

STAFF REPORT

Date: June 12, 2024

To: Mayor and City Council

Through: Doug Thornley, City Manager

Subject: Staff Report (For Possible Action): Approval of artist Erik Burke for the Evelyn Mount Northeast Community Center Mural Project in an amount not to exceed \$35,000. (Room Tax)

From: Megan Berner, Arts and Culture Manager

Department: City Manager’s Office – Arts and Culture

Summary:

On May 20, 2024, the Reno Arts and Culture Commission (RACC) approved the recommendation from the Public Art Committee (PAC) to commission artist Erik Burke for the Evelyn Mount Northeast Community Center Mural Project. Erik Burke's application to the request for qualifications (RFQ) was ranked the highest based on his approach to community engagement for the design of the mural.

| 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? | 0.0001% | |

Alignment with Strategic Plan:

Arts, Parks, and Historical Resources

Previous Council Action:

There is no recent Council action relevant to this item.

Background:

In 2021, Parks and Recreation Department staff came to Arts and Culture staff with concerns about the condition of the exterior mural on the Evelyn Mount Northeast Community Center (EMNECC). The mural was painted in 2000 as a collaboration between the City of Reno and Youth Artworks, a local organization that mentored student artists through large-scale mural projects. Large portions of the paint were peeling off down to the bare surface of the building.

At the time, no funding was available to replace the mural, though the PAC and RACC both gave informal support to move forward with planning to replace the mural. In 2023, staff worked to create a condition report for all the public art in the City's collection. The mural at EMNECC was flagged as a high priority for replacement according to that schedule. In Fiscal Year 2024, Council allocated annual repair, maintenance, and replacement funding to Arts and Culture to maintain the City's public art collection. Arts and Culture staff worked with Facilities staff to prepare the building to receive a new mural.

On March 11, 2024, the PAC approved a recommended call for artists to create a new mural at EMNECC. They restricted the call to a regional area in order to create more opportunities for a local artist to engage in a project that will have a big impact on the community. The RACC approved this call at their March 18, 2024, meeting.

At their meeting on May 13, 2024, the PAC reviewed and discussed 23 applications. They made a recommendation to the RACC to select artist Erik Burke for the commission based on the appropriateness of his past work and approach to this specific site and his letter of interest detailing his ideas for community engagement in the design process. One of the main goals of the project is to engage with the community to create something that reflects the neighborhood and that criteria was used to score the applications.

Once approved, the artist will work with City staff to conduct community engagement sessions and create a design for the project. Community engagement sessions will take place in June, July, and August with design of the mural taking place in conjunction with those sessions. The mural painting is expected to take place in September 2024.

Discussion:

The EMNECC Mural Project call for artists followed the required public art process approved and adopted by Council in 2009. The PAC and RACC took the selection process seriously, selecting an artist who lives and works in Reno and has the experience to successfully execute this project as well as bring artwork to the neighborhood that is responsive to community feedback. Selecting the artist before creating the design will allow for more in-depth and meaningful community engagement to take place in the creation of this new mural.

Financial Implications:

The \$35,000 for this mural project is included in the FY23/24 budget and is coming from the Room Tax allocation to Arts and Culture.

Legal Implications:

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

Recommendation:

Staff recommends Council approve artist Erik Burke for the Evelyn Mount Northeast Community Center Mural Project.

Proposed Motion:

I move to approve staff recommendation.

Attachments:

Evelyn Mount Northeast Community Center Mural Project Call for Artists

Erik Burke EMNECC Mural Project RFQ Submission

Erik Burke Agreement Evelyn Mount Northeast Community Center Mural Project