



DATE: February 24, 2022 AGENDA ITEM: 4.A

TO: Public Art Committee

FROM: David Ward, Public Art Specialist

SUBJECT: Small Artwork Commission - Evaluation of Final Design Proposal for
Consideration of Awarding Contract to Rough Edge Collective

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Petaluma Public Art Committee (PPAC) review and approve the proposal by Rough Edge Collective for the Small Artworks Commission 2021 as identified by the PPAC for proposal development. The selected proposal will be awarded a contract to execute the proposal as described utilizing feedback from the PPAC to support the artwork proposal.

BACKGROUND

In 2017, the PPAC provided direction and feedback to staff to create a program to, “Issue one call for artists for [a] smaller public art piece” by January 2018. With feedback from the Committee, Staff presented a draft RFP to the PPAC on December 7, 2017. On January 25, 2018, the PPAC approved the Small Artworks RFP. The culmination of that RFP is the Keller Street Parking Garage Mural by artist Ryan Petersen. The first phase of the mural which was approved through the Small Artworks Program and completed in December 2020. A second phase to expand the mural was approved as an amendment to the original contract and is now completed, extending the entirety of the eastern, exterior wall of the Keller Street Parking Garage with frontage along Telephone Alley.

In 2021, the PPAC expressed interest in issuing a new RFP for small artwork with minor updates to the program’s procedure and commission details. On March 25, 2021, staff presented an updated draft to the Committee for feedback and continued discussion of the item on June 24, 2021. Following the June PPAC meeting, staff incorporated Committee comments to revise the RFP to include clarified project goals, streamlined eligibility information and application requirements, and finally a focus on the desired site locations for East Petaluma for the 2021 commission (Attachment B).

On July 22, 2021, the PPAC unanimously approved the revised Small Artwork RFP at their regular meeting with minor feedback and directing staff to issue the RFP on August 1, 2021. Applications were accepted for the commission opportunity over the next two months and 27 completed submissions were submitted before closing on September 30, 2021.

At the October 28th 2021 PPAC meeting, staff presented the Committee with top-scoring proposals as ranked and reviewed anonymously by the Committee prior to the presentation. The Committee selected two (2) artist teams to be invited to further develop their proposals by working with staff and an assigned subcommittee for each team. These two selected teams were Rough Edge Collective from Santa Rosa, CA and Calderón-Delgado from Los Angeles, CA. At the same meeting, subcommittees were formed to work with each team; Committee members Smith and Coldiron volunteered to work with Calderón-Delgado and Committee member Earl and Committee chair Abercrombie volunteered to work with Rough Edge Collective.

DISCUSSION

The 2013 Public Art Master Plan (PAMP) calls for approximately 65 percent of the annual Public Art Funds be allocated towards artwork acquisition and commissions. The Small Artworks program commissions site-specific artwork proposals on public property within the city limits. The goals of the program are consistent with the PAMP by aiming to foster a sense of beauty at the artwork site, represent the diversity of our community, provide opportunity to underserved artists including artists of color, activate neighborhoods that may not have existing public art, and be low maintenance and appropriate for public space (Attachment C).

At the beginning of the fiscal year 2021-22 there was an estimated overall balance of \$719,000 in the public art fund. As presented to the PPAC in December 2021 (Attachment D), there are several projects in process for which budget is allocated but not spent. Based on the fund balance as of July 1, 2021 and including accounting of funds previously committed for projects such as the *River Arch* and *Fine Balance*, the resulting allocation for artwork acquisition and commissions for public property for the 2021-2022 fiscal year is approximately \$282,100. The PPAC expressed a potential interest in funding both proposals for the Small Artwork Commission in October 2021, where the \$25,000 budget for each proposal is within this allocation and there are adequate funds available to move forward with both proposals if desired.

The Small Artwork Commission seeks to achieve the previously stated goals which should be addressed in the project proposal. The stated project goals should be incorporated in the proposed artwork and used as major points for the PPAC to review the proposal for funding award. Additionally, the PPAC uniquely decided to focus the 2021's Small Artwork Commission on publicly accessible and city-controlled sites in East Petaluma.

Due to the unique choice in focusing the 2021 commission opportunity on Petaluma's east side in combination with requiring applying artists to research eligible sites fitting the stated criteria, both subcommittees experienced difficulties in finding viable project sites that met these requirements and enabled the artist's medium. This challenge to find eligible sites for the commission slowed the overall progress during the proposal phase for both groups, which hindered the artists' ability to begin designing their site-specific proposal throughout much of this process. Because of these factors, the subcommittees expanded the site eligibility to the Old East Petaluma, which is east of the Petaluma River, after an exhaustive search for eligible sites with little success and the proposal deadline nearing. This amendment was made after discussion and consideration of the overall project goals and determination that expanding the site search would achieve the primary project goals and support the artists' proposed vision for the artwork, outweighing the East Petaluma site selection in the proposal's review. Originally identified sites, such as the Santa Rosa Junior

College campus, the US Postal Service Office, the Petaluma Transit Center, and Fire Stations #2 and #3 were not pursued as site candidates after further examination for a variety of reasons including planned site improvements, upcoming art commissions, and inadequate access and jurisdiction over the sites to meet the project's requirements.

Given the challenge in finding an appropriate site that met all of the original stipulations, staff suggests that in the future the committee include potential sites in the commission instead of requiring artists to select sites. As a newer commission program, staff recommends utilizing this experience for future opportunities to select a project site prior to releasing the Request for Proposals with the Small Artwork Commission. The artists were directed by the City to expand their search criteria during the proposal process and acted under staff and subcommittee direction. Additionally, the artists were assured by staff that this amendment would not reflect on their proposal's eligibility and will be a critique to the commission's continued improvement.

After consideration and collaboration between staff, the artist teams, and the applicable subcommittees, the follow is the project proposed for award:

***Making Progress* by Rough Edge Collective**

Rough Edge Collective proposes a mural entitled *Making Progress* for the Petaluma Swim Center located at 900 East Washington Street (Attachment D). On the northeastern, northwestern, and southwestern exterior façades of the main building that parallels East Washington, the mural would cover the entire wall franking the parking lot entrance to the facility and round the two adjacent walls on both sides of the parking lot-facing wall. The walls of the building are cinderblock, which would allow the artists minimal issues with the walls' texture and application.

Making Progress's design is a narrative read from left to right, intending to welcome the community and describe its self-growth in its composition. The artists describe Petaluma as a community in pursuit of similar passions and goals, which the mural content interprets in its elements as becoming friends, comrades, and even family building a second 'home' together. Using motifs that embody motion, the artists portray this forward transition using bold shapes and color, inspired by the Swim Center's original paint color, to bring vibrancy and warmth to a location that hosts friends and families alike.

Rough Edge Collective is comprised of MJ Lindo-Lawyer and Joshua Lawyer, who are the founders and executive directors. MJ and Joshua are local artists based in Santa Rosa, California and are a married couple with over 20 years of professional experience specializing in fine art. Rough Edge Collective is committed to advancing mural art to higher levels by dedicating impactful artwork to enrich the community's landscape and its members.

The Petaluma Swim Center is city-owned and operated by the Parks and Recreation Department. If approved, the artists and planning staff will work closely with Parks and Recreation to share the design concept, working timeline, develop a general maintenance plan, and any other arrangements necessary for site access and logistics.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Draft Resolution – Rough Edge Collective
- B. Small Artwork Commission – 2021 Request For Proposals
- C. FY2021-22 Quarterly Budget Report (December 2021)
- D. *Making Progress* by Rough Edge Collective – Proposal Package