

STAFF REPORT

Date: May 21, 2025

To: Mayor and City Council

Through: Jackie Bryant, City Manager

Subject: Staff Report (For Possible Action): Approval of ABG Art Group, consisting of artists Sorell Raino-Tsui and Trent Thompson, for the California Avenue Mural Public Art Project in an amount not to exceed \$100,000. (Room Tax) [Ward 2]

From: Megan Berner, Arts and Culture Manager

Department: City Manager's Office – Arts and Culture

Summary:

This item is for approval to commission ABG Art Group (artists Sorell Raino-Tsui and Trent Thompson) for the California Avenue Mural Public Art Project. On April 21, 2025, the Reno Arts and Culture Commission (RACC) approved the recommendation of ABG Art Group from the Public Art Committee. ABG Art Group was selected from 57 artists/teams based on their past qualifications, letter of interest outlining their community engagement strategies for this project, connection to Reno, and experience with projects of similar scope and scale. The project is included in the Fiscal Year 2025 budget in Room Tax and the artwork is scheduled to be installed in late summer of 2025. Staff recommends approving the recommendation of ABG Art Group in an amount not to exceed \$100,000.

Consent Review	Yes	No
1. Is this item an annual or standard item that comes before Council for regular approval?		X
2. Is this item an agreement required based on an item previously approved by Council?		X
3. Is this item included in the current budget approved and adopted by Council?	X	
Other Considerations		
What percent of the total City budget does this item represent?	0.01%	

Alignment with Strategic Plan:

Arts, Parks, and Historical Resources

Previous Council Action:

There is no recent Council action relevant to this item.

Background:

On May 22, 2024, Council approved a resolution adopting the FY 24/25 final budget. An allocation of \$100,000 from Room Tax was set aside for a mural project on California Avenue along the retaining wall at the intersection of Keystone Avenue and Booth Street.

A call for artists for the California Avenue Mural Project went out on February 28, 2025 and closed on March 30, 2025. A total of 63 artists applied to the request for qualifications (RFQ). Out of those 63 artists, 57 met the requirements for eligibility.

At their meeting on April 14, 2025, the Public Art Committee (PAC) reviewed 57 applications and recommended ABG Art Group, comprised of artists Sorell Raino-Tsui and Trent Thompson, based on their past experience and letter of interest detailing their connection to Reno and approach to community engagement in designing the mural. The Reno Arts & Culture Commission (RACC) approved the PAC's recommendation of ABG Art Group at their meeting on April 21, 2025.

Next steps for the project will be to do outreach to the neighborhood and get input from the community for themes and content of the mural. The selected artists are also willing to work with local emerging artists in a mentorship capacity to give them experience creating a large-scale mural in partnership with a government entity and to learn the process from start to finish.

The wall has a complex surface of corrugated concrete, and the scoring of artist applications emphasized the need for the artist to have experience with similar surfaces in order to ensure a successful project.

Discussion:

The California Avenue Mural Project call for artists and selection process followed the public art process in code approved and adopted by Council in 2009. The PAC and the RACC took the selection process seriously, selecting an artist team with experience to successfully execute this project as well as work with the neighborhood to create a design that is responsive to community feedback.

Financial Implications:

\$100,000 is allocated to this project in the Room Tax budget.

Legal Implications:

Legal review completed for compliance with City procedures and Nevada law.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends Council approve ABG Art Group for the California Avenue Mural Public Art Project and authorize the Mayor to sign the agreement.

Proposed Motion:

I move to approve ABG Art Group (artists Sorell Raino-Tsui and Trent Thompson) for the California Avenue Mural Public Art Project.

Attachments:

California Avenue Mural RFQ Submission – ABG Art Group

California Avenue Mural Call for Artists

ABG Art Group Artist Agreement California Avenue Mural