



# Memorandum

**TO:** PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE

**FROM:** MICHAEL OGILVIE

**SUBJECT:** SEE BELOW

**DATE:** May 30, 2018

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**Council District:** City-wide

**SUBJECT:** Concept proposal for a public art project for the Co-generation Plant by artist Buster Simpson.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Review and take action on the recommendation to approve the Concept Design Proposal for the Co-generation Plant, by artist Buster Simpson.

**DATE OF ARTIST SELECTION:** November 9, 2017

**ARTWORK BUDGET:** \$290,000.

**LOCATION:** Co-Generation Plant, located at the San José-Santa Clara Regional Wastewater Facility.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

In order to become more self-reliant, the City will construct a new Co-Generation Facility to replace aging infrastructure at the Regional Wastewater Facility (RWF). The new Co-Generation Facility will beneficially use methane gas produced from the anaerobic digestion of wastewater solids to create the heat and electrical power required to support the wastewater treatment process. The new Co-Generation Facility will be located on Zanker Road which is predominately travelled by RWF and landfill employees. It is also an alternate route in and out of Alviso and used by residents. The current Co-Generation Facility program calls for screening the four 50-foot-high emissions treatment exhaust stacks with a simple perforated metal screen. While there are programmatic and structural constraints, there exists the potential to address this public-facing façade, with a 2-dimensional integrated approach to aesthetically enhancing the surface.

In November 2017, Seattle based artist Buster Simpson was selected for this commission. In January 2018 Simpson toured the RFW and met with Environmental Service Department stakeholders. Compelled by San José's commitment to recycled energy generation, Simpson's proposal intends to create an artwork incorporating the Co-Generation Plant structure and the Methanogenic microbes that produce methane as a byproduct of the digesters' function. Working with the large 10' wide by 40' high panels designed by the base project to screen the Co-Gen's exhaust stacks, he depicts the family of microbes that "do the work" to produce the facility's energy. Images of the organisms will be fabricated from perforated aluminum similar to the pattern found in half tone images. During the day, the large perforated aluminum panel image will be dominant as viewed from the road. The "scrim" will be both front and back lit by the sun through the course of the day creating a variety of lighting effects and shadow plays juxtaposed between the panels and infrastructure. Evening lighting is intended to be strategically placed to serve as both for functional operations lighting as well as back lighting the perforated images on the screens. Day and night viewing will present a blending of infrastructure and biological forms that change relative to the drive by experience.

**PUBLIC OUTREACH**

The Artist Selection Panel was a diverse group of stakeholders representing the Environmental Service Department, local and regional arts professionals, and community as follows:

- Nadya Chuprina                      City of Palo Alto Public Art Program
- Barbara Goldstein                      Public Art Consultant and Community Stakeholder Representation
- Aric Johnson                      Project Manager, San José-Santa Clara Regional Wastewater Facility
- Chris Sicat                      Artist
- Susan Leibovitz Steinman              Artist

Public Art Committee Liaison: Lynn Brown

Public meetings held in conjunction with this project:

<b>Date</b>	<b>What</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Convener</b>
11/9/17	Artist Selection Panel Meeting	Artist selection	City Hall	SJPA
12/5/17	PAC Meeting	Update on artist selection	City Hall	SJPA
1/22/18	Stakeholder Meeting	Visioning and input	Regional Wastewater Facility	SJPA
6/5/18	Concept Review	Stakeholder review of artist proposal	Regional Wastewater Facility	SJPA

MICHAEL OGILVIE  
Public Art Director