



# Memorandum

TO: PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE  
SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

FROM: MICHAEL OGILVIE  
DATE: May 30, 2023

Council District: 7

**SUBJECT:** Design Development proposal by artist Adam Feibelman for public art at the Municipal Water Building.

**DATE OF ARTIST SELECTION:** October 18, 2022

**ARTWORK BUDGET:** \$230,000

**LOCATION:** 3025 Tuers Road, in San José, CA.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Review and take action on the recommendation to approve the Design Development Proposal by Adam Feibelman for a public art project at the Municipal Water Building.

## PROJECT BACKGROUND

The City of San José is building a new Administration and Operations Building for the Environmental Service Department's (ESD) Water Resources Division. The new facility is expected to consist of one large building to house all staff and infrastructure necessary to ensure continuous operation of the San José Municipal Water Utility System. Site amenities are expected to include conference and training rooms; a customer service and payment area; a water quality laboratory; a map room for utility plans and documents; a warehouse for equipment, materials, and parts; a welding shop for metalwork and other fabrication needs; and a 75' high communication tower. At the Municipal Water Facility, public art is an opportunity to contribute to, and celebrate, the department's purpose of providing customers with safe, clean, reliable, and affordable water.

On October 18, 2022, artist Adam Feibelman was selected by a panel of stakeholders including key ESD staff, arts professionals, the architect, and community representatives. Selection was based on a competitive process that identified qualified artists from the Multi-Year, Multi-Project Prequalified Public Artist Roster, approved by the Public Art Committee on August 2, 2022. Mr. Feibelman is an experienced Bay Area artist who is best known for his intricate stencil and cut paper-based works exploring structures and surfaces in urban landscapes. As an emerging public artist, he has been translating his intricate stencil work into permanent materials. He recently completed a 173 lineal foot, cut-steel wall, at the Golden State Warriors' Chase Center In San Francisco and is in the process of completing commissions for Bay Area Rapid Transit and the County of San Mateo, CA. The Selection Panel was impressed by his body of work and the whimsy of his aesthetic.

The project’s Public Art Core Team of staff and other stakeholders determined that the primary audience for the artwork will be ESD staff, and public using the building. On January 20, 2023, as a kickoff to Mr. Feibelman’s design process, he met with ESD staff to introduce himself through a presentation of his past work. Then, to learn more about Municipal Water and its staff, he asked participants a series of questions to inform and inspire his design concept. For staff that missed the meeting, a questionnaire was transmitted, meant to further expand participation. On February 17, 2023, the artist met with staff on site to further understand the technical operations performed by Municipal Water staff.

### **ARTWORK DESIGN DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL**

Feibelman’s concept is meant to honor the work of the Municipal Water staff and their passion as stewards of water, a precious resource that supports the life, health, and safety of the community. Working with the project architect it was determined that the key sites for the public artwork are 1) a feature panel at the front entrance of the building and 2) the 2-story open interior stairwells located at either end of the building. The vertical orientation of these locations allows the artwork design to reference the operation of providing clean water – the mechanism of pumps required to traverse elevation and the gravity enabled force that delivers water to households.

The artwork will begin as a cut paper stencil, of patterns referencing land elevations and pipe infrastructure create a framework within which flow vignettes inspired by the stories told by staff – their memories, associations, and messages. Images call to attention little moments where water may be taken for granted – acts of love, like putting water in front of a pet, a summer day watching a child run through the sprinklers, an ant sipping dew from a blade of grass, all receivers of the magical system of water delivery. The cut paper patterns will be computer vectorized, scaled up, and translated into cut aluminum.

The panel at the building’s front façade will be a light gray metallic cut aluminum 240” high by 74” wide standing a foot from the building’s exterior facade. The length of the panel will be fabricated in 34” high sections. To enhance the readability of the front panel, and add an accent of color, it will be backed with an aqua blue perforated aluminum.

The stairwells will showcase a salon-style composition of different size metal panels both complimenting and juxtaposing one another. The panels will feature details from the exterior panel, and other images from the artist’s early studies. The art panels will be presented in black and white, backed with panels, hand painted to give a flash of color.

### **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

A Public Art Core Team comprised of key stakeholders, community members and public art professionals served as a selection panel and contributed to the vision of the site opportunities. They included:

Pilar Agüero Esparza	Painter, Sculptor, Art Educator
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PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE

May 30, 2023

Subject: Public Art Design Development Proposal for the Muni Water Public Art Project

Page 3

Chris Locsin	D-7 community member and poet
Jeff Provenzano	Deputy Director, City of San José Environmental Services Department
Patty McNeil	D-7 Community member
Ruben Torres	Water Systems Operation Manager, City of José Jose Municipal Water
Claire Whiteside	Project Architect, Studio G Architects

Meetings held in conjunction with this project:

<u>Date</u>	<u>What</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Convener</u>
10/18/22	Public Art Core Team meeting	Project visioning and selection of artist	Online via Zoom	SJPA
1/20/23	Stakeholder meeting	Artist introduction and stakeholders' input	Online via Zoom	SJPA
2/17/23	PAC meeting	On site meeting to tour operations and meet staff.	3025 Tues Rd., San José	SJPA
3/21/23	PAC meeting	Presentation of conceptual design to stakeholders.	3025 Tues Rd., San José	SJPA
4/4/23	PAC meeting	PAC review of Concept Proposal	Hybrid meeting online via zoom and 200 E. Santa Clara, San José	SJPA

/s/  
MICHAEL OGILVIE  
Public Art Director