

**City of Culver City, California
Agenda Item Report**

Meeting Date: 8/12/2013		Item Number: <u>A-2</u>	
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM: Consideration of a Culver City Arts District Organization and Sponsorship of Cooperative Economic Development and Marketing Programs.			
Contact Person/Dept.: Elaine Warner/CDD Todd Tipton/CDD		Phone Number: (310) 253-5777 (310) 253-5783	
Fiscal Impact: Yes ☒ No ☐		General Fund: Yes ☐ No ☒	
Public Hearing: ☐		Action Item: ☒ Attachments: ☒	
Commission Action Required: Yes ☐ No ☒		Date: _____	
Public Notification: (E-Mail) Meetings and Agendas – City Council (08/06/13)			
Department Approval: Sol Blumenfeld (07/31/13)		City Attorney Approval: Carol Schwab (by H. Baker) (08/06/13)	
Chief Financial Officer Approval: Jeff Muir (08/06/13)		City Manager Approval: John M. Nachbar (08/06/13)	
 <u>RECOMMENDATION</u> Staff recommends the City Council recognize the organization of property and business owners in the Culver City Arts District and approve sponsorship of cooperative economic development and marketing activities for the area through in kind services in the form of staff time. <u>BACKGROUND</u> The area known informally as the Culver City Arts District is comprised of numerous art galleries, architecture firms, and artisanal restaurants and has received both national and international attention as a center for fine art with one of the highest concentrations of fine arts galleries in Southern California. While the informal district is located within both the City of Los Angeles and Culver City, it is primarily located along Washington Boulevard between Helms Avenue and Fairfax Avenue in Culver City. In 2005, the former Culver City Redevelopment Agency (former CCRA) co-sponsored and produced Art Walk Culver City which promoted the various galleries and businesses in the area. The annual event included a promotional art gallery map listing participating businesses and exhibitions. In 2012, Artwalk Culver City was discontinued largely due to the dissolution of redevelopment agencies throughout the state (including the former CCRA) and the associated loss of funding. Since that time, the City has received numerous inquiries from area business and property owners requesting assistance in organizing promotional programs including			

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the installation of street banners that can help support, define and promote, in a more formal way, the Culver City Arts District (District) as a unique cultural destination.

DISCUSSION

Economic Development staff and the Culver City Chamber of Commerce have met with several area property and business owners to discuss street banners, monthly events, marketing materials, and other efforts that area stakeholders believe will best brand and promote the proposed District. Staff has also discussed the eventual creation of a more formal business improvement association that can fund capital improvements and maintenance in the area. Two meetings have been held with stakeholders to discuss both short and long term strategies, and there has been significant interest in implementing a District street banner program as the first short-term project. The banner program would be located along Washington Boulevard. Staff has worked with the organizations to develop conceptual banner designs, identify pole locations, provide cost estimates for banner installation, and organize the area to encourage participation in the program. The proposed District stakeholders have suggested installing the banners by mid-September to coincide with the galleries busiest time of the year.

Other marketing activities that were discussed included the development of a District map that not only highlights the galleries but also the other unique shops and restaurants in the area. In addition, several members of the organization have discussed the development of a monthly, "2nd Saturday" event that would be a recurring, but less formal type of "Artwalk" to draw visitors to the area on a regular basis for shopping, dining and entertainment.

City Sponsorship

To be categorized as a "sponsored" event by the City, an event or activity must meet the criteria set forth in Culver City Municipal Code (CCMC) Section 17.330.040.B.7.b.ii., confirming that the City is (a) participating in an official capacity in the planning, preparation or promotion of the event or activity; and (b) contributing 25% of the total estimated costs of the civic event or activity or at least \$1,000, whichever is less. This contribution may take the form of funds, labor, staff time, materials, a waiver of fees, or any combination thereof. The CCMC requires both (a) AND (b) conditions be satisfied. Additionally, in order for an event to be considered City-sponsored, the City Council must determine, by specific action, that the above criteria have been met.

If approved by the City Council, the City would be participating in an official capacity in the planning, preparation or promotion of the economic development and marketing activities for the area; and (b) contributing at least \$1,000 or 25% of the total estimated costs in the form of staff time.

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FISCAL ANALYSIS

There is no fiscal impact in recognizing the organization of property and business owners in the proposed District. The organization would work in partnership with Economic Development staff to implement marketing efforts and activities to enhance the proposed District. Work in the District is shown as part of the Economic Development Work Plan approved in the City Council Adopted Budget for Fiscal Year 2013/2014. These programs will be funded voluntarily by the members of the proposed District, and the City will provide in kind support staff on an as-needed basis. Eventually a more formal District organization may be created eliminating the need for in kind staffing.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Petition/Letters from Property and Business Owners in the proposed Culver City Arts District;
2. Preliminary Banner locations.

MOTION

That the City Council:

1. Recognize the organization of property and business owners as the Culver City Arts District; and
2. Direct the City Manager to sponsor future cooperative economic development and marketing activities for the area through in kind services in the form of staff time subject to availability of such time.