

# Culver CITY

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## MEMORANDUM

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**DATE:** January 16, 2024

**TO:** Honorable Mayor McMorris and Members of the City Council of the City of Culver City

**FROM:** Cultural Affairs Commission [Chair Brenda Williams; Vice Chair Leora O'Carroll; Members Tania Fleischer, Ehsaan Mesghali, and Jeannine Wisnosky Stehlin]

**SUBJECT:** **2023 Accomplishments and 2024 Proposed Activity and Upcoming Agenda Items for the Next Six Months**

**CC:** John Nachbar, City Manager  
Jesse Mays, Assistant City Manager

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On January 16, 2024, the Cultural Affairs Commission (CAC) approved the transmittal of the following information to the City Council:

**Cultural Affairs Commission Accomplishments (July 1 – December 31, 2023):**

- **Art in Public Places Program:** Public Art Subcommittee and CAC reviewed applications for new permanent artworks:
  - **10301-10395 Jefferson Blvd.** – Approval of a concept for a permanent art installation by Yoskay Yamamoto. The proposed concept will be in a sculpture sited within a newly built public space that is facing Ballona Creek. CAC discussed the plans for the placement and features of the artwork and made suggestions to ensure public accessibility and safety.
- **APPP Ordinance Update:**
  - CAC Subcommittees (Public Art and Performing Arts) met multiple times to review CCMC language pertaining to the Art in Public Places Program (APPP) and identify potential updates, to ensure that Culver City's program will be aligned with best practices and will fulfill the current needs of the community.
  - CAC received a report from Christine Byers, Cultural Affairs Manager, and posed relevant questions to Deputy City Attorney Christina Burrows, regarding the history of the APPP Ordinance, risk assessments, recent legal guidance, prior court opinions, and similar programs within Los Angeles County.
- **Artist Laureate Program:**
  - *"Dear Culver City..."*: Ceramics artist and educator Katy Krantz is implementing an ambitious community-wide participatory art project named *"Dear Culver City..."*. The CAC Subcommittee met with Ms. Krantz to assist with planning for the art project. CAC received updates about the project, which included free ceramics-

- making workshops and participation opportunities at many locations throughout the city.
- Temporary Art Project at 11029 Washington Blvd: CAC considered a proposal by Katy Krantz, and made a recommendation to City Council, for a temporary art project/mural at 11029 Washington Blvd.
  - **Commission Business**: CAC recommended to City Council Municipal Code updates re CAC powers and duties.
  - **Cultural Affairs Division**: CAC received a report from retiring Cultural Affairs Manager, Christine Byers, regarding historical challenges, upcoming opportunities, staffing, budgets, community needs, and recommendations.
  - **Culver City Arts Foundation (Culver Arts)**: Culver City Arts Foundation Liaison Subcommittee attended monthly Board meetings. Commissioners attended community events hosted by Culver Arts, received updates, and provided feedback about activities and proposed projects.
  - **Feasibility Study for Veterans Memorial Park and Bill Botts Fields**: CAC received two reports/presentations by Johnson Favaro, regarding the future of the facilities and provided feedback regarding a wide variety of arts and cultural uses. CAC made recommendations for community needs, necessary facilities, and limitations of current options. CAC's input was included in the report that was sent to City Council.
  - **Outreach and Community Engagement**: As appropriate, CAC participates in targeted outreach and attends cultural activities, museum exhibitions, panel presentations, and sponsored performances in Culver City. Commissioners O'Carroll and Fleischer along with Cultural Affairs Manager Christine Byers attended the 5-year countdown to the Olympics event on July 22, 2023. They met with community members to hear input on cultural ideas and events during the Olympics.
  - **Performing Arts Grant Program**:
    - Subcommittee provided support for drafting of guidelines, reviewed eligibility criteria, and analyzed materials for 32 incoming applications. Subcommittee provided support for the independent evaluation of grant applications, monitored an 8-hour panel review and scoring meeting, determined appropriate levels of grant funding based on panel scores, and made recommendations to the CAC. Subcommittee monitored grantee activities and discussed questions of eligibility or compliance. Subcommittee met with staff in December to review proposed program/process improvements for the future.
    - CAC considered a recommendation from the 2024 Performing Arts Grant Program Subcommittee pertaining to the 2024 grant awards. CAC received comments (written and verbal) from individual grant applicants and reviewed the proposed

projects. CAC made a recommendation to the City Council to award \$244,960 to thirty performing arts organizations for music, theatre, and dance events in 2024. CAC regularly attends and supports grant-funded performances.

- **Summer Sunset Concert Series:** CAC Subcommittee (Performing Arts Grant Program) met with Special Events Manager to prepare for the return of the popular concert series at The Culver Steps. Commissioners provided referrals, made suggestions for performers, assisted with marketing, and shared community feedback.

### **Cultural Affairs Commission Activities Plan (January 1 – June 30, 2024):**

- **Art in Public Places Program:** Continue review of applications for new artworks in conjunction with private development. Public Art Subcommittee will continue work on art component of Farragut Connector, Washington/National TOD project, The Culver Steps project, and other art projects and concept proposals in connection with development throughout the city.
- **APPP Ordinance Update:** CAC will continue to consider revisions to the Art in Public Places Program Ordinance to align with current community needs. CAC will receive answers from Deputy City Attorney Christina Burrows to questions previously posed and will propose ordinance revisions. These suggestions will be sent to the City Attorney, for future recommendation to the City Council.
- **Artist Laureate Program:** Receive updates and provide continuing support for Artist Laureate Katy Krantz. Participate in public exhibition of ceramics project, “Dear Culver City...” scheduled for display at City Hall during 2024. Continue to support Phase 1 (words and signage) of Katy Krantz’s temporary mural at 11029 Washington Blvd. and begin considering a potential second phase. Commence planning and recruitment of new Artist Laureate for 2025-2026.
- **Commission Business:** CAC’s new Ad Hoc Olympics 2028 Subcommittee will participate in planning and activities as determined by the City Council Olympics Subcommittee. As requested by City Council, CAC will form a new Ad-Hoc Subcommittee to serve in an advisory capacity for entertainment at Fiesta La Ballona. The Subcommittee will meet with PRCS staff to begin planning for event.
- **Community Cultural Plan Update:** CAC will work with staff to update the Community Cultural Plan.
- **Creative Economy and Cultural Plan:** Subcommittee will continue to work with Cultural Affairs and Economic Development staff on stakeholder activities and events and development of a new Cultural Plan to include a Public Art Master Plan.

- **Cultural Affairs Division**: CAC will provide support for the hiring and onboarding of a new Cultural Affairs Manager. Provide comments and recommendations to Assistant City Manager as appropriate. CAC will receive report and presentation regarding status updates for the FY 2023-24 Cultural Affairs Work Plan, and Work Plan priorities for FY 2024-25. CAC will provide comments to staff regarding the Work Plans.
- **Culver City Arts Foundation**: Continue to liaise and support Culver Arts. Provide input on MOU amendment, receive updates/report, and attend Board meetings.
- **Economic Vitality Task Force (EVTF)**: CAC members continue to support EVTF meetings with a focus on the launch of an art in empty storefronts/businesses program.
- **Feasibility Study for Bill Botts Fields and Veterans Memorial Building and Park**: CAC will continue to participate in the study process to ensure the preservation of cultural assets and identify opportunities for enhanced or new cultural/performance venues.
- **Historic Preservation Program Update**: CAC will work with staff to update program as included in the CCMC.
- **Outreach and Community Engagement**: As appropriate, CAC participates in outreach about various programs and attends cultural activities in Culver City.
- **Performing Arts Grant Program**: CAC regularly attends and supports grant-funded performances. CAC will monitor grants and provide guidance on eligibility and compliance.
- **Summer Sunset Concert Series**: CAC Subcommittee will participate in planning for the 2024 performances at The Culver Steps.