

TO: CITY ARTS COMMISSION

FROM: Cultural Arts Division, Library Services Department
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PREPARED BY: Tim Hetheron

TITLE: Master Plan for Arts and Culture

DISCUSSION:

The 2006 Newport Beach General Plan cites the importance of arts and culture for Newport Beach and the expectation that meaningful programs will require “coordination, preservation, and promotion” in order to avoid unintended losses of cultural assets. While the Newport Beach Arts Commission and City staff have worked together for a number of years to provide arts and cultural activities, exhibits, and programming to the community, there has been an interest in recent years to develop a longer-term, cohesive plan for providing these services to Newport Beach residents and visitors.

The City contracted with Arts Orange County (Arts OC) in May 2014 to develop Phase I of a Master Arts and Culture Plan. To gather community input as it developed the plan, Arts OC conducted one-on-one interviews with key stakeholders, held focus groups with community leaders, hosted a community forum, and conducted an online survey.

Phase 1 of the Newport Beach Master Arts and Culture Plan was completed and approved by the Newport Beach Arts Commission in November 2014. The plan was first presented to the City Council during its November 25, 2014 Study Session.

MAJOR FINDINGS/RECOMMENDATIONS:

A complete copy of the Master Arts and Culture Plan is available on the Cultural Arts web page at <http://www.newportbeachca.gov/index.aspx?page=2421>. The plan’s major findings include:

- Citizens of Newport Beach take enormous pride in their community.
- There is a struggle to find the balance between growth and protecting the quality of life.
- The perception frequently cited by residents is that the City has not prioritized arts and culture in a substantive way.
- There is a desire to balance the development of more offices and residential units with spaces dedicated to arts and cultural uses.
- Residents applauded efforts to highlight what is unique to Newport Beach and move forward with a Master Plan for Arts as a sign of the City’s cultural maturity.

The plan’s major recommendations include:

1. Grow public investment in arts and culture.

2. Establish an appropriately-staffed Division of Arts and Culture.
3. Establish arts-friendly City policies.
4. Develop a 21st Century Arts and Culture Communications Plan.
5. Develop a multi-faceted arts and culture program plan.
6. Refine the City's Public Art Policy.
7. Develop new accessible creative spaces.
8. Animate existing City parks, beaches, and other public spaces with unique programming, signature events, and neighborhood festivals.
9. Establish key partnerships that support arts education.
10. Include aesthetic considerations in city processes that review and approve public and private development of the built environment.

Staff returned to City Council in April 2015 for a more in-depth discussion about, and further direction on, the plan's major recommendations, and how Arts Commission should proceed in implementing the plan's major recommendations. In response, Council approved 9 of the 10 recommendations.

City Manager Dave Kiff summarized Council direction as follows:

- Return the Master Plan to the City Arts Commission to work on goals and a long-term vision;
- Remove recommendation 10, *"Include Aesthetics in Review of New Development"*;
- Focus on the private/public-funding aspect of arts and cultural activities; and,
- Staff should provide options for Council action on a Request for Proposal for an arts position.

NOTICING:

This agenda item has been noticed according to the Brown Act (72 hours in advance of the meeting at which the City Arts Commission considers the item).