



# City of Pomona

## Cultural Arts Commission

### Draft Action Minutes

*Chairperson Lisa Soiseth*  
*Vice-Chairperson Nancy Tessier*  
*Commissioner Jovani Esparza*  
*Commissioner Angel Arellano*  
*Commissioner Dianna Batts*  
*Commissioner Christian Ornelas*  
*Commissioner Aida Lugo*

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April 27, 2026

5:35 PM

Council Chambers

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#### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Lisa Soiseth called the Cultural Arts Commission meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. in Council Chambers.

#### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chairperson Lisa Soiseth led the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### **ROLL CALL**

Present: Chairperson Lisa Soiseth  
Vice-Chairperson Nancy Tessier  
Commissioner Jovani Esparza  
Commissioner Angel Arellano  
Commissioner Aida Lugo  
Commissioner Christina Ornelas

Absent: Commissioner Dianna Batts

Staff Present: Ata Khan, Deputy Director of OEBA  
Jocelyn Ayala, AIPP Program Manager  
June Ku, AIPP Program Coordinator  
Alan Fortune, Associate Planner

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

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## **COMMISSIONER COMMUNICATION**

Commissioner Ornelas shared about going to a talk with Father Greg Boyle of Homeboy industries and connected with him to discuss gang intervention for graffiti. Also, shared connecting with God’s Pantry.

Commissioner Arellano concurred about connecting and learning more about gang intervention for graffiti abatement. Also, shared how great it was to see the watercolor contest at the dA.

## **CONSENT CALENDAR**

### **1. Approval of Action Minutes from the Cultural Arts Commission Meeting of March 23, 2026.**

**A motion by Commissioner Ornelas, seconded by Chair Soiseth, carried by a unanimous vote of the members present (6-0-0-1) to approve the March 23, 2026 Action Minutes.**

Chairperson Soiseth – yes; Vice-Chairperson Tessier – yes; Commissioner Ornelas – yes; Commissioner Batts – absent; Commissioner Lugo – yes; Commissioner Esparza – yes; Commissioner Arellano – yes.

**IN OPPOSITION:** None

**IN SUPPORT:** None

**DISCUSSION TIME:** 6 minutes (5:38 p.m. to 5:44 p.m.)

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

### **1. Final Design Plan (PUBART-000141-2026) - 3101 W. Temple Ave.**

The final design plan necessitated reapproval after its approval timeline expired. The applicant representative, Ken Hao, was available for questions. Commissioner Tessier asked if the project is ready, and the applicant representative responded that it’s still under the City’s plan check process, but if all is ready by June then it’ll be ready by next year.

The applicant shared that the white flowers in the design are representative of orange flowers as a nod to Pomona’s agricultural history.

**A motion by Commissioner Esparza, seconded by Commissioner Tessier, carried by a unanimous vote of the members present (6-0-0-1) to approve Final Design Plan (PUBART-000141-2026) at 3101 W. Temple Ave.**

Chairperson Soiseth – yes; Vice-Chairperson Tessier – yes; Commissioner Ornelas – yes; Commissioner Batts – absent; Commissioner Lugo – yes; Commissioner Esparza – yes; Commissioner Arellano – yes.

**IN OPPOSITION:** None

**IN SUPPORT:** None

**DISCUSSION TIME:** 8 minutes (5:44 p.m. to 5:52 p.m.)

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

**1. SIEMENS Call for Art Part B: Proposals - Selection of Artist for Public Art Installation**

Commissioners Ornelas and Lugo recused themselves from this item at 5:53 PM. Program Manager Ayala presented that the Ad-Hoc Committee comprised of Adam Kastamo, Laura Figueroa, Alejandro Ruiz, Heather Albertson, and David Judah Oliver scored Jamies Dinh's proposal the highest. The Commission scored the Home Team's proposal the highest. In descending order of amount of engagement, public comment engaged most with the Home Team, then James Dinh, then Joe Adams.

Public Speakers Joshua Swodeck and Diana Echeverria expressed support for the Home Team in the name of supporting local artists. Public Speaker Donna Otero wished for more proposals that had a stronger connection to Pomona and SIEMENS. Public Speaker Alejandro Ruiz wants these sculptures in less industrialized areas. Public Speakers Lilianna Figueroa and David Otero, both employees of SIEMENS, felt that the proposals do not reflect SIEMENS employees.

Public Speaker George Moawad stated it'd be beneficial to have a longer span of time between releasing the open call and deadline to apply. Home Team Artist Elizabeth Redd stated the importance supporting Pomona artists as this call is a career defining opportunity and clarified that she will be using more durable and easily reparable glass in the Home Team's proposal. Artist Joe Adams said he'd be interested in collaborating with Pomona artists.

Commission asked if Staff could pause the call to allow for more collaboration with SIEMENS for the 3 artist teams to resubmit proposals that are more reflective of what SIEMENS wants. The 3 artist teams responded that they'd be receptive to that. Deputy Director Khan clarified that there has already been collaboration with SIEMENS and did not recommend pausing the call.

Public Speaker Andrew Fernandez expressed support for the Commission choosing the Home Team given that they were the most popular. Public Speaker Diana Echeverria stated that pausing the call would be a disservice to the artists given that the parameters were already stated prior and the public has already expressed their support for the Home Team. New renderings would also cost time and effort on the artists' part. Public Speaker Joshua Swodeck stated that ultimately, the community's input is most important when deciding who to move forward with.

Public Speaker Celeste Diaz also stated that pausing the call would be unnecessary and

supported the Home Team’s proposal. Public Speaker Alejandro Ruiz also expressed support for the Home Team given that they are Pomona-based.

Commissioner Esparza stated that since the community and the commission supports the Home Team, it’d be advisable to move forward with them and have them collaborate more with SIEMENS. Chairperson Soiseth agreed that it’d be helpful if that’s how everyone wants to proceed, but that further collaboration doesn’t have to be a stipulation.

**A motion by Chairperson Soiseth, seconded by Commissioner Arellano, carried by a unanimous vote of the members present (4-0-2-1) to approve Team B – the Home Team as the artist team for SIEMENS Public Art Installation.**

Chairperson Soiseth – yes; Vice-Chairperson Tessier – yes; Commissioner Ornelas – recused; Commissioner Batts – absent; Commissioner Lugo – recused; Commissioner Esparza – yes; Commissioner Arellano – yes.

**IN OPPOSITION:** None

**IN SUPPORT:** None

**DISCUSSION TIME:** 105 minutes (5:53 p.m. to 7:38 p.m.)

Chairperson Soiseth motioned for a 5-minute recess.

**2. Discussion on Public Artwork containing images of and/or dedicated to Cesar Chavez.**

Program Manager Ayala presented that given the accusations of sexual abuse against Cesar Chavez, Staff recommend 3 points of action to reckon with the three works of art in the City’s collection that depict Cesar Chavez:

1. Work with Artists Paul Botello, Gary Lett, and Pomona Unified School District to determine alterations of their artwork.
2. Hold listening sessions to discuss how to navigate potential cases of artwork alterations and suggestions for the current situation with artwork depicting Cesar Chavez.
3. Establish an Advisory Committee for the Cultural Arts Commission to formally address the concerns of the public as it pertains to alteration or removal of public artwork.

The 3 works of art depicting Cesar Chavez are The Cesar Chavez Suite by Paul Botello, Cesar Chavez Tiles by PUSD Students, and Freedom Is Not So Free, Neither is Peace! By Gary Lett.

Chairperson Soiseth asked if the Parks department would be involved, given that how they rename Cesar Chavez Park might inform how the artwork is changed. Program Manager Ayala stated that Parks undergoes a different and separate process.

Commissioner Ornelas stated that the alterations should still uplift the Chicano movement.

Public Speaker Joshua Swodeck urged the Commission to move urgently given the sensitivity

of the situation.

Commissioner Ornelas suggested painting it over first to act quickly then take time to decide after. Commissioner Lugo centered on the cultural importance of the pieces and stated that artists have civic responsibility. Program Manager Ayala stated that there is no current timeline for how long these actions will take and Staff is open to hearing any pointers from Commission.

**A motion by Chairperson Soiseth, seconded by Commissioner Ornelas carried by a unanimous vote of the members present (6-0-0-1) to approve moving forward with the three staff recommendations.**

Chairperson Soiseth – yes; Vice-Chairperson Tessier – yes; Commissioner Ornelas – yes; Commissioner Batts – absent; Commissioner Lugo – yes; Commissioner Esparza – yes; Commissioner Arellano – yes.

**IN OPPOSITION:** None

**IN SUPPORT:** None

**DISCUSSION TIME:** 37 minutes (7:51 p.m. to 8:28 p.m.)

**3. Discussion of a future potential opportunity for Public Artwork dedicated to Victor Glover.**

Deputy Director Khan noted that given the previous discussion about the drawbacks of memorializing people, the public artwork could address themes such as space exploration or education instead of Glover himself. He also noted that the dedication would have to go through NASA.

Commissioner Arellano stated that given Glover attended Allison Elementary School, it'd be a good opportunity to use artwork to celebrate Pomona and the African American community to inspire youth. Commissioner Ornelas suggested highlighting space exploration and STEM education. Chairperson Soiseth emphasized that we can celebrate those themes without venerating a particular individual. Vice Chairperson Tessier suggested placing the artwork at Allison Elementary.

Public Speaker Elizabeth Redd stated that this opens us up to the people we celebrate making mistakes. Public Speaker Alejandro Ruiz is supportive of the idea but wondered how Victor Glover himself would feel and if he has a present connection to Pomona. Chairperson Soiseth stated that Glover can be the inspiration but not the subject.

Commissioner Arellano rebuked that just because heroes have let us down as in the case of Cesar Chavez, it shouldn't prevent us from celebrating heroes in the future. Deputy Director Khan suggested opening it up to the community as a themed contest.

Discussion only no action taken.

**IN OPPOSITION:** None

**IN SUPPORT:** None

**DISCUSSION TIME:** 12 minutes (8:29 p.m. to 8:41 p.m.)

**STAFF COMMUNICATION**

Program Manager Ayala presented that Artist Carly Lake has completed her mural and two teen art workshops. The Watercolor Contest Exhibition had 38 entries, triple the amount from last year, back to pre-pandemic numbers. She thanked the commission for celebrating April Arts Month.

Program Manager Ayala presented that the best way to support our public art collection is to use the PomonaGO app to report vandalism, and that the monthly newsletter is live as of April.

Deputy Director Khan remarked on the similarity between Carly Lake's mural and the SIEMENS call in that both are public works on private property where private entities had a say in the design of the artwork.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The Cultural Arts Commission meeting was adjourned by Chairperson Lisa Soiseth at 8:50 p.m. to the next regular meeting of May 20, 2026, at 3:00 p.m. in the Admin Board Room.

Respectfully submitted,

Prepared by,

Ata Khan  
Deputy Director

June Ku  
Program Coordinator

**Attachments**

1. Draft CAC Resolution No. 26-##

*This attachment is a correction from Discussion Item #1, attachment #5. This error was relayed to commission and the public at the time of the meeting.*