



City of Pomona

CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

ADMINISTRATION | OFFICE OF ECONOMIC BUSINESS AFFAIRS

June 22, 2026

TO: Cultural Arts Commission

FROM: Ata Khan, Deputy Director of OEBA
Jocelyn Ayala, AIPP Program Manager

SUBJECT: 2022 Call for Art – Mosaic Mural by Gary Lett project update and City Council recommendation.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval of amendment to agreement between Gary V. Lett and City of Pomona for proposed mosaic mural

FISCAL IMPACT

The amendment would allocate an additional \$128,300 to the agreement to be expended from the FY 2026-2027 Art in Public Places fund budget.

PROJECT INFORMATION

As part of the 2022 Call for Art, on August 8, 2022, the Commission reviewed and approved Gary Lett's proposal for a large-scale mural mosaic ("artwork") to be located in Martin Luther King Jr. Park (APN: 8344-024-901). This artwork is titled "Freedom is not so free, neither is Peace!" and is expected to be 54 feet (width) by 11' feet (height). This artwork was proposed with a budget of \$150,820.00. It was meant to be a year-long project with several workshops dedicated to Pomona Youth aiding in the creation of the artwork. Due the scale of the artwork being underestimated, the Artist required three amendments to adjust the timeline of the project's completion.

In August 2024, Staff noted that the approved location of the artwork may not withstand the physical weight of the artwork as brought to the attention from the artist to be near two tons. Upon discussion with Building & Safety and Public Works, the approved location was no longer suitable to host the artwork due to concerns of the weight not being sustained. It's for this reason that Staff sought a new location at Martin Luther King Jr. Park. Staff spent time searching for an appropriate location and even sought Parks & Recreation Commission's approval for the new location. However, upon further research constructing a wall in the park became more unfeasible and impractical for the available areas of the park.

PROJECT LOCATION

The new project location for this artwork is the Civic Center. The artwork would be placed in front of the library on the north side facing City Hall. This location was reviewed with the Artist and openly accepted as the new location.

Approvals occurred on the following dates—

Date	Body / Permit	Action
October 27, 2025	Cultural Arts Commission	A motion by Commissioner Swodeck, seconded by Chairperson Ornelas, carried by a unanimous vote of the members present (6-0-0-0) to approve the change in mural location from MLK Park to Civic Center and the amendment of the artist Gary Lett's contract to include an additional \$5000 on the condition of commission review of pre-bid language.
November 19, 2025	Board of Library Trustees	No official motion was made, but the Board expressed support for the mosaic mural installation.
November 20, 2025	Parks and Recreation Commission	Chair Ibanez-Mandujano made a motion supporting the relocation of the Mosaic Mural artwork to Civic Center Plaza, second made by Vice Chair Oliva, carried 4-0.
February 24, 2026	Minor Certificate of Appropriateness (MINCOA-000079-2026)	Planning Manager Geoffrey Starns reviewed and determined approval.
TBD	City Council	Staff will seek final approval from City Council.

AMENDMENT REQUEST

1. Addition of fabricator and installer.

Initially, on October 27, 2026, Staff intended to initiate a capital improvement project to construct a structure to place the artwork in and support the installation of the piece. In this process, Staff is proposing adding an additional \$5,000.00 to the current agreement with the City of Pomona and Artist Gary V. Lett in order to support the Artist supervising the installation.

However, Staff had concerns about placing this item through a construction bid process that may not yield strong results for consideration of the longevity of the mosaic over cost efficiency. It is out of concern for ensuring the artwork was properly installed with the considerations of future conservation, that Staff supported the Artist in connecting with a public art consulting firm. Staff has connected frequently with the Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture (“LACDAC”) and one consulting firm that LACDAC has utilized in support of fabricating artwork in their own collection is Dyson & Womack. Staff and the Artist connected with the public art consulting firm to see if a potential collaboration could be created. Upon multiple meetings and a Staff and Artist site visit to Dyson & Womack’s fabrication shop, confidence was established in ensuring that the structure supporting the artwork would prioritize longevity of the artwork.

The Artist has agreed to include in the amendment adding Dyson & Womack as their fabricator and installer.

2. Budget modification.

The Artist has prepared the following budget:

Labor and Material: \$26,500

- 1) Artist Fee
- 2) Research and redesign of replacement image of Chavez with Larry Itliong
- 3) Identify and lay out existing boxed tiles to make diagram of the new image changeout of Chavez (locate necessary pieces, unpack and repack)
- 4) Draw schematic of basic 12-inch squares referencing the forth coming layout of the new image on clear acetate; Discover specific shapes that will become acetate templets for the all-new pieces/shapes that will be used as make-over images. Design will be projected onto clear acetate. These cut-out patterns will eventually be used during the bisque cutting process.
- 5) Making the new images: (Larry Itliong, dress portion of Mrs. King, and clouds background) Execution: Rolling-out clay slabs
- 6) Firing clay slabs (loading and unloading kiln)
- 7) Cut bisque ware per templet, glaze each piece according to existing surroundings (this will require tests firing for color-matching of surrounding areas as needed.

*Additional approximations expenses: \$4,400

- 1) Rent \$4,000
- 2) Electricity \$300

The pricing is based on what I paid during the making of the mural. A location is still being sought.

Fabrication and Installation (Dyson and Womack, of Artist): \$98,300

- 1) Existing Artwork Review, Condition Assessment, Site Plan: \$2,300
- 2) Design and Engineering: \$16,000
- 3) Fabrication: \$34,000
- 4) Site Work and Foundations: \$15,000
- 5) Transportation and Installation: \$31,000

The proposal for the Artist is still being worked on due to a location to fire a kiln being sought, Staff is supporting the Artist to find a proper location, so approximately no more than \$30,000 would be added to the Artists direct budget. This allocation would be calculated exactly before seeking City Council approval.

Attachments:

1. Attachment 1 - Artist Rendering of Alteration of Mural
2. Attachment 2 - Draft Resolution