



Agenda Report

MEETING DATE: Thursday, July 17, 2025

TO: PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

FROM: IMELDA NEGRETE, ASSISTANT PCS DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: APPROVE APPLICATION FOR PUBLIC ART AT GHWR YOUTH CENTER, SUBMITTED BY PAJARO VALLEY ARTS COUNCIL

STATEMENT OF ISSUES:

Public Art Application submitted for approval.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Staff recommends that the Parks and Recreation Commission approve the Teen Artes Summer 2025 Mural Project to be placed at the GHWR Youth Center located at 30 Maple Avenue.

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. These 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 two walls of the Callaghan Park Cultural Center.

The Project

The GHWR Youth Center's greenhouse area was identified as the recommended location for the Teen Artes Summer 2025 Mural Project. A total of twelve students from local schools are given the opportunity to participate in the program. Local professional muralist, Melissa Marzan was selected as the lead artist for this year's Teen Artes Summer 2025 project, where student applicants and alumni will take the lead in developing the design under her mentorship and guidance.

Students will begin painting mural from July 21st through July 27th and plan to host a ribbon cutting ceremony in August.

Mural Description : “Youthful Journey to Hope”

The mural celebrates the spirit of youth through colorful, nostalgic elements like games, sports, and more activities, which symbolize playfulness, shared experiences, and the excitement of being young. It highlights the transition from childhood to adulthood, encouraging viewers to reconnect with their inner child and embrace their evolving journey. Themes of nature—including roses, sunflowers, lush greenery, rainbows, and celestial elements like the sun and moon—reflect growth, resilience, and the journey between the night and day time. The mural will serve as a beacon of hope and optimism, with the rainbow and affirmations of inclusivity and pride for all, including LGBTQ+ youth.

Beyond its visual impact, the mural is designed to bring the community together, offering a playful yet meaningful piece that celebrates collective and individual growth. It aims to inspire both current and future generations, encouraging them to be joyful about growing up in a town enriched by art and filled with opportunities to feel joy, connection, and creativity. The use of bright colors and nostalgic themes evokes a sense of fun and wonder, inspiring hope and reaffirming that there is always beauty and light ahead, even during challenging times.

Ultimately, this mural stands as a joyful, colorful testament to imagination, resilience, and community spirit. It is a collaborative gift to the youth center and to Watsonville as a whole—an invitation to dream big, celebrate each other, and remember that through art, we can build a stronger, more vibrant, and more inclusive future. Through its interactive, game-inspired layout, the mural will be a thoughtful representation of youth culture, nature, and community spirit, celebrating the playful heart of the young people who call the Youth Center home.

The mural will feature bright colors and follow a board game-inspired concept, with various destinations and pathways that guide the viewers throughout the artwork. There will also be reds, oranges, yellow, greens, blues, turquoise, purples, and earthy colors as this will be painted in their back garden area.

Maintenance Plan

Touch ups will be done as requested by the Youth Center or when paint/colors seem to be fading.

Youth Participants

Erika Cruz Rendon, Diamond Technology Institute: Community and togetherness for the youth. Giving the youth something to have hope about. Growing and letting childhood memories come back to life. Give to the community like the way they give.

Jazmine Lara, Diamond Technology Institute: I want the mural to express how we can bring the community together with these playful yet meaningful art pieces. It's also a way to represent our colorful childhood and how we are growing as a community and individually as well.

Isabella Alvarado, Watsonville High School: This mural explores the excitement and enthusiasm of being young. It's also for the current and future generations to grow up in a town covered in beautiful art

Rhiannon White Plume, Delta Alternative High School: The mural should symbolize a playful environment. So that youth can grow and learn from it.

Kamryn Hadler, Delta Alternative High School: This mural was made by artists who have come together to inspire the youth to grow in this community. With all of this colorful, playful fun, there is always hope inside.

Sophie Eliza Jacobo, Aptos High School: The mural is important to me because it means that I have the opportunity to bring people together through art. I want to represent people within the youth center so that they feel recognized/seen and feel supported. I want to uplift and inspire people through this mural.

Aleyda Jimenez, Aptos High School: Our mural represents our community's youth and transition from childhood to adulthood, with themes of dark and light to represent that. Our mural has a nostalgic feeling by including our memories from our childhood, representing our inner nostalgia from when we were kids. The colors and roots from the flowers show our community's togetherness and what this mural is making us feel. This mural means to me the growth and transition from when I was a kid and how fast that transition was.

Ximena Jimenez, Watsonville High School: This mural to me, mainly represents youth which is a big important theme due to the fact that it is a youth center. This incorporates so many elements that really glue together to symbolize youth. This mural to me means happiness, especially being able to take part in it and create a hopeful image.

Elenah Esquivel, Aptos High School: A community is often full of many diverse backgrounds that combine together creating a place where people can grow and learn what being a community really is. Such as helping to nurture the youth being the building blocks to create a stronger and better future.

Marlene Vega, Cabrillo College: Working on this mural to me means that I am allowed to express my creativity. It brings happiness and reassurance that there are always good beautiful things ahead from the badness.

Evelyn Pini, Aptos High School: The mural should incorporate themes of childhood, youth, playfulness, and nature in order to inspire hope and fun into the community and children's lives. It is important to include bright colors, and themes that give the viewer a sense of nostalgia.

Natalia Ortiz-Aguinaga, Aptos High School: Making a mural for Watsonville is special to me because whenever I saw Watsonville, I saw the town covered in art. The thought that I also get to be one

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 the installation of this mural.

ALTERNATIVE ACTION:

Commission may chose not to approve image and project will not move forward.

ATTACHMENTS AND/OR REFERENCES (If any):

Attachment A: Mural Image