

Culver CITY

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 10, 2026

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR PUZA AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CULVER CITY

FROM: Cultural Affairs Commission
As of 07/28/2026: Chair Ehsaan Mesghali, Vice Chair Tania Fleischer, Commissioner Shona Gupta, Commissioner Heather Moses, Commissioner Van Johnson

SUBJECT: 2026 ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND PROPOSED ACTIVITY/UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT 6 MONTHS

CC: Odis Jones, City Manager
Adam Troy, Assistant City Manager

At the July 28, 2026 Special Meeting of the Cultural Affairs Commission (CAC), the CAC discussed and approved a staff report of activity and authorized staff to transmit the final report to City Council for approval. The list below summarizes the CAC's accomplishments during the period of January through June 2026 and provides a list of anticipated activities and upcoming agenda items for the second half of the 2026 calendar year. The CAC regularly meets on the third Tuesday of each month and met 7 times during this reporting period.

Cultural Affairs Commission List of Accomplishments (January 1 – June 30, 2026):

Art in Public Places Program (APPP) & Public Art:

- Participated in key discussions surrounding the transition of the "Art as Architecture" model to the "Art in Public Places" framework for the Rethink Project in Downtown Culver City.
- Engaged in discussions to implement new art elements within the Parks Plan, focusing on strategic opportunities for murals and vinyl wraps.
- Participated in ongoing discussions regarding the rehabilitation of municipal tree surrounds.
- Colorful Communities Poster Program: Successfully launched Phase 1 of the poster program, transitioning operations into Phases 2 and 3. Commissioners supported and attended associated community events, including the activation at Wade Park.

- Actively participated in discussions to identify a suitable permanent home for the historic MGM Lion sign inherited from Amazon.
- Participated in the ongoing review and evaluation of public art proposals, including Architecture as Art projects, rotating sculpture opportunities, and permanent public art installations. Worked collaboratively to provide thoughtful feedback on proposed artwork, public art policy, and long-range planning for Culver City's Public Art Program.
- Reviewed and discussed public art initiatives including the relocation of Neptune's Necklace, the Colorful Communities Poster Program, Utility Box Wrap Program, and future public art opportunities throughout the City.
- Contributed to discussions focused on balancing artistic excellence, community engagement, and accessibility within Culver City's growing public art collection.

Artist Laureate Program:

- Met with current Artist Laureate Victoria Marks to consult on program concepts and outline future engagement strategies. Worked with the Artist Laureate Subcommittee to support the development of community-focused programming and public engagement opportunities.
- Participated in discussions around increasing visibility of the Artist Laureate Program and expanding opportunities for residents to connect with the City's artists.
- Attended and supported the Artist Laureate's creative activation at the local Book Festival as well as various Artist Laureate activations and community events celebrating creativity and artistic expression.

2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games /Cultural Olympiad

- Met at various super subcommittee meetings to coordinate updates and program developments across departments regarding Culver City's involvement in the Cultural Olympiad.
- Established a focused, council-adopted cultural plan for the Olympics that aligns with previous commission work, international hostings, and key agreements with the Culver Arts Foundation (CCAF).
- Provided feedback on the RFP processes for jazz and dance organizations, as well as the hiring of a top-level freelance cultural producer to manage city-wide Olympic activations alongside city event staff.

Creative Economy & Community Cultural Equity Plan (CCEP):

- Helped usher in the selected consulting team (CVL Economics + MIG), providing key feedback and guidance during the kick-off phase of the data collection, survey development, and stakeholder interview candidate selection.
- Community Engagement & Outreach:
 - Supported the CCEP soft launch at the inaugural "Kick It With Culver City" community soccer watch party at Veterans Park.
 - Distributed physical survey postcards, flyers to local businesses, and promoted online e-surveys across social media and personal networks.

- Conducted a focused stakeholder conversations with MIG.
- Initiated coordination with the Economic Development division to plan an upcoming Architecture-focused Creative Economy Mixer, highlighting a panel of local Culver City-based architects.

Culver City Arts Foundation (CCAF) Partnership:

- Continued active participation in monthly CCAF board meetings and artist meetups to keep the Commission aligned on foundation happenings.
- Assisted CCAF in developing a more robust artist meetup system and actively supported and promoted their newly launched internship program.

Music in the Chambers, Fiesta La Ballona & Live Music Programming:

- Music in the Chambers (MITC): Created a sustainable, structural framework for MITC as an elite chamber music series to protect artistic quality across commissioner terms and reduce city staff burden. Recommended curation duties be handled by the Music Guild of Los Angeles, meeting with their Executive Director to align on budgets, dates, and prospective ensembles.
- 75th Fiesta La Ballona: Reviewed 52 band applications and successfully selected 12 high-quality, family-friendly musical acts (plus alternates) representing an excellent mix of genres and styles.
- Summer Sunset Concert Series: Collaborated with Edgar Varela to curate a diverse slate of six performances for the summer series, representing a rich variety of demographics, genres, and styles.

Performing Arts Grant (PAG) Program:

- Participated on the PAG Subcommittee, helping review grant applications and funding recommendations that support Culver City's vibrant performing arts community.
- Commissioners attended numerous PAG-funded performances across the city and participated in discussions evaluating grant priorities, funding allocations, and opportunities to strengthen the long-term impact of the City's cultural investments.

Cultural Affairs Commission Activities Plan (July 1 – December 31, 2026):

Art in Public Places Program (APPP) & Public Art:

- Public Art Initiative Implementation: Assist with the implementation of upcoming public art initiatives, private developer compliance, and city cultural programming.
- APPP Compliance & Developer Advisement: Continue working with developers, project architects, and art consultants to provide guidance on meeting Art in Public Places Program requirements for private developments.
- Collection Maintenance & Conservation: Periodically review and evaluate existing municipal public art installations to make recommendations for standard conservation, potential deaccessioning, or relocation.

Performing Arts Grant (PAG) Program:

- New PAG Cycle & Performance Support: Embark on the new PAG cycle and continue consistent attendance, evaluation, and support of live PAG performances.
- Subcommittee Work: Continue serving on the Performing Arts Grant Subcommittee to draft guidelines, evaluate incoming applications, coordinate independent review panels, and prepare funding recommendations for City Council.

Creative Economy & Community Cultural Equity Plan (CCEP):

- CCEP Implementation & Stakeholder Meetings: Continue close collaboration with CVL Economics + MIG on the Community Cultural Equity Plan, attending all scheduled public stakeholder meetings and events.
- School District Stakeholder Integration: Facilitate the upcoming CCUSD stakeholder connection between Ann Bechtold and JD Sargent at the Frost

Music in the Chambers & Live Music Programming:

- Music in the Chambers Production: Partner with the Music Guild of Los Angeles and city staff to successfully produce the upcoming MITC concert on October 18.
- Live Music: Continue to support City programs advancing live music planning, and attending local musical performances.

2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games / Cultural Olympiad:

- Olympic RFP Support: Continue promoting and guiding the RFP selection process for Olympic programming, performance organizations, and cultural producers.

Artist Laureate Program:

- Support the Artist Laureate in developing community-focused programming and expanding public opportunities for residents to connect with local artists, specifically assisting with, promoting, and participating in the upcoming "Hug" activation.

Commission Business:

- Prepare for the nomination, selection, and voting process for the Commission Chair and Vice Chair seats in accordance with annual commission terms.
- Subcommittee Assignments: Re-evaluate standing and ad hoc subcommittee rosters following new mayoral or council appointments to align with the fiscal work plan.

Historic Preservation:

- Partner with selected planning consultants and division staff to review municipal historic preservation ordinances and advance the comprehensive inventory of local historic properties.

Community Advocacy & Awareness:

- Support efforts to expand public awareness of Culver City's arts and cultural initiatives, while fostering stronger connections between artists, residents, and community organizations. Continue to attend, document, and promote Culver City's diverse array of local cultural events, art activations, and performances across municipal social media channels and personal networks.