



STAFF REPORT
3/17/2021

TO: Planning Commission Chair and Commissioners

FROM: Luis Lopez, Development Services Director

SUBJECT: Review of Public Art – Harvest Mural Frame in City Library

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission authorize the City Manager to accept the donation of the “Coachella Valley Harvest Mural” painting to be installed in the City Library located at 1544 6th Street.

BACKGROUND:

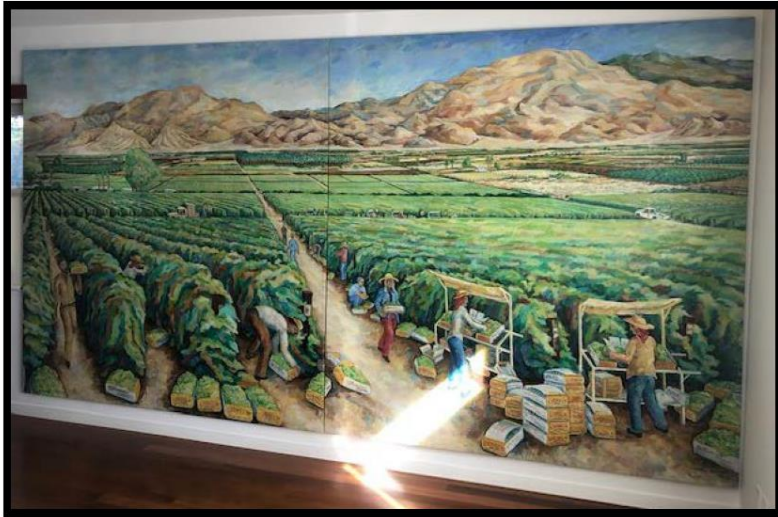
Section 2.68.020(A) of the Coachella Municipal Code designates the Planning Commission as the City’s “Public Arts Commission” for purposes of reviewing requests for public art, as they relate to use of the City’s development impact fees (fund) for art in public places. In February 2021 the City Council created a new “Culture and Arts Commission” that will take the place of the Planning Commission for reviewing public art. Ordinance No. 1172 which amends Section 2.68.020(A) became effective on March 10, 2021 and the City Council will be appointing the members of the Culture and Arts Commission in April 2021. As such, this will be the last public art review to be brought before the Planning Commission.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

The City’s Public Works Director was recently contacted by Mr. Billy Steinberg, a well-known grape grower and published songwriter, whose family owned the David Freedman Company in Thermal, California for many years. The Coachella Valley grape harvest scene mural (“Harvest Mural”) belongs to Mr. Steinberg. It was painted in 1979 and resided in the entryway of the family’s David Freedman Company headquarters in Thermal. His father, Lionel Steinberg, signed the first Collective Bargaining Agreement with Cesar Chavez in 1970, and Billy worked with his father for fifteen years, from 1973-1988, in addition to pursuing his musical career.

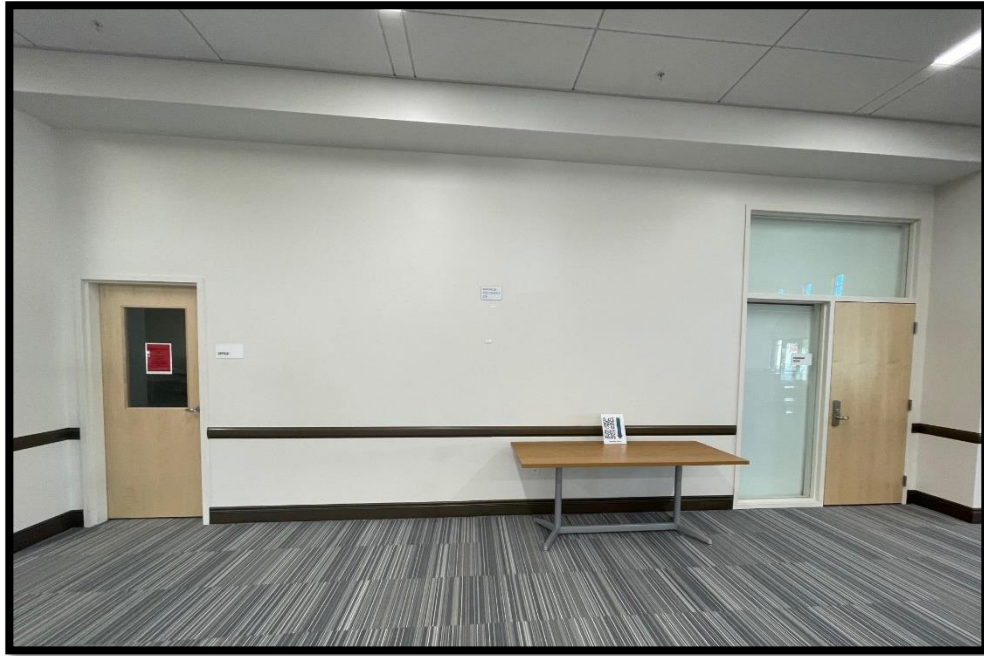
Mr. Steinberg would like to donate the two-piece large painting that depicts farmworkers during a Coachella Valley grape harvest. The frame is currently located in Mr. Steinberg’s Santa Monica office and there is a tentative agreement to allow the frame to be donated to the City for installation inside the City Library located at 1544 6th Street. Two picture images of the current conditions of

the “Harvest Mural” painting are shown in the attachment to this staff report, and in the images below.



The mural was originally painted as one piece of canvas and measures approximately 7 feet by 14 feet. When it was relocated from the Thermal headquarters, it had to be cut into two pieces and stretched so that it could be hung. Currently the mural exists as two large oil paintings that should be hung side by side.

The mural will be placed inside the City Library, on the black wall that is located between the Cesar Chavez collection and manager’s office, as shown below.



Because time is of the essence, staff is requesting that the Planning Commission, acting as the prior City's Arts Commission, review the photographs in the attachment to this staff report and consider approving the "Harvest Mural" frame painting to be relocated to the City Library located at 1544 6th Street, or to provide staff direction regarding this gift.

Since the painting will be donated to the City, there are no fiscal impacts associated with the procurement of this art installation, except for nominal costs associated with the long-term care and maintenance of the mural. Staff recommends that the Planning Commission authorize the City Manager to accept the gifted mural from Mr. Billy Steinberg.