

MEMORANDUM

TO: Odis Jones, City Manager

CC: Lisa Soghor, Assistant City Manager / Chief Financial Officer

FROM: Culver City Cultural Affairs Commission

DATE: 03.10.2026

SUBJECT: FY 2026–2027 Budget Recommendation - Cultural Affairs Staffing

Commission Recommendation:

Support conversion of the Cultural Affairs Management Analyst position from limited-term to permanent status in the FY 2026 - 2027 budget in order to maintain the Division's operational capacity to implement existing programs, capital projects, and upcoming cultural initiatives.

Dear Mr. Jones,

At a recent meeting, the Culver City Cultural Affairs Commission discussed the upcoming FY 2026–2027 budget and the operational needs of the Cultural Affairs Division. As part of the Commission's advisory role to the City Council on arts, culture, and public art, the Commission respectfully offers the following recommendation for consideration, as the City develops its proposed budget.

The Cultural Affairs Division is a small but highly productive team responsible for administering the City's Art in Public Places Program, performing arts grants, public art stewardship, and a range of cultural initiatives that contribute to Culver City's civic identity and creative economy.

Importantly, most Cultural Affairs programming is funded through the Cultural Trust Fund, a restricted funding source established through municipal code. This structure allows the City to deliver cultural programs and capital projects with limited reliance on General Fund resources.

Over the next several years, the Division will also be responsible for several significant initiatives requiring sustained staff capacity. These include development of the City's Community Cultural Equity Plan, which will establish a long-term framework for cultural investment and partnerships, and Culver City's participation in regional cultural planning connected to the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The Division also continues to oversee ongoing responsibilities, including stewardship of the City's public art collection and implementation of major capital projects. Among these is the Washington/National Transit-Oriented Development public art installation, *A Frame for a Tree* by Charles Gaines, the largest public art commission in Culver City's history.

Given the scope of these responsibilities, the Commission believes the Division's current staffing structure represents a minimal but necessary level of operational capacity. The limited-term Management Analyst position plays an important role in supporting public art administration, cultural programming, and project coordination across these initiatives.

Maintaining this position would help ensure that existing City investments in cultural programs, public art, and approved capital projects can continue to be implemented effectively. Without this support capacity, responsibilities would need to be redistributed among existing staff, significantly limiting the Division's ability to deliver initiatives already underway.

The Commission offers this recommendation with full recognition of the difficult fiscal decisions facing the City in the current budget cycle. Maintaining the Cultural Affairs Division's current staffing capacity will help ensure that programs and projects already approved by the City Council can be delivered effectively and continue generating public value for the community.

The Cultural Affairs Commission looks forward to continuing to work collaboratively with City leadership and staff to support cultural initiatives that strengthen Culver City's public spaces, community identity, and creative economy.

Respectfully,

Culver City Cultural Affairs Commission

Ehsaan Mesghali, Chair
Tania Fleischer, Vice Chair
Shona Gupta, Member
Heather Moses, Member