

# CITY OF OAKLAND

## AGENDA REPORT

FILED  
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK  
OAKLAND

2003 OCT -2 PM 2: 05

**To:** Office of the City Manager  
**Attn:** Deborah Edgerly  
**From:** Cultural Arts & Marketing Department  
**Date:** October 14, 2003

**Re: RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF OAKLAND AND VICKIE JO SOWELL IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$25,000 FOR THE FRUITVALE PEDESTRIAN PLAZA PUBLIC ART PROJECT**

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### SUMMARY

Staff recommends that the City Council approve the artist selection panel recommendation to award artist Vickie Jo Sowell an amount not to exceed twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) for the creation of a metalwork gateway public art project for the new Fruitvale Pedestrian Plaza in the Fruitvale district of Oakland.

### FISCAL IMPACT

The funding for the Fruitvale Pedestrian Plaza public art projects is derived from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) grant funds for the overall streetscape improvement project, which is being managed by the Public Works Agency. Funds are available in Fund: 2163, Organization: 92242, Construction Contract Account: 57411, Project No. G166410. There are sufficient funds available in the project budget for the artwork.

### BACKGROUND

A new streetscape project and pedestrian plaza has been designed for the Fruitvale neighborhood; construction started in March 2003. The Unity Council, along with the urban design and architecture firm Jacobs Macdonald:Cityworks, have been working with the local community and the City of Oakland for many years to guide the design of this new central social space, funded by Metropolitan Transportation Commission and Bay Area Air Quality District. The project is physically coordinated with the new Fruitvale Village, a transit-oriented mixed-use development currently under construction at the Fruitvale Thirty-fourth Avenue between East 12<sup>th</sup> St. and International Boulevard will be closed to through traffic and converted into a pedestrian plaza that can be used for neighborhood events and markets. The plaza will be outfitted with trees, lighting, benches and new paving. Through work with the community, several opportunities for public art have emerged from the overall streetscape design, including:

- 1) The gateway metalwork over the pedestrian plaza at International Boulevard that identifies the "FRUITVALE" community and serves as a portal into the heart of the district.

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- 2) A series of mosaic artworks on the gateway columns and in the plaza paving, that help to reinforce the physical identity of the area and present themes relating to the natural, cultural, and social history of Oakland and the local neighborhood.

A Request for Proposals (RFP) was announced in June 2003, and subsequently sent to hundreds of artists in Northern California and regional public art administrators, and advertised on the Department website and through a press release. The RFP requested proposals that addressed either the gateway or the mosaic opportunities, or both. Other requirements included: 1) reference to history, culture and community of the Fruitvale area; 2) use of durable materials able to withstand weight, weather and direct sunlight; 3) low maintenance requirements; 4) adherence to public safety regulations; and 5) short on-site creation and installation schedule. Fifteen proposals were received by the application deadline of July 11, 2003.

Public Art Advisory Committee member Gerry Goeres chaired the selection panel, which consisted of artists Ernesto Hernandez Olmos, Suzanne Takehara (alternate), Diana Pumpelly Bates and Trisha Kyner; community representatives Pamela Magnuson-Peddle and Barbara Bye; and non-voting advisors Soo Zee Park and Evelyn Johnson of the Fruitvale Development Corporation/Unity Council, and Alan Jacobs of Jacobs MacDonald:Cityworks. At the first panel meeting on July 24, 2003, the panel recommended seven finalists (four artists for the mosaic commission; three artists for the metalwork commission).

A community meeting was held on August 26, 2003, at the Cesar Chavez Library, to discuss the finalists' work and gain community feedback, which was then shared with the selection panel. At its second meeting on August 29, the panel interviewed the finalists and recommended artist Vickie Jo Sowell for the metalwork commission. The Public Art Advisory Committee heard an informational report with the artist selection panel recommendation at its September 8, 2003 meeting, and the Cultural Affairs Commission heard the informational report at its September 15, 2003 meeting. Both bodies agreed with the artist selection process and panel recommendation.

## KEY ISSUES AND IMPACTS

Community outreach and public process has been an important part of the artist selection. Public art project opportunities were identified through the extensive community outreach and design work of the Unity Council and Jacobs MacDonald:Cityworks. The Request for Proposals was widely noticed and distributed locally and regionally. Artist selection panels were open and accessible to the public, and artwork proposals were shared with the local community in an outreach meeting at the Cesar Chavez Library. The artist selection panel included community members and local artists in addition to project team advisors. Finally, the Public Art Advisory Committee and Cultural Affairs Commission heard the artist selection panel recommendation of artist Vickie Jo Sowell in regular public meetings on September 8, and September 15, 2003, respectively.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The metalwork commission is a gateway project to be installed at the top of four columns at the northern entry (International Blvd.) to the pedestrian plaza. The two flanking end columns are 12' tall; the central columns are 15' tall. The gateway will span the four columns, creating a three-entry portal to the pedestrian plaza. The community had expressed a desire to see the name "FRUITVALE" incorporated within the overall design, and in addition, the metalwork will reflect the character of the local area.

Vickie Jo Sowell is an Emeryville artist whose work has been included in numerous exhibitions throughout the Bay Area, and whose recent public art commissions have included projects for the cities of Dublin, Milpitas, and Emeryville.

## **SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

*Environmental:* The artwork will be designed to be compatible with and integrated into the environment and architecture of the Fruitvale Pedestrian Plaza. The artist will work closely with the project architect and City staff to develop a project that uses materials that are low-maintenance and will not adversely impact the natural environment of the project site.

*Economic:* Community-based public art projects bolster the cultural and civic identity of Oakland, fortifying the City and in this instance the Fruitvale district as a destination, and enhancing, enriching and enlivening the visual environment of the area.

*Social equity:* The public artwork described in this report adds to the quality of life for all residents of Oakland, and particularly those who live or work in the Fruitvale district, as well as visitors to the City.

## **DISABILITY AND SENIOR CITIZEN ACCESS**

The location of the metalwork sculpture atop four columns at the northern end of the Fruitvale Pedestrian Plaza poses no concerns for disabled or senior citizen access to the artwork or the plaza.

## **RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE**

Staff recommends that the City Council approve the resolution authorizing a professional services agreement between the City of Oakland and Vickie Jo Sowell for an amount not to exceed twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000).

Paying careful attention to upholding the public trust in the selection and commissioning of public artwork, the Public Art Program has emphasized community outreach, an open, public selection process, and thorough and thoughtful consideration of artist applications for the Fruitvale Pedestrian Plaza public art project.

**ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

Approve the resolution authorizing a professional services agreement between the City of Oakland and Vickie Jo Sowell for an amount not to exceed twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000).

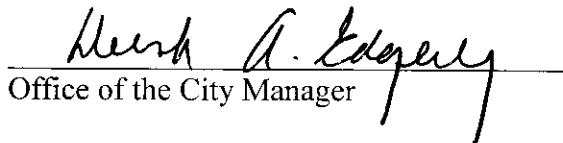
Respectfully submitted,



Dr. Dennis M. Power, Director  
Cultural Arts & Marketing Department

Prepared by: Leslie Holzman, Public Art Coordinator  
Public Art Program

APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO THE  
LIFE ENRICHMENT COMMITTEE:



Office of the City Manager

# OAKLAND CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION No. \_\_\_\_\_ C.M.S.

FILED  
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK  
OAKLAND  
2003 OCT -2 PM 2:05



RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE CITY OF OAKLAND AND VICKIE JO SOWELL IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$25,000 FOR THE FRUITVALE PEDESTRIAN PLAZA PUBLIC ART PROJECT

**WHEREAS**, the City of Oakland is in the process of constructing a new pedestrian plaza on 34th Avenue between East 12th Street and International Boulevard and implementing adjacent streetscape improvements along International Boulevard; and

**WHEREAS**, it is the intent of the City's Public Art Program to provide a means for the City to commission artists to create artwork which enlivens, enhances, and enriches the visual environment of the City of Oakland; and

**WHEREAS**, the City's Public Works Agency is providing funding for public art projects at the new pedestrian plaza and the Public Art Program is managing the public art implementation on its behalf; and

**WHEREAS**, on July 24 and August 29, 2003, a five-member artist selection panel – consisting of three local artists/arts professionals and two community representatives, with an advisory body consisting of representatives of the Unity Council and the Project Architect – reviewed design proposals, interviewed artists, and recommended artist Vickie Jo Sowell to create a metalwork gateway sculpture for the Fruitvale Pedestrian Plaza public art commission; and

**WHEREAS**, on September 8, 2003, the artist selection panel recommendation was presented to the Public Art Advisory Committee, and on September 15, 2003, to the Cultural Affairs Commission; now, therefore be it

**RESOLVED**: that the City Council hereby authorizes a professional services agreement between the City of Oakland and Vickie Jo Sowell, in an amount not to exceed twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000), for the design, fabrication and installation of a public artwork at the Fruitvale Pedestrian Plaza, and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED**: that the City Council hereby authorizes the City Manager or designated representative as agent of the City to conduct all negotiations, execute and submit all documents, including but not limited to agreements, modifications (with the exception of those related to an increase in compensation), payment request and related actions, which may be necessary for the completion of the aforementioned artwork in accordance with their basic purpose; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the contract will be approved by the Office of the City Attorney and a copy will be on file in the Office of the City Clerk.

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IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_\_

**PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:**

AYES- BROOKS, BRUNNER, CHANG, NADEL, QUAN, REID, WAN and PRESIDENT DE LA FUENTE

NOES-

ABSENT-

ABSTENTION-

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

CEDA FLOYD  
City Clerk and Clerk of the Council  
of the City of Oakland, California

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LIFE ENRICHMENT CMTE

OCT 14 2003