Overview
The County of Alameda is working on a corridor improvement project along East 14th Street between 162nd Avenue and the I-238 freeway overpass in Ashland. The intent of the corridor improvement project is to make the street safer for people walking, biking, and driving, to revitalize and beautify the corridor, and increase community pride. The Alameda County Arts Commission is working alongside the County’s Public Works Agency to include public artwork in this project.

NEW! - Project Update
The project is nearing completion. The cut metal art panels in the street medians and artistic pedestrian barriers will be installed in late 2021. The ‘pebble seats’ with artwork as well as the street light pole banners and utility box wraps will be installed in early 2022. This update includes a selection of the final artwork designs created by artist Miriam Klein Stahl. The designs will be presented to the Members of the Alameda County Arts Commission for an update on December 8, 2021. Arts Commission Director, Rachel Osajima will provide a brief project update at the Unincorporated Services Committee Meeting on Wednesday, December 1, 2021 and the Eden Area Municipal Advisory Council on Tuesday, December 14, 2021.

The overall theme of the artwork for the E. 14th Street Corridor Improvement Project is “Keep Close to Nature.” The artwork invokes the beauty of the natural world, resilience, and a sustainable future for communities. The imagery explores how all the living things in the neighborhood live in harmony and how we are interdependent.

There is one change to the artwork. It was originally specified that the artwork designs for the pebble seats would be laser cut in stainless steel and inlaid on the tops of the seats. Due to technical challenges encountered by the seat fabricators, the artwork designs will be sandblasted into the tops of the pebble seats rather than inlaid laser cut stainless steel. The number of pebble seats and the artwork designs will not be changed. The sandblasted design will not impact the comfort or performance of the seating.

Project Description
The public art project includes the following elements:
2. Pedestrian Barrier: 1 design for laser cut steel infill panels for pedestrian barriers installed in a alternating pattern. Approximately 220 linear feet of pedestrian barrier installed along the sidewalk in certain areas of the site to prohibit pedestrian access and ensure public safety.
3. Seating: 22 designs on the tops of 53 ‘pebble seats’
4. Street Light Pole Banners: A series of designs featuring diverse Ashland community members engaged in activities they enjoy and value. The designs were developed with feedback from community members serving on the Artist Selection Committee.
5. Utility Box Wraps (In design development): The designs for the utility box wraps will be similar to the designs for the street light pole banners. Additional figures and activities will be featured.
Community Involvement & Artist Selection Process
Community involvement and engagement are at the core of this project. Community members were involved in the project by contributing to a community survey about Ashland, participating in a community roundtable and community meetings, providing comments about the artists' proposal designs, serving on the artist selection committee, and providing feedback during the design development.

Artist Miriam Klein Stahl was selected through the following open, competitive process. The Artist Selection Committee met on September 13, 2019 to review the qualifications and past work of the artists in the Project Pool of artists identified from the Alameda County Arts Commission’s Artist Registry. The Artist Selection Committee selected 6 artists as semi-finalists who were invited to create proposals for the project. The artist semi-finalists were reviewed and approved by the Alameda County Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC) and the Members of Arts Commission. On October 17, 2019, a Community Roundtable was held with the artist semi-finalists at the Ashland Community Center. During the Roundtable, community members had the opportunity to share thoughts about the special characteristics of Ashland and how those characteristics should be reflected in the proposals for the public art. Community members also contributed ideas through an online survey. The artist semi-finalists considered the community survey and Roundtable comments when developing their proposals. The proposals were on display for community members to view in-person at the San Lorenzo Library and online from December 20, 2019 – January 30, 2020. The Arts Commission Staff also took the proposals to REACH Ashland Youth Center, made a presentation, and collected feedback from youth and REACH Staff on January 30, 2020. Community members were encouraged to submit comments describing why each of the artists’ proposals may or may not be a good match for the community. All of the comments were shared with the Artist Selection Committee, and the Committee was asked to consider the comments when making a recommendation of which artist to select for the project. The Artist Selection Committee reconvened on February 7, 2020 to review the proposals and interview the semi-finalists. At that meeting, the Committee recommended that artist Miriam Klein Stahl receive the design contract for the project. On February 27, 2020 the Alameda County Public Art Advisory Committee reviewed and approved Stahl as the recommended artist. On March 10, 2020 the Eden Area MAC reviewed and approved Stahl as the selected artist. The selection of Stahl was approved by the Members of the Alameda County Arts Commission on May 13, 2020. Stahl’s contract was approved by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors on June 30, 2020.

Artist Selection Committee
The Artist Selection Committee members for this project are:
• Nico Berry, Artist
• Sharon Bohaman, Community Representative
• Stella Chui, Community Representative
• Celeste Johnson, Community Representative
• Saleen Moreno, Community Representative
• Erik Sakamoto, REACH Ashland Youth Center
• Barisha Spriggs, Community Representative

Project Management
The Alameda County Arts Commission staff manages this project utilizing the same approach used for past public art projects involving community outreach and engagement, an open competitive selection process, and multi-step reviews and approvals. This process was used in recent public art projects in the unincorporated areas including the Ashland Community Identifier Mural, Cherryland Community Center, Cherryland Fire Station, Castro Valley Streetscape Improvement Project, Castro Valley and San Lorenzo Libraries, and REACH Ashland Youth Center.

Artwork Designs
The following pages include a selection of the final artwork designs created by artist Miriam Klein Stahl for the E. 14th Street Corridor Improvement Project.
Artwork Designs: Cut Metal Art Panels
17 designs laser cut in aluminum panels will be installed in the landscaped street medians.

Artwork copyright
All rights reserved.
Artwork Design: Pedestrian Barriers
1 design will be repeated for laser cut steel infill panels for pedestrian barriers. Every other panel will be rotated 180 degrees as shown below to provide variation in the design. Approximately 220 linear feet of pedestrian barrier will be installed along the sidewalk in certain areas of the site to prohibit pedestrian access and ensure public safety.

Artwork Designs: Seating
Below is a selection of the 22 designs that will be sandblasted on the tops of 53 ‘pebble seats’ and installed along E. 14th Street.

Illustration of pebble seat.

Artwork copyright Miriam Klein Stahl, 2021. All rights reserved.
Artwork Designs: Street Light Pole Banners & Utility Box Wraps

The street light pole banners will feature a series of designs depicting diverse Ashland community members engaged in activities they enjoy and value. The designs were developed with feedback from community members serving on the Artist Selection Committee. The Arts Commission will partner with the Alameda County Economic & Civic Development Department (ECD) to fabricate and install the street light pole banners along E. 14th Street as part of their Banner Program in unincorporated Alameda County. The designs for the utility box wraps are still in development and will be similar to the designs for the street light pole banners. Additional figures and activities will be featured. Approximately 60 banners will be installed along E. 14th Street and 9 County-owned utility boxes will be wrapped in the Ashland community.

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Email artscommission@acgov.org to be added to the Arts Commission’s email list about this project.

About the Alameda County Arts Commission & the County’s Public Art Ordinance
The Arts Commission was established in 1965 by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors. The Members of the Arts Commission govern the services of the Commission and act in an advisory capacity to the Board of Supervisors concerning the arts and the cultural environment in the County. The Arts Commission is comprised of fifteen community members appointed by the Board of Supervisors, and seven ex-officio members representing County Departments and leading educational and cultural institutions. The Arts Commission’s programs are managed by a staff of four full-time County employees. The Office of the Arts Commission is proud to be a division of the County’s Auditor-Controller Agency/Clerk-Recorder’s Office led by elected official Melissa Wilk. The support and leadership provided by Melissa Wilk is critical to the work of the Arts Commission. The Auditor-Controller Agency/Clerk-Recorder’s Office has an extensive leadership role with the County government and the Arts Commission.

The Alameda County Arts Commission is dedicated to improving the quality of life in Alameda County by nurturing a thriving environment for the arts; promoting economic opportunities for Alameda County’s artists and arts organizations through services such as arts funding, public art, and arts education; encouraging public participation in the arts and actively advocating for the arts. The Arts Commission supports all art forms including visual, performing, literary, traditional, and media arts. All of the Arts Commission’s services are based on the belief that the arts and creativity are an essential part of every successful and thriving community.

The Alameda County Board of Supervisors established Alameda County’s “Percent for Art” ordinance in 1994. The Public Art Program provides for public art elements connected to capital improvement projects undertaken by the County. By ordinance, the Arts Commission Staff are responsible for the management and administration of the Public Art Program. All aspects of the program are conducted in-house by the Arts Commission Staff. The goals of the Public Art Program are to generate positive, uplifting art experiences that create a sense of place, foster involvement with and respect for the regional community and users of the buildings, and promote the economic vitality of the County. For each site, unique artworks are created by professional artists and are integrated into the design of the structure or landscaping. Artwork is purchased or commissioned through an open, competitive process. The Public Art Program is administered with guidance from the Public Art Advisory Committee, a body of nine appointed community members.