

Date: October 15, 2024

To: Public Art Advisory Committee

From: Michelle Traver, Public Art Program Administrator

Subject: Deaccession Recommendation: BUS.003 *Untitled* (mural)

In 2005, Site Painters (Laura Bender and the late John Early) were commissioned to paint an *Untitled* 1,600 square feet mural on a long retaining wall facing the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) pedestrian overcrossing at the Barbur Blvd Transit Center. Apparently the wall is also owned by ODOT and apparently *Untitled* replaced a student mural that had come into disrepair. The colorful mural is of “designs from world folk art.”

Records regarding the mural are sparse, and apparently, it was paid for with funds from RACC’s murals program at the time. It was a “one-off” effort and not part of a larger capital project. There was also not any community engagement, to my knowledge, other than the input of the Public Art Advisory Committee members at that time. A specification for murals did not exist when the mural was created, so it was not created with longevity in mind and did not receive an anti-graffiti barrier layer of protection. It should be noted that all murals within the City of Portland are legally considered “temporary.” The Permanent Record, past and current photos are attached for reference.

The mural was in good condition until 2010 and again in 2014, when the artists were hired to clean and repaint sections that had been tagged with graffiti. (The artists may have applied a sealant or some type of graffiti barrier in 2010). Since that time, there was not good internal communication about the condition of the mural and it has been tagged repeatedly to the point where TriMet Facilities Maintenance has essentially removed the mural by painting over the tagging (aka “buffing”).

Recommendation

Untitled meets the criteria per the “Policy for Deaccessions” (2001), in that:

- 1) The condition or security of the artwork cannot be reasonably guaranteed, and
- 2) The artwork has been damaged or has deteriorated and repair is impractical or unfeasible, and
- 3) The status of the artwork is “temporary”.

Deaccession of *Untitled* and replacement with a newly commissioned mural that meets the current specification is recommended with community engagement and improved site checks and communication with TriMet Facilities Maintenance staff. However, ODOT would need to approve an agreement for new mural. Concurrently, Site Painters (Laura Early and daughter) will be offered the opportunity to replace a more site specific mural that is damaged at the Tigard Transit Center).

Alternately, *Untitled* could be painted over and not replaced, since it is difficult to maintain and not on TriMet’s property.

BUS.003

Title

Untitled

Artist

Site Painters - John Early and Laura Bender

Date

2005

Description

1,600 square foot mural on a large retaining wall on a pedestrian walkway to Barbur Blvd Transit Center.

Artistic Intent

A colorful mural painted along the pedestrian walkway to Barbur Blvd features designs from world folk art.

Public Image













MISTY

JONES
KFA
CEKA

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