Government of the District of Columbia
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B

By Electronic Mail

August 28, 2023

Kerry Kennedy, Public Art Program Coordinator
DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities
200 I Street, SE, Suite 1400
Washington, DC 20003
kerry.kennedy@dc.gov

RE: Supporting "Takoma Taking Flight" Proposal for the Public Art Building Communities Grant Program

Dear Kerry Kennedy:

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B, at a duly noticed public meeting, with a quorum being the "majority of the total number of commissioner positions currently filled in Commission 4B," at its August 28, 2023, meeting voted with _ Yeas, _ Nays, and _ Abstentions to send this letter expressing strong support for Julio Valdez's "Takoma Taking Flight" application to the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities for the Fiscal Year 2024 Public Art Building Communities Grant Program.

"Takoma Taking Flight" will provide a beautiful neighborhood amenity that will highlight one of our strongest community hubs – Takoma Elementary School. Takoma Elementary School is located at 7010 Piney Branch Road, NW, within Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B in Single Member District 4B02.

"Takoma Taking Flight" consists of a set of five murals of different sizes to be installed at Takoma Elementary School. Two of the murals will be installed along Piney Branch Road, NW (front low wall, school fence, and concrete benches), while the other three larger murals will be installed on the exterior walls of the gym. The murals will be visible

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to the school community as students, teachers, and families come in and out of the school building and use the school's playgrounds and fields, as well as to the broader community as they travel through the neighborhood.

Julio Valdez is a DC and New York-based artist, who has a track record of working meaningfully with the school. He recently installed several ground murals around the school as part of the Color the Curb project. These ground murals are beautiful, incorporate student designs and reflect substantial engagement with students, and provide valuable traffic calming. The proposed murals in "Takoma Taking Flight" are a natural extension of these ground murals, while also honoring the school's longstanding focus on an arts-integrated curriculum, including their partnership with the DC Youth Orchestra Program.

Julio Valdez has engaged substantively with the community, including attending the Commission's August 28th meeting to present and discuss the final designs of the proposed project with neighbors. The school community, including the Principal and the Parent Teacher Organization, and surrounding community members are excited by this proposal. Ninety community members have signed an online petition in support of the project based on its beauty and additional traffic calming effects. One resident noted, "Murals highlighting the school will not only enhance the appearance of the school but communicate to the larger community what [a] special place [Takoma Elementary School] is."

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B strongly supports Julio Valdez's "Takoma Taking Flight" proposal and looks forward to the installation of these murals as a neighborhood amenity.

Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B has voted with _ Yeas, _ Nays, and _ Abstentions to appoint the Commissioner for Single Member District 4B02, Erin Palmer, or any member of the Executive Committee in their absence, to be authorized to communicate this letter and represent Advisory Neighborhood Commission 4B in communication with you or any DC government entity regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

Erin Palmer, ANC 4B02 Commissioner

cc: Aaron Myers, Director, District Commission on Arts and Humanities
Ashley Lynch, Executive Assistant, District Commission on Arts and Humanities

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Janeese Lewis George, Councilmember, Ward 4

Brandon Clayton, Principal, Takoma Elementary School
Alex Simbana, President, Takoma Elementary School Parent Teacher Organization

Julio Valdez, JVS Project Space

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