

CHICANO PARK MURAL RESTORATION PROJECT

Project Background

The Chicano Park Mural Restoration project will restore 18 of the murals painted on the columns and retaining walls that are part of the San Diego-Coronado Bay Bridge. The murals have deep transcending values and are recognized at the local, state and national levels as historical, cultural and socio-political public art. The murals were painted by various artists throughout the 1970's and 1980's and are the intellectual properties of the original artists.



This restoration project is funded by a federal Transportation Enhancement Act (TEA) grant administered by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). The TEA application specifies that the original artists and/or their designees will restore the murals whenever possible. Also, and more importantly, the murals are copyrighted and can only be restored or altered by the original artists or their designees in compliance with federal copyright laws and California Civil Code, sections 980-989. For this reason, the original artists or their designees will be contracted to do the restoration work.

The Chicano Park mural restoration project is unique. Caltrans has never undertaken such an endeavor and does not have the in-house expertise for such a project. It is necessary for Caltrans to hire a consultant who specializes in restoring murals to oversee the restoration work besides the original artists to do the actual restoration work.

Project History

The TEA application was submitted by Caltrans in November 2000. The application was approved under the categories of *Scenic or Historic Highway Programs* and *Historic Preservation*.

A "Non-Competitively Bid Contract" was executed in December 2004, for the preparation of a mural restoration manual. The manual was prepared by various members of the Chicano Park Steering Committee including Victor Ochoa and Sal Barajas. The *Chicano Park Mural Restoration Technical Manual* was completed in July 2006.

A Request for Proposal was advertised in May 2008, for a consultant experienced in project management, mural development, and mural restoration on exterior surfaces. Ghirardelli Associates was selected and a contract was executed in September 2008. The project manager for Ghirardelli Associates is Ricardo Duffy who is assisted by Roberto Delgado. Mr. Duffy has extensive experience in the art community, especially in the

Chicano art scene and has personally worked on a number of murals throughout California and abroad. Mr. Delgado has worked on numerous Caltrans projects and is involved in several Hispanic organizations. The first phase or the pre-restoration project activities were completed in June 2009. The tasks completed included assessing and recording the condition of the 18 murals to be restored; locating original artists and ascertaining copyright status; defining the restoration work to be performed and; determining cost estimates and a schedule for each mural.

In September 2009, an amendment to the contract was requested to have Ghirardelli Associates act as the prime contractor and subcontract with the original artists or their designees. The amendment needed approval from two state agencies, the Division of Procurement and Contracts and the Department of General Services. After a year and half, approval was finally given to move forward with the project and have Ghirardelli Associates hire the original artists to perform the mural restorations. The amendment was executed on March 15, 2011.

A few of the murals were painted using lead paint. A separate contract was issued to remove the lead paint from the murals prior to

commencement of the restoration work. This work was completed in August 2010.

Ghirardelli Associates will develop a schedule for restoring the murals based on the availability of the individual artists. The plan is to begin work on the murals soon after the Chicano Park Day celebration in April 2011. The entire project should take about a year to complete. The goal is not to have more than five murals worked on at any given time. If everything goes as planned, all 18 murals will be restored in time for next year's Chicano Park Day celebration.

