

Culver CITY

MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 26, 2026

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

FROM: Cultural Affairs Commission
As of 10/21/2025: Chair Ehsaan Mesghali, Vice Chair Tania Fleischer, Commissioner Shona Gupta (Seats 1 and 2 are Vacant)

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

CC: Odis Jones, City Manager
Jesse Mays, Assistant City Manager

At the December 16, 2025, regular meeting of the Cultural Affairs Commission [CAC], the CAC discussed and approved a staff activity report and authorized staff to send the final report to the City Council for approval. The list below summarizes the CBC's achievements from July through December 2025 and outlines anticipated activities and upcoming agenda items for the first half of 2025. The CAC regularly meets on the third Tuesday of each month and held five meetings from July 15 to December 16, 2025.

Cultural Affairs Commission List of Accomplishments (July 1 – December 31, 2025):

- **Art in Public Places Program (APPP):** The Public Art Subcommittee and CAC reviewed applications for new permanent artworks and other City art projects, including:
 - CAC members supported and attended Council meeting to approve final phase of Charles Gaines' "A Frame for a Tree" installation at Washington TOD.
 - Public Art Subcommittee discussed and made recommendations regarding upcoming Rotating Art, Commemorative Poster, and Utility Box Programs
 - CAC and Public Art Subcommittee members discussed and made recommendations regarding a possible acquisition of the historic MGM sign

- CAC and Public Art Subcommittee recommended the Deaccession of Permanent Artwork “Media in Motion” by Paul Novacek and Nick Seierup, located at 10950 Washington Boulevard
- CAC and Public Art Subcommittee members discussed the requested funding for the Attune LA Temporary Outdoor Sound & Frequency Exhibition by NOW Art
- **Artist Laureate Program:**
 - Subcommittee worked to onboard new Artist Laureate Victoria Marks
 - Subcommittee met with Artist Laureate Marks to consult on planned booth activation at Art Walk & Roll
 - Subcommittee and CAC members attended Artist Laureate activation at Art Walk & Roll in October
 - CAC members received report from Artist Laureate Marks in October and provided guidance and suggestions to proposed artist work plan engagements in 2026.
- **Commission Business:**
 - CAC Chair and Vice Chair attended monthly agenda-planning meetings
 - CAC dissolved the previous and created the new Subcommittees to reflect the FY 2025-2026 Cultural Affairs Work Plan
 - CAC assigned Commissioners to Standing and Ad Hoc Subcommittees in July, and again in August and October including Chair and Vice Chair appointments in July and October
- **Creative Economy and Community Cultural Equity (CCE) Plan:**
 - Subcommittee members assisted with the planning of and attended October Creative Economy mixer
 - Subcommittee members reviewed 18 cultural planning firm proposals, reviewed inter-departmental scoring, and together with staff, selected four finalists to invite for interviews
 - Subcommittee members supplemented interviews, checked references, and selected finalist CVL Economics + MIG to recommend to City Council for CCE Plan.
- **Culver City Arts Foundation (CCAF):**
 - Chair Mesghali attended CCAF Board meetings throughout the six-month period
- **Fiesta La Ballona Entertainment Applications:**
 - Subcommittee members attended opening night program for Fiesta La Ballona after working with PRCS staff on artist selections for the event.
- **Other Live Music Programming:**
 - Commissioner Fleischer worked with Staff on pilot concert marking the return of “Music in the Chambers” series, featuring the cello quintet SAKURA. Commissioner Fleischer reviewed lighting and sound design proposals, communicated with musicians about program needs and discussed promotion and roll-out of the program.
 - CAC members attended various live performances in and around Culver City.

- Commissioner Fleischer worked with Edgar Varela to select performers for the City's Summer Concert Series and attended concerts in July and August.
- **Olympics and Paralympics in 2028:**
 - Chair Mesghali attended CCAF Board meetings with various discussions related to the Games in 2028
 - Chair Mesghali attended 88 for 28 Cities meeting focused on Fan Zones including a presentation by Cultural Affairs Manager on Culver City's partnership with New Zealand Olympic Committee.
- **Performing Arts Grant Program (PAG):**
 - Subcommittee met to discuss guidelines, eligibility, request limit, and scoring criteria for the 2026 PAG applications. Subcommittee participated in orientation session and other meetings with independent review panel to assist with consistency of scoring.
 - Subcommittee reviewed scores from panel, evaluated the applications, and prepared award recommendations.
 - Full Commission considered the results and prepared a recommendation to City Council for grant awards. CAC welcomed award candidates to the December 16, 2025 meeting to receive comments and provide guidance.
 - Ongoing discussion with Subcommittee and Staff to evaluate and assess the PAG grant program, funding allocations, and priorities.
 - Commissioners attended many PAG performances throughout the year.
- **Miscellaneous Partnerships and Community Engagement:**
 - Commissioners attended community feedback session in August regarding the Washington Blvd tree surrounds

Cultural Affairs Commission Activities Plan (January 1 – June 30, 2026):

- **Art in Public Places Program:**
 - CAC and Public Art Subcommittee members to consider an approval of an Architecture as Art proposal
 - CAC and Public Art Subcommittee members to consider a relocation of an artwork, *Neptune's Necklace* by David Trubridge at the Westfield Culver City mall
 - CAC and Public Art Subcommittee members to approve the five finalists for the *Culver City: Colorful Communities* poster program
 - Public Art Subcommittee members to discuss and make recommendations for the Rotating Sculpture Program
 - Public Art Subcommittee members to discuss and make recommendations for the expansion of the Utility Box wraps program
 - Public Art Subcommittee members to work with art consultants and developers to advise on best practices in compliance with APPP requirements
 - Public Art Subcommittee members to continue to review proposed artwork for installation, deaccession, or maintenance
 - Subcommittees to advise on long-range art plan for City
- **Artist Laureate Program:**

- Subcommittee and CAC to work with incoming Artist Laureate Victoria Marks to receive program feedback, align with City partners in increasing public engagement with the Artist Laureate program, and attend Artist Laureate event activations and community engagements as appropriate.
- **Commission Business:**
 - CAC will work with new Commissioners as appointed (TBD) and will reevaluate committee appointments as needed
- **Creative Economy and Community Cultural Equity (CCE) Plan:**
 - Once approved by City Council, Subcommittee and CAC to work with selected firm CVL Economics + MIG to provide feedback, guidance, and assistance with community engagement strategies for all elements of the CCE.
 - Subcommittee will discuss future Creative Economy events and work to align events with long-range Division goals
 - Subcommittee and CAC members will attend various events and community engagements related to CCE.
- **Culver City Arts Foundation:**
 - Subcommittee to meet with CCAF stakeholders and Staff to finalize MOU with Culver City as well as formalize communications, partnerships, and upcoming collaborations.
 - Subcommittee to meet to discuss fundraising approach with CCAF for FY 2026-27 in alignment with Division and CCAF priorities.
- **Fiesta La Ballona Entertainment:**
 - CAC Ad Hoc Subcommittee to be established to assist with entertainment planning for 2026 Fiesta La Ballona.
- **Historic Preservation Program Updates:**
 - CAC members will discuss updating Historic Preservation municipal code, as well as appoint an Ad Hoc subcommittee to assist with overdue code updates and strategies to begin full inventory of historic properties 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 and Music in the Chambers.
- **Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2028:**
 - Subcommittee and CAC members 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 attend cultural activities in Culver City. Ad Hoc subcommittee to be formed to map out a long-range communications strategy for CAC and Cultural Affairs Division.
- **Performing Arts Grant Program (PAG):**

- Ongoing discussion with Subcommittee and Staff to evaluate the tasks of the PAG Subcommittee and assess internal funding allocations and other contributions.
- Commissioners will attend PAG performances, and other performing arts events in the community.