following vote:

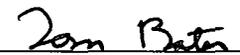
Ayes: Councilmembers Anderson, Capitelli, Maio, Moore, Olds, Spring, Worthington, Wozniak and Mayor Bates.

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

Attest:


Pamyla Means, City Clerk


Tom Bates, Mayor

RESOLUTION NO. 70,974-N.S.

CONTRACT WITH SCOTT PARSONS FOR CREATION OF THREE STONE MEDALLIONS AND PURCHASE OF GRANITE BOULDERS AND BASES FOR ARTWORK ELEMENTS FOR TURTLE ISLAND MONUMENT

WHEREAS, The City of Berkeley's Arts and Culture Plan calls for the enhancement of Berkeley's environment by placing temporary and permanent public art in public spaces throughout the city; and

WHEREAS, The City of Berkeley underwent a public process in 2005 to commission artist Scott Parsons to create four bronze oceanic turtle sculptures and facilitate the creation of stone art medallions by North, Central and South American Indigenous artists and international tribal representatives; and

WHEREAS, the 2023 Turtle Island Monument design calls for the creation of three additional stone medallions created by Scott Parsons to be embedded along with the existing stone medallions into twelve granite boulders; and

WHEREAS, the 2023 Turtle Island Monument design also calls for the four bronze turtles Scott Parsons created for the City in 2006 to be mounted on new granite bases for integration into the new Turtle Island Monument, and

WHEREAS, in order to ensure a consistent look across all granite elements for the new monument, Scott Parsons will also purchase from the same quarry the granite base for the new central turtle, and

WHEREAS, Funding for the artwork contract was set aside in the Public Art in Private Development Budget for FY 2024 (\$36,000) and \$200,000 from Measure T-1 as approved by Council on June 13, 2023; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City Manager is authorized to execute a contract and any amendments thereto with Scott Parsons for the creation of three stone medallions and purchase of granite boulders and bases for artwork elements for Turtle Island Monument with the contract period of July 1, 2023 through March 30, 2025 in an amount not to exceed \$236,000. A record signature copy of said contract and any amendments are to be on file in the Office of the City Clerk.

The foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Berkeley City Council on July 25, 2023 by the following vote:

Ayes: Bartlett, Hahn, Humbert, Kesarwani, Robinson, Taplin, Wengraf, and Arreguin.

Noes: None.

Absent: Harrison.



Jesse Arreguin, Mayor

Attest: 

Mark Numainville, City Clerk



City of Berkeley Proclamation

Loni Hancock
Mayor

DEDICATING THE SITE FOR THE TURTLE ISLAND MONUMENT

WHEREAS, the Berkeley Resistance 500 Task Force, a broad-based community group, brought the proposal for Indigenous Peoples Day and related activities and programs to the Commission on Peace and Justice, which recommended adoption of the proposal to the City Council; and

WHEREAS, the Berkeley City Council, on 22 October 1991, approved the recommendation for Indigenous Peoples Day and the designation of 1992 as the Year of Indigenous People, including educational events throughout the year and commemorative events on the weekend of 10-12 October; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force proposal also included a monument, now known as the Turtle Island Monument, and the concept for this monument and time capsule are being developed and circulated for review and approval through all necessary City boards and commissions; and

WHEREAS, the Turtle Island Monument is dedicated to all indigenous people of this hemisphere, whose societies flourished centuries before Columbus arrived and which continue on this day, which is seen as the end of 500 years of resistance and the beginning of 500 years of rebuilding;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that I, Loni Hancock, Mayor of the City of Berkeley, do hereby dedicate this site for the Turtle Island Monument to the Native People of this hemisphere on behalf of the non-native people of Berkeley, in recognition of your care for this land long "before Columbus was discovered on our shores" and in honor of your culture and philosophy, which are needed now more than ever if the planet is to survive.


Loni Hancock, Mayor

2180 Milvia Street, Berkeley, California 94704 • Telephone (415) 644-6484
TDD (415) 644-6915



Parks Recreation & Waterfront
Department

**PUBLIC ART OPPORTUNITY
CALL FOR ARTISTS
2003
REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

**CIVIC CENTER PARK FOUNTAIN
TURTLE ISLAND MONUMENT
ARTWORK BUDGET - \$35,000**

ELIGIBILITY

This is a Call for Artists. This project is open to all artists in the United States. We encourage experience in public art and Native American culture.

LOCATION

In the Civic Center Historic District, at the center of Civic Center Park. The park is bordered by Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Allston Way, Center Street and Milvia Street. This project is part of a rehabilitation of the existing park and fountain.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Turtle Island Monument is dedicated to all indigenous people of the hemisphere whose societies flourished centuries before Columbus arrived. Some societies continue to this day, some are extinct. The Turtle Island Monument is based on ancient American Indian legend, which is described below. The monument will consist of 4 turtles placed on the true north, south, east and west axis, mounted in the lower pool of an existing historic fountain; and 8 medallions incorporated into the surrounding plaza surface. At least 1 turtle should have a map of the Americas on its back. The medallions represent different tribes of the Americas, both flourishing and extinct. These medallions shall also be on axis with the turtles.

The Turtle Island Story

Long, long, time ago, a great tree in the Sky World had been uprooted and an empty hole took its place. One day, Sky Woman was peeking into that empty hole to a place far below. She fell into the hole and tumbled rapidly down. At the world below there was only water and water animals. The first to see her falling were the graceful geese. They spoke amongst themselves saying: "Why is she falling straight into the water so fast that she will surely die!" So they flew beneath her and spread their wings that it might slow her descent; and it did.

Down upon the water, some animals called out to a Giant Turtle because his back was the strongest thing in the watery world. The Giant Turtle placed himself directly beneath the falling being, and so ever so gently Sky Woman landed upon his back. But there was barely room for her long slender legs and arms, her feet and hands fell into the water.

The animals all knew that deep beneath the water was something firmer, brown and gloppy. So one by one, they dove deep beneath the water trying to bring mud up to the turtle to make more room for poor Sky Woman. None were successful until finally Muskrat, with his dying breath, came out of the water with a tiny bit of mud in his tail. The animals spread this mud all around the turtle, it began to spread all on its own, and then they brought up more. And when Sky Woman had fallen from her lofty world, there had been seeds from the Great Tree which caught in her skirts; these seeds fell upon the mud and grew. And soon the world which had been just water, was very different; it was Turtle Island. It grew and nurtured the native people for many generations.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

The Civic Center Historic District and Civic Center Park define the political, architectural and social heart of the City. Civic Center Park is the site for numerous social events and celebrations throughout the year, including Indigenous People's Day, Farmers Market, Earth Day and "How Berkeley Can You Be".

Located in the center of Berkeley's downtown business and civic core, Civic Center Park is a highly visible, active location, characterized by its variety of uses. Local business and residential neighborhoods surround the Park. Center Street, the busiest pedestrian thoroughfare in Berkeley, runs from the park, east, to UC Berkeley. Up to 1 million pedestrians use the sidewalks of Center Street, annually. Berkeley High School students use the park heavily on a daily basis when school is in session.

In 1992, Berkeley City Council dedicated the fountain and plaza area as the location of the future Turtle Island Monument. The Civic Center District, including the park, was later landmarked in 1997. The current Turtle Island Monument, as approved by the community and Berkeley City Council, is designed to honor and recognize Native American history commemorating the end of 500 years of resistance and the beginning of 500 years of rebuilding.

This public art project aspires to illustrate this history, while simultaneously integrating with the historic architecture of the existing Moderne fountain.

Estimated Time line

<i>Process begins</i>	August 15, 2003
<i>Applications Due</i>	October 15, 2003
<i>Final Selection Begins</i>	November 15, 2003
<i>Final Artist Selected</i>	January 2004
<i>Fabrication Begins</i>	Spring 2004
<i>Project Completed</i>	TBD

Please note that this is an estimated timeline and may be substantially revised to reflect changes based upon the availability of panelists.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Applications must be received by the
Project Manager or postmarked by
October 15, 2003

Late applications and faxed applications will not
be accepted. Send all information and
applications to:

Mark Mennucci
City of Berkeley
Park Recreation & Waterfront Department
2121 Allston Way, 1st Floor
Berkeley, CA 94704

The City of Berkeley reserves the right to not award any contracts for this project.

This Call for Artists does not constitute an agreement to fund artworks for the site described above.

For more information on this project, please visit the Parks Recreation & Waterfront website at
<http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/parks/PlanDesignnews.html> and click on the link to Civic Center Park.

GENERAL Terms

ARTWORK SPECIFICATIONS

Any medium appropriate for use on the project site will be considered. The artwork in the plaza must be designed to meet the City's safety and Americans with Disabilities Act standards. Artwork must be durable, graffiti and stain resistant, slip resistant, easily maintainable, and not a public safety hazard. The Artwork must also withstand submersion in water, since it will be located within a fountain, and interaction from people of all ages climbing in the fountain.

Artist must coordinate with the Project Design Consultant on details describing the Artwork connection to the fountain floor, and medallion inset into plaza surfacing. These details will be required for inclusion in the contract document plan set, for permit approval. Artwork plans and details should be stamped by a licensed engineer or architect.

BUDGET SPECIFICATIONS

The specified budget amount for this project is **\$35,000**. This must cover all costs associated with design, fabrication, permit approval, any required licensed engineer drawings, public review, shipping, oversight of the artwork installation, and travel expenses. In the event that finalists are requested by the Selection Panel to make a model, each finalist will receive an honorarium of up to **\$500**. For the selected artist, **\$5,000**, from the budget, will be allocated to cover any cost attributed to transportation & lodging for the purpose of further public presentation and construction oversight in the City of Berkeley.

SELECTION PROCESS

All applications submitted by the deadline will be reviewed for selection. The candidate's slides and background materials will be screened by a Selection Panel made of 7 members representing the following groups: Berkeley Parks Staff (1), Parks and Recreation Commission (1), Landmarks Preservation Commission (1), Civic Arts Commission (1), and members of the Native American Community (3). This will be done in lieu of presenting in front of the Civic Arts Commission.

The Selection Panel will then select up to three (3) finalists to develop design proposals and maquettes. The finalists will receive an honorarium of **\$500** for further development of the proposed concept and maquette. The proposed concept shall also include a detailed material list and detailed budget. The finalists will be required to present to the Selection Panel at a future time to be determined. The Panel will then select a single artist to complete the Artwork.

Public review of the Selected Artist design proposals and maquettes shall consist of a maximum of three (3) public meetings. These meetings will occur after the Selection Panel has selected the artist. The artist will be required to present their proposal to the Park and Recreation Commission, the Arts Commission, and the Landmarks Preservation Commission. Approval by the LPC will designate notice to proceed with fabrication of full scale Artwork.

All Selection Panel, Committee, and Commission meetings are open to the public. For additional information contact **Mark Mennucci, Project Manager at (510) 981-6436** or E-mail Mmennucci@ci.berkeley.ca.us.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Artists will be selected to develop proposals based on:

- Artistic merit as evidenced by representation of relevant past work in slides and other supporting material.
- Appropriateness of the artist's medium, style, and previous experience as those relate to the project goals and setting.
- Experience with projects of a similar scale and scope including familiarity with public works projects, the public review process, and/or collaboration with City agencies and community groups. Artists must have good communication skills and be able to work with diverse City representatives.
- Extensive knowledge of Native American culture illustrated in past works and submitted proposal.

PUBLIC ART PROGRAM COMMISSIONS

Artists interested in reading this document electronically are encouraged to visit the Parks Recreation & Waterfront website at <http://www.ci.berkeley.ca.us/parks/PlanDesignnews.html> and click on the link to Civic Center Park. For interest in learning about other public art opportunities, visit the Public Art Program web site at <http://www.cityofberkeley.info/civicarts/publicart.htm> or to call the **Civic Arts Program Recorded Information Line at (510) 981-7543**. Information is updated whenever new opportunities arise.

ACCEPTANCE OF PROPOSALS

The Selection Panel reserves the right to reject all design proposals.

MODEL POLICY

In the event that you are asked to develop a model of your proposal, the following policy shall apply. The Selection Panel shall:

1. At its sole discretion, the City of Berkeley will have the unconditional right to own any model selected for evaluation, as part of commission awards or may alternatively choose to retain all such models until completion and approval of project implementation.
2. Require that all proposals and/or models submitted are original and unique.

All artists of all ethnicities and genders are encouraged to apply.

All information contained herein does not constitute either an expressed or implied contract and these provisions are subject to change.

For further information about the Turtle Island Monument Project, please contact

Mark Mennucci, Project Manager (510) 981-6436, FAX (510) 981-6390

Parks Recreation & Waterfront Department

2121 Allston Way, 1st Floor

Berkeley, CA 94704

E-mail: Mmennucci@ci.berkeley.ca.us



Parks Recreation & Waterfront
Department

City of Berkeley 2002/2003 Public Art Projects Application Form

Log # _____

For office use only

- A.** Name(s) _____
Address _____
City & State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____ FAX _____ Email _____
Website address _____

B. Submitting for the project:

Turtle Island Monument Project, **Deadline, Wednesday, October 15, 2003.**

C. Application checklist: Have you enclosed the following?

To apply, please submit the following:

- A plastic slide sheet containing six (6) slides of relevant previous work, numbered, fully labeled, including artist's name, title of work, date completed, media, dimensions and with a red dot in the lower left corner of each slide.
- Two (2) copies of a one-page corresponding slide list including title, date, media, dimensions, location, and other pertinent information deemed useful in orienting the Selection Panel to your work.
- A self-addressed, correctly sized and stamped envelope for the return of slides and other materials.
- OPTIONAL: One or two relevant printed materials such as catalogues, articles, etc. that might assist the selection panel in understanding applicant's work. All materials should clearly indicate the portion(s) for consideration.

Please submit ten (10) complete, one-sided, collated sets of the following written materials:

Each set should contain one of each of the following, in the order given.

Please do not bind materials and do not submit in plastic sleeves, folders or binders.

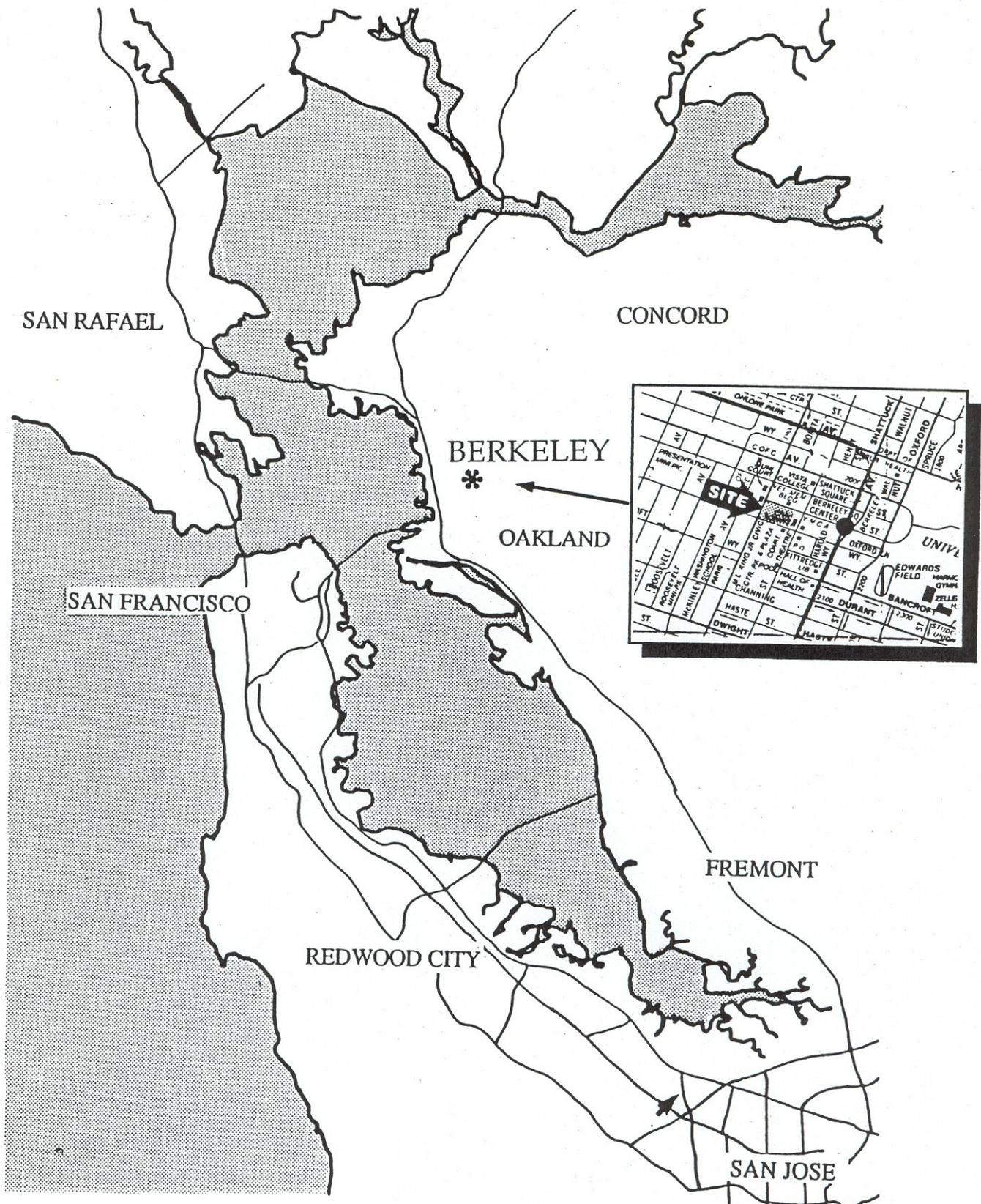
- Artist's statement of interest, briefly noting relevant past experience, conceptual approach for this design, related materials and budget, and other information you wish to highlight about your work and career (1 page maximum).

- [] A thumbnail sketch of your proposed idea.
- [] Resume (two pages maximum).
- [] Names, addresses and phone numbers of three (3) professional references.

Incomplete or incorrectly assembled applications may not be accepted. Regretfully, neither the Selection Panel, or City of Berkeley Staff, cannot be responsible for lost, missing or damaged materials. The Selection Panel will endeavor to return the originals of application materials to the applicants following the selection.

Submit materials to:
Mark Mennucci – Project Manager
City of Berkeley, Parks Recreation & Waterfront Department
2121 Allston Way
Berkeley CA 94704
E-mail: Mmennucci@ci.berkeley.ca.us (510) 981-6436 FAX (510) 981-6390

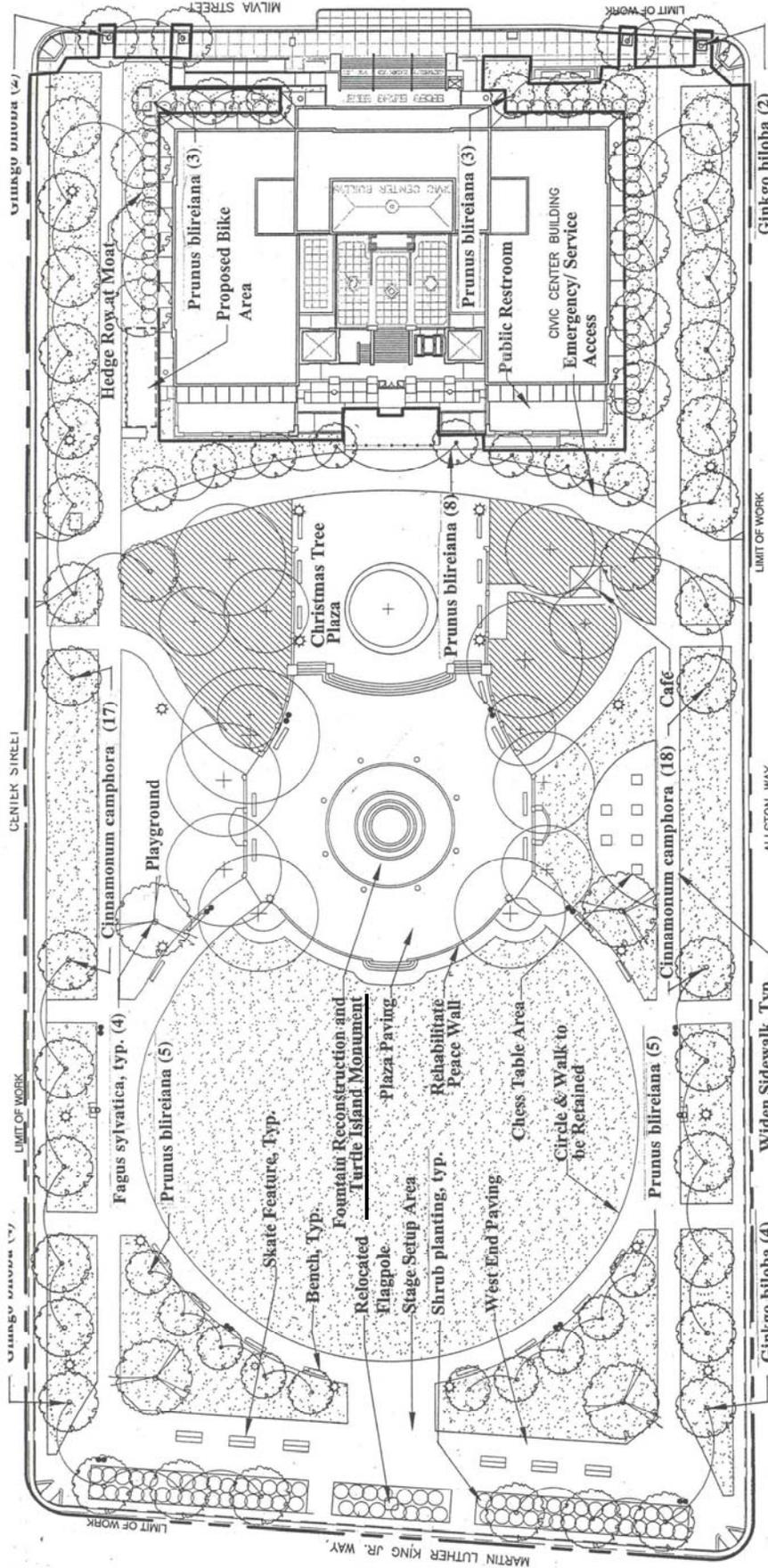
REGIONAL LOCATION MAP



CITY MAP

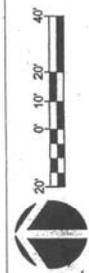


CIVIC CENTER PARK SITE MAP (PREFERRED PLAN)



LEGEND

- Lawn
- Groundcover
- Proposed Tree
- Existing Tree
- Project Limit of Work
- Trash/Recycling
- Drinking Fountain
- Existing Light
- Proposed Light



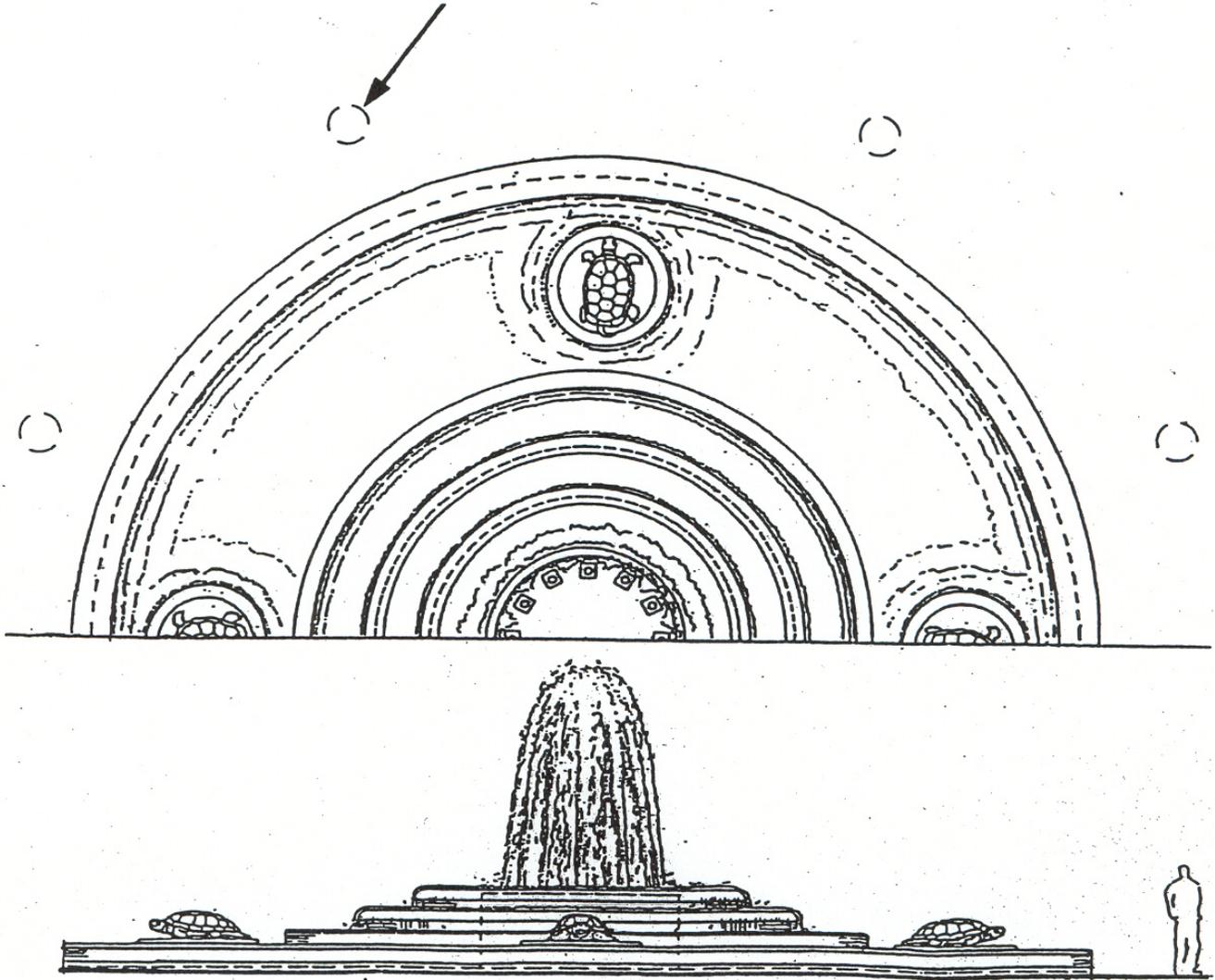
Preferred Plan

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. PARK / CIVIC CENTER

CITY OF BERKELEY, CA

FOUNTAIN LAYOUT

Proposed Medallions to be Located
in Plaza Paving, Typ.



Turtle Island Monument



Turtle Island Monument

A Public Art Proposal and Collaboration

presented by Scott Parsons

February 16, 2005

*Designed to honor and recognize Native American history
commemorating the end of 500 years of resistance
and the beginning of 500 years of rebuilding.*

THE TURTLE ISLAND STORY

Long, long, time ago, a great tree in the Sky World had been uprooted and an empty hole took its place. One day, Sky Woman was peeking into that empty hole to a place far below. She fell into the hole and tumbled

rapidly down. At the world below there was only water and water animals. The first to see her falling were the graceful geese. They spoke amongst themselves saying: “Why is she falling straight into the water so fast that she will surely die!” So they flew beneath her and spread their wings that it might slow her descent; and it did.

Down upon the water, some animals called out to a Giant Turtle because his back was the strongest thing in the watery world. The Giant Turtle placed himself directly beneath the falling being, and so ever so gently Sky Woman landed upon his back. But there was barely room for her long slender legs and arms, her feet and hands fell into the water.

The animals all knew that deep beneath the water was something firmer, brown and gloppy. So one by one, they dove deep beneath the water trying to bring mud up to the turtle to make more room for poor Sky Woman.

None were successful until finally Muskrat, with his dying breath, came out of the water with a tiny bit of mud in his tail. The animals spread this mud all around the turtle, it began to spread all on its own, and then they brought up more. And when Sky Woman had fallen from her lofty world, there had been seeds from the Great Tree which caught in her skirts; these seeds fell upon the mud and grew. And soon the world which had been just water, was very different; it was Turtle Island. It grew and nurtured the native people for many generations.



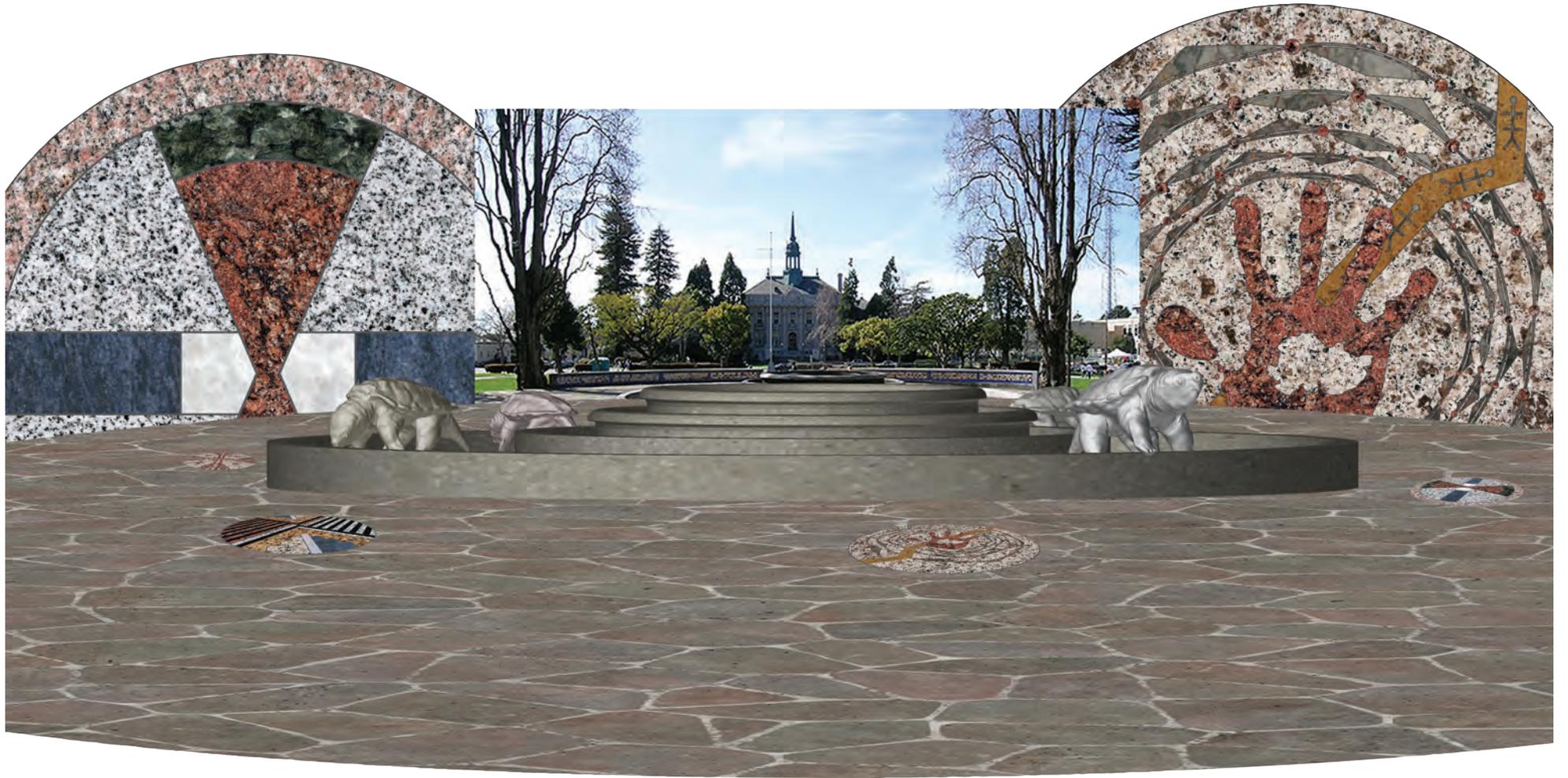


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The Beginning

Once a woman fell from the sky...

Once she told him the stars spoke a language
akin to the plains of her home,
a language like rocks.”

Joy Harjo, “The Woman Who Fell From the Sky”

Abstract

“This Monument will consist of four turtles placed on the true north, south, east and west axis, mounted in the lower pool of an existing historical fountain; and eight medallions incorporated into the surrounding plaza surface.”

All of the medallion images will be made by living Native artists. This circle of contemporary images with traditional references will serve to make a connection to the turtle sculptures which will have historical images and maps of the Americas on their shells. I am designating the inner circle as one to honor the past peoples and ancestors. The medallions are a way of thinking about and honoring the past as tangible and immediate, in the here and now—serving as a connection or bridge for those who will visit this park and come to learn, maybe unexpectedly, but to learn from these images the story of Turtle Island.

Foremost to this project is a vision of reconciliation that is living, honest, and authentic. The *connection* of First Peoples to the land and the creation of Turtle Island is primary. This proposal offers an unprecedented multi-visionary approach to the making of this public art monument. Eight contemporary Native artists will create the medallions, each to commemorate his or her own people, the beauty of, and the survivability of Turtle Island. Scott Parsons will sculpt the four turtles and coordinate the overall project.

The Turtles

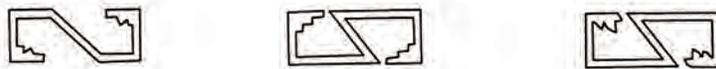
The connection to history and to water.

The four turtles represent the ancient record. Each turtle will be sculpted and cast in stone. Stone is a very traditional medium, it is an ancient material, it connects the artwork to the historic fountain, to geologic time, and to the earth itself. Each turtle will be approximately four feet in length and weigh 2600 pounds.

The turtles are based on the large alligator snapping turtle represented in Plains and Woodlands cultures as a symbol of power and defense. The snapping turtle is both a land and water turtle, capable of navigating under water for more than twenty minutes between breathes. It can weigh 180 pounds or more and live for more than 100 years. The claws of a helper turtle in some traditions of the Turtle Island story describe how the crevices and carved landscapes still seen today were made made when the smaller turtle applied mud to the Great Turtles shell.

The Turtle Island story is a very old story. It has been told many times and in many ways. The challenge is to make the story current with meaning and to recreate the turtles so they are different and come alive and draw people in with interest. The base for each turtle will be slightly below water level. All four turtles will stand with their legs in the water. Three of the four turtles will be taking a drink of water. Their mouths and tongues connecting one to another. The fourth turtle will be posed leaving his platform with his front legs on the exterior lower wall of the fountain.

The shells of the turtles will contain both cast and carved images. The surfaces will be manipulated in a creative, poetic way using an iconography of resistance, such as the double-headed key motif which was brought back into use by the women of Kotyiti during the Pueblo revolts of the 1680s and recalls an even more ancient use of this symbol. The cast images will be cast from separately in stones of different colors. All the imagery on the turtle shells as well as the ring of turtles are part of the ancient record of the Americas.



The Medallions

The connection to First Peoples and the land.

The medallions in turn, connect the present with the past. They form a larger concentric ring, a living circle of contemporary artists' expressions of their traditional cultures' beliefs and artwork. These medallions serve as a way to connect the present to the past and then to make the connection to the present again real and lived. Each medallion will be designed by a separate artist and cut from stone, principally granite, with some marble and other stone inlays. Each medallion will measure three feet in diameter and be in the form of a circle.

The circle of medallions is a symbol of unity and protection for the land and native cultures. Several medallions contain imagery from painted drum heads which recall songs, stories, dancing and ceremonies. The drum resides as a sacred element of the universe, past and present. Other imagery includes shields for the protection of the land and culture. The imagery expresses an interest in physical bodies, animals, elements, the lay of the land, and silhouettes. Together these images are meant to honor the past with a shared vision of the present.

Creating the Turtles

The first turtle will be sculpted in Plastilina or clay. The Plastilina sculpture will be the basis for the four cast turtles. A steel armature will be created inside each casting—this is an epoxy-coated steel that will reinforce the cast stone. Casting is done from a single mold. The stone mix is pressure-injected and consists of carefully graded and washed natural gravel and sands combined with crushed graded stone such as granite, marble, quartz or limestone. The stone is formed in an accelerated natural stone formation process with a polymer added to strengthen the resulting stone to 10,000 PSI—which is well above marble, right up there with granite—and capable of supporting kids and adults alike whom might take to climbing on them. Pigments will be introduced into the stone mix to naturally color each turtle in (subtle) colors of the four directions: white, black, red and yellow.

There will be some intentional variation between the four turtles to make them more alive and interesting, positioning the legs, neck and head differently. I will rework each shell so that each turtle shell will be unique and contain different designs in their shells. Some of these designs will be sculpted in the Plastilina. Other geometric motifs will be cast with a second or third color of stone. These cast stone symbols will be cast first, and then the entire turtle will be cast around these designs. This will allow the integrity of the shell to be continuous in form, across different colors and surfaces.

Constant exposure to water is no problem, there are many cast stone pieces which are permanently installed underwater.

Creating the Medallions

The medallions will be digitally redrawn from the original designs and converted into CAD files. The medallions will be cut by a waterjet machine which cuts the stone from a concentrated stream of water and ruby powder. The larger stone shapes will have a thermal or flamed (textured) exterior surface. Some small areas of the design may have a polished or smooth surface to the stone pieces. All of the cut stones will be epoxied together, so that each medallion can be installed as a single disk unit on site.

Installing the Turtles

Artworks Foundry in Berkeley will be contracted to install the turtles. Each turtle will weigh approximately 2,600 pounds. We will use a forklift to lift each sculpture into place on their base. Each piece will be gently set and marked for precise fitting, then lifted while holes are cut in the base and then reset and epoxied into position. This specification may change to meet the City of Berkeley's requirement for removability. Final specs will be drawn by a licensed engineer and approved by the City of Berkeley prior to installation.

Installing the Medallions

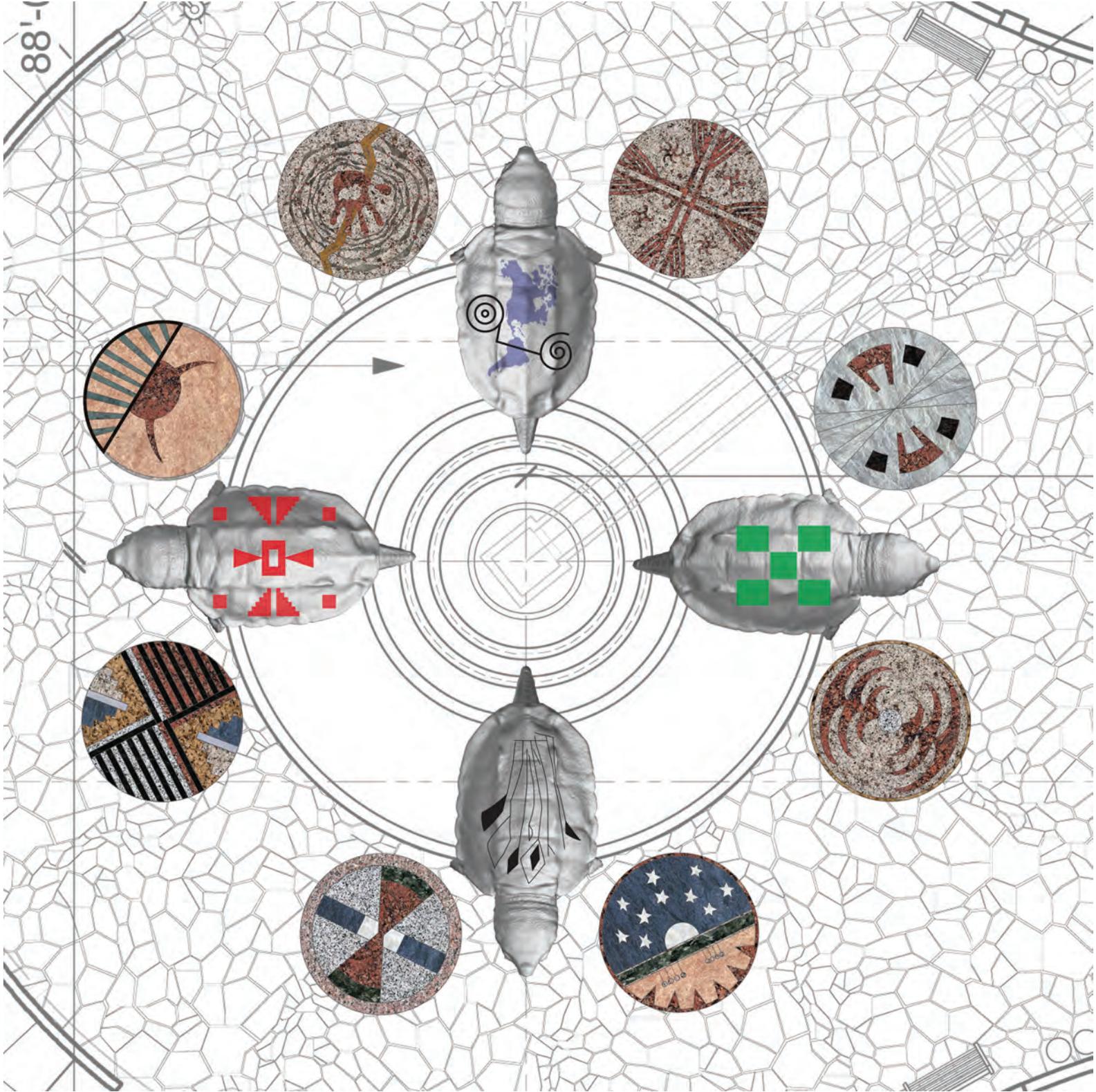
I will coordinate with the City's design consultant and contractor for the installation. I would prefer to obtain some of the paver flagstone material beforehand and have the circle shapes cut into these surrounding stone pieces at the same time the medallions are waterjet cut. This will facilitate a perfectly cut circle surrounding each art medallion.

A licensed tile and flooring contractor will be subcontracted for the installation. An industry standard dry-pack concrete technique will be used to permanently bond each medallion to the dry-pack and subfloor beneath as a single solid piece. The medallions will be 36 inches in diameter and $\frac{3}{4}$ to $1\text{-}\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick stone slab. Some tile pieces may also be used.

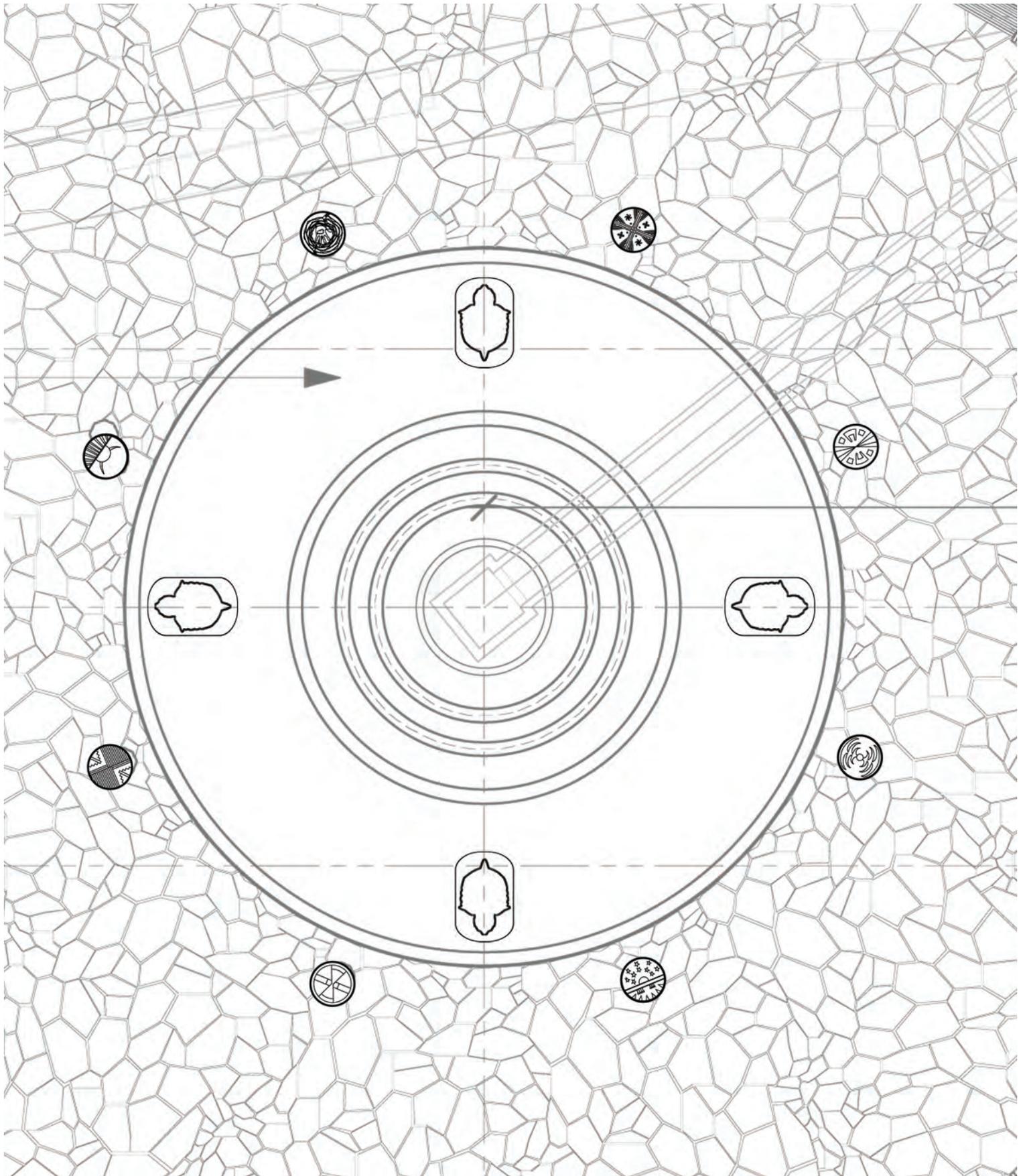
Maintenance

The cast stone turtles should remain maintenance free. They are as hard as granite and will weather as stone. The geometric patterns on the turtles' shells are cast stone as well, and will not fade or peel, or wear off.

Regular cleaning is required for the medallions. Spills should be cleaned when they occur. Dirt may be hosed off with water or a pressure washer. Gum and other debris must be scraped and removed, consistent with the maintenance schedule for the rest of the Park. Colored liquids, like coffee, soda, or oil, left to dry on the surface of the stone will stain the medallions. A periodic treatment of the stone with a color enhancer and sealer is suggested to maintain the vivid coloration of the stone. Long-term: maintenance of the grout may require re-grouting in 15–20 years time.



Not to scale



To scale

The Northern Turtle

As the migrations began to end, the record of the people's wanderings was left engraved on rocks over the face of the land. The people at Gila Bend, Arizona, were on their third round when this symbol was inscribed, but stayed for some time, as indicated by the connecting line.

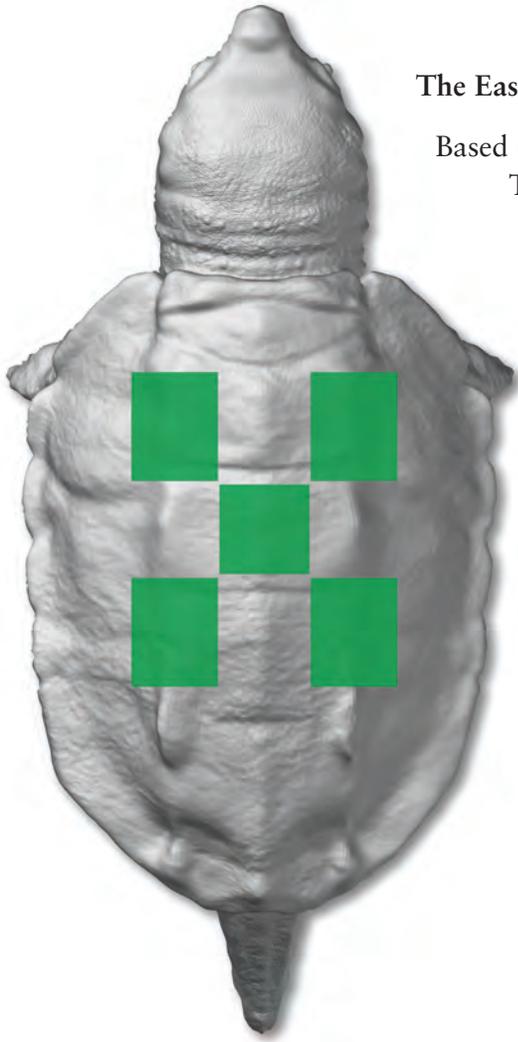
Frank Waters, *The Book of the Hopi*, 1972



The Southern Turtle

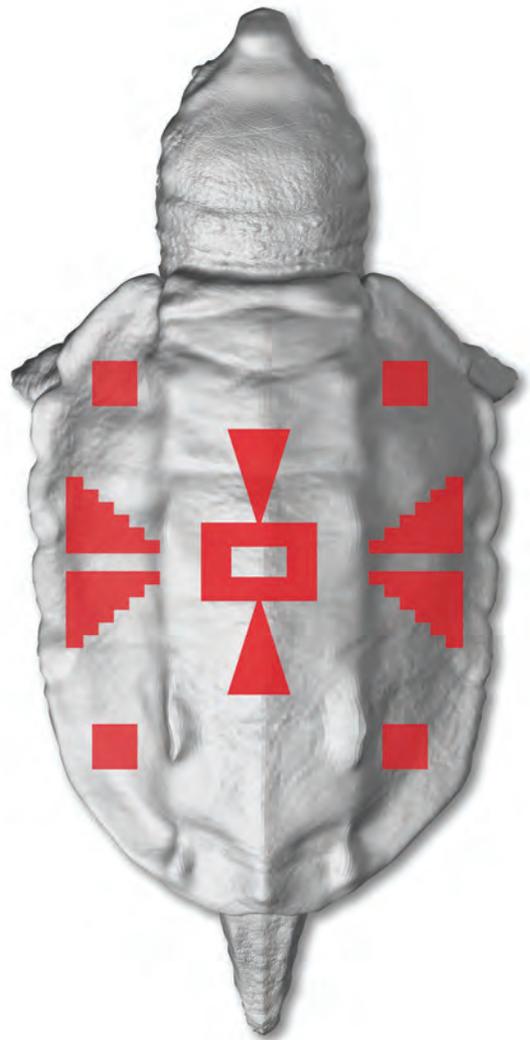
This is the oldest known art in the Americas. These marks were carved in a stone about the size of your palm. They are believed to be part of a horizon just at 12,000 years ago, from the Gault site in Texas. I drew the design from an actual cast of the piece.

This is absolutely the oldest art we have in the New World. The Clovis culture dates to 11,500–11,600 years before the present..



The Eastern Turtle

Based on a 19th-century solidly beaded Arapaho moccasin design.
The five squares in quincunx on a white ground are a turtle.



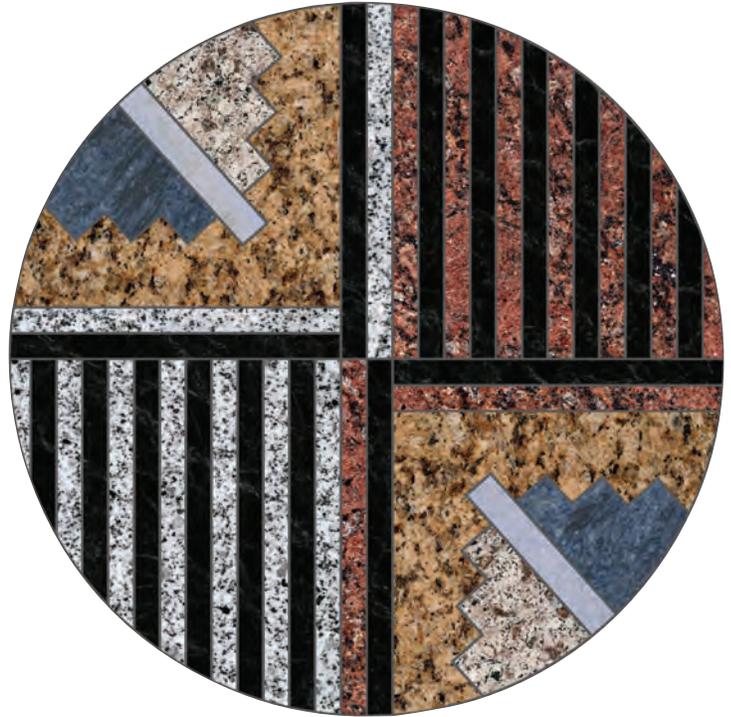
The Western Turtle

Based on a 19th-century solidly beaded Arapaho moccasin design. The center square is the life symbol (hiiteni). The red triangles touching hiiteni are tipis. The small squares are rabbit tracks in snow. The triangular figures represent seats (çioku'utaana").

Alfred Kroeber, *The Arapaho*, 1902–1907

Choctaw/Delaware
David Jones (Buffalo Horn)

David Jones is from the Turtle Clan, his Father, a Choctaw; and his Mother, a full blood Delaware, were of the Turtle Clan. This design comes from a hand drum he painted. The Drum Head is in the shape of a medicine wheel. In most tribes, the Medicine Wheel is for the “four directions” North, South, East & West. Many of the colors chosen are colors used by the Choctaw tribe. The red and black lines are the colors of the Warrior. In the Delaware beliefs, the Turtle was a symbol of Mother Earth and the first of all living things. The upper left and lower right are the Mound—“Nanih Wiya”, from which the Great Spirit created the first of their Choctaw people, who then crawled through a cave into the light of day. The brown granite is meant to be the color of rawhide, a light tan.



Cheyenne River Lakota Tribe (Hohwoju)
Harley Zephier (Wanbli Hoksila)

The hand represents a human being's commitment to his people. Spiritual powers were asked to accompany the man on his journey.

The spiral is our path through the Creator's world. All life crosses our path. The stripe is the people's presence on earth. We were visible, then we seem to have disappeared, but are now protecting our future.

The Lakota Oyate (People), a spiritual existence on Unci Maka (Grandmother earth). Within the Creator's circle, they lived with all beings.

The world was in balance and a wonderful civilization flourished. Preserving culture, tradition and nature became our responsibility.

commitment to the people's needs first, was asked of many. These human beings would risk their lives in service to this way of life.





Ohlone
Linda Ohlone

Linda Yamane and I will select an historical Ohlone basket design for this medallion. This is one example. These baskets were originally made of little, circular shell beads which were attached into the coil stitch on the surface. In between the beads were stitched in feathers of the red acorn woodpecker and green Mallard feathers on the exterior. The Ohlone nation are the original inhabitants of the area now known as Berkeley.



Mapuche Kultrung (drum)

Painted drum head design, early 20th century, from Chile, which refers to the four directions of the world.

National Museum of the American Indian, *Native Universe*, 2004



Cochiti Pueblo
Mateo Romero

Tewa shield design created for this project.

Shoshone-Bannock
Ramon Murillo

“Star Drum”

Upper half: Natural stars in dark blue background represents the universe.

Center green horizontal thin rectangle represents mother earth.

Lower center black thin lines connected to a circle represents rain-clouds.

Bottom half: Red-brown triangles surrounded by yellow ochre represent mountains.





**Shoshone-Bannock
Ramon Murillo**

“Shoshone Hand Drum”

Vertical center: The red-brown triangle represents a mountain and tipi, and when repeated makes a classic hour-glass design found in bead work of the 1800s Plains designs.

The six black lines represent the six direction (four cardinal points, mother earth, and the Great Spirit).

The horizontal light blue rectangles represent the sky and water.

**Absaloka
TR Glenn (Pretty Elk)**

This design commemorates the relationship between the Hidatsa and Absaloka (Crow Agency, MT) nations who were once one people.

The Absaroka and Hidatsa both utilize the sun symbols depicted in this design.

The thin vertical triangles represent the two nations lodges: the Absaroka tipi and the Hidatsa earthen lodge.

The four black squares symbolize the unique four-pole construction of the lodges. Four is the most sacred number to both nations.

The Absaloka acquired horses during their migration and shared them with the Hidatsa during their reunion. This event is symbolized in the red horse tracks on the left and right.



Artist Bios



Mateo Romero (Cochiti Pueblo) grew up in Berkeley, California and hung out in the “Park” while attending high school at Berkeley High. Mateo is collected by many museums, including the Denver Art Museum and was part of the “Reservation X” exhibit at the Hood Museum and elsewhere. His MFA is from the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe. He currently resides at the Pueblo of Pojoaque in New Mexico.

“I am always looking. Through catalogues, Museum shows galleries, newspapers, and other artist’s studios. I am looking for art that is central, forceful, honest. Things that are true about life, elements of a larger human condition, to view, absorb, ingest, and remake as artwork. As I believe in myself, and my need to do this, I also believe in a reconstructive agenda for art and that ultimately things can get better.”

My name is Mary Longman and my Aboriginal name is Aski-Piyewiwiskwew. I am Saulteaux and a member of Gordon First Nation in Saskatchewan. I have received a DFA at the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design in Vancouver, a MFA at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design in Halifax, and currently, I am a Ph.D. candidate in the Faculty of Education at the University of Victoria. My dissertation topic is: “Deconstructing Colonial Ideology: Contemporary First Nations Art in Canada.”

As a professional artist, I have been exhibiting my art work consistently for the past twelve years. Some of the galleries that I have exhibited my work in are; the National Gallery of Canada, the Vancouver Art Gallery, the Canadian Museum of Civilization, and the Smithsonian, National Museum of the American Indian.



TR Glenn (Pretty Elk) is a Master Jeweler who fabricates exquisite contemporary jewelry featuring traditional Crow designs using overlay and inlay techniques on silver and gold. Pretty Elk is able to replicate distinctive Crow color design using semi-precious stones, ivory, shell, and buffalo horn. He works out of his studio on the Crow reservation in south central Montana.

Years ago Pretty Elk was relocated to Redwood City, California, as part of a government program, and later moved to San Jose. He attended the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe. His son is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of California at Berkeley.



Ramon Murillo is a member of the Shoshone-Bannock tribe. His Native American heritage permeates his imagery. Tribal and personal symbols derived from his dreams and participation in various ceremonies lead him on a continual journey depicting life as a human being living in harmony with the Earth and Spirit World.

The 1992 show entitled “Decolonizing the Human Mind” (Seattle, Washington) describes Ramon as having produced profound images that convey the changes he believes is the body and spirit of Indian Country and himself, which is a major test to any peoples’ vision.

Ramon received his MFA in Printmaking from the University of Oregon, and BFA from Idaho State University. He is the first Native art instructor to be employed full-time by Northwest Indian College.

Harley Zephier is an enrolled member of the Cheyenne River Lakota Tribe (Hohwoju) in South Dakota. He lives near Thunder Butte, the north west portion of the Cheyenne River reservation. Harley is also of the Yankton Dakota people of southeastern South Dakota.

Harley has a love and respect for the plains, her peoples, the Lakota/Dakota traditions, and cultures. He envisions all peoples working together, communicating, and practicing in balance with one-another. Being a self-taught artist has allowed him to create unique works of art. His art is created through his heart’s appreciation of the peoples he comes from. The hands are gifts of expression. The senses enrich the finished piece of work. Harley seeks knowledge and direction from the Creator. His greatest influence in pursuing ways of his people was his maternal grandmother. She instilled pride, and gave life lessons to follow his heart.

Harley uses earth-given mediums from Creation, as artful expression. To authentically represent the works of the people, he thanks you for your pursuit of art and life.

Pilamiya, (Thank You)

Mitakuye Oyasin (All My Relatives)



Linda Yamane, Ohlone basketweaver, singer and storyteller, traces her ancestry to the Rumsien Ohlone, the native people of the Monterey area. She has been active in researching and retrieving Rumsien language, song, folklore and basketry. Traditions that were once thought lost. Linda works as a freelance writer, illustrator and graphic designer, and is the newsletter editor for the California Indian Basketweavers Association. She is also a contributing editor to *News From Native California* magazine.



Linda is the author of *Weaving a California Tradition* and co-author of *In Full View- Three ways of Seeing California Plants*. She has researched, compiled and illustrated two collections of Ohlone stories, *When the World Ended, How Hummingbird Got Fire* and *How People Were Made and The Snake That Lived in the Santa Cruz Mountains & Other Ohlone Stories*.

Her thirty years of experience in enrichment education has included training classes for teachers and docents throughout the San Francisco and Monterey Bay areas, six years as an outdoor education teacher for the Youth Science Institute in San Jose, classroom programs and school assemblies, GATE art teacher for San Jose Unified School District, guest speaker in college and university courses, and UC Santa Cruz Extension Instructor.



David Jones is my Christian name. My Choctaw name is Buffalohorn. My family's Choctaw name is Hardwood. We are of the Turtle Clan; I am a full-blood Choctaw/Delaware Indian and a registered artist of the Choctaw Nation of Southern Oklahoma. I spent 17 years in the Marine Corp; several years as the Director of Emergency Medical Services on the Navajo Nation.

My life changed in a single day sixteen years ago, when I was reflecting on my tribal heritage. The inspiration came to me that I was to make a pipe. I did not know where to begin, but I began by finding Catlinite, the red stone generally used for pipe bowls. Having no mentor, and being self-taught was a long process.

Since then I have studied and researched the many different styles of Native American Art, including but not limited to pipes, dance rattles, the breast plate, the pipe axe and other items, most generally used by the Choctaw nation. My work has been distributed around the world and is on display in museums and Universities.

All of my pieces are original, made with my own hands and personal tools. I use only genuine materials. All of my art comes from inspiration—there are no patterns for anything I create.



Scott Parsons

I am an artist who creates metaphors that open the experience of the built environment to new understandings of history, siting, and the flow of people and their relationship to a site. I received an MFA from the University of Colorado at Boulder in 1990. My experience in public art includes percent-for-art and private commissions for museums, research facilities, university buildings and transportation centers. I work in precast concrete, stone, light (solstice markers), glass, ceramic mosaic, terrazzo and stone in walls, floors, sidewalks and plazas. My design experience includes 3D pre-visualization, fabrication, design-team collaboration and early integration public art planning. My work is reviewed in *Art in America*, *Sculpture*, *Art Papers*, and *Public Art Review*.

| Public Art

- 2006** Boehnen Memorial Museum and Visitor's Center
60 ft. dia. outdoor granite plaza.
Mitchell Prehistoric Indian Village, Mitchell, SD
Group II, PC
- 2002** *Algorithmic Tapestry*
Engineering Centers Building
10,200 sq. ft. terrazzo floor.
University of Wisconsin, Madison
Kohn Pederson Fox Associates, PC, and Flad, PC
Wingscape
Hurst Hall
175 ft. stone frieze; 13,000 piece ceramic tile murals.
Western State College, Gunnison, CO
Davis Partnership, PC
Community, Technology, and Innovation
The National Cable Television Center and Museum
Five 50 x 12 ft. digital output murals.
University of Denver, Denver, CO
- 2000** *Solstice Window*
Center of Southwest Studies
Precast concrete window aligned to the summer
solstice sunrise.
Ft. Lewis College, Durango, CO
Klipp Colussy Jenks DuBois Architects, PC
- 1998** *Biomatrices*
Two 17 ft. diameter stone floor rosaces
Laboratory and Radiation Services Building
Colorado Department of Public Health
and the Environment, Denver, CO
The Davis Partnership, Architects, PC
- 1997** *Ha-no-oo: Star Calendar*
500 sq. ft. outdoor granite sidewalk
16th & California Street Light Rail Station
Regional Transportation District, Denver, CO
- 1992** *Quincentenary Project*
100 burnt tips and 29 historical markers
Denver Civic Center Park and State capitol lawn
Fourth World Center, UCD, Denver, CO and the American
Indian Movement of Colorado
Reconciliation Project
22 burnt tips and 9 historical markers
Nobel Institute Peace Prize Forum
Augustana College, Sioux Falls, SD

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September 20

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| Exhibitions

- 2003 Museum of New Mexico: Museum of Fine Arts, Santa Fe, NM
William Havu, Denver, CO
- 2002 Gallery of Design, UW-Madison, WI
- 2001 William Havu, Denver, CO
GOOG, Denver, CO
- 1999 Dulaney Architecture, Denver, CO (one-person show)
- 1998 Art Directors Club of Denver Annual Show, CO
Dulaney Architecture, Denver, CO (one-person show)
Arts on Vine, Denver, CO
Canyon Crossing Gallery, Brattleboro, VT
- 1997 Iac Contemporary Art, Albuquerque, NM
- 1996 William King Regional Arts Center, Abingdon, VA
Guadalupe Fine Art, Santa Fe, NM
- 1995 Nicolaysen Art Museum, Casper, WY
Eide/Dalrymple, Sioux Falls, SD
Hays Arts Center, Hays, KS
Robert A. Peck Arts Center, Riverton, WY
- 1994 Umc Gallery, Boulder, CO
- 1993 Umc Gallery, Boulder, CO
CORE Gallery, Denver, CO
Long Island Arts Council, Freeport, NY
- 1992 Gustavus Adolphus College, St Peter, MN (one-person show)
Umc Gallery, Boulder, CO
- 1991 Core Gallery, Denver, CO
- 1990 Cu Art Galleries, Boulder, CO (one-person show)
Rocky Mountain Peace Center, Boulder, CO
Pirate 2/C, Denver, CO
Chicano Humanities & Arts Council, Denver, CO
Sioux City Arts Center, Sioux City, IA
- 1989 Rochester Fine Arts Center, Rochester, MN
Colorado Institute of Art, Denver, CO
- 1987 Dahl Fine Arts Center, Rapid City, SD
Gallery 306, Sioux Falls, SD
Augustana College, Sioux Falls, SD

| Lectures

- 2002 Beyond Bricks & Mortar, School of Human Ecology, UW-Madison,
October 27
Wisconsin Tile & Terrazzo Expo, International Masonry Institute,
Milwaukee, August 16
- 2001 Gallery Talk, William Havu Gallery, Denver, June 30
- 1999 Phantoms of the High Plains, SD Humanities Council, Augustana
College, May 7

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| Education

- 1995 Computer Graphics
Platt College, CO
Highest Honors
- 1990 MFA—Painting
University of Colorado at Boulder, CO
Magna cum laude
- 1987 BA—Spanish, Art and Anthropology
Augustana College, Sioux Falls, SD
Magna cum laude
- 1986 Latin American Studies in Bogotá, Colombia
Hamline University
- 2004 Golden Trowel Award
International Masonry Institute
- 2002 Job of the Year
National Terrazzo and Mosaic Association
- 2001 Work Sample Finalist
Creative Capital
- 2000 Research Grant: The Lost Medicine People:
A Northern Arapaho Oral History
Colorado Endowment for the Humanities
- 1999 Artist Project Grant: The Colorado Powwow Highway
Colorado Council on the Arts
- 1998 Open Studio: The Arts Online
Colorado Council on the Arts
Annual Show—Award of Excellence
Art Directors Club of Denver, CO
- 1996 Tier III Award
Scientific and Cultural Facilities District, Denver, CO
- 1995 COVisions Project Grant
Colorado Council on the Arts
- 1994 Fellowship
Art Matters, Inc, NY
- 1992 Quincentenary Award
Chinook Fund, Denver, CO
Lakota Wopila—Honoring Dance
American Indian Movement of Colorado
- 1987 Harold Spitznagle Medal of Fine Art
Augustana College, Sioux Falls, SD
- 1972 International Lego Building Contest
Third Place (Age 7)
- 1970 International Lego Building Contest
Tenth Place (Age 5)

| Teaching

- 1996–2005 Platt College, Aurora, CO
Art History, Computer Graphics, Drawing, Illustration, Multimedia, Web,
Typography
- 1995 Denver School of the Arts, Denver, CO
Photography
- 1994–95 Denver Public Schools, CO
Art, Spanish (Substitute Teacher)
- 1992–93 Gustavus Adolphus College, St Peter, MN
Drawing, Painting, Photography, Screenprinting
- 1988–90 University of Colorado at Boulder, CO
Drawing (Graduate Part-time Instructor)

| Languages

English, Spanish, Northern Arapaho



INFORMATION REPORT TO CIVIC ARTS COMMISSION

Meeting Date: July 23, 2025, 6pm

Subject: Turtle Island Monument Project – Contract Negotiation Impasse

Prepared by: Jennifer Lovvorn, Chief Cultural Affairs Officer

SUMMARY

Following extensive and years-long discussions with Indigenous artists Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson regarding the Turtle Island Monument (TIM) project, negotiations have reached an impasse. Regrettably, the gap between artists' demands and reasonable municipal contract terms cannot be bridged and therefore, the City has concluded that the Turtle Island Monument project cannot proceed with these artists due to the negotiation impasse under current circumstances. Despite multiple proposal iterations and significant accommodation efforts, the gap between the artists' stated requirements and municipal contracting capabilities has proven insurmountable. This report documents the most recent negotiation process, proposals offered, and factors leading to this decision.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Historical Context

In the 1990s, the Turtle Island Monument (TIM) project was first proposed to the City by Lee Sprague as artist and Marlene Watson as project designer. Both Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson worked with the City of Berkeley and Indigenous communities internationally to develop the monument's design – merging an Indigenous ethic and aesthetic with the requirements provided by the City and its Commissions.

On July 7, 1992, Berkeley City Council approved the recommendation from the Berkeley Peace and Justice Commission for "the creation of the Turtle Island Project, as the native Nation's monument within the Peace Wall circle at Martin Luther King Civic Center Park, as adopted by the Berkeley City Council in the Resistance 500 Task Force Proposal and with the support of the Landmarks Preservation and the Civic Arts Commissions." Also in 1992, the City of Berkeley became the first city in the U.S. to declare and institute Indigenous Peoples Day, to coincide with the 500th anniversary of the arrival of Columbus in the Americas on October 12, 1492.

The original proposal for the Turtle Island Monument project dated 1992 included "a round base of granite with entry from the East. In the center of the circle will be a bronze turtle ... Around Turtle Island will be a circle of water... round tiles with the names of Indigenous nations and people engraved on them. Many of the tiles will be blank, to represent the people who are no longer with us, languages that are not heard anymore, and nations that have ceased to exist since 1492."

In 1997, the City of Berkeley Landmark Preservation Commission initiated a Landmark Application of Civic Center Park¹, and the general concept of the Turtle Island fountain/monument was further described in it as such: "In recent years, the "Turtle Island" fountain design has been revised to incorporate some of the concentric ring arrangement of the current fountain, and reduce the size of the composition to the center of the terrace rather than the entire terrace space. Water would flow outwards and pathways would lead inward, representing the migration of peoples to the Americas across the surrounding oceans." In the Landmark Application, this concept is attributed to Lee Sprague, Potawatomie from Michigan, of the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, as the original Turtle Island Monument artist.

As stated in the Landmark Application of Civic Center Park, the park has been the site of numerous cultural and civic events of importance to Berkeley's history. Civic Center Park was renamed Martin Luther King Jr. Civic Center Park in 1983, and the park is listed on the National Register under this name.²

Previous Challenges

The project faced significant delays and complications over the past three decades, including:

Late 1990s-Early 2000s:

- Following initial approvals, there was a long delay in advancing the project, during this time Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson left the Bay Area to pursue work elsewhere, while the fountain constructed in 1942 remained inoperable.
- There were numerous project approvals related to the Turtle Island Monument (TIM) in the 1990s and then an appeal of the proposed project was filed as part of EIR process on March 22, 2002). City Council dismissed the appeal on July 9, 2002, after which the project left the domain of public documents.

¹ Landmarks Preservation Commission, Notice of Decision for Meeting on November 3, 1997. Landmark Application for "Civic Center Park, Civic Center Plaza, Provo Park" dated August 27, 1997. Records available for viewing by request to the Planning Department.

²Access the National Register listing of Berkeley's *Martin Luther King Jr. Civic Center Park* online: <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/123858157>, National Archive Identification District Number (NAID): 123858157.

2003-2006:

- 2004: The City of Berkeley approved a master plan for a renovation of the Martin Luther King Jr. Civic Center Park with construction of TIM to start in the park.
- Instead of notifying the original TIM artists Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson, the City sought new artists and architects to work on a revised redesign for the Turtle Island Monument at the park's existing (inoperable) fountain.
- 2005: The City underwent a public procurement process to commission artist Scott Parsons to create four bronze oceanic turtle sculptures and facilitate the creation of eight stone art medallions by North, Central and South American Indigenous artists and international tribal representatives.
- 2006: Artist Scott Parsons created and delivered four bronze turtles and eight stone medallions, but they were never installed at the TIM site because the project was paused due to funding shortages.
- Since delivery, in 2006 the eight stone medallions (art pieces) have been in storage at City facilities (Corp Yard and currently 2180 Milvia storage) and the four bronze turtles have been on display at 2180 Milvia Street (Lobby and 5th Floor) waiting to be installed as part of the Turtle Island Monument at Martin Luther King Jr. Civic Center Park.

2017-2021 Turtle Island Garden Efforts:

- 2017-2018: Three Berkeley community members conducted advocacy (which consisted largely of visiting many City of Berkeley Commissions and Councilmembers) to convert the inoperable 1942 fountain into "Turtle Island Garden," a new design that did include the four turtles and eight stone medallions delivered by artist Scott Parsons, but did not include water.
- At the time, City staff were not aware of the prior 1990s "Turtle Island Monument" design by artists Sprague and Watson.
- On December 4, 2018, the Berkeley City Council adopted a resolution directing the City Manager to develop a plan for the "Turtle Island Garden" located in the same place as the Turtle Island Monument (the inoperable fountain in Martin Luther King Jr. Civic Center Park).
- On March 21, 2022, the City received a \$591,666 *Clean California Local* grant from CalTrans for the "Turtle Island Garden" and upper civic center plaza improvements.³ The funding for the grant included a date of June 30, 2024, by which the project was originally to be completed.

³ CalTrans, Clean California Local Grant Projects, District 4, Online: <https://dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district-4/d4-popular-links/d4-clean-california/d4-local-grants>

- When the City held an initial "Indigenous stakeholder meeting" for the garden project, a fundamental problem emerged: the project was built on an Indigenous concept but was proposed by non-Indigenous people.
- After realizing the problem through the course of the stakeholder meetings, City staff re-engaged artists Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson for a listening session, after which Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson agreed to participate in a design charrette for the Turtle Island Monument (TIM) project.

2022-2023: TIM Design Development and Emerging Conflict:

- August 18 & 19, 2022: Design charrette held for development of TIM design which PGA Design was engaged to draw Lee and Marlene's vision into design documents that could be reviewed by the City of Berkeley Landmarks Preservation Commission, and other departments (including the Parks Recreation and Waterfront department) ultimately for permitting and construction.
- It was established that Turtle Island Monument was Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson's intellectual artistic property, as reported to Civic Arts Commission on December 7, 2022.⁴
- March 30, 2023: The City of Berkeley Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) grants approval of Turtle Island Monument design developed through the Design Charrette that included input from Lee Sprague, Marlene Watson, Scott Parsons, PGA Design, and others.⁵
- June 2023: Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson requested additional design changes to the LPC approved plan, for TIM which included adding another boulder for the "Turtle Island creation story".
- August 25, 2023, the design team consisting of Parks Recreation and Waterfront Capital Project staff, Civic Arts staff, Scott Parsons, and City's contracted landscape architect for the Civic Center Upper Plaza Improvement Project, met with Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson to attempt to reconcile the proposed design changes, with the approved design and the project schedule. However, the scope of possible changes was limited due to the funding deadline imposed by the Cal Trans Grant. The meeting ended without agreement on feasible design changes.

⁴ City of Berkeley, Civic Arts Commission, Staff Report to Civic Arts Commission, December 7, 2022, Item 5 a. Online: <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/legislative-body-meeting-attachments/Civic%20Arts%20Commission%20Meeting%20Late%20Attachments%2012-7-22.pdf>

⁵ City of Berkeley, Landmarks Preservation Commission, Meeting Minutes, March 30, 2023, Item 7. Online: https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/legislative-body-meeting-minutes/2023-03-30_LPC_Action%20Minutes_FINAL.pdf

2023-2025: Project Crisis Attempted Resolution and Continued Challenges:

- September 2023: Lee Sprague disavowed the design he and Marlene Watson had helped create and accused the City of violating the Indian Arts and Crafts Act by falsely representing Scott Parsons' artwork under his name.

(November 2023-December 2024):

- November 2023: Outside consultants (Kristen Bennett and Jackie De La Cruz) were brought in to work with Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson to resolve issues so that contracts could be agreed to.
- Late 2023 – early 2024: The Upper Civic Center Park improvements are separated from the TIM project to ensure that the CalTrans grant funding was not lost.
- Late 2023 – early 2024: CalTrans grants an extension to June 30, 2025, for project completion. The park improvements include bringing stubbed utilities to the fountain site in preparation for when a contract with the TIM artists (Sprague and Watson) could be executed.
- October 2024: Construction contract for Martin Luther King Jr. Civic Center Park - Upper Plaza Improvements Project is authorized by City Council.⁶
- While the consultants and artists reviewed many proposed contracts over these years, no contract agreements with the TIM artists were reached during this time. By December 2024, the project entered "hibernation" status with no resolution.

RECENT NEGOTIATION TIMELINE

Recent Reengagement (April-May 2025)

In April 2025, the City made renewed efforts to reengage with the TIM artists to identify a viable path forward for project completion. Following email negotiations between Jennifer Lovvorn and the TIM artists, staff presented and emailed new "path forward" proposal iterations to the artists (Sprague and Watson) and met twice on Zoom (May 2 and May 9, 2025).

As negotiations progressed, a significant gap emerged between the artists' demands and what the City could reasonably accommodate. The meetings became increasingly contentious and uncomfortable, with the artists issuing a public press release (May 12, 2025 – Attachment 1) alleging violations of the Indian Arts and Crafts Act and presenting additional conditions for creating the TIM artwork that substantially exceed the City's capacity to fulfill.

Additional Requirements demanded by the artists Included:

⁶ Berkeley City Council, [Item 12](#), October 29, 2024.

- Establishment of a City of Berkeley certification policy relative to the Indian Arts and Crafts Act (communicated verbally May 9, 2025)
- Formal apology from the City (communicated by email May 8, 2025, and verbally May 9, 2025)

In late May 2025, staff discussed with City leadership options for resolution, including discussion of a “path forward plan” dated May 21, 2025 (Attachment 2) that addressed many of Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson’s concerns and represented a viable path for project completion.

Key points of “Path Forward Plan” Proposals Offered by the City (dates October 2024 – May 2025)

Comprehensive Project Implementation Plan

- Resolution Correction: Formal rescission of incorrect historical attributions
- Project Control: Artists' primary role in design development with City providing implementation support
- Procurement for landscape architect for Turtle Island Monument design documents with extensive familiarity and experience working with Indigenous communities
- The exclusion of Scott Parson’s artwork elements (four bronze turtles, eight mosaics) from Turtle Island Monument, as they were not part of the original Turtle Island Monument concept created by Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson in the 1990s.

Multiple Plan Iterations were developed with the Initial plan development starting October 2024 and continuing with multiple revisions through May 2025 addressing artist feedback. The “path forward plan” and the preceding multiple plan iterations always put forth a comprehensive approach centering addressing artistic vision and compensating the artists fairly while maintaining City requirements.

The final path forward plan shared with Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson on June 27, 2025 included a generous fee at a fixed amount to mitigate the risk of not reaching an agreed upon fee with the artists should the amount be determined at a later point in the project:

- Artist Compensation: Fixed \$100,000 per artist for consultation during development of Turtle Island Monument. This amount is inclusive of fee and travel.

Some of Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson listed concerns and demands were not included in the “path forward plan” because they were outside the purview of a public art contract negotiation. City leadership determined that the artists' expanded requirements could not be accommodated within standard municipal contracting procedures and despite good faith efforts on behalf of the City, the negotiations had reached an impasse with no realistic path to working successfully with these artists on this project.

DECISION FACTORS

Demands Outside Contract Scope

The artists' expanded requirements included elements beyond the scope of municipal contract negotiations:

- Indian Arts and Crafts Act Certification Policy: Request for City to establish certification policy relative to IACA compliance – A new certification policy would require broader municipal policy modifications rather than project-specific contract terms
- Formal City Apology: Request for official municipal apology for past handling of the project. This would be a decision that is beyond the scope of contract negotiations.

CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

Project Status

The Turtle Island Monument project is formally concluded due to a negotiation impasse - the inability to reach mutually acceptable contract terms between the artists and the City despite extensive good faith negotiations. The City sent notification to the artists regarding the project conclusion on June 27, 2025 (Attachment 3).

City's Position

- The City respects the artistic vision and contributions of Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson
- Multiple reasonable proposals were developed and offered through extensive iterations from October 2024 through May 2025, in addition to efforts undertaken in the years prior (2022-2024)
- Certain artist demands fell outside the scope of contract negotiations and required broader policy changes beyond project parameters
- The decision reflects procedural limitations rather than lack of commitment to the vision of these artists for a Turtle Island Monument in Berkeley

Public Process

This Information Report provides public transparency about the negotiation process and decision factors. The artists have been invited to participate in public comment during this meeting should they wish to provide their perspective.

No Commission action is required, as this is provided for informational and transparency purposes.

Meeting Information: July 23, 2025, 6pm – Agenda posted July 16, 2025

Public Comment is available for input on this matter in writing ahead of the meeting or at the meeting

Attachments:

1. Turtle Island Monument Press Release issued by John Curl (May 12, 2025)
2. Turtle Island Monument “Path Forward” Project Plan (May 21, 2025)
3. Correspondence with artists (June 27, 2025)



TURTLE ISLAND MONUMENT COMMITTEE
BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA

From: **Turtle Island Monument Committee**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 12, 2025

Contact: John Curl, press liaison, (510) 847-3431

The artists Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson are available for interviews.

Berkeley's Turtle Island Monument Fountain, dedicated to Native America 33 years ago, will finally replace the broken Civic Center Fountain, but Council must remove the last obstacles by acknowledging and correcting the City's past violation of the Indian Arts and Crafts Act.

As public art, the Turtle Island Monument is the artistic and intellectual property of Indigenous artists Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson, protected under the Indian Arts and Crafts Act (IACA) of 1990, and cannot be credited to another artist. Yet that is exactly what the City flagrantly tried to do in 2005. Today we are still undoing the damage and misconceptions caused by the misappropriation of Sprague and Watson's original design.

History and Future of Berkeley's Turtle Island Monument Fountain (TIM)

1992: Mayor Hancock dedicated the Turtle Island Monument, honoring Native America and representing the highest values of the people of Berkeley, at the first Indigenous Peoples Day celebration, which touched off the movement that has since spread around the country and the world. The old fountain had not been in operation for over a decade, and was viewed by all as an eyesore. The artists Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson, both Native people, presented the preliminary architectural drawings with a central turtle presenting the vision, bearing the American continents on its back. The project was enthusiastically approved by the necessary commissions and unanimously by City Council.

1996-1997: Voters approved a \$49 million bond measure which included funds for TIM. But the project was undercut when the entire historic Civic Center was landmarked to prevent unwanted development. During the long delay, Lee and Marlene both eventually left the Bay Area to pursue work elsewhere, while the old fountain remained dysfunctional.

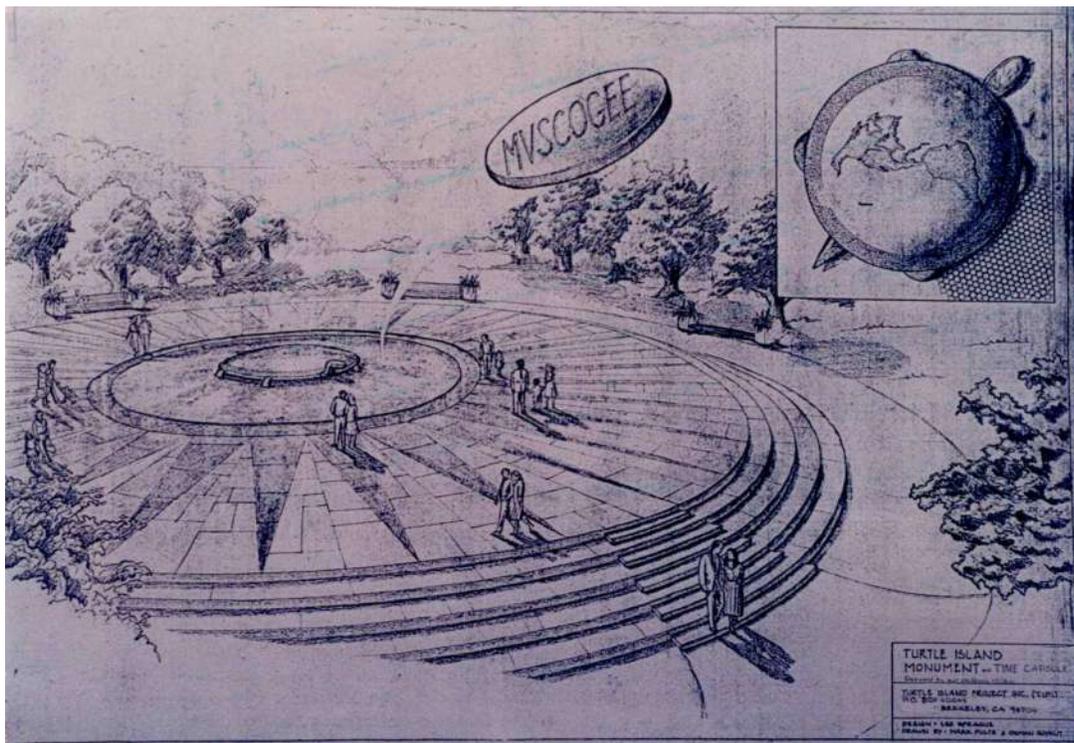
2003-2006: The City approved a master plan for park renovation with construction of TIM to start in 2004. But, instead of making any attempt to notify the artists Sprague and Watson, the

City sought new non-Native artists and architects to work on a revised redesign, in violation of the Indian Arts and Crafts Act, which protects the rights of Indigenous artists. TIM had been a 100% Indigenous concept and design, but the City in 2005 awarded a commission for four bronze turtles, which were not part of the original design, to a non-Native artist. Native people were now entirely excluded from the project, but it was then paused again due to funding.

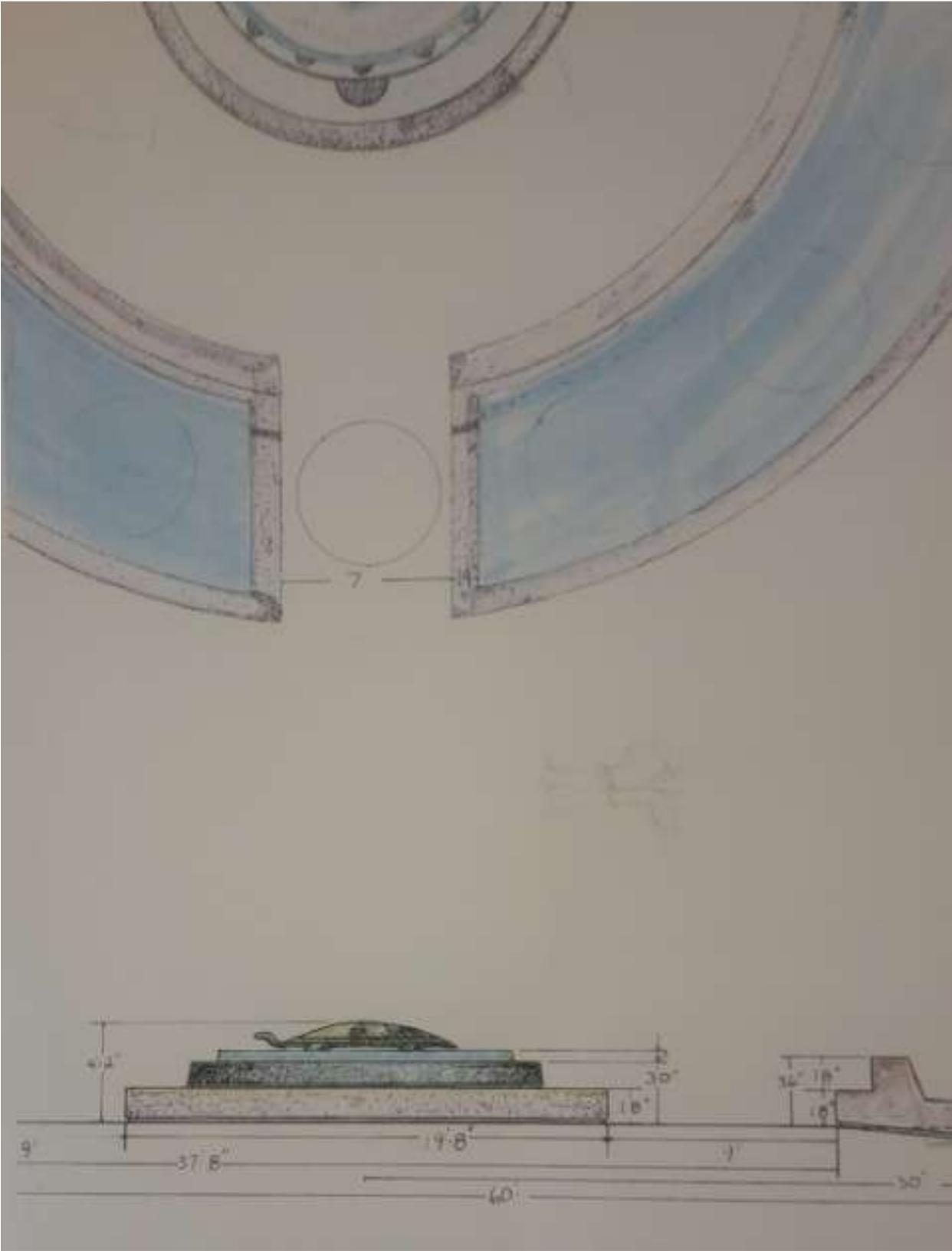
2017-2018: Council directed the City Manager to develop a plan, staff began to re-engage, and a group of non-Native people presented a new idea involving plants and gardens, but the City still made no attempt to contact the artists Sprague and Watson.

2021-2023: City of Berkeley and a non-Native landscape architectural firm began devising another TIM project design when the City finally reached out to contact Sprague and Watson. Lee and Marlene did not give consent to the latest design by the City, but shared their original concept and meaning of the central turtle design of the TIM project. The City passed another misdirected resolution naming the same non-Native artist from 2005 as primary artist for the TIM project to purchase granite stone for the center water fountain. The City needs to acknowledge and remove the four bronze sea turtles already built from any association to the TIM project and MLK Civic Center Park

2024-2025: But the project remains stalled. All past City Resolutions misappropriating TIM to this same non-Native artist need to be rescinded by Council before the TIM project can move forward again. This will open the way after over three decades to finally complete the Turtle Island Monument Fountain project with its original concept and artists, destined to become the beautiful, powerful and profound center of our city.



TIM Concept 1992



TIM Concept 2023



DEDICATING THE SITE FOR THE TURTLE ISLAND MONUMENT

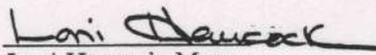
WHEREAS, the Berkeley Resistance 500 Task Force, a broad-based community group, brought the proposal for Indigenous Peoples Day and related activities and programs to the Commission on Peace and Justice, which recommended adoption of the proposal to the City Council; and

WHEREAS, the Berkeley City Council, on 22 October 1991, approved the recommendation for Indigenous Peoples Day and the designation of 1992 as the Year of Indigenous People, including educational events throughout the year and commemorative events on the weekend of 10-12 October; and

WHEREAS, the Task Force proposal also included a monument, now known as the Turtle Island Monument, and the concept for this monument and time capsule are being developed and circulated for review and approval through all necessary City boards and commissions; and

WHEREAS, the Turtle Island Monument is dedicated to all indigenous people of this hemisphere, whose societies flourished centuries before Columbus arrived and which continue on this day, which is seen as the end of 500 years of resistance and the beginning of 500 years of rebuilding;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that I, Loni Hancock, Mayor of the City of Berkeley, do hereby dedicate this site for the Turtle Island Monument to the Native People of this hemisphere on behalf of the non-native people of Berkeley, in recognition of your care for this land long "before Columbus was discovered on our shores" and in honor of your culture and philosophy, which are needed now more than ever if the planet is to survive.


Loni Hancock, Mayor

2180 Milvia Street, Berkeley, California 94704 • Telephone (415) 644-6484
TDD (415) 644-6915

Turtle Island Monument artists Marlene Watson & Lee Sprague.

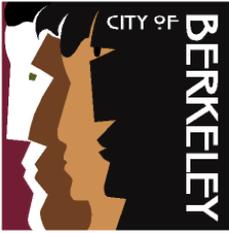


(Photo: Marc Kolsters, Digital Media Services)

"Our original designs connect the indigenous peoples from Turtle Island to the moment when Berkeley recognized indigenous Peoples Day, the first city in the world to do so. Marlene and I worked with Berkeley residents beginning 33 years ago. We are looking forward to seeing water flowing at the fountain at Civic Center, which has faced 50+years of administrative delays. Water is Life. Through our art, the unseen powers, the great mysteries, guide our footsteps and recognize Berkeley's creation of the first Indigenous Peoples Day as a shared dream for generations to come."

Lee Sprague

Mr. Sprague and Ms. Watson are available for interviews.
John Curl, press liaison, (510) 847-3431



TURTLE ISLAND MONUMENT (TIM) PROJECT PLAN

May 21, 2025

Transition of Authority:

- The Civic Arts Program has authority over the project with Artwork Design Approval by the Civic Arts Commission (per Municipal Code 6.14.050) and approval of any alterations to the Fountain by Landmarks Preservation Commission (per Municipal Code 23.402.050).
- Jennifer Lovvorn will serve as project manager.
- These changes support a commitment to honor Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson's original artistic vision.

Plan to Address the Resolution Issue:

- Prioritize the research on rescinding the resolutions that incorrectly named Scott Parsons as the Turtle Island Monument artist
- Jennifer Lovvorn to prepare a draft resolution for Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson's review that:
 - Explicitly acknowledges Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson as the original and current artists of Turtle Island Monument or TIM.
 - Corrects the historical record regarding the artistic vision rooted in the Historic Landmark Designation.
 - Outlines the commitment to implement the artists' (Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson)vision going forward.
- Jennifer Lovvorn to share the timeline for bringing this to the Civic Arts Commission and then to Council.
- Jennifer Lovvorn to utilize already gathered archive of historical documents pertaining to Turtle Island Monument dating back to the 1990s.
- Jennifer Lovvorn to remove the four sea turtles created by Scott Parsons from the Civic Center building located at 2180 Milvia Street.
- Once Resolution is approved, Jennifer Lovvorn to establish a Turtle Island Monument project webpage with regular updates that credit Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson as the original and current artists of TIM.

Project Approach:

This project plan, now framed clearly under Civic Arts management, includes the following elements to directly address Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson's concerns:

- New landscape architect with extensive familiarity and experience working with Indigenous communities.

- Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson’s primary role in design development.
- The exclusion of Scott Parson’s artwork elements from Turtle Island Monument.
- The use of dedicated Civic Arts funds that don’t have spending deadlines to allow the project the time it needs to move forward.

Turtle Island Monument Scope of Project

1. Working with Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson as the artists and with a Landscape Architect (TBD):
 - Complete design of Turtle Island Monument
 - Design approvals and permits as needed
 - Construction Document Package for Bidding
 - Conduct Construction and Specialty Artwork Fabrication Bidding
2. Adding Construction Contractor and Specialty Artwork Fabricator to the team to complete the project with consultation from Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson and Landscape Architect:
 - Construction of Turtle Island Monument
 - Fabrication and Installation of Specialty Artwork Elements

Project Implementation.

1. City to establish Budgets and Council authorization for contracting and Landscape Architect RFP.
2. Lee Sprague & Marlene Watson to be placed under Sole Source Artist Contracts for \$100,000 each covering all project related expenses including travel to consult and guide the development of the Turtle Island Monument, and consultation during construction and fabrication of the Turtle Island Monument. Their scopes of work would be consulting and the artist contracts would not hold any subcontracts. The contract would include the narrative description of Turtle Island Monument from the 1997 Landmark Application language as the basis for the design work.
3. Artwork Foundry to be placed under Sole Source Contract (for Design Phase only) with the City so that their model maker can work with Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson during the design phase to create a model of the central turtle and its relationship to the fountain under Lee Sprague and Marlene Watson’s creative guidance.
4. City to go out to bid for a Landscape Architect with extensive familiarity and experience working with Indigenous communities. The Landscape Architect’s scope of work would be: Working with Lee Sprague & Marlene Watson as advisors throughout entire scope from approvals, through development of Construction Bid Documents and review during construction.
5. Approvals:
 - a. All phases of Artwork Design must be approved by Civic Arts Commission.
 - b. Any structural alterations to the historic fountain must be approved by Landmarks Preservation Commission.
 - c. All contracts over \$50,000 must be authorized by City Council.
6. Bid Documents: Once all approvals are obtained, development of Construction Bid Documents used to bid for the construction of Turtle Island Monument and separate Specialty Artwork Element Construction Documents to bid the fabrication of any specialty artistic elements such as the central bronze turtle and any pavers.
7. Construction Bidding

8. Artwork Fabrication Bidding
9. Council authorization of contracts
10. Award Construction Contract
11. Award Artwork Fabrication Contract
12. Construction of Turtle Island Monument
13. Fabrication and Installation of Specialty Artwork Elements
14. Dedication Ceremony

Civic Center Site – Current Conditions:

The Upper Plaza Improvement Project is currently moving forward as a capital project managed by the Parks Recreation and Waterfront Department with an anticipated completion date of June 2025. The footprint of the fountain has been excluded from the Upper Plaza Improvement Project and reserved for the future Turtle Island Monument to be implemented according to an agreed upon Turtle Island Monument Project Plan. As part of the scope of work of the Upper Plaza Improvement Project, utilities and infrastructure to support the implementation of the Turtle Island Monument are being provided: capped irrigation line for any future plantings, empty electrical conduit for future electrical needs, empty conduit sleeves under the pavers leading to fountain edge for any other needed utilities at the fountain, and the tunnel under the fountain can be utilized for any other needed utilities for the Turtle Island Monument.

Lovvorn, Jennifer

From: Lovvorn, Jennifer
Sent: Friday, June 27, 2025 5:49 PM
To: Lee Sprague; Marlene Watson
Cc: John Curl
Subject: Turtle Island Monument Project - Conclusion of Contract Negotiations
Attachments: Turtle Island Monument Path Forward Plan 5-21-25.pdf

Dear Lee and Marlene,

Over the past couple months, I have been excited to reengage with you both to explore how we might move the Turtle Island Monument (TIM) forward after more than three decades. As you know, the City has made substantial efforts to address your concerns and develop a viable path for project completion.

I was hopeful that the proposed "path forward plan" shared with you starting in October 2024 and developed through many iterations until May 2025 had sufficiently addressed your concerns. There were, however, certain additional concerns and demands, such as the establishment of a City of Berkeley certification policy relative to the Indian Arts and Crafts Act and a formal apology from that City that you made verbally (May 9, 2025) and by email (May 8, 2025), which are not in the purview of a contract negotiation. Because these concerns and demands are not in the purview of a contract negotiation, I cannot feasibly address them. Correspondingly, your concerns and demands asking for the establishment of a City of Berkeley certification policy relative to the Indian Arts and Crafts Act and a formal apology from that City, cannot be included in the plan. What is included in "path forward plan" (attached) is a feasible approach to move the project forward. It aligns with the spirit of the project as described in the press release that John Curl distributed on May 12, 2025.

Please note that the attached plan is substantially the same as the version that was shared with you on May 6, 2025 with the exception of the artist fee determination, which changed from "a yet to be determined" amount to a fixed amount, the text changes are indicated in underline below: *Lee Sprague & Marlene Watson to be placed under Sole Source Artist Contracts for \$100,000 each covering all project related expenses including travel to consult and guide the development of the Turtle Island Monument.*

After extensive discussion and careful consideration of your position and additional requirements relative to what the City can reasonably accommodate through our standard municipal contracting processes, there remains too significant a gap between your demands and what the City can realistically provide.

While I had hoped we could reach an agreement that would allow this important project to move forward in alignment with what the City can responsibly deliver, I must unfortunately inform you that we will not be able to proceed with the Turtle Island Monument (TIM) public art project at this time.

As part of our commitment to transparency and public process, I will be presenting an Information Report about the conclusion of these negotiations to the Civic Arts Commission at their meeting on **July 23, 2025, at 6pm**. This meeting is open to the public and includes an opportunity for public comment. Should you wish to participate in public comment, either remotely via Zoom or in person, please let me know and I will arrange the appropriate connection details. The agenda will be posted on the [Civic Arts Commission Agenda webpage](#) by July 16, 2025.

I want to acknowledge the significance of this project and your long-standing commitment to it. The City's decision reflects the practical realities of municipal contracting requirements and our responsibility to follow established procedures for public projects, rather than any lack of respect for your artistic vision or contributions.

I am attaching the most recent project implementation plan that was under discussion for your reference.

If you have any questions about the Civic Arts Commission meeting or the public comment process, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully,

Jennifer Lovvorn

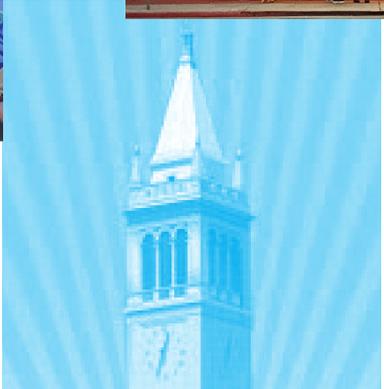
Chief Cultural Affairs Officer

City of Berkeley

Attachment: Turtle Island Monument Project Plan (May 21, 2025)

Keeping Creativity Local: A Strategic Response to Affordable Housing for Artists

**A Report by the Housing
Advisory Commission and
the Civic Arts Commission,
July 2025**



In 2018, the City Council adopted the City of Berkeley 2017-2018 Arts and Culture Plan Update (Update). The Update is a framework for supporting the arts. A key Update recommendation is to increase access to affordable housing and affordable spaces for artists and arts organizations. In 2021, the Civic Arts Commission commissioned a survey on affordable housing for artists in Berkeley by Creative Equity Research Partners. The survey report concluded that without strategies and policies to work affirmatively to keep artists and cultural workers in the city, artists will continue to be priced out of the housing market.

The 2022 survey on affordable housing for artists concluded that without affirmative strategies and policies, artists will continue to be priced out of Berkeley.

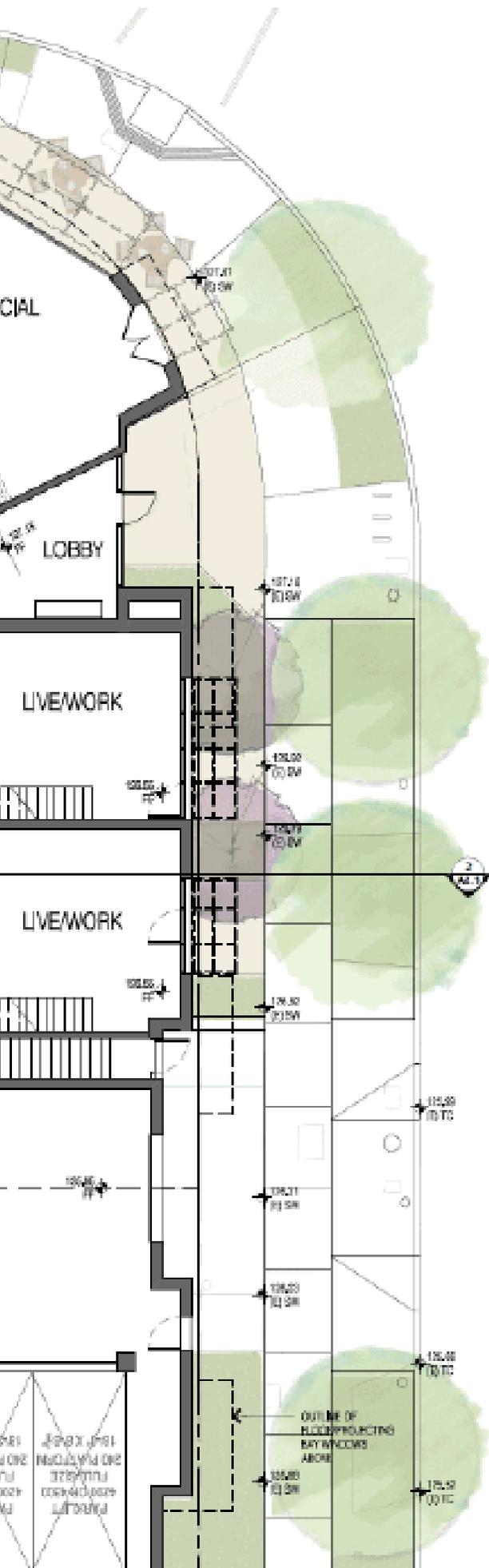
Acting on the survey report's findings, in July 2023, members of the Civic Arts Commission made a presentation to the Housing Advisory Commission (HAC) regarding its desire to work with HAC on recommendations to the City Council to increase access to affordable housing for lower-income artists. HAC and the Civic Arts Commission formed a joint subcommittee to explore affordable housing strategies and policy initiatives to retain and grow the artist community.

The joint subcommittee met regularly over the past two years to prepare the following goals and recommendations to address the critical need for affordable housing for artists and cultural workers in Berkeley. This report was presented to the HAC and Civic Arts Commission at their respective July 2025 meetings with a recommendation that the report be forwarded to the Berkeley City Council for its consideration and approval.

Overview of Policy Recommendations

- 1 Adopt an ordinance implementing AB 812, which allows up to 10% of Below Market Rate units within cultural arts districts to be set aside for low-income artists.
- 2 Integrate policies to incentivize affordable housing and affordable commercial space for artists and arts organizations in study areas already identified in the City's Housing Element, specifically the San Pablo Specific Plan and the Corridors Zoning Update: North Shattuck, College and Solano Ave.
- 3 Place an affordable housing bond measure on the 2028 ballot.
- 4 Partner with regional arts and affordable housing organizations to identify a large site, or multiple small sites, for an affordable housing project (new-build or existing properties) for low-income artists, provide technical assistance, pre-development funding and/or other resources as necessary to kick-start such a project.
- 5 Implement the short- and medium-term strategies recommended in the Berkeley Social Housing Study Draft – May 2025.
- 6 Adopt a standardized process for designating local cultural districts and apply for State cultural district designation.
- 7 Preserve the funding for a Guaranteed Basic Income GBI pilot project and explore the feasibility of including low-income artists and cultural workers as a category of eligible participants in the pilot project.

A proposed development on San Pablo Ave. (left) suggests live/work spaces on the first floor in place of traditional retail space.



Making the Case for Artist Housing in Berkeley

In 2018, the City Council adopted the City of Berkeley 2017-2018 Arts and Culture Plan Update. The Update is a framework for supporting the arts. It developed and recommended citywide goals, policy improvements, and actions to support and further develop local arts, culture, and entertainment. The Update contains five strategic goals. Goal number one is to increase access to affordable housing and affordable spaces for artists and arts organizations. Several of the policy recommendations are updated and included in this report.

In 2021, the Civic Arts Commission commissioned a survey on affordable housing for artists in Berkeley by Creative Equity Research Partners. One hundred and sixty-three (163) local artists were surveyed and represented a cross-section of Berkeley’s most vulnerable populations. The survey found that high housing costs were placing the community’s thriving cultural sector at increasing risk of displacement. The survey report concluded that without strategies and policies to work affirmatively to keep artists and cultural workers in the city, artists will continue to be priced out of the housing market.

Acting on the report’s findings, in July 2023, members of the Civic Arts Commission made a presentation HAC regarding its desire to work with HAC on recommendations to the City Council to increase access to affordable housing for lower-income artists. The Civic Arts Commission’s key concern was that the affordable housing crisis was adversely impacting the artist community in Berkeley by pricing practicing artists out of the city, negatively impacting the local economy, and community vibrancy and creativity. Given the unique role that artists play in a community’s character and prosperity, HAC and the Civic Arts Commission formed a joint subcommittee to explore affordable housing strategies and policy initiatives to retain and grow Berkeley’s artist community.

“ Goal number one is to increase access to affordable housing and affordable spaces ... ”

Current Housing Funding Landscape

This report comes at a unique and challenging moment when traditional funding sources for affordable housing face unprecedented constraints. Affordable housing developments serve as essential infrastructure for low- and moderate-income individuals and families, including the artists and cultural workers who contribute significantly to Berkeley’s identity and economy. Funding for affordable housing comes from various sources, including government programs, private investors, and local initiatives. All three sources for funding affordable housing projects are severely distressed for the foreseeable future—government funding is increasingly scarce as government cuts in spending gain momentum. Meanwhile, private sector funding is tentative at best given the uncertain economic atmosphere. In short, funding nationally and locally (both municipal and private sectors) is scarce.

Still, there are several actions to be taken to put necessary zoning into place, provide capacity building, and position the city with critical local matching funds, as well as building alliances and dreaming on a large scale, so that when the economic outlook improves and funding once again becomes available—the city of Berkeley will be ready to act. The need for affordable housing will not subside—and neither should our commitment to addressing it.

Artists as Economic Contributors and Vulnerable Workers

Artistic professions are highly valued but poorly compensated. Artists represent a significant yet vulnerable segment of our workforce. As a labor sector, artists are among the lowest-income workers, placing them within already marginalized communities that struggle with housing affordability. Despite this economic vulnerability, artists drive substantial economic activity, representing 7% of California’s economy—or 15% when including television and film industries. This economic contribution makes artists vital to the prosperity of California and the city of Berkeley.

According to the 2022 Creative Equity Research Partners survey, of the 88% respondents who had Bachelor’s degrees, 60% reported an annual household income of \$69,000 or below, which qualified as low-income in Alameda County. Forty-five percent (45%) were rent-burdened. This disparity also intersects with the racial wealth gap: among respondents who identified as non-White, 72% reported low household incomes, compared to 55% among those who identified as White or Caucasian.

Berkeley’s artistic and cultural richness is actively promoted as an attraction to renters and homebuyers, yet the very artists who create this cultural value face displacement due to housing costs. Without accessible housing and workspace options, Berkeley risks losing the complete arts sector that defines much of the city’s local economy, character and appeal.

The definition of “artist” for the context of this report, approved by the Civic Arts Commission, May 25, 2022, is as follows:

An individual (or team member of an arts group) who is regularly engaged in the arts on a professional basis. These include but are not limited to those who practice:

Fine Arts such as painting, sculpture, mixed media works, photography, papermaking, printmaking, filmmaking or videography, or interdisciplinary art practice.

C such as dance, dance theatre, acting, directing, set design, or members of theatre troupes.

Musical Arts such as musicians, composers, singers, choir members, band members, or ensemble members.

Literary Arts such as writers of prose, poetry, or plays.

Social Practice Arts including interdisciplinary

modes of creative production with methods of public engagement.

Craft Artisans who create such as fine wood-working, ceramics, glass blowing, stained glass, textiles, jewelry, metal works, fashion, blacksmithing, basketry, etc.

Artists who have culturally specific creative practices (folk arts, traditional arts, tradition bearers)

Self-taught and “outsider” artists

The terms “artist”, “cultural worker”, and “creative workforce” are used interchangeably throughout this report.



EMBRACING BERKELEY'S COMMITMENT TO THE ARTS: Laying the Groundwork for Artists Housing

Current efforts by organizations like Vital Arts, which is conducting a regional artist census and providing emergency displacement prevention grants, and Artist Space Trust, which provides low-income housing for artists and trains artists to access existing affordable housing, highlight the two-pronged nature of this crisis.

The City's Housing Element recognizes this need. Policy H-8 calls for developing workforce housing for low- and moderate-income households, including teachers, *artists*, and other residents who work in the city of Berkeley. This policy underpins the idea that artists, who are often teachers as well, contribute to the economy and vibrancy of the community and that high housing costs are placing the community's thriving cultural sector at increasing risk of displacement. Further, the Housing Element includes programs like Program 27, focused on Priority Development Areas (PDAs), including the San Pablo Specific Plan, and other initiatives that call for rezoning to enable higher-density housing, especially near transit and services.

The Corridors Zoning Update is one of the primary tools to carry out the Housing Element's vision. It will focus specifically on North Shattuck, College Avenue, and Solano Avenue—commercial corridors with potential for added housing. The goal is to update zoning codes to allow more housing (including affordable units), promote mixed-use development, and ensure compliance with state laws on housing capacity.

Both planning efforts emphasize equity and access. Berkeley has long valued its creative spirit. Now is the time to protect it. The dual imperative is clear: create more affordable housing and ensure artists can remain in their communities.

Goal: To support the long-term sustainability of the arts and culture sector by expanding access to affordable housing and workspaces for artists and arts organizations—through targeted policies, funding mechanisms, and land use strategies.

HAC and the Civic Arts Commission share the following recommendations:

1 Adopt an ordinance implementing AB 812, which allows up to 10% of Below Market Rate units within cultural arts districts to be set aside for low-income artists.

In 2023, the State Legislature adopted AB 812 (Chapter 747). The bill provides that cities with inclusionary zoning programs can set aside up to 10% of Below Market Rate (BMR) units for lower-income artists. The units reserved must be located within, or within one-half mile, of a State-designated, or wholly within a locally designated, cultural district. The city has two locally designated cultural arts districts: The Black Arts and Culture District in South Berkeley and the Arts District Overlay in downtown Berkeley. Community members and stakeholders are exploring a possible third local arts district in West Berkeley.

To provide a BMR unit set-aside for artists within local cultural districts, the city must adopt an ordinance implementing the state law. A draft ordinance has been prepared for Planning Commission and City Council consideration and is attached as Appendix A. [The Civic Arts Commission and HAC previously approved a recommendation referring the draft ordinance implementing AB 812 to the Planning Commission.]

Adopting an ordinance implementing AB 812 is an immediate action that can lead a concerted effort to retain the city's creative workers, especially low-income artists and artists of color.

2 Integrate policies to incentivize affordable housing and affordable commercial space for artists and arts organizations in areas already identified in the City’s Housing Element, specifically the San Pablo Specific Plan and the Corridors Zoning Update: North Shattuck, College and Solano Ave.

Planning staff are currently working with the community on the San Pablo Specific Plan and have recently initiated the Corridors Zoning Update: North Shattuck, College and Solano Avenue. Both planning initiatives focus on key commercial corridors with the goal of developing land use and economic revitalization initiatives that will encourage and support diverse housing, commercial activities, and public amenities. The Plans also provide critical opportunities for developing land use standards and policies that encourage and incentivize live-work spaces for artists, spaces for non-profit arts organizations, and affordable housing for low-income cultural workers. In addition, flexible outdoor and indoor spaces for exhibitions and performances should be encouraged along these commercial corridors. The exhibition and performance spaces should be accessible and affordable to ensure their usability by artists.

a. San Pablo Specific Plan

The San Pablo Specific Plan is investigating land use and zoning standards that promote access to housing, equity, safer streets, sustainability, and an economically vibrant commercial corridor.

The December 4, 2024 presentation to the Planning Commission provides an outline of the major goals derived from the community assessment. The identified goals, if translated into land use standards and policies, will go a long way to promoting affordable and diverse housing and encourage flexible spaces for arts and culture organizations and activities. The expansion of allowable ground floor uses to permit residential, with an emphasis on live-work spaces, is critical to animating the corridor and promoting economic vibrancy. Allowing pop-up uses by right and sponsoring public-private events are key avenues for supporting the arts and local artists. All of these strategies should be adopted in the final Plan.

Specific recommendations include:

- In exchange for increased density, require provision of ground floor, below-market-rate office or exhibition space for non-profit arts organizations or provision of ground floor affordable artist live-work space.
- All live-work projects should have a set-aside for below-market units specifically for artists.
- If corridor improvements are permitted in exchange for increased density, they should include outdoor areas suitable for exhibitions and performances. It is essential that “corridor improvements” include hard and soft funding as “hard” spaces are only as good as the programming that happens within them. Funds for ongoing activities, landscaping, amenities, etc. must be provided.
- Permitted ground floor uses must be expanded to have an economically vibrant and successful San Pablo Avenue. Residential uses must be allowed, with a focus on live-work housing. Offices should also be permitted with a focus on arts and cultural (and other) non-profit space. Day care facilities are critical to economic development and should be a permitted ground floor use.

b. Corridors Zoning Update: North Shattuck, College and Solano Ave.

The Corridors Zoning Update is a city of Berkeley initiative focused on revising zoning regulations along three key commercial corridors: North Shattuck Avenue, College Avenue, and Solano Avenue. These areas have been designated as priority commercial and transit corridors in the city's 2023–2031 Housing Element, aiming to increase housing capacity and promote equitable development.

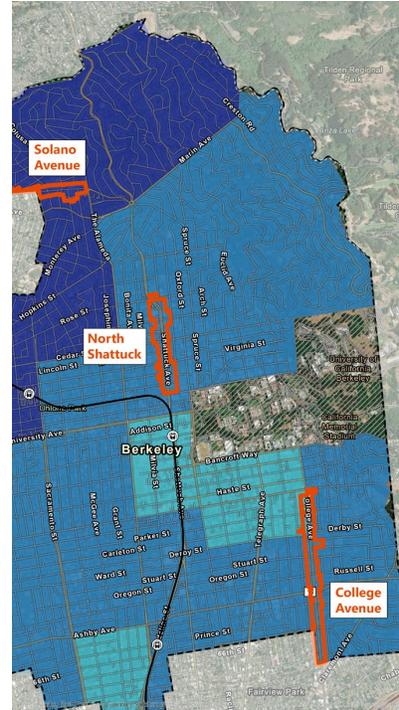
The Corridors Zoning Update is focused on land use and zoning standards that enhance housing capacity and address development barriers to advance fair housing and augment housing capacity, with a focus on equity and inclusion. The re-zoning effort launched earlier this year, and it is estimated to be completed at the end of 2026. The initial community meeting was held on May 1, 2025. The PowerPoint presentation from the meeting can be found here.

This initiative, which is just beginning, is an opportunity for affordable housing and arts organizations and advocates to be engaged to:

- Ensure that live-work spaces are permitted as part of the re-zoning; and
- Permit ground floor spaces in new residential developments, both market rate and affordable, to be used, by right, as flexible spaces that can accommodate offices and performance, exhibition and classroom facilities.

Affordable housing should be prioritized and incentivized:

- City-owned properties within the three corridors should be studied for feasibility for conversion into affordable housing sites; and
- A set-aside of affordable units for low-income artists should be included (see report recommendation #1 regarding adopting an ordinance implementing AB 812.)



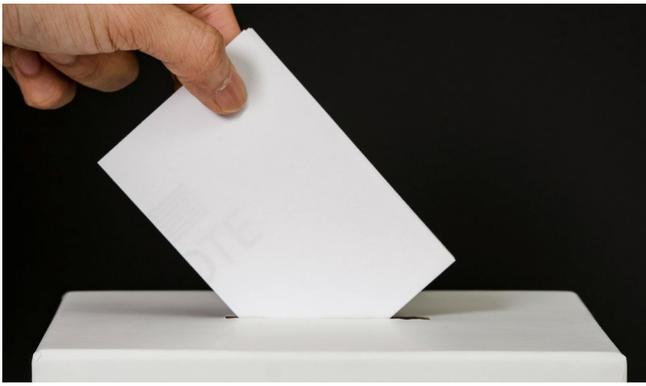
The city of Berkeley has identified sites for housing opportunities.

3 Place an affordable housing bond measure on the 2028 ballot.

In 2018, the voters approved Measure O, with 77.5% of voters voting yes. Measure O provides \$135 million of funding from bond revenue to pay for affordable housing projects. Since approval of Measure O, over 750 units of affordable housing have been built or are under construction and hundreds of units have been approved for funding and are in the development pipeline. The city completed two of the planned four issuances of the Measure O bond, with the third issuance anticipated in 2025.

The City does not have an annual Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) process to allocate Measure O funds, but instead issues NOFAs when sufficient funding is available to support one or more projects. There are no immediate plans for a NOFA for the estimated \$1.8M in remaining Measure O funds. Staff anticipates that remaining Measure O funds could be used to support pipeline projects that need additional subsidy, or may be used to support a new project, in conjunction with other local housing funds.

While there are major affordable housing projects in the development pipeline, including the North Berkeley and Ashby BART stations, Measure O funds have been expended, encumbered, or reserved for identified projects. Therefore, there are no significant local funds that can be used for new affordable housing projects. Local funding is a critical component of affordable housing development as \$1 of local funding can leverage up to \$5-\$7 of additional funding.



Local matching funds make projects more competitive when applying for state and federal funding, and are essential for securing Low Income Housing Tax Credit funding, a key affordable housing mechanism. Without a new local source of affordable housing funding, the forward progress in addressing the city’s affordable housing crisis will be stalled and the gains in reducing the number of unhoused

people and providing stable housing for low-income families and individuals will be reversed. Therefore, it is imperative that the city begin the process of placing a new affordable housing bond measure on the November 2028 ballot.

A 2028 bond measure can ensure funding for:

- Workforce housing, including housing for artists;
- Redeveloping the West Berkeley Senior Center site on 6th Street;
- A Social Housing pilot project(s); and
- Initiatives identified in the San Pablo Specific Plan and Corridors Zoning Update.

“... it is imperative that the city begin the process of placing a new affordable housing bond measure on the November 2028 ballot.”

4 Partner with regional arts and affordable housing organizations to identify a large site, or multiple small sites, for an affordable housing project (new- build or existing properties) for low-income artists, provide technical assistance, pre-development funding or other resources as necessary to kick-start such a project.

The city is fortunate to be part of a vibrant affordable housing and arts ecosystem. While the development of housing projects can take years, in the short term, it is also important for the city to work to support and retain its diverse workforce and residents.

City Housing and Economic Development staff could seek to work in close partnership with

arts organizations, including Artist Space Trust who is already providing technical assistance programming to educate their members and the larger arts community on accessing existing affordable housing, navigating the Section 8 wait list, monitoring various housing advocacy and provider websites, learning about community land trust housing, and more.



Several housing developments exist which aim at housing artists —from a proposed project on Market Street in San Francisco, CA (upper left) to the majestic Warren Building / the Artspace Uptown Artist Lofts (left) in Michigan City, IN and Westbeth Artists Housing in New York City, NY (lower left).

Longer-term, and working in partnership, these same arts organizations are a vital asset to the city in the development of an artist-centered affordable housing project. The project would incorporate best practices gathered from across the sector to create affordable housing for low-income arts workers. It could include live-work units and studio spaces, define finance and ownership structures, and importantly, continue to deliver vital technical assistance programs, aimed at informing and engaging the most vulnerable within our arts community. All the lessons learned, and expertise gained, could then inform other artist-centered housing projects and zoning programs and policies, with the goal of preserving and growing the arts as an impactful economic sector and retaining and expanding the artist community in Berkeley.

Specific activities might include:

- Explore the feasibility of a NOFA for an artist-specific affordable housing project to be funded in part with Housing Trust Fund monies.
- If sufficient funds are not available for a NOFA, develop a pilot project to provide technical assistance and pre-development funding to support an affordable housing project for artists to be awarded through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process.
- Hold a workshop for arts organizations about how to access affordable housing with information about Section 8, the Inclusionary Housing program, the Housing Preference Policy, non-profit housing development organizations, and housing advocacy groups like East Bay Housing Organization (EBHO). The workshop could also include information about Fair Housing and the Rent Stabilization Program.

5 Implement the short- and medium-term strategies recommended in the Berkeley Social Housing Study - Draft - May 2025.

The Draft Berkeley Social Housing Study advances a vision of housing as a universal right and outlines how Berkeley can integrate social housing principles into local policy. It highlights the city's acute housing challenges – widespread rent burdens, homelessness, displacement of residents, and a persistent shortfall in affordable housing—indicating that current efforts are falling short of the need.

Drawing on international models (like Vienna and Denmark) and a U.S. example (Montgomery County, MD), the study finds that social housing can be effectively delivered by public and/or nonprofit entities if backed by sustained funding, and that when such housing constitutes a large share of the total stock, it dramatically improves overall affordability. Key findings emphasize the need for: 1) long-term public investment, 2) strict cost controls to keep development costs down, and 3) strong tenant participation in housing management to ensure success.

The study's financial analysis (comparing a mixed-income, cross-subsidy approach to a deeply affordable model) found that acquiring and rehabilitating existing buildings is more cost-effective per unit than new construction and can create affordable homeownership opportunities; however, delivering new social housing at scale will require either including some market-rate units to cross-subsidize lower rents or securing much larger public subsidies—in all cases, substantial outside funding is needed to reach the lowest-income households.

In the near term (1–3 years), the study recommends launching pilot projects to demonstrate social housing principles – for example, a mixed-income development and an acquisition-rehab project converting rentals to affordable homes. It also suggests bolstering existing programs by: 1) expanding the Small Sites Program (with sustainable funding) to preserve at-risk buildings, 2) encouraging cost-saving construction methods (like modular design), and 3) leveraging public land for affordable housing developments.

Over the medium term (4–10 years), the study calls for a 10-Year Affordable Housing Strategic Plan to set clear social housing goals (including targets for income mix and what proportion of Berkeley’s housing stock should be social) and to clarify the City’s future role in housing (whether to remain a funder or become a direct housing provider). The plan would also identify sites for future projects, institute formal cost controls on development (such as limits on unit size, per-unit cost, and developer fees), and explore new public financing tools like infrastructure financing districts to support social housing. Finally, the study urges efforts to “decommodify” housing by preserving affordable units long-term and establishing robust tenant governance structures (such as participatory budgeting and rent transparency) to ensure housing is treated as a public good.

“ ... the study urges efforts to “decommodify” housing by preserving affordable units long-term and establishing robust tenant governance structures ... to ensure housing is treated as a public good. ”

6 Adopt a standardized process for designating local cultural districts and applying for State cultural district designation

The City of Berkeley currently has two locally designated cultural districts. However, they are implemented differently:

1. The Arts District Overlay was established in Berkeley Municipal Code 23.204.130.D in 2012, as part of the Downtown Area Plan, and has specific boundaries outlined in the Downtown Mixed-Use District.
2. The Black Arts & Culture District was designated by the City Council on February 13, 2024, by Resolution No. 71,212–N.S. The Black Arts & Cultural District is not designated with its own unique boundaries, but rather by reference to the Adeline Corridor Specific Plan, which allows and “strongly encourage[s]” arts and entertainment uses in ground floor spaces.

In December 2024, the City Council referred to the City Manager and Civic Arts Commission the task of establishing common standards for locally designated cultural districts, with the recommendation that the city should consider a standard process for cultural district designation such that the above and future designations can qualify under AB 812 as a “similar locally designated cultural district.”

The referral also directs city staff to consider seeking state-level cultural district designation once local standards are in place. With the adoption of AB 189 (2015), the state of California launched the California Cultural District program as a pilot in 2017, with 14 state-designated cultural districts certified by the California Arts Council. In June 2025, the Council launched a second round of the California Cultural Districts program to select another 10 state-designated cultural districts.

Adopting common standards for locally designated cultural district will leverage the power of the AB 812 implementing ordinance by expanding the universe of available BMR set-aside units for lower-income artists, as these set-aside units can be located with 1/2 mile of a state-designated cultural district.

7 Preserve the funding or a guaranteed basic income (GBI) pilot project and explore the feasibility of including low-income artists and cultural workers as a category of eligible participants in the pilot project.

The feasibility of including low-income artists and cultural workers as eligible participants in a Guaranteed Basic Income pilot project should be explored in recognition of their economic vulnerability and contribution to Berkeley’s cultural and economic vitality.

As part of its Reimagining Public Safety initiative, the City Council budgeted \$50,000 to hire a consultant to develop a Guaranteed Basic Income (GBI) pilot project. According to staff, this project has not moved forward and the designated funding will be examined among competing priorities for the city budget in the fall. When the GBI pilot project is re-evaluated in the fall, HAC and the Civic Arts Commission recommend that the funding be retained for this initiative.



Artists share the same challenges as other economically precarious workers with irregular incomes. Participation in a GBI program could help stabilize housing and access to work spaces, thereby retaining an important sector of the local economy. A study of Oakland’s recently concluded GBI pilot program showed that the GBI pilot program resulted in more modest employment and modest improvements in housing outcomes, including less likelihood of becoming homeless, compared to the control group. Moving forward with a GBI pilot project is essential given all the on-going and anticipated cuts to federal and state social safety net programs and services. Strategies to meet the needs of lower income workers must be explored and implemented as resources shrink and the need grows. Developing and refining best practices is an important part of this effort if we are to support and sustain the arts and the working artists who make up the arts workforce.

“Berkeley has a long history of supporting the arts and artists with specific policies and requirements to ensure its standing as a vibrant and forward-looking community.”

CONCLUSIONS

Berkeley has a long history of supporting the arts and artists with specific policies and requirements to ensure its standing as a vibrant and forward-looking community. Its original Arts and Culture Plan was approved over 20 years ago. During this time, the city has weathered the Great Recession of 2008; multiple housing cycles and downturns resulting, at various times, in increases in its unhoused residents; a growing affordable housing crisis; a pandemic; and most recently, an unprecedented attack on the social safety net and funding for the arts and humanities by the federal government.

At the same time, the city has worked hard to address these challenges, with citizens voting for several measures to fund programs to reduce homelessness and build affordable housing. During the pandemic, the city provided emergency funding to non-profit arts organizations and tenants to prevent displacement. The city has undertaken several planning initiatives to incentivize more equitable development and pave the way for more affordable housing opportunities. These efforts must be built upon to realize the goal of supporting the long-term sustainability of the arts and culture sector. Adopting this report’s recommendations will go a long way to achieving that effort.

APPENDIX A

ORDINANCE NO. _____

Implementation of AB 812 (Chapter 747) Authorizing a Certain Percentage of Affordable Units be Reserved for Artists up to 10% of those Required Affordable Housing Units Consistent with the City of Berkeley's Affordable Housing Preference Policy

BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Berkeley as follows:

Section 1. That Berkeley Municipal Code Chapter 23.328 is amended to read as follows:

Section 23.328.010

Findings and Purpose.

Section 23.328.010 is amended to add the following:

H. AB 812 (Chapter 747) authorizes a city or county that requires, as a condition of approval, that a certain percentage of units of a residential development be affordable housing, as specified, to reserve for artists up to 10% of those required affordable housing units, if certain conditions are met, including that the units reserved are located within or within one-half mile from a state-designated cultural district or within a locally designated cultural district, as specified.

I. The City of Berkeley has two locally designated cultural districts. The Black Arts and Culture District was designated by the City Council on February 13, 2024 by Resolution No. 71,212–N.S. 2. The Arts District Overlay was established in Berkeley Municipal Code 23.204.130.D in 2012 as part of the Downtown Area Plan.

J. According to a 2022 survey produced for Berkeley's Civic Arts Commission by Creative Equity Research Partners, the 163 local artists surveyed represent a cross-section of Berkeley's most vulnerable populations, and high housing costs are placing the community's thriving cultural sector at increasing risk of displacement. Artistic professions are highly valued but poorly compensated. Of the 88% respondents who had Bachelor's degrees, 60% reported an annual

household income of \$69,000 or below, which qualified as Low Income in Alameda County. 45% were rent-burdened. This disparity also intersects with the racial wealth gap: among respondents who identified as non-White, 72%, reported low household incomes, compared to 55% among those who identified as White or Caucasian.

K. In 2023, the City Council approved the City of Berkeley's 2023-2031 Housing Element Update, which included several programs to produce and preserve affordable housing for a broad population including Policy H- 8 (Workforce Housing): Develop Workforce Housing for low- and moderate-income households, including teachers, artists, and other residents who work in the City of Berkeley.

L. In 2023, the City Council approved an Affordable Housing Preference Policy for individuals who have previously been displaced from Berkeley and desire to return. Implementation of the AB 812 affordable housing set-aside for low-income artists shall be consistent with the Affordable Housing Preference Policy as it may be amended from time to time.

Section 23.328.020

Definitions

Section 23.328.020 is amended to add the following:

"Affordable housing" for the purposes of implementing AB 812 (Chapter 747) means units dedicated to moderate-income, lower income, very low income, or extremely low income households, as defined in Sections 50079.5, 50093, 50105, and 50106 of the Health and Safety Code, at an affordable housing cost, as defined by Section 50052.5 of the Health and Safety Code.

"Artist" for the purposes of this Chapter means the creator of any work of visual, graphic, or performing art of any media, including, but not limited to, a painting, print, drawing, sculpture, craft, photograph, film, or performance.

APPENDIX A ... continued

Section 23.328.030 Affordable Housing Regulations

Section 23.328.030 Affordable Housing Regulations is amended to add the following:

A. Requirement to Construct Affordable Units.

A. 10. Pursuant to AB 812 (Chapter 747), up to 10% of the required Affordable Units shall be reserved for Artists, if certain conditions are met, including that the units reserved are located within or within one-half mile from a state-designated cultural district or within a locally designated cultural district. The percentage of Affordable Units set aside for Artists and consistency with the City’s Affordable Housing Preference Policy shall be determined by the City Manager or their designee who may promulgate additional rules and regulations consistent with the requirements of AB 812 (Chapter 747).

Section 2. The City Council intends that this Ordinance be construed as an amendment to the City’s existing affordability requirements, and that the repeal and re-enactment of any requirement shall not be construed to relieve a party of any outstanding obligation to comply with the requirements applicable to any previously approved Housing Development Project.

Section 3. Copies of this Ordinance shall be posted for two days prior to adoption in the display case located near the walkway in front of the Maudelle Shirek Building, 2134 Martin Luther King Jr. Way. Within 15 days of adoption, copies of this Ordinance shall be filed at each branch of the Berkeley Public Library and the title shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation.

At a regular meeting of the Council of the City of Berkeley held on _____, 20_____, this Ordinance was passed to print and ordered published by posting by the following vote:

Ayes: _____ Nos: _____

Absent: _____

Credits/ Art and Photographs

Cover: (From left to right) Berkeley Art Museum-Pacific Film Archives; Sawtooth Building Artist Studios; La Pena Building Mural, Berkeley, photos by Daniella Thompson; Maudelle Miller Shirek Community (housing development) image provided by MWA Architects; the Campanille, image courtesy of U.C. Berkeley; The Ashby Stage: Home of the Shotgun Players, photo by Daniella Thompson.

Page 2: 2902 Adeline Street Site Plan (detail) by Trachtenberg Architects

Page 5: Photograph by Pexels/Cottonbro

Page 8: The City of Berkeley/North Shattuck, College, Solano Corridors Plan

Page 9: “Vote” photograph by Pexels/Sora Shimazaki (top); 1687 Market Street, rendering by Mark Cavagnero Associates (bottom inset), Warren Building image provided by Artspace, Westbeth Artists Housing photograph by Graham Dickie/*The New York Times* (bottom inset).

Page 12: Photograph by Pexels/Pixabay



**Draft Minutes
Civic Arts Commission
Wednesday, July 23, 2025
6:00 PM**

**Meeting Location: Tarea Hall Pittman South Branch Library
1901 Russell St, Berkeley, CA 94703**

Agenda

1. CALL TO ORDER: 6:04 PM

2. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present: Bachrach, Blecher, Bullwinkel, Montgomery, Pineda, Woo

Commissioners Absent: Scott

Staff Present: Hilary Amnah, Grants Program Lead; Jennifer Lovvorn, Commission Secretary/Chief Cultural Affairs Officer; Mark Salinas, Public Art Program Lead

Members of the public present: 7

3. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

4. PUBLIC COMMENT (for items not on the agenda): None

5. COMMUNICATIONS: None

6. CHAIR'S REPORT

- a) Joint Subcommittee with Housing Advisory Commission ending and final report

7. PRESENTATIONS, DISCUSSION & ACTION ITEMS

- a) **Information Report:** Turtle Island Monument Project Contract Negotiations Impasse Presented by Jennifer Lovvorn, Chief Cultural Affairs Officer/Commission Secretary

Public Comment: 6

- b) **Action Item:** Final Report with Recommendations to Council on Affordable Housing for Artists from the Joint Subcommittee of the Housing Advisory Commission and the Civic Arts Commission

M/S/C (Blecher/Pineda) to approve final report with recommendations to Council on affordable housing for artists from the Joint Subcommittee of the Housing Advisory Commission and the Civic Arts Commission.

Vote: Ayes — Bachrach, Blecher, Bullwinkel, Montgomery, Pineda, Woo; Nays — None; Abstain — None; Absent — Scott.

Public Comment: None

- c) **Action Item:** Willard Clubhouse: Construction Document Phase of public art project by Julie Chang

Introduced by Mark Salinas, Public Art Program Lead; Presented by Chandra Cerrito, Willard Clubhouse Public Art Project Manager.

M/S/C (Bullwinkel/Blecher) to approve construction document phase deliverables for public art project by Julie Chang for Willard Clubhouse.

Vote: Ayes — Bachrach, Blecher, Bullwinkel, Montgomery, Pineda, Woo; Nays — None; Abstain — None; Absent — Scott.

Public Comment: None

- d) **Information Report:** Quarterly Grant-Funded Festivals Report
Presented by Hilary Amnah, Grants Program Lead

Public Comment: 2

8. STAFF REPORT

- a) Civic Arts Program Updates, Jen Lovvorn
- b) Grants Program Updates, Hilary Amnah
- c) Public Art Program Updates, Mark Salinas

9. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a) Grants – Next meeting is September 5.
- b) Public Art – No Report.
- c) Policy Subcommittee – July 25 meeting cancelled.
- d) Joint Subcommittee with Housing Advisory Commission – Approved report draft of recommendations to Council for affordable housing for artists document; will vote on finalized document at August 5 meeting.
- e) Representative on Design Review Committee – One project under preliminary review from last meeting.

10. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a) **Action Item:** Draft June 25, 2025 Meeting Minutes
M/S/C (Bullwinkel/Blecher) to approve final June 25, 2025 Meeting Minutes.
Vote: Ayes — Bachrach, Blecher, Bullwinkel, Montgomery, Woo; Nays — None;
Abstain — Pineda; Absent — Scott.
Public Comment: None

11. COMMISSIONER ANNOUNCEMENTS

12. ADJOURNMENT: 8:23 PM

- M/S/C** (Bullwinkel/Blecher) to adjourn.
Vote: Ayes — Bachrach, Blecher, Bullwinkel, Montgomery, Pineda, Woo; Nays —
None; Abstain — None; Absent — Scott
Public Comment: None

Staff Contact:



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