

# Culver CITY

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## MEMORANDUM

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**DATE:** January 21, 2025

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR O'BRIEN AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CULVER CITY

**FROM:** Cultural Affairs Commision, [Chair Brenda Williams; Vice Chair Leora O'Carroll; Members Tania Fleischer, Ehsaan Mesghali and Damon Willick]

**SUBJECT:** **2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND 2025 PROPOSED ACTIVITY/UPCOMING AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT 6 MONTHS**

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

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At the January 21, 2025 regular 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 CBC's accomplishments during the period of July through December 2024 and provides a list of anticipated activities/upcoming agenda items for the first half of the 2025 calendar year. The CAC regularly meets on the third Tuesday of the month and met 6 times from July 12 – December 17, 2024.

**Cultural Affairs Commission List of Accomplishments (July 1 – December 31, 2024):**

- **Art in Public Places Program:** Public Art Subcommittee and CAC reviewed applications for new permanent artworks and other City art projects, including:
  - Subcommittee participated in the selection of artist Sonia Romero for tile installation as part of the Farragut Connector project.
  - Consideration of an art installation at 3550 Hayden Avenue in fulfillment of APPP requirement
  - Consideration of an art installation at 5880 Adams Boulevard in fulfillment of APPP requirement
  - Consideration of artwork color for Marc Fornes/THEVERYMAN's large-scale installation at Culver Steps
  - Consideration of Deaccession of Permanent Artwork "Sentry" by John Okulick at 4040 Duquesne Avenue and discussion of possible Call for Artists for commissioning new artwork on site

- **APPP Ordinance Update:**
  - Staff presented CAC with detailed report comparing percent-for-art funds and their structures across Southern California and recommended revisiting adjustments to our percent allocations following a long-term cultural planning process with substantive community input into arts and cultural priorities for Culver City.
- **Artist Laureate Program:**
  - Supported Katy Krantz through the last phase of the 11029 Washington Blvd. project including reviewing mosaic tile design options for the trapezoid insets and helping to map out a timeline for the final set of community art workshops including the culminating event on the property
  - Subcommittee met to discuss revisions to the Artist Laureate program including hiring a consultant to facilitate a formal evaluation of the program and provide Subcommittee with recommendations to keep the program vibrant and sustainable.
  - Subcommittee attended evaluation sessions with staff and various stakeholders and later met to discuss actionable items in the report for the next Artist Laureate cycle beginning in February 2025.
  - CAC members attended Artist Laureate Katy Krantz's tile-making workshop at the former gun store on October 29, 2024 and participated in the community input session on site. CAC members spoke with stakeholders during event.
- **Commission Business:**
  - CAC members acknowledged outgoing Commissioner Jeannine Wisnosky Stehlin.
  - CAC nominated and approved Brenda Williams to continue her role as chair and Leora O'Carroll as Vice Chair of the Cultural Affairs Commission.
  - CAC welcomed Damon Willick to the Cultural Affairs Commission.
  - CAC reviewed and participated in nomination and appointment process for various ad hoc and standing subcommittees.
  - CAC members attended the State of the City Address by Mayor Yasmine-Imani McMorris. The address included a celebration of women where elected and appointed female city officials were invited on stage with the Mayor.
- **Creative Economy and Cultural Plan:**
  - Subcommittee met to discuss Economic and Cultural Development Division planning for October Creative Economy Mixer.
  - CAC members attended Creative Economy Mixer on October 23, 2024 at the Wende Museum. Subcommittee co-chairs spoke briefly with introductions of Mayor McMorris and Wende director Justin Jampol as well as discussed the importance of the Creative Economy in Culver City and the need for continued networking events to support our local creative businesses.

- **Culver City Arts Foundation (CCAF):**
  - CAC member attended the documentary premiere on Tito's Tacos entitled "Tito's Tapestry" as an invitee of the Culver City Arts Foundation.
  - Subcommittee co-chair O'Carroll organized the first quarterly Culver City Arts Foundation subcommittee meeting which was attended by Commissioner Willick, Sally Unsworth, Jim Clarke (CCAF Chair) and Alicia Ide (CCAF Vice Chair). Many topics were discussed regarding the activities of the CCAF as well as the intersection between CCAF and the City.
  - Commissioner Willick attended Culver City Arts Foundation Board Meeting in August and observed board proceedings.
  - CAC Members attended annual CCAF Fundraiser at Tito's Tacos.
- **Fiesta La Ballona Entertainment Applications:**
  - Following ad hoc Subcommittee recommendations for various entertainment selections for Fiesta La Ballona, PRCS thanked Commissioners for contributing to the successful 3-day August festival.
- **Live Music:**
  - CAC members attended all six Summer Sunset concert series at the Culver Steps.
  - Commissioner Fleischer assisted Staff with planning a concert to pilot a new "Music in the Chamber Series" and provided recommendations of artists and chamber music ensembles.
  - CAC members attended Culver City Jazz Series events at the Kirk Douglas Theater. The series was hosted by the City and curated by The Jazz Bakery.
- **Olympics in 2028:**
  - Following the success of the Jazz Series, Vice Chair O'Carroll organized a meeting with members of the Jazz Bakery (Ruth Price, Glen Ward and Daniel Rotem), Commissioner Mesghali, Sally Unsworth and Edgar Varela. The meeting included a discussion of ongoing partnerships and future collaborations with the Office of Economic and Cultural Development including a proposal to include a Jazz Series into the 2028 Olympics planning.
  - CAC Olympics Subcommittee members attended various Olympics-related meetings to discuss ongoing planning and support for Culver City arts and cultural initiatives during the upcoming 2028 Games.
  - Commissioner Mesghali met with industry and institutional partners across various categories in order to advise City Council on strategies for activating Culver City as a cultural hub.
- **Performing Arts Grant Program (PAG):**
  - Subcommittee members met to discuss guidelines and eligibility criteria for the 2025 PAG applications. The Subcommittee created a scoring rubric for independent reviewers to help with consistency of scoring and award limits were set per available funds in budget.

- Commissioner Fleischer attended one of two panel meetings, and full Subcommittee met after the panel meetings to determine awards.
- Discussion with Subcommittee and Staff to evaluate and assess the PAG grant program beginning in the next cycle
- Commissioners attended many PAG performances throughout the Summer and Fall.

**Cultural Affairs Commission Activities Plan (January 1 – June 30, 2025):**

- **Art in Public Places Program:**
  - Participate in celebration and unveiling of Sonia Romero's tile mural at Farragut Connector
  - Subcommittee to work with art consultants and developers to advise on best practices in compliance with APPP requirements
  - Subcommittee to continue to review proposed artwork for installation, deaccession, or maintenance
- **Artist Laureate Program:**
  - Acknowledge and work with outgoing Artist Laureate Katy Krantz to document program accomplishments and receive program feedback and final report
  - Implement recommended changes to the 2025 Artist Laureate application cycle and participate in the selection of the new Artist Laureate to be appointed and begin work by July 1, 2025
- **Community Cultural Equity Plan Update:**
  - Subcommittee to convene to develop the Call for Proposals for launching Community Cultural Equity Plan, including determining scope of project and timeline for the long-range planning process
- **Creative Economy Activities:**
  - Subcommittee to meet to discuss future Creative Economy events and work to align events with long-range Division goals
- **Culver City Arts Foundation:**
  - Subcommittee to meet with CCAF stakeholders and Staff to develop new MOU with Culver City as well as formalize communications, partnerships, and upcoming collaborations with CCAF.
- **Fiesta La Ballona Entertainment Applications:**
  - CAC Ad Hoc Subcommittee to be established to assist with entertainment planning for 2025 Fiesta La Ballona.
- **Historic Preservation Program Updates:**
  - Subcommittee to meet to discuss updating Historic Preservation municipal code, as well as process for hiring consultant to assist with the historic property inventory and code updates in order to align with current best practices and updated Federal, State and local mandates.
- **Live Music:**
  - CAC members to assist with advising and providing performer recommendations to City for live music events such as Summer Concert Series, Music in the Chambers, and Jazz Series.

- **Olympics in 2028:**
  - CAC and Subcommittee to discuss various proposed ideas and engage with potential cultural partners. CAC to recommend programming and arts activations to City Council and contribute to City-wide efforts around the Cultural Olympiad and 2028 Games.
- **Outreach and Community Engagement:**
  - As appropriate, CAC to participate in outreach about various programs and attends cultural activities in Culver City.
- **Performing Arts Grant Program:**
  - CAC regularly attends and supports grant-related performances.
  - Subcommittee will receive feedback, evaluate and consider updates and changes to the structure of the PAG including considerations to revising the timing of the grant cycle throughout the year and considering a second yearly grant cycle.
  - Subcommittee will provide support for the drafting of guidelines, consideration of eligibility criteria, and preparations for incoming applications. Subcommittee will provide support for the independent evaluation of grant applications and determine recommendations to the City Council.