



City of Pomona

CULTURAL ARTS COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

ADMINISTRATION | OFFICE OF ECONOMIC BUSINESS AFFAIRS

April 27, 2026

TO: Cultural Arts Commission

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

SUBJECT: Discussion on Public Artwork containing images of and/or dedicated to Cesar Chavez.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Please see the Next Steps section.

DISCLAIMER

The information that will be outlined in this staff report and discussed at the Cultural Arts Commission meeting on Monday, April 27, 2026, at 5:30PM PST contains information that may be upsetting for trauma survivors.

FISCAL IMPACT

Currently, there is no fiscal impact on this item.

BACKGROUND

On March 18, 2026, the New York Times published the article "*Cesar Chavez, a Civil Rights Icon, Is Accused of Abusing Girls for Years—An investigation by The New York Times found extensive evidence that the United Farm Workers co-founder groomed and sexually abused girls who worked in the movement.*" This article has prompted many institutions, whether private or public, to discuss how to navigate the dedication of a wide range of infrastructure that many California cities and counties have established in Chavez's name and legacy. The most notable infrastructure that highlights Chavez is Public Art, thus a thorough review of art collections that contain Chavez's depiction are being called under examination.

PUBLIC ART COLLECTION

The City of Pomona has three artworks that depict Cesar Chavez—

1. *The Cesar Chavez Suite* (2003) by Paul Botello

Commissioned by	Description
Cesar Chavez Character Champions group. Special thanks to: George Hunter, Council	Five acrylic paintings depicting places and events in the life of Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers Union

Member, Doug Bridges, Human Services and Frank Garcia, Pomona Chambers of Commerce

2. *Cesar Chavez Tiles* (2003) by Various students from Pomona Unified School District

Commissioned by	Description
Cesar Chavez Character Champions Group	Individual 6" x 6" glazed tiles assembled into three 3' x 2.5' murals with Cesar Chavez themed images

3. *Freedom Is Not So Free, Neither Is Peace!* (2022) by Gary Lett
(Note: This artwork is not yet installed, but the tiles have been created.)

Commissioned by	Description
The City of Pomona Cultural Arts Commission	Mosaic tiles approximately 54' x 11' assembled in different shapes features Martin Luther King Jr. and other imagery related to the Civil Rights Movement. Chavez is one of the many figures depicted.

NEXT STEPS

Artists

Staff intend to work with Paul Botello, Pomona Unified School District, and Gary Lett to determine alterations of their artwork. Botello and Lett have already expressed interest in re-imagining or depicting another figure from the farmworker movement.

Art Community Listening Sessions

Staff intend to hold a listening session with local artists and community partners / stakeholders to discuss ways in which the Art in Public Places program navigates in response to potential cases of artwork alterations and hear thoughts on current suggestions for the artwork specifically depicting Cesar Chavez in the City of Pomona's Public Art Collection.

Advisory Committee

Staff intends to establish an Advisory Committee for the Cultural Arts Commission that will formally address the concerns of the public and artists as it pertains to next steps in alteration or removal of Public Artwork containing Cesar Chavez's image.

Attachments:

1. Public Art Collection – Depictions of Cesar Chavez