

Memorandum



Date: April 14, 2026
To: Chair and Members
 Art in Public Places Trust
From: Ashlee K. Thomas, Interim Director
 Department of Cultural Affairs
Subject: Trust Resolution No. APPT 26-19 / Marlon Portales – Jose Marti Midrise /
 Professional Artist Services Agreement

Trust Resolution No. APPT 26-19

RESOLUTION APPROVING A PROFESSIONAL ARTIST SERVICES AGREEMENT IN SUBSTANTIALLY THE FORM ATTACHED WITH MARLON PORTALES IN THE FIXED FEE AMOUNT OF \$ 50,000.00 FOR PHASE I – DESIGN AND PHASE II – FABRICATION AND INSTALLATION SERVICES OF THE ARTWORK PROJECT FOR THE JOSE MARTI MIDRISE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (FROM MIAMI-DADE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED URBAN PUBLIC ART FUNDS)

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Art in Public Places Trust approve a Professional Artist Services Agreement in substantially the form attached with Marlon Portales in the fixed fee amount of \$50,000.00 for Phase I-Design and Phase II – Fabrication and Installation Services for the artwork project at the Jose Martin Midrise Housing Development.

Background

A meeting of the Professional Advisory Committee (PAC) was held on March 26, 2026 to review design proposals from a group of seven (7) artists shortlisted from a Regional Call to Artists for multiple public art opportunities for the new housing development at the former site of the Jose Marti public housing community. This public-private partnership between the Miami-Dade Department of Housing and Community Development and Related Urban Group comprise two (2) separate sites and facilities. The first build known as the Jose Marti Gardens (rebranded as Brisas del Sol II) is a 3-story garden-style building with 36 units and the second build, Jose Marti Midrise (rebranded as Brisas del Sol I), is an 8-story mid-rise building with 110 affordable units and community amenities. The call envisioned commissioning public art inspired by the works of seminal Spanish-Cuban author and activist José Martí and his poem “Guantanamera” famously interpreted by renowned singer Celia Cruz

The PAC unanimously recommended commissioning Miami-based Cuban artist Marlon Portales to create a large-scale painting depicting the tropical landscape, light and atmosphere rooted in the artist’s visual memories of Cuba and the Caribbean. The paintings do not depict specific locations, instead, construct imagined environments where nature becomes a space of emotional and symbolic resonance. The PAC was particularly interested in his proposal referenced as “*El Valle*”, oil on canvas and wood panel, 12 x 7 feet (triptych) for placement on the wall opposite to the front entrance to allow for a prime vantage point for residents and the single painting on panel “Azul”, oil on canvas and wood panel, 5 x 5 feet for placement at the elevator core wall directly to

the left of the main entrance. All works are to be framed, protected, and properly secured to designated walls.

APP staff recommends the approval of Trust Resolution No. APPT 26-19 authorizing a Professional Artist Services agreement in substantially the form attached with Marlon Portales in the fixed amount of \$50,000.00 for Phase I-Design and Phase II- Fabrication and Installation Services of the artwork project for the Jose Marti Midrise (Brisas del Sol I) public housing development.