

Memorandum



Date: September 8, 2026

To: Chair and Members
Art in Public Places Trust

From: Ashlee K. Thomas, Director
Department of Cultural Affairs

Subject: Trust Resolution No. APPT 26-52 / Edison Peñafiel, Rainbow Village
Phase I / PSA Contract

Trust Resolution No. APPT 26-52

RESOLUTION APPROVING A PROFESSIONAL ARTIST SERVICES AGREEMENT IN SUBSTANTIALLY THE FORM ATTACHED WITH ARTIST EDISON PEÑAFIEL IN THE NOT-TO EXCEED AMOUNT OF \$87,500.00 FOR PHASE I-DESIGN AND PHASE II – FABRICATION AND INSTALLATION SERVICES OF THE ARTWORK PROJECT FOR THE RAINBOW VILLAGE PHASE I HOUSING DEVELOPMENT (FROM MIAMI-DADE HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT AND HOME TRUST GROUP (HTG) 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 artist Edison Peñafiel in the not-to-exceed amount of \$87,500.00 for Phase I-Design and Phase II – Fabrication and Installation Services of the artwork project for the Rainbow Village Phase I Housing Development.

Background

A meeting of the Professional Advisory Committee (PAC) was held on July 23, 2026 to review design proposals from a group of nine (9) regional artists for various opportunities at the new Rainbow Village, a campus of four (4) individual buildings developed through a public-private partnership between the Housing Trust Group (HTG) and the Miami-Dade County Department of Housing and Community Development. These “live–work” units on the Overtown and Wynwood border are envisioned to be developed over four phases, with the first phase including a 7-story building with 310 new apartment units. Opportunities for the first phase included the major exterior facades of the building, and design of wall-based artwork applications and free-standing elements for both the interior courtyards and pool deck.

The development site was the former home of a public housing facility built back in 1972 and recently demolished to make room for the significantly larger and more dense housing development featuring top-tier market-quality amenity package designed by award-winning architecture firm Zyscovich, including resort-style pool and a sundeck with cabanas. The client

team envisioned that artists would approach the commission opportunities to pay homage to the history and rich cultural heritage of Miami's Overtown neighborhood since the 1970's.

After thoughtful discussion with input from the client teams, APP Trust, and staff, the PAC recommended Miami-based artist Edison Peñafiel to pursue his proposal *Florida Florarium: Hanging Gardens for Rainbow Village*, a vertical botanical archive ascending the seven floors of the main building exterior facade. The artwork is inspired by the living flora that built this peninsula and the species now vanishing from it. The work translates the endangered plant life of Florida into a contemporary tropical visual language of serpentine vines, teardrop leaves, floral clusters, and saturated color fields that ascend the building floor by floor, reminiscent of the mythic Hanging Gardens of Babylon. The artwork is an allegory to the 1960s Overtown when the construction of I-95 cut through the heart of a Black cultural capital, demolishing thousands of homes and severing a community that had been built and recognized as the Harlem of the South.

The artist proposed to execute the work in multi-dimensional, powder coated laser-cut aluminum, with the option to incorporate a mural or painted surface to create a dimensional hybrid approach. Given the large-scale and multiple areas tackled by the proposed concept, APP staff recommends a commission budget of \$350,000.00 and the initial release of \$87,500.00 for design development services. Early in the design process, APP will work with the artist and client team to identify the facades that will have the most visual impact.

APP staff recommends approval of Trust Resolution No. APPT 26-52 authorizing a Professional Artist Services Agreement in substantially the form attached with artist Edison Peñafiel in the not-to-exceed amount of \$ 87,500.00 for Phase I-Design and Phase II- Fabrication and Installation Services of the temporary light-based artwork project at the MLK Metrorail Station Plaza