



City of
OAKLAND
California

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News from: **Economic & Workforce
Development Department**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**City of Oakland Dedicates MacArthur Boulevard
Gateway Arches**

Oakland, CA – Today, Vice Mayor Larry Reid (District 7) and City Councilmember Loren Taylor (District 6) dedicated the MacArthur Boulevard Gateway Arches, the newest City-funded public artwork. Two colorful, 45-foot-wide, site-specific roadway arches have been installed along MacArthur Boulevard. The Oakland arch (located near Durant Avenue) greets motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians as they travel into Oakland from the south, while the Eastmont arch (located near 73rd Avenue) welcomes visitors and residents traveling into deep East Oakland.

“I want to thank the residents of Las Palmas and Toler Heights for their hard work, diligence and patience for seeing this project to completion,” said Vice Mayor Larry Reid, who represents Council District 7 where the Oakland arch is located. “I want to especially thank Jean Blacksher of Toler Heights, the late Gloria Jeffries of Las Palmas and Pat Mossburg on my staff who gave so much time and energy on this exciting project.”

“The Eastmont name on the arch is an important display of community identity, pride and unity,” said Councilmember Loren Taylor, who represents Council District 6 where the Eastmont arch is located. “East Oakland has a distinct culture known around the world and the completion of these arches is an essential step to uplifting our business corridors to the prominence East Oakland residents deserve.”

At the dedication ceremony, the elected officials were joined by Public Art Advisory Committee Co-Chair Charmin Roundtree-Baaqee, Selection Panel community member Jean Blacksher and others.

The arches were commissioned by the City’s Public Art Program and were hand-painted and -crafted by East Bay artist Eric Powell. Mr. Powell was selected from a pool of qualified artists by a selection panel comprised of local arts and community representatives.

Funding for the MacArthur Boulevard Gateway Arches comes from the City of Oakland’s Public Art Ordinance that allocates 1.5% of the City’s Capital Improvement Projects to Public Art. In this case, the artwork was the Public Art component for the MacArthur Streetscape project, and received additional financial support for installation in the form of a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) grant for capital improvements in the Eastmont neighborhood.

(more)

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Artwork Description

Mr. Powell transformed the existing arches into elegant, welcoming gateways for East Oakland. Composed of 40 hand-painted, cut steel panels, the two 45-foot-wide arches span MacArthur Boulevard, creating a visual continuity between the Eastmont community at 73rd Avenue and the Oakland border at Durant Avenue. Each arch evokes positive, uplifting feelings that invite people to enter and celebrate the neighborhoods along the MacArthur Boulevard corridor.

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About the Cultural Affairs Division

The Cultural Affairs Division is housed in the City's Economic & Workforce Development Department. The division includes the City's cultural funding program, which provides approximately \$1 million in grants to support the arts in Oakland; the public art program, which has more than \$1 million in funds currently dedicated for public art installations across Oakland and staff working on special events, film production permitting and a walking tours program.