



# Agenda Report

**MEETING DATE:** Thursday, August 1, 2024

**TO:** PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

**FROM:** PROJECT MANAGER PERALTA

**SUBJECT:** APPROVE PUBLIC ART APPLICATION FOR MURAL AT 225 SUDDEN STREET BY PAJARO VALLEY ARTS

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## **RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Staff recommends that the Parks and Recreation Commission approve the Teen Artes Summer 2024 Mural Project to be placed at the Callaghan Park Cultural Center located at 225 Sudden Street.

## **DISCUSSION:**

### Background

The Teen Artes Program is part of Pajaro Valley Arts and is funded through the California Arts Council. High school students who participate in the 10-week program explore their creativity, learn new artistic skills, learn the operations of a gallery, visit galleries in the area, learn about local murals, and create their own public art mural. Ultimately, students obtain hands-on experience working with local artists to help them explore career fields in the arts. Last year's mural was placed on the west facing wall of the Ramsay Park Family Center located at 1301 Main Street. Pajaro Valley Arts staff collaborated with Parks & Community Services Department staff to identify feasible locations for this year's project.

### The Project

Two walls located of the Callaghan Park Cultural Center (225 Sudden St.) were identified as a recommended location for the Teen Artes Summer 2024 Mural Project. A Mural Project Site Plan is included as Attachment A with additional information on the mural location. A total of twelve students from local high schools such as Watsonville, Pajaro Valley and Aptos High are given the opportunity to participate in the program. All participants enrolled in the program on a first come basis. Venessa "Nessa" Ledesma is the muralist who was selected as the lead artist for this year's project. As a Watsonville raised visual artis, Nessa comes with significant experience in acrylic painting, muralism, digital illustrations and teaching. Students will begin installing the mural beginning August 5<sup>th</sup> to August 11<sup>th</sup> and plan to host a ribbon cutting ceremony the week after.

### Mural Description

This mural celebrates Watsonville's vibrant community and cultural diversity, capturing the essence of childhood/youthhood and the shared experiences that unite us. It also highlights the importance of local heritage, the positive impact of recreational activities, such as music and sports, and the significance of safe spaces for youth expression, discovery, togetherness, and joy.

With symbols of generational growth and colorful elements, our mural represents Watsonville's pride, memories, and future aspirations. Central themes include the vitality and livelihood of youth, such as it being illustrated through playful elements like balloons, bubbles, and a bouncy house, including a rainbow to honor queer youth. We also illustrate generational growth and a nod to Watsonville's agricultural roots.

This mural reflects the spirit and diversity of Watsonville, emphasizing the importance of community and the experiences that shape our youth. It combines symbols of local culture, joy, and growth, representing the shared values and aspirations of Watsonville. By capturing the essence of childhood/youthhood and the unity within our community, this mural aspires to inspire and celebrate the bright future of Watsonville's youth.

The mural will utilize bright colors such as oranges, yellow, greens, reds, blues, turquoise, purples, and earthy colors as well.

### Maintenance Plan

Pajaro Valley Arts will power wash the wall before and after painting is complete - it will also be sealed. Touch ups will be scheduled and as needed. The mural will also be washed every two years to maintain its vibrant colors.

### Youth Participants

**Yarezi Arias-Luna, Watsonville High School:** This mural represents our childhood and the different aspects that the community of Watsonville has contributed to it. The square that I am painting is a *loteria* card with a variety of symbols and ideas that represent Watsonville and culture. This *loteria* card highlights the beauty and diversity in Watsonville.

**Aleyda Jimenez, Aptos High School:** My two drawings show how my community and how the advancement of technology has taken over youth and how they grow with it. The Farmers Market represents my community and the rich culture that we all share and recognize. This mural means to me that the youth and their future helps us grow our community and represents the attributes and the innocence of the youth/teenagers.

**Ximena Jimenez, Watsonville High School:** My drawings both represent how music and sports really impact people and bring them together. You can meet someone and not know anything about them and still have the same interests. Sports and music really bring people together and create communities all over the world. This is why my two pieces are important. Mural → The whole mural itself is to show and represent the people of Watsonville and down to every little detail of what makes us and what we believe is important to us.

**Marlene Vega, Pajaro Valley High School:** The smiley balloons represent the happiness balloons brought us when we were younger. The bubbles continue to flow to represent that our childhood memories can also flow with us through our future.

**Victor Moreno, Pajaro Valley High School:** The reason why I decided to do this drawing was because when you're a kid, you tend to draw random things on your school math homework. That's what I did. That's one thing we all have in common. We all drew. Why not include that in the mural to show what we all did as kids - to remember the youth. Our youth.

**Bella Umeki Martinez, Watsonville High School:**

The bouncy house is representative of the joy and youthful energy. Included in the design is a rainbow as well to represent queer youth and the joy in being seen. The three hands are representative of the three different generations. An older hand is one of someone that has worked in the fields with calloused hands. The second up is an adult with culturally significant tattoos, and the third is a child. In order of birth, they hold seeds, a sprout, and a strawberry, showing the growth of opportunities. With the strawberry to specifically represent Watsonville, the fields in the background lines transition into sun rays to convey the same message.

**Isabella Alvarado, Watsonville High School:** This mural shows the different parts of our community and cultures and how they bring us all together. Presenting the youth now so we can show our growth and pride in the future.

**Nayela Reynoso, Watsonville High School:** In my notebook, I have images that combine my childhood with more traditional images of Chicax culture. I am hoping the mural conveys inspiration to youths/teens in Watsonville

**Adalia Fortino, Aptos High School:** In my drawing I included the things that bring people together, and for others to see the beauty of Watsonville

**Sophie Eliza Jacobo, Aptos High School:** What my artwork represents is the produce grown in Watsonville to me because I believe in eating from locally sourced food and I find it beautiful that there is a wide variety of food available year-round in Watsonville. The whole mural represents what the Watsonville community and what culture and opportunities can be found in its city. This mural is important to me because I want to encapsulate the memories and community of Watsonville.

**Elenah Esquivel, Aptos High School:** The pictures that I am contributing to the mural are meaningful to me because they represent things on a deeper meaning. For example, the open book glowing represents youth writing their own story as they go through life. The skull with flowers is my style of art that I wanted to input into the mural. The mural is an opportunity to spread more color to Watsonville and share beautiful artwork with the community.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN:**

03-Infrastructure & Environment

05-Community Engagement & Well-Being

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

There is no financial impact since Pajaro Valley Arts will be responsible for all costs and materials related to installation of the mural.

**ALTERNATIVE ACTION:**

The Parks & Recreation Commission may choose to not approve the image and this project will not move forward.

**ATTACHMENTS AND/OR REFERENCES (If any):**

Attachment A: Mural Project Site Plan

Attachment B: Mural Design