

**OLYMPIA DRAGON MURAL
PROJECT OVERVIEW**



#OlympiaDragonMural

MISSION

The Olympia Dragon Mural Project is intended to commemorate and recognize the cultural and community contributions of early Chinese-Americans in the capital city of Washington State.

CHINESE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Significance to Olympia and Mural Location

Drawn by opportunity and a better life, the first Chinese pioneers arrived in Olympia soon after the first settlers started coming in the 1840s. Those early Chinese pioneers worked as contract laborers, built bridges, graded downtown streets, worked in lumber camps, and harvested shellfish. Later, many Chinese became cooks and house servants, operated hand laundries, or cultivated and delivered vegetables door to door. Available records show the earliest Chinatown was located a half of a block west of Capitol Way on Fourth Avenue, although some Chinese-owned businesses were located near the intersection of State Avenue and Washington Street. The core of Olympia's Chinatown consisted of several structures, including hand laundries, mercantile, grocery stores, and restaurants in the surrounding area. Over the years, the Chinese-American population grew and enjoyed being part of the downtown business community.

Following the passing of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882, a period known as The Driving Out era was born. In this period, anti-Chinese mobs physically forced Chinese communities out including in

Tacoma, Seattle, and Bellingham. Many were killed, a dark side of Washington State history that is rarely told. During this volatile period on February 8, 1886, Olympia was spared the fate that other nearby cities faced. On this day, anti-Chinese agitators converged at Chinese-owned dwellings and businesses on Fourth Avenue wanting to emulate nearby cities by forcibly removing their residents. Instead of disaster, Sheriff William Billings deputized many prominent Olympia residents who arrested the leaders of the proposed riot who were later tried and convicted of conspiracy. They were fined and sentenced to prison at McNeil Island.

Olympia historically has had a reputation for being a city of progressive and open beliefs and intolerance of those who wish to act negatively against those who wish to call Olympia home. The dragon has been a symbol in Chinese mythology that represents power, strength, and good luck. These traits are those that represent the thousands of Chinese-American pioneers who helped build Olympia and make it the city we are proud of today. ■

ABOUT THE ARTIST

The mural is designed by Mymy Nguyen. Currently a student at The Evergreen State College and completing her BA degree in public policy, Mymy will be attending law school at UCLA in the fall of 2019. Having grown up in Olympia, Mymy draws inspiration from the stories, experiences, and history of the early Chinese-Americans that helped to establish Olympia.

ARTIST STATEMENT

Mymy Nguyen

The dragon is a symbol of strength, ordinarily depicted in great detail – scales, skin, features, expression; a sense of intention and motion.

But in this dragon, we see only a silhouette – a ghost of the past strength, intention and motion of Chinese immigrants who left their homes, crossed the widest ocean, and came to Olympia for a better life.

This is where they built a community. This is where they built laundries to wash other people's clothes, gardens and restaurants to feed them, and bars where all could relax at the end of a long day.

That was the immigrant experience brought to Olympia in the 19th century, not by white settlers, but by people who spoke a different language, had a different history, and had different eyes, skin and hair.

As a new immigrant, I hear the echo of their experiences; I feel it in my bones. I share their gratitude for finding a home here. Like them, I have been welcomed by some, but felt the sting of prejudice and rejection by others. I share their sorrow for the displacement of the community that thrived here starting in the 1880s and was dispersed in the late 1920s.

What surrounds the incorporeal dragon are layers of meaning – of complicated lives, of the struggle and survival of people who persisted, survived, and left descendants in our midst.

This mural is a tribute to them; a remembrance that mourns the absence of their lost community here, and honors their bravery. ■



DONOR RECOGNITION

A dedication plaque will accompany the mural to recognize major donors and the historic significance of the area and people.

"The Olympia Dragon Mural commemorates the cultural, business and community contributions of early Chinese-American pioneers in the South Puget Sound region. The dragon represents power, strength, and good fortune in Chinese mythology and is representative of the many Chinese pioneers who endured hardship and adversity to build a better life in Olympia."



Proposed Dragon Mural Design – Artist Mymy Nguyen



West facing wall of Hannah's Bar & Grille



Proposed mural application

MURAL PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Olympia Dragon Mural Committee

- Manage a related MOU agreement with the artist
- Raise funds for the mural project
- Review and approve a proposed budget for all related Olympia Dragon Mural activities
- Review and approve summaries of all funds and donations in a timely fashion in a manner conducive to documentation (i.e. check or electronic transfer)
- Receive and review reports on mural progress in a timely fashion
- Notify the fiscal agent of all media inquiries for commentary and representation of the fiscal agent
- Ensure a safe, orderly mural project that is completed on time and on budget

GENERAL TERMS

Mural Location

The mural will be painted at the corner of 5th Avenue and Columbia Street in downtown Olympia. The mural will be located on the west-facing wall of the real property located at 123 5th Avenue, Olympia, WA 98501. The mural will be approximately 36 feet wide and 9 feet tall. Site control was acquired in June 2019.

Mural Duration

The mural is expected to be installed and maintained for a minimum of three years.

Project Timeline

Initial design and planning started in April 2019. The installation of the mural shall be completed no later than the end of July 2019.

Project Costs

The planned budget for the installation and ongoing maintenance of the mural is \$10,000. Costs include site preparation, paint, protective coating, other materials, safety equipment, installation equipment, cleanup materials, dedication signage, and a small artist stipend.

Project Support and Management

The Olympia Dragon Mural Committee is raising funds to cover all costs associated with the mural. The Committee will help coordinate volunteers and provide general support for the artist and artist's assistants during the installation of the mural. The Committee will provide assistance in a manner that does not create a negative impact to the property owner or nearby businesses. The Committee also agrees to work with the Olympia Downtown Alliance to maintain the mural in the future.

Project Finances

The Olympia Downtown Alliance (ODA) will serve as the fiscal agent for the project. The ODA is a 501 (c)(3) organization and is located at 116 5th Ave SE, Olympia, WA 98501. They can be reached at (360) 357-8948 and their mailing address is 120 State Ave NE, P.M.B. #1031 Olympia, WA 98501-8212

Dedication Ceremony

A community dedication ceremony will occur in August 2019. All donors and will be recognized as part of the dedication ceremony and program.

Dedication Statement

The dedication statement shall read, "The Olympia Dragon Mural commemorates the cultural, business, and community contributions of early Chinese-American pioneers in the South Puget Sound region. The dragon represents power, strength, and good fortune in Chinese mythology and is representative of the many Chinese pioneers who endured hardship and adversity to build a better life in Olympia."

Major Donors

Major donors will be formally recognized as part of the dedication statement contained within the mural. Major donors shall be those individuals or organizations that make a financial contribution \$1,000 or greater.

Donations:

Financial donations are being accepted by the Olympia Dragon Mural Committee. Checks should be made out to: ODA – Olympia Dragon Mural Project. Donations are tax deductible as a charitable donation to the Olympia Downtown Alliance. Please consider making a donation to the Olympia Dragon Mural Project. ■

WHAT WILL IT COST?

The Olympia Dragon Mural Committee is seeking resources to install and maintain the mural for a minimum of three years. The estimated combined installation and maintenance budget is \$10,000.00.

HOW CAN I HELP?

The Dragon Mural Committee is seeking financial contributions for this project. Major donors will be recognized on the plaque accompanying the mural. All donors will be acknowledged at the unveiling scheduled to occur in August 2019.

Make Checks Payable to: Olympia Downtown Alliance – Dragon Mural.

The Olympia Downtown Alliance is a 501(c)3 designated non-profit organization, and all Olympia Dragon Mural contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. The ODA Tax ID number is: 91-1460653

THE OLYMPIA DRAGON MURAL COMMITTEE

The Olympia Dragon Mural Project is managed by an ad hoc committee that is composed of local business people. Primary contacts are listed below:

Mymy Nguyen	mymylynn@me.com	Artist
Anna Schlecht	annaschlecht@gmail.com	Overall Coordination, Paint Lead
Brian Lock	brian_lock@comcast.net	Historical Research
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SPECIAL THANKS TO

Ira Coyne for consulting with Mymy and providing information on materials and techniques.