

July 2020

Alameda County Arts Commission

Public Art on East 14th Street in Ashland!

Overview

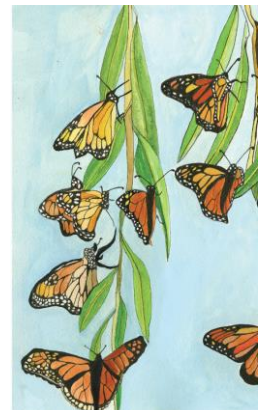
The County of Alameda is working on a corridor improvement project along East 14th Street between 162nd Avenue and the I-238 freeway overpass in Ashland. The intent of the corridor improvement project is to make the street safer for people walking, biking, and driving, to revitalize and beautify the corridor, and increase community pride. The Alameda County Arts Commission is working alongside the County's Public Works Agency to include public artwork in this project.

NEW! - Project Update

The Alameda County Arts Commission is pleased to announce that artist Miriam Klein Stahl has been awarded the public art contract for the East 14th Street Corridor Improvement Project. Stahl's contract was approved by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors on June 30, 2020. Stahl is currently working on the artwork designs.

Stahl was selected from a group of 5 semifinalist artists by the Artist Selection Committee, comprised of community members and a local artist. Stahl is creating designs for 17 unique cut metal art panels that will be placed in the street medians along East 14th Street. The panels will be painted a solid color which will be determined at a later date. Stahl is also creating 16 smaller designs that will be cut in metal and inset on the tops of seating placed along the sidewalks. The 16 smaller designs will be repeated and appear on a total of 53 seat tops. Lastly, the artist is creating 10 designs that will wrap utility boxes as well as 2-4 designs to be printed on street banners. Preliminary designs are in progress. It is anticipated that the designs will be completed in early 2021.

The overall theme of the artwork is "Keep Close to Nature". The artwork invokes the beauty of the natural world, resilience, and a sustainable future for communities. The imagery explores how all the living things in the neighborhood live in harmony and how we are interdependent. Stahl is creating the designs as paper cuts which will then be turned into digital files for use by the fabricator who will laser cut the designs into the metal.



Example of preliminary designs for the cut metal panels (left and middle) and utility box (right) created by artist Miriam Klein Stahl. Stahl is in the process of creating more images as part of this series. All designs will be completed in early 2021.

Project Background

Community involvement and engagement are at the core of this project. Community members have been involved throughout the project by serving on the artist selection committee, contributing to community surveys about Ashland, participating in a community roundtable as well as community meetings.

The Artist Selection Committee met on September 13, 2019 to review the qualifications and past work of the artists in the Project Pool. The Artist Selection Committee selected 6 artists as semi-finalists who were invited to create proposals for the project. The artist semi-finalists were reviewed and approved by the Alameda County Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC) and the Members of Arts Commission.

On October 17, 2019, a Community Roundtable was held with the artist semi-finalists at the Ashland Community Center. During the Roundtable, community members had the opportunity to share thoughts about the special characteristics of Ashland and how those characteristics should be reflected in the proposals for the public art. Community members also contributed ideas through an online survey. The artist semi-finalists considered the community survey and Roundtable comments when developing their proposals.

The proposals were on display for community members to view in-person at the San Lorenzo Library and online from December 20, 2019 – January 30, 2020. The Arts Commission Staff also took the proposals to REACH Ashland Youth Center, made a presentation, and collected feedback from youth and REACH Staff on January 30, 2020. Community members were encouraged to submit comments describing why each of the artists' proposals may or may not be a good match for the community. All of the comments were shared with the Artist Selection Committee and the Committee was asked to consider the comments when making a recommendation of which artist to select for the project.

The Artist Selection Committee reconvened on February 7, 2020 to review the proposals and interview the semi-finalists. At that meeting, the Committee recommended that artist Miriam Klein Stahl receive the design contract for the project. On February 27, the Alameda County Public Art Advisory Committee reviewed and approved Stahl as the recommended artist.

On March 10, the Eden Area Municipal Advisory Council (Eden Area MAC) reviewed and approved Stahl as the selected artist. To read the report to the Eden Area MAC about the East 14th Street Corridor public art project, visit: http://www.acgov.org/board/bos_calendar/documents/DocsAgendaReg_3_10_20/GENERAL%20ADMINISTRATION/Regular%20Calendar/Item_1_artists_recommend_3_10_20.pdf

Additionally, video footage of the meeting can be found on the Eden Area MAC's Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/pg/edenarea/videos/?ref=page_internal

The selection of Stahl was presented to the Members of the Alameda County Arts Commission on May 13 for approval. Stahl's contract was approved by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors on June 30, 2020. Stahl is currently working on the artwork designs for the project.

Artist Selection Committee

The Artist Selection Committee members for this project are:

- Nico Berry, Arts Professional
- Sharon Bohoman, Community Representative
- Stella Chui, Community Representative
- Celeste Johnson, Community Representative
- Saleen Moreno, Community Representative
- Erik Sakamoto, REACH Ashland Youth Center
- Barisha Spriggs, Community Representative

Project Management

The Alameda County Arts Commission staff manages this project utilizing the same approach used for past public

art projects involving community outreach and engagement, an open competitive selection process, and multi-step reviews and approvals. This process was used in recent public art projects in the unincorporated areas including the Ashland Community Identifier, Cherryland Community Center, Cherryland Fire Station, Castro Valley Streetscape Improvement Project, Castro Valley and San Lorenzo Libraries and REACH Ashland Youth Center.

Main Project Steps

- July - Sept 2019 - Community survey & submission of interest forms regarding selection committee
- Sept 2019 - Selection Committee meeting and selection of artist semi-finalists
- Oct 2019 - Community Roundtable and online survey
- Oct - Dec 2019 - Artist semi-finalists develop proposals
- Late Dec 2019 - Jan 2020 - Proposals on display at San Lorenzo Library and online for public comments
- Feb 7, 2020 - Selection Committee reconvenes to select artist and make recommendation
- Feb - March 2020 - Presentations to community groups in Ashland and Eden Area MAC
- March - June 2020 - Approvals by Members of the Arts Commission and County Board of Supervisors
- June 2020 - Artist under contract as per regular procedure for County public art projects
- Mid 2020 - 2021 - Artwork design period
- Early 2022 - Estimated completion of project

Get Connected & Stay Informed!

Email artscommission@acgov.org to be added to the Arts Commission's email list about this project.

About the Alameda County Arts Commission & the County's Public Art Ordinance

The Arts Commission was established in 1965 by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors. The Members of the Arts Commission govern the services of the Commission and act in an advisory capacity to the Board of Supervisors concerning the arts and the cultural environment in the County. The Arts Commission is comprised of fifteen community members appointed by the Board of Supervisors, and seven ex-officio members representing County Departments and leading educational and cultural institutions. The Arts Commission's programs are managed by a staff of four full-time County employees.

The Alameda County Arts Commission is dedicated to improving the quality of life in Alameda County by nurturing a thriving environment for the arts; promoting economic opportunities for Alameda County's artists and arts organizations through services such as arts funding, public art, and arts education; encouraging public participation in the arts and actively advocating for the arts. The Arts Commission supports all art forms including visual, performing, literary, traditional, and media arts. All of the Arts Commission's services are based on the belief that the arts and creativity are an essential part of every successful and thriving community.

The Alameda County Board of Supervisors established Alameda County's "Percent for Art" ordinance in 1994. The Public Art Program provides for public art elements connected to capital improvement projects undertaken by the County. By ordinance, the Arts Commission Staff are responsible for the management and administration of the Public Art Program. All aspects of the program are conducted in-house by the Arts Commission Staff. The goals of the Public Art Program are to generate positive, uplifting art experiences that create a sense of place, foster involvement with and respect for the regional community and users of the buildings, and promote the economic vitality of the County. For each site, unique artworks are created by professional artists and are integrated into the design of the structure or landscaping. Artwork is purchased or commissioned through an open, competitive process. The Public Art Program is administered with guidance from the Public Art Advisory Committee, a body of nine appointed community members.