



## Legislation Details (With Text)

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**Title:** Actions pertaining to the National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Program Grant for the proposed redesign of the Mariposa Plaza, commission artists to create and install new artwork

1. \*\*\*RESOLUTION - 29th amendment to the Annual Appropriation Resolution (AAR) No. 2016-118 appropriating \$150,000 in grant funds from the National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Program Grant for the redesign of Mariposa Plaza, and move grant match appropriations from the General City Purpose Department to the Development and Resource Management Department (Requires 5 affirmative votes)

2. RESOLUTION - Authorizing the City of Fresno to accept a grant in the amount of \$150,000 from the National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Program for the redesign of the Mariposa Plaza, commission artists to create and install new artwork

**Sponsors:** Planning and Development Department

**Indexes:**

**Code sections:**

**Attachments:** 1. 29th amendment to AAR.pdf, 2. B: Resolution Accepting NEA Grant Award.pdf

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
12/8/2016	1	City Council	approved	Pass

## REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

**December 8, 2016**

**FROM:** JENNIFER K. CLARK, Director  
Development and Resource Department

**THROUGH:** DANIEL ZACK, Assistant Director  
Development and Resource Department

**BY:** LUPE PEREZ, Project Manager  
Development and Resources Department

## SUBJECT

Actions pertaining to the National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Program Grant for the proposed redesign of the Mariposa Plaza, commission artists to create and install new artwork

1. \*\*\*RESOLUTION - 29<sup>th</sup> amendment to the Annual Appropriation Resolution (AAR) No. 2016- 118 appropriating \$150,000 in grant funds from the National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Program Grant for the redesign of Mariposa Plaza, and move grant match appropriations from the General

City Purpose Department to the Development and Resource Management Department (Requires 5 affirmative votes)

2. RESOLUTION - Authorizing the City of Fresno to accept a grant in the amount of \$150,000 from the National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Program for the redesign of the Mariposa Plaza, commission artists to create and install new artwork

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends the City Council appropriate the project funding and authorize acceptance of the \$150,000 grant award from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Our Town Program for the Mariposa Plaza Project (Project) pursuant to the NEA Guidelines.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

City Council approval is sought to appropriate funding and authorize acceptance of a grant award in the amount of \$150,000. The total Project amount is \$332,000 which includes matching funds appropriated from the City of \$75,000 and \$107,000 in financial and in-kind contributions from community partners.

The purpose of the grant is to redesign Mariposa Plaza (Plaza) to make cultural gatherings and performances more enjoyable to attend, less costly, and easier to produce. Staff will also issue a national call for artists and commission and install one or more unique world-class works of interactive artwork in the Plaza. The site's poor layout currently makes hosting and attending events difficult. This affects every event occurring at the Plaza, especially those involving artists and groups without resources to rent a stage, sound, and lighting equipment. Making the site easier to use for gatherings and performances improves use of an existing open space and community asset.

### **BACKGROUND**

In 2011, the City Council authorized staff to submit a joint application with the former Redevelopment Agency for funding in the amount of \$100,000 from the NEA Our Town Program to create a new landscape design for the Plaza and commission new interactive artwork. Our Town is a prestigious and highly competitive program of the NEA and the City was not selected as a grantee. In 2013 the NEA sought proposals for the Our Town Program 2014 cycle. The City's application for \$150,000 was made much stronger through input from our Strong Cities, Strong Communities partners: Suzanne Hague who had previously won an Our Town grant for a similarly scoped project in Florida. The new elements of the City's application included a substantially expanded circle of project partners and greater evidence of the City's commitment to artistic excellence in the level of urban design employed.

Several partners who were essential in the formation and writing of the application in its new, successful form includes: the landscape architecture firm of Wallace Roberts & Todd (WRT), with offices in San Francisco, as well a local design firm Urban Diversity Design. Identifying these designers on the project team helped provide comfort to the selection committee about the level of excellence to be employed. The NEA, in their announcement about the entire round of Our Town awards, explicitly highlighted the fact that such a renowned firm as WRT would be involved in work funded by the program. The project budget shows a total of \$50,000 being spent on landscape design services, and community and artists charrettes among these two firms, with \$10,000 of that total being contributed as a participating match by the firms themselves.

On the artistic/sculptural side, the Fresno Art Museum, and Fresno Arts Council are the primary art partners and lead the artistic vision of the Mariposa Plaza Project, engaging partners from across

the arts, business, civic, education, and human and social services sectors in commissioning of the artists and artwork. The Fresno County Office of Education will engage Fresno County students and families in the design process. Other contributing partners include: the owners of the Pacific Southwest building, and TW Patterson building for on-site meeting space, and Univision Fresno for on-air advertising, and EOC. The PBID Partners of Downtown Fresno; Creative Fresno; Housing Authority; Bonner Family Foundation are contributing funds to the project.

The Plaza is not part of the Fulton reconstruction project. Its location at the corner of Mariposa and Fulton Street is within immediate proximity to a new Van Ness bus rapid transit stop and the high speed rail station. As previously stated the site's deteriorating condition, and poor layout today makes hosting and attending events there expensive and difficult. The Plaza is the most active public space in downtown Fresno. Multiple events are staged throughout the year attracting very large crowds. The renovation of the Plaza and incorporation of the major public art component is envisioned as part of the greater revitalization of downtown. It is a key factor in a series of catalyst projects Fulton Street, the high speed rail station, BRT, and numerous private developments. In the future, after a successful renovation, the Plaza will serve as the premier public space anchor downtown hosting major events as well as attracting residents, shoppers, tourists, and the downtown workforce on a daily basis. The renovation goal is a seamless combination of features and elements to create a comfortable, engaging, and safe environment for users.

To date, significant work and outreach has been accomplished to advance the design of the Plaza. On April 22, 2015 the community partners launched the Mariposa Plaza project. Artists and the public were invited to attend the event that was held at the Pacific Southwest building. On July 15, 2015 WRT facilitated a community workshop to engage the community and seek input on key project components, WRT developed three conceptual renderings. On June 23, 2015, the Section 106 Review for the Plaza was completed and accepted by the State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPO) on August 6, 2015. On October 1, 2015, the NEA received and accepted SHPO's correspondence. In September 2015 the Fresno Art Museum developed an art program to engage the students of Fresno County. On February 18, 2016, staff requested an extension of the grant, which was approved by NEA in March 2016. In September 2016, the Mariposa Plaza committee attended the Fiesta Patrias celebration on Fulton. Conceptual drawings were displayed at the event and attendees were encouraged to submit ideas, comments, and drawings of the Plaza. Materials used at the event were available in English and Spanish.

Selecting an artist is another important step that needs to occur before the redesign of the Plaza can be accomplished. If Council accepts the grant awarded, staff will proceed with hiring WRT Landscape Architecture for an amount not to exceed \$50,000, and issue a national call for artists. Thereafter, the City in conjunction with WRT and community partners will finalize the redesign of the Plaza, commission and install at least one or more world-class works of interactive art in the Plaza.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL FINDINGS**

This is not a "project" for the purposes of CEQA pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, section 15378(b)(5), as it is an administrative activity that will not result in direct or indirect physical changes to the environment.

## **LOCAL PREFERENCE**

Local preference was not used based on conditions of federal grant funding.

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

The \$75,000 in matching funds for this project is appropriated in the FY 2017 Budget.

**Attachments:**

A: Resolution adopting the 29th amendment to the Annual Appropriation Resolution

B: Resolution authorizing the City of Fresno to accept an NEA grant