Culver CITY

MEMORANDUM

DATE: July 15, 2025

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

FROM: Cultural Affairs Commision
As of 6/30/2025: Chair Brenda Williams, Vice Chair Leora O'Carroll, Tania Fleischer, Ehsaan Mesghali, Damon Willick
As of 7/1/2025: Nikki Diloreto, Tania Fleischer, Shona Gupta, Ehsaan Mesghali, Leora O'Carroll

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

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

At the July 15, 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 January through June 2025 and outlines anticipated activities and upcoming agenda items for the second half of 2025. The CAC regularly meets on the third Tuesday of each month and held four meetings from January 21 to June 17, 2025.

Cultural Affairs Commission List of Accomplishments (January 1 – June 30, 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:
  - Subcommittee discussed and made recommendations regarding upcoming Rotating Art, Commemorative Poster, and Utility Box Programs.
  - Second round consideration of an art installation at 3550 Hayden Avenue in fulfillment of APPP requirement by artist Rogan Gregory
  - Consideration of an art installation at 3592 Eastham and 8432 Stellar in fulfillment of APPP requirement by artist Geoff McFetridge
  - Consideration and Recommendation of Deaccession of Permanent Artwork "Media in Motion" by Paul Novacek and Nick Seierup, located at 10950 Washington Boulevard.

- CAC members supported and attended Council meeting to approve final phase of Charles Gaines' "A Frame for a Tree" installation at Washington TOD.

- **Artist Laureate Program:**
  - Subcommittee worked with staff to revamp Artist Laureate application and application processes.
  - Subcommittee supported application outreach efforts to advertise program to professional contacts, including outreach within the new geographic catchment area for the program.
  - Subcommittee read all program letters of interest and determined list of twenty-five artists invited to complete a full application.
  - Subcommittee members attended the finalists' presentations and supported Victoria Marks as the panelist's choice for the 2025 – 2027 Culver City Artist Laureate.
  - CAC recommended Victoria Marks to City Council for appointment.
  - Commissioner Fleischer attended performance at the Odyssey Theater by Victoria Marks entitled "A Deer Walks into a Dance"
- **Commission Business:**
  - CAC Chair and Vice Chair attended monthly agenda-planning meetings
  - Vice Chair O'Carroll reappointed for second term on CAC
  - CAC members acknowledged outgoing CAC Chair Brenda Williams
  - CAC member Damon Willick stepped down from CAC in March 2025
- **Creative Economy and Cultural Plan:**
  - Commissioner Mesghali participated in various creative networking and economic development events, bringing civic and business leaders connected to the creative economy together, including events organized and executed by Commissioners in neighboring districts such as Santa Monica and Long Beach.
- **Culver City Arts Foundation (CCAF):**
  - Vice Chair O'Carroll provided input and help to shepherd the Memorandum of Understanding between CCAF and the City.
  - Vice Chair O'Carroll participated in quarterly meetings with CCAF Board members and Staff.
- **Fiesta La Ballona Entertainment Applications:**
  - Subcommittee made recommendations for various entertainment selections for Fiesta La Ballona.
- **Live Music:**
  - Commissioner Fleischer worked with Staff to get a pilot concert on the calendar for a return of the "Music in the Chambers" series scheduled for September 7, 2025, 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 Staff and Edgar Varela to select performers for the City's Summer Concert Series. The slate of seven

performances represents a diverse array of styles, genres, and demographics.

- **Olympics and Paralympics in 2028:**
  - Subcommittee and CAC members explored how Culver City can best showcase itself and reviewed various performing arts and visual arts proposals.
  - Subcommittee members met with various community partners regarding the City's role as a cultural hub in 2028 and proposed programming ideas to the subcommittee, CAC and other cultural partners.
- **Performing Arts Grant Program (PAG):**
  - Commissioner Fleischer met with Staff in June to discuss how to proceed with the upcoming PAG cycle and participated in analysis of the program evaluations.
  - Commissioners attended many PAG performances.
- **Miscellaneous Partnerships and Community Engagement:**
  - Commissioner Mesghali participated in on-campus meetings/presentations with design educators at Culver City High School, both in the CTW Architecture and AVPA programs to bridge the gap between the art and civic arenas.

Cultural Affairs Commission Activities Plan (July 1 – December 31, 2025):

- **Art in Public Places Program:**
  - Participate in celebration and unveiling of Sonia Romero's tile mural titled *The Speedway* 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
  - Subcommittee to advise on long-range art plan for City
- **Artist Laureate Program:**
  - Acknowledge and work with incoming Artist Laureate Victoria Marks to onboard and introduce her to the City, to document program accomplishments, receive program feedback, and produce City arts activations and community engagements.
- **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 will 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.
- **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 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.
- **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:**
  - CAC regularly attends and supports grant-related performances.
  - 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.