

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION
PUBLIC ART SUBCOMMITTEE
CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA

August 25, 2025
6:00 P.M.

Call to Order & Roll Call

The special meeting of the Cultural Affairs Commission Public Art Subcommittee was called to order at 6:02 P.M. in the Patio Room at City Hall.

Present: Ehsaan Mesghali, Vice Chair
Shona Gupta, Commissioner

Staff: Sally Unsworth, Cultural Affairs Manager
Sam Lee, Cultural Affairs Analyst

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Consent Calendar Items

Item C-1

Approval of Minutes of the June 24, 2025 Cultural Affairs Commission Public Art Subcommittee Meeting

MOVED BY VICE CHAIR MESGHALI, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER GUPTA AND UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED, THAT THE CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION PUBLIC ART SUBCOMMITTEE APPROVE MINUTES FOR THE JUNE 24, 2025 CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION PUBLIC ART SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING.

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Order of the Agenda

No changes were made.

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Action Items

Item A-1

1) Discussion of a Temporary Outdoor Sound & Frequency Exhibition Titled Attune by Now Art; 2) Provide Comments as Appropriate, and 3) Make Recommendations to the Cultural Affairs Commission

Sam Lee, Cultural Affairs Analyst, introduced the item.

Sally Unsworth, Cultural Affairs Manager, noted that the item had been presented at the July Cultural Affairs Commission meeting; and noted that Now Art had reached out to Sam Lee.

Sam Lee, Cultural Affairs Analyst, provided background on Now Art; discussed the presentation made to the Cultural Affairs Commission in July; presented the slide deck from that meeting; discussed their work to put together a sound and frequency exhibition throughout Los Angeles county; clarification that a date had not been set, but the organizers were looking for buy-in from Culver City; number of sites proposed to be activated simultaneously; inclusion of lights and sound in the exhibition; scheduling; the timeline; moving parts to the exhibition; length of the exhibition; the budget; the ask from Culver City; cost per site; the intent to hold the event outdoors; the small ask from each city; overall budget; and the Commission request for feedback from the Subcommittee.

Sally Unsworth, Cultural Affairs Manager, discussed staff research after the presentation; excitement at doing a multi-disciplinary event; freeing up part of the Temporary Art budget to accommodate the request; integration with existing programs; clarification that the item is not within the existing work plan and they had not been actively seeking proposals; support for the event as being a potential first step for the Temporary Art Program; the Performing Arts Grant Program; the Culver City Special Events Program; permitting; staff capacity; a suggestion to provide a stipend as a pilot project; lack of a comparable hard contract with another city to see; other large-scale events by Now Art; a suggestion to support a pilot program and then determine whether to collaborate on other events; potential locations; tech; promotion; volunteers; capacity for the program; and the desire of the Commission to have a conversation about the viability of the project.

Discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding clarification about the overarching concept; activating light and sound at the same time as other locations in Southern California; synching light to music; participating areas; lack of information about financial commitment of other cities; communication with other cities; unity; mental health; wellness; the hour-long program looped three times; logistics; agreement on a date; multiple moving parts; timing; ensuring

that Now Art takes care of the permits; the event that does not fit existing categories; multi-disciplinary art experiences; placement; making use of a grassy area; whether people are going to stumble on the event; creating a destination; being part of a unique experience; West L.A. College; accessibility; ambiance; the Overlook; ensuring against an onerous process; support for making use of the Wende Museum; creation of a more intimate setting for the pilot event; support for the idea but concern with the vague details provided; creation of a process to address proposals received; infrastructure; providing a framework; limiting creation of a pilot program; providing infrastructure for intake and consideration and for clear boundaries of what can be provided; concern with opening the door to anyone coming to a Commission meeting and being able to pitch a \$15,000 activation; the need for additional information; being clear about not being involved in the production of the event; communication with other cities; promoting the project but not being part of the production; providing temporary arts grants using the same structure as the Performing Arts Grants; contracting; insurance requirements to enter into a contract; involvement of the public in a public space; and being clear with expectations.

The following member of the public addressed the Subcommittee:

Marla Koosed received clarification regarding cost of the proposed project; discussed the type of company pitching the idea; quality; supporters; and she noted the number of good people doing things.

Additional discussion ensued between Ms. Koosed, staff, and Subcommittee Members regarding most recent work done by Now Art; the corporate match mural program; lack of details or samples; providing a more transparent process; establishing criteria; things that can be passed along to Culver Arts; creating more formalized partnership agreements; communication with other cities; receipt of a sound sample; the Artist Laureate; next steps; further conversation with the Commission; challenges with sound components; sound installations; use in confined spaces; capacity; reality; and the pilot Music in the Chambers event.

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Item A-2

**1) Discussion of a Possible Acquisition of the MGM Sign; and,
2) Provide Comments as Appropriate**

Sally Unsworth, Cultural Affairs Manager, presented slides depicting lions in Culver City; discussed historical markers; the Lion Fountain; the lion signage that was removed in 1980s that is currently in a storage locker in downtown Los Angeles; scale and condition of the lion; lack of original artist attribution for the lion; potential locations that were scouted for siting the sign; ideas for how to utilize both sides of the sign; internal components of the sign; the opportunity for the potential placement at the front of the Senior Center; allowing the Senior Center and the Commission to consider acquisition of the sign; acquiring the sign for the permanent collection; responsibility for maintenance; cost to move the item from the Trust; and donation of the signage.

Hope Parrish, Culver City Historical Society, provided background and context on the lion sign noting that they had been trying to get the sign back for a long time; she reported that no one owned the signage; and she discussed Lot 2 of MGM.

Discussion ensued between Ms. Parrish, staff, and Subcommittee Members regarding consideration by the Senior Center Board as part of the landscaping plans; Commission consideration; steps; anticipated costs; alternative siting that had been considered; historic signage; access for the general public; scale; clarification that the sign would not be perceived as advertising; the historical significance designation; City Council consideration of the item; support for the item; questions still to be asked; the need for a process; Cultural Trust Fund allocations to cover expenses; and adding it to the collection.

Marla Koosed discussed difficulty envisioning the placement, and the importance of providing a rendering with the actual sign to help people visualize the signage to scale.

Additional discussion ensued between Ms. Parrish, Ms. Koosed, staff and Subcommittee Members regarding mounting; aging of the signage; the journey of the signage; ensuring against vandalism; use of the lion part of the signage, not the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer portion; Geotech; potential siting; potential issues with the scale of the piece; support for placement of

the sign on a pedestal in the middle of a plaza; alternate locations; visibility; state vs. City jurisdiction; scouting trips; approvals; ensuring against interrupting the ecosystem; the timeline; lighting; preserving the age of the signage rather than restoring it; accessibility for the general public; placement in a traffic spot vs. a gathering spot; history of Culver City; infrastructure; and Cultural Affairs consideration of the item in September.

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Item A-3

1) Discussion of a Rotating Sculpture Program for Fiscal Year 2025 and 2026; and, 2) Provide Comments as Appropriate

Sally Unsworth, Cultural Affairs Manager, provided background on the item; indicated that staff would be meeting with the Public Art Coordinator for Pasadena on Friday; discussed rotating seven commissioned pieces; providing opportunities for emerging artists; enlivening Culver City before the Olympics; the potential timeline; site specific works; on loan projects; identified locations; the intent to provide activation in every Culver City neighborhood in the next year; communication with local galleries; referrals; the per piece budget; length of the cycle; use of materials that are not as robust as those used for permanent installations; mentoring opportunities; engagement with local artists; the budget scaled toward accessibility; and activating different areas.

Discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding the local focus; openness to artists in the region; making use of sculptures that are in storage; and outreach to Redcar about possible loans of artwork.

Marla Koosed discussed installations from Desert X that could translate; the tree surrounds in the Arts District; observed that it took three cycles of three full time employees to get back to how things were in 2012; and she expressed appreciation to staff and Hope Parrish for their efforts.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding the Washington Boulevard tree surrounds; public engagement; feedback on the tree surrounds during Art Walk and Roll; the pause on the removal process pending

Commission consideration; potential placement for temporary art; medians; landscaping; the public announcement about the September 14 public feedback session regarding the tree surrounds with artist Jeff Morrical; the timeline for installation of temporary artwork; potential programming around the art; phased installation; unveiling; production of a map; hiring of a graphic designer to create polished, branded graphic identities for each program; roll-out; criteria; scale; material requirements; communication with West Hollywood; staff capacity; size of the pieces; creating opportunities within a diminishing landscape of opportunities; the sculpture budget in Pasadena; themed installations; alignment with the Olympics; movement-related pieces; pieces that live on past the Olympics; and art that is more Culver-specific.

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Item A-4

Culver City: Colorful Communities Poster Program for Fiscal Years 2025 and 2026; and, 2) Provide Comments as Appropriate

Sam Lee, Cultural Affairs Analyst, distributed an RFQ (Request for Qualifications) for feedback; discussed having a commemorative poster series to celebrate the 15 micro-neighborhoods in Culver City; modeling after the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transit Authority's *Through the Eyes of the Artist* series; celebrating unique things in neighborhoods; creation of a commemorative poster series; providing a set to dignitaries that come to the City; the first five areas focused on; rotating through neighborhoods until all are covered; highlighting overlooked places; and having an artist look at things with fresh eyes.

Discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding original commissions; neighborhoods picked to complement the rotating art; community feedback sessions for the Cultural Plan; pieces for the permanent collection; budget per artist; transferrable designs to bus stops, construction wraps; digital assets; merchandise; wayfinding signage in the parks; and opportunities for the images to live on.

Marla Koosed noted that landlords might want to utilize the images.

Additional discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding the competitive process; subcommittee involvement; the time-consuming process; creation of a short list of candidates; requiring a mandatory public engagement workshop; the budget for each artist or artist team; the need to submit original artwork for the design; the mandatory orientation meeting to make expectations clear; holding public engagement workshops in the assigned neighborhoods; consultation with the community being represented; maintaining the freedom for the artist to create; involvement of Hope Parrish for the history of the area; and blending past and present.

Hope Parrish, Culver City Historical Society, noted that she had three great researchers to assist her.

Further discussion ensued between staff and Subcommittee Members regarding the process; the ability to reapply; providing onramp opportunities for 2-D and 3-D artists at the same time; the LACMTA's process; the timeline; alignment with the Cultural Plan; public engagement; the mid-point review; ensuring control over content; clarification that the art becomes the property of Culver City; hard art; creation of a high resolution digital archive that can translate to other formats; the potential for an exhibition; an artist that has done a rendering of The Baldwin Hills Steps; branding the neighborhood; studio visits; the iconic Ernie Barnes posters from the 1984 Olympics; banner programs; including a minimum and maximum for the resume section; changing the date for the request issued; subcommittee consideration of staff-vetted applications; the City process; email blasts; use of a similar process as was done for the Farragut Connector; Artist Registry; potential involvement of Culver Arts; the ability to extend the deadline if sufficient response is not received; advocacy for the program; finding opportunities to promote the program.

Marla Koosed received clarification that the lighting of the tower at Vets Park is under the purview of the Parks, Recreation and Community Services (PRCS) Department.

Additional discussion ensued between meeting attendees, staff, and Subcommittee Members regarding studio visits; the ambitious agenda; templates used on the tower at Vets Park; and a

suggestion to provide input on what people want to see on the tower.

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Items from Members/Staff

None.

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Adjournment

There being no further business, the special meeting of the Cultural Affairs Commission Public Art Subcommittee adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

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Jeremy Bocchino
CITY CLERK of Culver City, California
EX-OFFICIO CITY CLERK of the City Council of Culver City,
California

APPROVED

12/10/2025



Ehsaan Mesghali
CHAIR of the Culver City Cultural Affairs Commission
Public Art Subcommittee