

Montgomery MEDC
AGENDA REPORT

Meeting Date: March 19, 2024	Available Budget: \$20,000 (\$0 spent this FY)
Department:	Prepared By: DMc

Subject

Consideration and possible action on an Economic Development Grant Application for a proposed outdoor wall mural at the North Houston Art Gallery located at 14259 Liberty Street in the historic downtown.

Recommendation

Staff has no objections to the grant request. If the MEDC wishes to approve the grant application after discussing the project with the applicants, staff recommends approval of the Resolution with a stated dollar amount for the grant.

Discussion

Anthony & Rebecca Noriega are the owners of the North Houston Art Gallery and business spaces at 14259 Liberty Street across the street from the Nat Hart Davis Museum in the historic downtown. They have worked with the city and P&Z Commission on renovations to the property over the last year.

They approached the city recently about an idea for an outdoor mural on the north wall of the building that reflects a historical livery and stables that used to exist on the property. See attached applications and supporting documents for details. The Noriega's have worked with a local artist to develop a depiction of a street scene with a livery building representative of the structure.

This is the first application the MEDC has received this year. The MEDC budgeted \$20,000 for economic development grants with zero expenses to date. The cost of the proposed mural is \$4,000. The requested grant is for \$1,300, or roughly 1/3 of the cost.

Murals and outdoor artwork are common elements found in many great historic downtowns. These murals usually tell a story of the place or signify important events. The benefit of murals is they are widely seen and can quickly communicate an idea, even if the details are not able to be conveyed. By introducing an idea (in this case, the central role a livery and stable played in historic towns), viewers have the option of learning more about a subject or learning a new piece of history that may inspire them to learn more about it.

The MEDC should consider whether this mural project will add to the overall economic development in the historic downtown through a public art project that has historical tourism as a component. Staff has no objections to the request.

A Resolution will be provided at the meeting in the event the MEDC would like to move forward. Using a Resolution to award grant funding is a best practice for tracking expenses in a transparent manner.

Approved By

Assistant City Administrator	Dave McCorquodale	Date: 03/12/2024
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