



Office of the City Manager

CONSENT CALENDAR
February 23, 2021

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
 From: Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager
 Submitted by: Eleanor Hollander, Acting Economic Development Manager
 Subject: Contract: Mildred Howard Sculpture Commission

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute a contract for an amount not to exceed \$210,000, and any amendments thereto, with Mildred Howard for a public art commission of a sculpture for the preferred location at the triangular green space on the northern side of the intersection of Adeline Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Way (see map, Attachment 3).

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

The \$210,000 contract will be funded through the Cultural Trust Fund (Fund 148). Funding for this public art project was set aside in the Public Art in Private Development Budget for FY 2021 adopted by the Civic Arts Commission (M/S/C Passmore/Blecher; Ayes — Anno, Blecher, Bullwinkel, Covarrubias, Ozol, Passmore, Ross, Tamano; Nays — None; Abstain — None; Absent — Slattery) at its regularly scheduled commission meeting on December 9, 2020.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

The Civic Arts Commission approved commissioning a sculpture by artist Mildred Howard for the preferred location at the triangular green space at Adeline Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Way at its regularly scheduled commission meeting on December 9, 2020 (M/S/C Ross/Blecher. Vote: Ayes — Anno, Blecher, Bullwinkel, Covarrubias, Ozol, Passmore, Ross, Tamano; Nays — None; Abstain — None; Absent — Slattery). Mildred Howard is world renowned artist¹ who grew up in South Berkeley, where she lived until 2017 when she was displaced from her live/work unit by a rent increase.² She has received many awards and fellowships including two Rockefeller Fellowships to Bellagio, Italy; the Joan Mitchell Award; an NEA Fellowship in Sculpture; the Lee Krasner Award in recognition of a lifetime of artistic achievement; and an Honorary Doctorate of Fine Arts from the San Francisco Art Institute. Her artworks are in the collections of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA), the de Young

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mildred_Howard and Selz, Peter *Spirit and Matter: A Conversation with Mildred Howard*, *Sculpture Magazine*, December, 2015.

² <https://www.sfchronicle.com/art/article/Berkeley-s-beloved-homegrown-artist-Mildred-10840197.php>

Museum in San Francisco, the Museum of Glass in Tacoma, Washington, and many more.

Mildred Howard proposes creating a 10' diameter bronze sculpture (Attachment 2) mounted on a concrete base with a granite skin to be installed at the preferred location at the intersection of Adeline Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Way in the triangular green space which is currently planted with ivy and has a backdrop of redwood trees (Attachment 3). If the preferred location is infeasible due to future development at that site, the artwork would be installed at a highly visible location along the Adeline Corridor near the commercial district. Her proposal takes its inspiration from traditional African currency from the Congo. She describes the artwork concept as follows:

In addition to being used as money for exchange, traditional West African currency could be worn as a sign of prosperity, embodying one's power. As such, each piece of currency possessed both a symbolic and an economic value. This artwork symbolically celebrates the labor and perseverance of many African-American families who once owned homes in the surrounding neighborhoods. Below the "red line" of Martin Luther King Street (then Grove Street), African-American businesses once thrived. In the wake of a virtual exodus of African-Americans throughout Berkeley and surrounding cities, it is crucial that their contributions to this community not be forgotten. This sculpture is a monument to the contributions made by African-Americans in Berkeley and a tangible metaphor for the wealth they worked so hard to build, even in the face of racism and oppression.

To ensure that the preferred location is feasible and so that the artwork is properly integrated with the installation site, the contract with the artist will include a final design phase in addition to artwork fabrication. The final artwork design must be approved by the Civic Arts Commission prior to the artist commencing with artwork fabrication. There will be a separate contract with a professional art handling company to address artwork lighting and installation.

Commissioning the sculpture by Mildred Howard for Adeline Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Way is a Strategic Plan Priority Project, advancing our goal to provide state-of-the-art, well-maintained infrastructure, amenities, and facilities. This public art project also advances goals contained in two other strategic planning documents of the City of Berkeley:

1. The Arts and Culture Plan for the City of Berkeley (Adopted July 24, 2018 by Resolution 68,568–N.S.)
Policy 4.1: Enhance Berkeley's environment by placing temporary and permanent public art in public spaces throughout the city.
2. The Adeline Corridor Specific Plan (Adopted Dec. 8, 2020 by Resolution 69,642–N.S.)
Policy 7.7 (Public Art): Incorporate public art into publicly-accessible spaces, streetscape amenities, and wayfinding signage.

BACKGROUND

Mildred Howard originally proposed this sculpture as part of the procurement process for the Measure T1 Public Art Project opportunity at San Pablo Park. For that project a Request for Qualifications was released on September 11, 2018 and was open through October 23, 2018. A selection panel comprised of arts professionals reviewed the qualifications of the 42 applicants and recommended 21 applications to be presented to the San Pablo Park Public Art Project selection panel, which was comprised of arts professionals, a representative from the Civic Arts Commission, a Public Works Measure T1 project team member, and community representatives. This panel reviewed the qualifications of the 21 artists on the short list and selected four finalists who were invited to develop site specific public art project proposals. The San Pablo Park Public Art Project selection panel reconvened to evaluate the four proposals and they selected another artist for the San Pablo Park public art project. However, the panel made a recommendation to the Civic Arts Commission that the proposal by Mildred Howard be commissioned for another site in Berkeley. The Civic Arts Commission received this recommendation favorably and allocated funds for the sculpture's commission and approved the proposal for the new site.

The proposed sculpture site at Adeline Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Way is a highly visible location which will allow Mildred Howard's sculpture to create a visual identity that celebrates the neighborhood's cultural heritage.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

There are no identifiable environmental effects or opportunities associated with the content of this report.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

This sculpture will honor the African American heritage of South Berkeley and will be a legacy artwork by an important artist with a deep connection to Berkeley where she grew up and lived for most of her life.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

There were no alternative actions considered.

CONTACT PERSON

Jennifer Lovvorn, Chief Cultural Affairs Officer, (510) 981-7533

Attachments:

- 1: Resolution
- 2: Proposed Sculpture Description
- 3: Proposed Artwork Location

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

CONTRACT: MILDRED HOWARD TO CREATE A PUBLIC ARTWORK FOR THE GREEN SPACE AT ADELINE STREET AND MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. WAY

WHEREAS, the City of Berkeley's Arts and Culture Plan calls for the enhancement of Berkeley's environment by placing temporary and permanent public art in public spaces throughout the city; and

WHEREAS, the Adeline Corridor Specific Plan calls for incorporating public art into publicly-accessible spaces, streetscape amenities, and wayfinding signage; and

WHEREAS, funding for the artwork commission was set aside in the Public Art in Private Development Budget for FY 2021 as approved by the Civic Arts Commission on December 9, 2020; and

WHEREAS, Mildred Howard's proposal to create a 10' diameter bronze sculpture mounted on a concrete base with a granite skin to be installed at a prominent location along the Adeline Corridor was approved by the Civic Arts Commission at its meeting on December 9, 2020.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that the City Manager is authorized to execute a contract and any amendments thereto with Mildred Howard for a public art commission of a sculpture for the Adeline Corridor for an amount not to exceed \$210,000. A record signature copy of said contract and any amendments are to be on file in the Office of the City Clerk.

Proposal for Public Art by Mildred Howard

West African metal sculpture in copper, bronze and iron stands at the intersection of art, jewelry and wealth. In addition to being used as a currency for exchange, such objects could be worn as a sign of prosperity, embodying one's power. Some of the hand-forged money was created in the shape of tools. As such, each piece of such currency possessed both a symbolic and an economic value. My proposal takes its inspiration from this powerful signifier, using traditional African currency from the Congo to memorialize the unsung contributions of the African-American community in South Berkeley – a community that has been largely displaced due to gentrification and the rise of a new, digitally-oriented economy.

This work symbolically celebrates the labor and perseverance of many African-American families who once owned homes in South Berkeley. Below the “red line” of Martin Luther King Street (then Grove Street), African-American businesses once thrived. In the wake of a virtual exodus of African-Americans throughout Berkeley and surrounding cities, it is crucial that their contributions to this community not be forgotten. This sculpture is a monument to the contributions made by African-Americans in Berkeley and a tangible metaphor for the wealth they worked so hard to build, even in the face of racism and oppression.

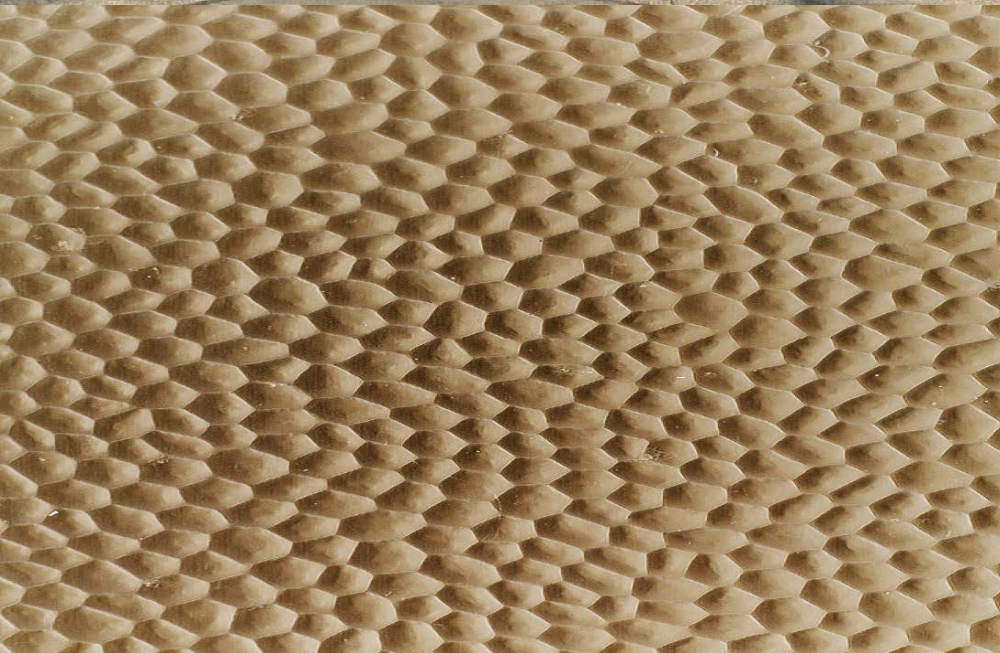
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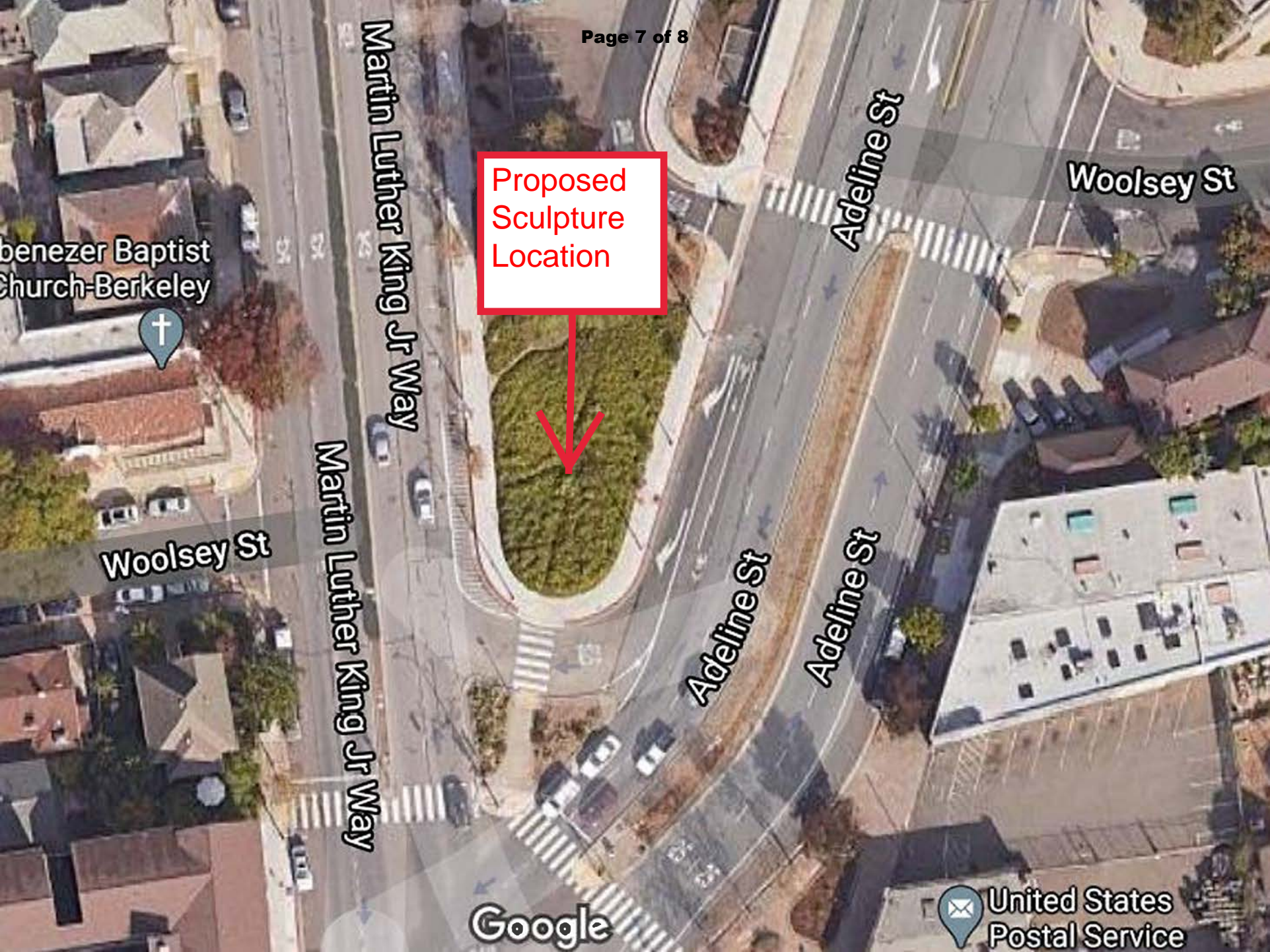
Mildred Howard, Project Lead Artist, Oakland, CA

Hugh Hynes, Architecture, Principal of PROTOinc, San Francisco, CA

Artworks Foundry, Fabrication, Berkeley, CA







Proposed
Sculpture
Location

Ebenezer Baptist
Church-Berkeley



Woolsey St

Adeline St

Martin Luther King Jr Way

Martin Luther King Jr Way

Woolsey St

Adeline St

Adeline St

Google



United States
Postal Service

Proposed
Sculpture
Location

