



AGENDA REPORT



TO:
Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

FROM:
Councilmember Charlene Wang

DATE: July 15, 2026

SUBJECT: Resolution in support of the
“Grand Performance Mural” Restoration

RECOMMENDATION:

COUNCILMEMBER CHARLENE WANG RECOMMENDS THAT THE CITY COUNCIL ADOPT A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR TO: (1) ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR THE SPONSORSHIP AND MAINTENANCE OF THE “GRAND PERFORMANCE MURAL” RESTORATION PROJECT LOCATED AT THE GRAND AVENUE UNDERPASS OF INTERSTATE 580 IN OAKLAND; AND (2) ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH SOA VILLAGE HOUSING INC. (EVOAK!) FOR THE RESTORATION OF THE MURAL AND ONGOING MAINTENANCE, IN COORDINATION WITH ARTISTS DANIEL GALVEZ AND KEITH SKLAR.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report requests City Council authorization for the City Administrator to enter into an agreement with the State of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) for the sponsorship and maintenance of the "Grand Performance Mural" restoration project located at the Grand Avenue underpass of Interstate 580. Additionally, the resolution authorizes an agreement with SOA Village Housing Inc. (EVOAK!) to execute the physical restoration of the mural and assume all ongoing maintenance responsibilities, in coordination with the original artists Daniel Galvez and Keith Sklar.

BACKGROUND:

The Grand Performance Mural is a 140-foot, 3,000-square-foot landmark public artwork located beneath the Interstate 580 overpass at Grand Avenue and MacArthur Boulevard. Created in 1984 by muralists Daniel Galvez and Keith Sklar in partnership with local volunteers, it was designated an official Oakland City Landmark in 1985. More recently, in 2025, it was designated an Endangered Latinx Landmark, underscoring both its national preservation significance and the physical urgency of its deteriorating state.

- **Deterioration & Preservation Need:** Having stood for forty years without graffiti defacement—a testament to its deep community value—the mural has never received formal conservation or maintenance funding. Severe weathering and age require a full restoration before this artwork is permanently lost.
- **The Restoration Plan:** The restoration will feature intensive pressure washing, surface preparation, a complete repainting using Nova Color acrylics, and a final protective coating with Golden MSA varnish and sealer. Work is scheduled to run from October 1, 2026, to December 1, 2026.
- **Regulatory Framework:** Because the mural sits on State property, Caltrans requires the City of Oakland to sponsor and assume responsibility for the art via a Transportation Art Maintenance Agreement. To meet this requirement, the City is leveraging its established practice of entering into a back-to-back agreement with the nonprofit sponsor (EVOAK!) to transfer 100% of ongoing maintenance duties to them.
- **Permitting Status:** The Department of Transportation has already successfully applied for and secured Caltrans encroachment permit **04-26-N-MC-0108** (including rider **04-26-N-RW-1511**) to support this effort

RACIAL AND EQUITY IMPACT:

The Grand Performance Mural is a visual celebration of the rich, multicultural performing arts history of Oakland and the broader Bay Area. Restoring this landmark directly advances racial and cultural equity by preserving representation of historically marginalized communities:

- **Multicultural Heritage:** The mural features monumental portraits of critical local figures, including **Calvin Simmons**, the first African American conductor of a major U.S. orchestra; Latinx muralist **Ray Patlan**; and diverse cultural groups such as the African dance organization **Fua Dia Kongo**.
- **LGBTQ+ Representation:** The mural actively honors Oakland's LGBTQ+ history. It highlights lesbian activist and author **Judy Grahn** (who co-founded Oakland's Women's Press Collective in 1969) and pioneering women's music composer **Mary Watkins**.
- **Cultural Anchoring:** The mural sits directly adjacent to Oakland's LGBTQ Cultural District and the LGBTQ Community Center. Preserving this landmark reinforces the visibility of LGBTQ+ and BIPOC histories at the gateway to the Grand Lake district, where it is viewed daily by thousands of local residents, shoppers, and students.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This project represents a highly successful public-private partnership with no impact on the City's General Fund.

SOA Village Housing Inc. (EVOAK!), acting as the fiscal agent, has organized an extensive grassroots and institutional funding network. The **\$92,000** total project cost is completely secured through:

- **\$57,000+** raised via a community GoFundMe campaign and a local art auction supported by over 70 Bay Area artists.
- **\$30,000** via an Abbey Mural Prize awarded by the National Academy of Design.
- **\$5,000** awarded by the Zellerbach Family Fund.

Additionally, EVOAK! has agreed to absorb all long-term maintenance costs (including cleaning, repair, and graffiti removal), to be memorialized in a subsequent agreement. This arrangement will immunize the City of Oakland from future operational and physical liabilities regarding the artwork.

CONCLUSION:

The Cultural Affairs Division Public Art Program in Economic & Workforce Development strongly supports the passage of this resolution. The Grand Performance Mural is a crown jewel of Oakland's public art landscape.

With funding fully secured and Caltrans encroachment permits already issued, the only remaining hurdle is the execution of local agreements. Approving this item on **July 21, 2026**, prevents a multi-month legislative delay that would otherwise push construction past the dry-weather window and potentially derail this fully funded preservation effort. Acting now ensures the City can actively facilitate the restoration of this historic gateway landmark alongside the original artists and our community partners.

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