


**CITY OF LOS ANGELES**  
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

**DATE:** December 7, 2010

**TO:** Honorable City Council Budget Committee

**FROM:** Olga Garay, Department of Cultural Affairs General Manager  MS 380

**SUBJECT:** **Motion 10-1590- Murals Restoration Plan**

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This report is respectfully submitted to the Budget and Finance Committee as directed by Council Motion 10-1590. It is an addendum to the October 20, 2010 submittal to the Public Works Committee (attached). This report outlines the Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) mural restoration plan using a reduced budget from \$100,000 to \$40,000 or \$80,000, and describes the process by which the funds will be deployed.

**Summary**

Council Motion 10-1590 instructing the transfer of up to \$80,000 to the Department of Cultural Affairs from the Vandalism and Graffiti Trust Fund, presents the opportunity to restore four to six of the City's culturally important murals. The exact number of murals to be restored will be dependent on the amount of funds allocated to the Department, as well as the condition and scope of work required for each mural. The scope of work will be established through an assessment process devised by pre-qualified paintings conservators working in tandem with the original artists. Community participation may also be engaged if feasible, to reacquaint the murals with the local community and youth with the murals.

**Budget**

In DCA's memo of October 20<sup>th</sup>, we indicated that nine to ten murals could be restored with a budget of \$100,000. This amount was based on \$80,000 being transferred from the Vandalism and Graffiti Trust Fund to DCA, and \$20,000 from DCA's mural restoration line item in this year's budget. However, in July of this year, Council File 10-0600-S8 reconfigured the DCA 2010-11 budget, resulting in the reallocation of the \$20,000 line item originally intended for mural restorations. Thus, the only available funds for mural restorations would be the transfer of \$40,000-\$80,000 from the Vandalism and Graffiti Trust Fund. As such, this lower budget amount would enable the Department to restore four to six murals, down from the originally proposed nine to ten. (The annual murals line item within the DCA budget has been reduced dramatically from a high of \$400,000 in 1989, to \$0 in 2005 and \$20,000 in 2010.)

**Murals Restoration Process**

Murals in poor condition are not only limited to murals with graffiti. Underlining structural issues such as flaking, cracking, fissures, and powdering paint are also signs of a troubled mural.

The Department will obtain mural treatment proposals, consisting of a work plan and budget, from independent paintings conservators on our pre-qualified conservator list. The Social and Public Art Resources Center (SPARC), will also be asked to submit a similar work plan and budget for the City-funded Neighborhood Pride Program murals.

The scope of work generally associated with mural restoration consists of:

- 1) Removing any graffiti or overpaint from the mural;
- 2) Repairing the damages including; rebonding flaking paint, resealing cracks in the paint or wall surface, and resaturating powdering paint;
- 3) Repainting losses to the mural image;
- 4) Application of an anti-graffiti coating.

## Murals Database

The Department of Cultural Affairs has a database of City-funded murals. As part of this database, murals that are believed to be "culturally significant", as determined by an independent panel of art historians, arts leaders, and artists, are ranked on a 1-3 system. Murals with a score of "3" are designated highly significant, a score of "2" are significant, and a score of "1" are not significant.

Additionally, in June of 2010, the Department completed a murals condition survey, funded by AT & T, produced by professional conservators of 400 City-sponsored murals created between 1970 and 2009. This survey has information regarding the general status of the murals regarding graffiti, overpaint, paint flaking, detachment and/or powdering. By correlating the two sets of data DCA has identified the following highly-ranked murals for restoration. The final selection of murals to be restored will be determined once specific proposals have been received and the final available budget is established.

### Preliminary list of murals to be restored

The following murals have been targeted as being significant artworks in need of restoration that can be addressed on a moderate budget.

#### "Women do get weary, but they don't give up" - Alice Patrick – CD 8

This is the first mural painted in Los Angeles by an African American woman artist. The mural features the Godmother of the Civil Rights Movement and former President of the National Council of Negro Women, Dorothy Height, who died in April 2010 at the age of 98. *There is also County interest in providing financial support for the restoration of this mural should the City move forward with this effort.* This is an opportunity to leverage the City's dollars in the restoration of this work.



Original



Current

**Title:** Women do get weary but they don't give up.

**Artist:** Alice Patrick

**Year:** 1991

**Ranking Score:** 3

**Graffiti:** 1% of surface

**Flaking and Detachment:** 40% of surface

**Paint Loss and Powdering:** 40% of surface

**Anti-graffiti Coating Present:** No

Requires paint saturation to address powdering; reattachment of paint to wall surface; significant in-painting by artist; application of anti-graffiti coating.

"Pride of Mar Vista" – East Los Streetscapers – CD 11

This mural, painted by the renowned muralist collective, East Los Streetscapers, combines ancient African and Mexican traditions with imagery of contemporary life.



Original



Current

**Title:** Pride of Mar Vista

**Artist:** East Los Streetscapers

**Year:** 1989

**Ranking Score:** 2.7

**Graffiti:** 75% of surface

**Flaking and Detachment:** 1% of surface

**Powdering:** 5% of surface

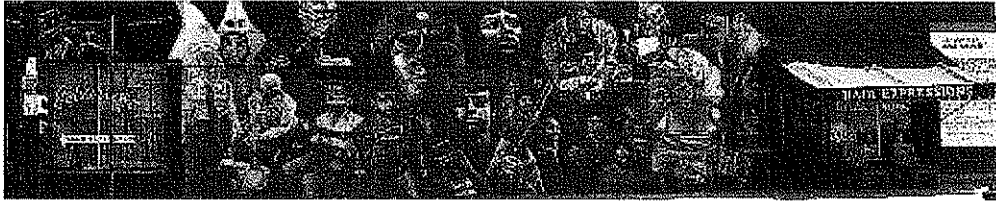
**Loss:** 15% of surface

**Anti-graffiti Coating Present:** No

Requires graffiti removal with significant in-painting by artist due to paint loss from graffiti and application of anti-graffiti coating.

"To Protect and Serve" – Noni Olabisi – CD 10

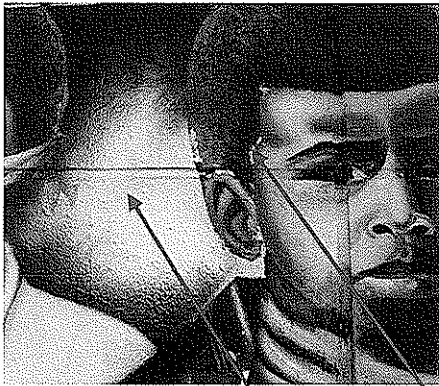
This highly significant mural depicts African American civil rights struggles and the history of the Black Panther party. It includes images of the Klan and Bobby Seale bound and gagged as he was during the Chicago 7 trial of the late 1960s. Huey Newton and Angela Davis are also portrayed.



Original



Current



Detail of silver overpaint/paint damage showing paint loss and flaking

**Title:** To Protect and Serve

**Artist:** Noni Olabisi

**Year:** 1995

**Ranking Score:** 3

**Graffiti/Silver Overpaint:** 30% of surface

**Flaking and Loss:** 5% of surface

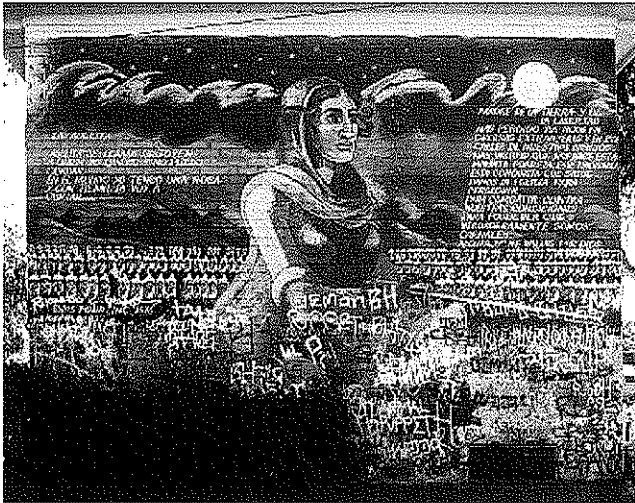
**Powdering:** 100% of surface

**Anti-graffiti Coating Present:** No

Requires paint saturation to address powdering; artist in-painting of solid red background; paint reattachment; additional in-painting of losses due to flaking paint; application of anti-graffiti coating.

"La Adelita"-Carlos Almaraz (Ramona Gardens) – CD 14

This is a major artwork by a deceased artist. The murals in Ramona Gardens date to the 1960's and 1970's. This is a collection that is recognized as highly significant to the birth of the murals movement in Los Angeles. This mural was created through the "Citywide Murals Program". It portrays an idealized vision of women, both maternal and powerful.



2008

<b>Title:</b> La Adelita
<b>Artist:</b> Carlos Almaraz
<b>Year:</b> 1976
<b>Ranking Score:</b> 3
<b>Graffiti/Overpaint:</b> 50% of surface
<b>Powdering:</b> 35% of surface
<b>Anti-graffiti Coating Present:</b> No



Current

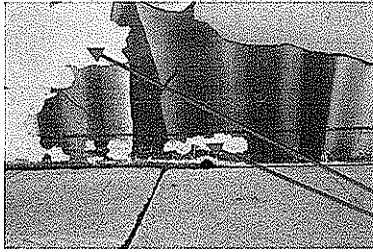
Requires removal of overpaint and graffiti layers, resaturation of powdering paint, substantial in-painting by an artist to be approved by artist's heir; application of anti-graffiti coating.

### "Earth Memories"- Eva Cockroft -CD 1

Eva Cockroft, deceased, was lead artist on this 540-foot-long (14,352 sq ft) mural near Belmont High School in downtown Los Angeles. Painted in 1996, the mural represents the history of the universe. It was created through the Environmental Affairs Department.



Current



Close-up of paint loss

Reattachment of flaking and detached paint; in-paint of losses by an artist to be approved by artist's heir. Application of anti-graffiti coating to in-paint areas.

<b>Title:</b> Earth Memories
<b>Artist:</b> Eva Crockroft
<b>Year:</b> 1996
<b>Ranking Score:</b> 2.5
<b>Graffiti:</b> 5% of surface
<b>Flaking and Detachment:</b> 10% of surface
<b>Loss:</b> 15% of surface. (Loss areas up to 8 ft in diameter)
<b>Anti-graffiti Coating Present:</b> Yes

"Mariachi Plaza Murals" - Juan Solís -CD 14

The Mariachi Plaza murals were funded by DCA and have become an established part of the Mariachi Plaza and gazebo courtyard area.



2009



Current

<b>Title:</b> Mariachis
<b>Artist:</b> Juan Solís
<b>Year:</b> 1994
<b>Graffiti:</b> 10% of surface
<b>Flaking and Detachment:</b> 25% of surface
<b>Loss:</b> 15% of surface.
<b>Anti-graffiti Coating Present:</b> Partial coverage

Requires graffiti removal, reattachment of flaking and detached paint, in-paint of losses by artist, fresh application of anti-graffiti coating.

The Department would like to thank the Council for making funding available to restore these murals. Murals throughout the City are important cultural assets; many are in desperate need of attention. We look forward to carrying out this work on behalf of the City.

If you require further information, please contact Pat Gomez at 213-202-5555.

Thank you.