

City of Albany Terrace Park Public Art Project

Call for Artists

Project: Tile mural at Terrace Park, Albany CA

Eligibility: This project is open to all artists in Northern California with demonstrated ability to carry out a public art project of this nature and who are available to complete the project during the anticipated timeline.

Purpose of Project:

To create a tile mural on the new restroom building at Terrace Park that reflects the character of the neighborhood and community

Location/Background:

Terrace Park, a small neighborhood park in southeastern Albany, is one of the city's hidden treasures. Even some Albany residents do not know where the park is located. Bordered to the east and west by the backyards of homes on a portion of Neilson and Tevlin Streets, it has two unassuming entrances on small side streets: Terrace St. to the north and Francis St. to the south.

The residential neighborhood surrounding the park is made up of typical Albany bungalows on narrow streets. The park is heavily used in many eclectic ways by the neighborhood. Many children use the play area, neighbors hold regular gatherings and parties in the picnic area, and dog walkers as well as children and adults playing informal sports use the lawn area. Several backyard gates lead directly into the park, and some neighbors' gardens extend into the edge of the park. There are tennis courts and a small basketball area at the southern end of the park, and there may be a community garden in the park in the future.

Although little is known about its history, Terrace Park was probably the first park established in Albany because some of the city's earliest residences are in this area. The neighborhood in which it is located was, in the mid-1800s, part of a cattle ranch owned by Jose Domingo Peralta. Peralta's first house, a one-story, tile-roofed adobe with dirt floor, was built in 1841, on Albina St. in Berkeley, just south of what is now the Albany border and near the current site of St. Mary's College High School. After the decline of the Spanish ranches, a grand, 4-story, 120-room hotel, the Peralta Park, was built during the 1880s by actor Maurice B. Curtis. The Peralta Park Hotel was ornamented with many steeples, dormers, and turrets and surrounded by a 20-acre garden. The hotel was in what is now Albany, near the site of Jose Domingo Peralta's original adobe.

Around the turn of the 20th century, the first homes were built in the area of the Peralta Park Hotel, along dirt streets that residents navigated on foot, on horseback, or in horse-drawn cars, struggling with mud during the rainy season and floods after the Santa Fe railroad tracks were laid in 1902 (the mounded dirt on which the tracks rested created

serious drainage problems). The original streets in this area were Neilson and what is now Curtis, both of which are just west of present-day Terrace Park. Early residents describe herding cows in the area and shooting coyotes that preyed on their chickens. Homes were lit by coal lamps. There were no streetlights, making it difficult to find one's way at night. One of the first homes, at 1061 Curtis St., belonged to David Thomas Griffin, an electrician who moved across the Bay from San Francisco to wire the Peralta Park Hotel.

When Curtis's fortunes fell, the Peralta Park Hotel became Mr. Sprague's School for Girls and later Professor Dunn's School for Boys. In 1903, the Christian Brothers purchased the property and started what is now St. Mary's College High School. A fire seriously damaged the old hotel building in 1946, and it was finally demolished in 1959.

Current city residents remember children enjoying summer programs and a wading pool at Terrace Park.

This will be the first piece of public art in this park and in this area of the city.

Community Profile:

The city of Albany is a primarily residential community of approximately 17,000 residents, originally incorporated in 1908 as the city of Ocean View. The name was changed to Albany (honoring the New York hometown of the first mayor) in 1909 when it was discovered that there was already another town named Ocean View CA. The first significant influx of residents moved to what is now Albany seeking to leave San Francisco after the 1906 earthquake.

Albany occupies approximately one square mile on the shore of San Francisco Bay. The geography of the city is essentially flat except for Albany Hill. The typical architecture is California bungalows; Albany was known in the past as "the Bungalow City."

Since its beginnings, Albany has been a small, family-oriented town. Even today, it maintains an identity as a small town within the larger urban Bay Area. Establishing public schools for residents was an early priority; the first public school was established in 1908 (in a barn!) even before the city incorporated, and Albany today is known for its excellent school system.

See Attachment A, map of Terrace Park location.

For additional historical information, see the resources list at the end of this document.

Description of Project:

This project is to commission an original tile mural that will be installed on the eastern face of the new restroom and storage building to be constructed in Terrace Park (replacing the current restroom building, in the same location) as part of a park renovation project. The mural will be a prominent visual focal point in the park and should create an appealing, colorful first impression from a distance as well as draw

viewers in to discover its details. The mural process is to include workshops, facilitated by the artist, during which community members (children and possibly also adults) will hand-decorate tiles to be included in the mural. The artist will guide community members to decorate tiles consistent with the mural theme that the artist has chosen.

The mural and hand-decorated tiles can be abstract or figurative in focus, and should reflect the theme the artist has chosen to illustrate.

Suggested themes:

The theme of the mural should reflect and celebrate an identifying quality of the neighborhood and the city. Possible themes include: community, family, creeks (several creeks run through Albany, and Codornices and Village Creeks run near the park), nurturing children, children's play, the eclectic neighborhood character of the park, or any aspect of the history of the neighborhood or city.

Suggested construction materials and specifications:

The restroom building on which the mural will be installed (see rendering, Attachment B) will be a prefabricated with a stucco surface. The area to the left of the restroom doors on the building's east face is designated for the tile mural. The total open area of the building's wall where the mural can be installed (i.e., to the left of the restroom doors) is 136 square feet (8' x 17') from ground to eaves. The mural need not occupy this full space. A defined space may be created for the mural with wood or metal edging. Budget allowing, the tile could wrap around the restroom doors. The total square footage of the building's entire east wall less the doors is about 204 square feet.

The artist is expected to prepare the stucco surface to receive the tile and to design a project that will be durable outdoors, exposed to the elements.

In envisioning this project, the Arts Committee was inspired by another local project, an abstract tile mural on the exterior the "Over Sixty Health Center" at Alcatraz and Sacramento Avenues in Berkeley CA, which is made up of a combination of colorful commercially made tiles and tiles that have been hand-decorated (or handmade) by community members, with a few small areas of tile mosaic. It is not necessary to use ceramic tiles for this project, but, if artists propose to use ceramic tiles, glazed high-fire/porcelain tiles are preferred (though not required) for this project because of their durability and resistance to graffiti. Proposals for alternate tile materials (e.g., glass, marble, metal, concrete, etc.) will be accepted as long as the materials meet all of the above criteria, including: can be durably installed on the building surface (described above), can withstand outdoor exposure over time, and can incorporate tile elements that are hand decorated or handmade by both adults and children from the community.

The Arts Committee has a stock of donated commercially made colored porcelain tiles that are roughly 4x4 inches as well as some smaller (roughly 2x2-inch) ones that can be used for this project.

Project Budget:

The maximum budget for this project at this time is \$10,000, with final budget approval by the Albany City Council. It is possible that this amount will be supplemented by donations from the community. This budget must cover all costs associated with design, fabrication, transportation, engineering approval, installation, and documentation of the artwork.

Required Submission Materials:

Completed application (form attached; can also be downloaded from: <http://www.albanyca.org/gov/parkart.html>)

Application deadline:

Applications must be received no later than 5 p.m. on October 1, 2006 at the following address:

Albany Arts Committee
attn: Chelle Putzer
Recreation and Community Services
1249 Marin Ave.
Albany CA 94706

Late applications, faxed applications, and late postmarks will not be accepted.

Timeline:

Applications due: October 1, 2006
Notification of finalists: by December 13, 2006
Finalists' proposals due: January 29, 2007
Models on Display at City Hall: January 30 – March 30, 2007
Finalist interviews: February 2007
Notification of Artist Selected: by March 20, 2007
Installation complete: by October 30, 2007

Please note that this is an estimated timeline and is subject to change.

Selection Process and Criteria:

A Selection Panel made up of artists, Arts Committee members, and community representatives will review all applications and select, from those that meet the specifications described in this Call for Artists, 3 finalists to prepare designs and models for final consideration. The Selection Panel's decisions are subject to final approval by the Albany Arts Committee and the Albany City Council.

The criteria to be used in selecting the finalists are as follows:

- Artistic merit (excellence, originality) as evidenced by representation of relevant past work in slides and other supporting material.
- Appropriateness of the artist's medium, style, and experience in relation to the project goals and settings.
- Responsiveness of the application narrative to the specifications of this call for artists.
- Experience with projects of a similar scale and scope and/or adequate professional experience (studio and employment experience included) to fulfill the requirements of this project. Experience should include familiarity with public agencies, the public review process, and/or collaboration with city agencies and community groups. Artists must have good communication skills and be able to work with diverse city representatives and community members.
- Ability to assist residents in shaping the course of public art at the park.
- Capacity to improve the overall appearance of the vicinity and to create a community asset and sense of place.
- Demonstrated ability to recognize, honor, and link together significant historic, cultural, and natural resources representative of a site and surrounding community.
- Experience with developing educational themes that demonstrate an area's historic, geographic, or environmental significance.
- Availability to fabricate and install the project during the time period identified for this project.

The process for finalists is summarized in the next section below.

The Albany Arts Committee reserves the right to reject all design proposals as well as the right not to award any contracts for this project. This call for artists does not constitute an agreement to fund artwork for the site described above.

Process for Finalists:

Finalists will receive an honorarium of \$300 each to meet the following requirements:

- submit a model of the proposed project by the deadline announced when finalists are selected

NOTE: The model will be displayed publicly (at City Hall or Community Center) for public comment prior to the artist's presentation of the model to the Arts Committee.

- provide the following additional materials:
 - a materials list and samples of all materials to be used
 - a detailed budget for the project

- present the model to the Selection Panel/Arts Committee in an in-person, public interview

Models and proposals submitted to the Arts Committee shall be original and unique in design and fabrication. The Albany Arts Committee has the right to retain ownership of models provided by finalists.

The artist whose work is selected for the project will be required to sign a contract that will include, among other obligations, the following:

- give a brief public presentation as part of the opening ceremonies after the installation of the sculpture
- give one presentation at an Albany public school
- document the artwork once it is installed (in photos and slides) and provide documentation to the committee
- provide a description of maintenance required for the artwork installed

Reference Resources:

The Story of Albany, Albany Police and Fire Employees Civil Service Club, 1947

Stories of Albany, Catherine J. Webb/Albany Historical Society, 1983

“From Berkeley’s Garbage Dump...to the Thriving Albany of ’75? “ (photocopy), *North News*, March 19, 1975

Copies of the above resources are available for on-site review at the Albany Library Information Desk (at the address above).

Photos of Terrace Park in its current state (pre-renovation) are available on line at <http://www.albanyca.org/gov/parkart.html>

Attachments:

A. Map of Terrace Park location

B. Elevation of Terrace Park restroom building

C 1-3. current (pre-renovation) photos of Terrace Park

Application for Terrace Park Tile Project, City of Albany CA

Deadline: October 1, 2006

Name(s) _____
Address _____
City & State _____
Phone _____ Fax _____ Email _____
Website address _____

Application checklist:

Please check to make certain that you have enclosed all of the following items, and label each item with your name, address, and telephone number:

◇ A plastic slide sheet containing six (6) slides (individual applicants) or twelve (12) slides (team applicants, total from all members) of relevant previous work, numbered, fully labeled including artist's name, title of work, date completed, media, dimensions and with a red dot in the lower left corner of each slide.

◇ Two (2) copies of a one-page corresponding slide list including title, date, media, dimensions, location, and other pertinent information that you deem useful in orienting the committee to your previous work.

◇ A self-addressed, correctly sized and stamped envelope (SASE) for the return of slides and other materials. Materials will only be returned if a SASE is provided.

Please submit ten (10) complete, one-sided, collated sets of the written materials listed below. Each set should contain one of each of the materials, in the order in which they are listed below. Please do not bind materials and do not submit in plastic sleeves, folders, or binders.

◇ Up to a one-page narrative of your proposed idea, including a brief description of the maintenance requirements envisioned for the finished piece. A thumbnail sketch may also be included but is not required.

◇ Resumé (two pages maximum).

◇ Names, addresses, and phone numbers of three (3) professional references.

◇ **OPTIONAL:** One or two relevant printed materials such as reviews, essays, catalogs, articles, etc. that might assist the committee in understanding your work. All materials should clearly indicate the portion(s) that the committee should consider.

Incomplete or incorrectly assembled applications may not be accepted.

The Arts Committee is not responsible for lost, missing, or damaged materials.