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CITY OF OAKLAND
AGENDA REPORT

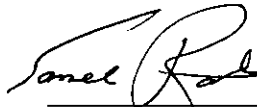
TO: Office of the City Administrator
ATTN: Deborah Edgerly
FROM: Cultural Arts & Marketing Division
DATE: December 11, 2007

RE: **Semiannual Report from the Cultural Affairs Commission**

Attached is the Cultural Affairs Commission's Semiannual Report for the period January through November, 2007. This report covers the Commission's accomplishments and challenges since its last report to the Life Enrichment Committee in February 2007.

A representative from the Cultural Affairs Commission will be available to answer questions.

Respectfully submitted,



SAMEE ROBERTS, Manager
Cultural Arts & Marketing Division

FORWARDED TO THE
LIFE ENRICHMENT COMMITTEE:



OFFICE OF THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR

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December 11, 2007



Cultural Affairs Commission

December 11, 2007

LIFE ENRICHMENT COMMITTEE
Oakland City Council

RE: Informational Semiannual Report from the Cultural Affairs Commission

Chairperson Chang and Members of the Committee:

SUMMARY

This informational report covers the activities of the Cultural Affairs Commission and the City of Oakland's cultural arts department from January 2007 through November 2007.

FISCAL IMPACT

This report has no fiscal impact since no action is requested of City Council.

BACKGROUND

The Cultural Affairs Commission (CAC) has fifteen seats. Members are appointed for staggered four-year terms. There are currently nine active Commissioners. As established by Ordinance 11323 C.M.S. in 1991 and amended by Ordinance 11778 C.M.S. in 1995, the goals, duties and functions of the CAC are to:

1. Advise the Mayor, City Council and City Administrator on all matters affecting cultural development in the community.
2. Review and comment on all community policies, programs and actions which affect arts and cultural development in the community.
3. Actively participate in the community cultural planning process and advise the City Council on recommendations arising out of said process affecting City support for cultural development.
4. Render advice and assistance to other City boards and commissions, to City departments and to private agencies on matters related to cultural affairs in the community.
5. Invite the Library Commission, Parks and Recreation Commission, and the Museum Foundation Board of Directors to participate in Cultural Affairs Commission meetings in a non-voting capacity.
6. Encourage and assist in the development of support to individual artists, traditional artists and non-profit arts organizations within Oakland.
7. Make cultural planning reports and recommendations to the Mayor and City Council regarding actions to be taken by the City to fund, assist, and encourage activities in support of artistic, cultural and humanities activities in the City.

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8. Advise the City on the placement of works of public art throughout the City and/or the inclusion of artists and design teams in certain City capital improvement projects.
9. Recommend to the Mayor appointments of persons to serve on the Public Art Advisory Committee ... and other Committees and Task Forces as deemed necessary to fulfill the duties of the Commission.
10. Take such other action as may be necessary or desirable to promote public awareness of, and participation in, artistic, cultural and humanities activities in Oakland.
11. Perform such other functions and duties as may be directed by the Mayor, City Council or the City Administrator.
12. Submit regular status reports to the City Council committee designated as liaison to the Commission, at least once a year. Status reports must include detailed descriptions of operating and staffing needs, to be developed and maintained by the department responsible for staffing and administration of the Commission.
13. Each year, review the annual goals and objectives of the City Council, to provide the Commission the opportunity to better integrate the activities of the Commission with the City's overall goals and objectives.
14. Obtain City Council approval prior to the creation of any standing committee of the Commission. A proposal to create a standing committee of the Commission must include information regarding the costs associated with staffing the standing committee, and the costs of complying with noticing and reporting requirements resulting from the establishment of any such standing committee of the Commission.

KEY ISSUES AND IMPACTS

In this reporting period, the CAC made advancements in its goals of outreach to the community, strengthening its relationship to the City's elected officials, expanding its influence and more deeply engaging underserved areas of the Oakland population. However, the CAC continued to be challenged by attrition and chronic absenteeism. At the time of this report there are three vacancies and three inactive members on the 15-seat Commission.

Accomplishments

In the period of January to November, 2007, the Cultural Affairs Commission:

- Began periodically holding meetings in neighborhood locations (e.g., regular meeting in West Oakland, March 2007, town hall meeting in Dimond district, September 2007) as part of outreach efforts to create stronger connections with the City's diverse communities. The neighborhood-based meetings will continue on a quarterly basis.
- Established a City Council liaison and Mayor's Office liaison.
- Reactivated its Marketing Committee. The Committee's initial project is the collaborative development of a comprehensive cultural services website for Oakland and the East Bay.
- Began discussions on initiating a citywide Cultural Planning effort.
- Joined the Alameda County Office of Education Alliance for Arts Learning Leadership, a dynamic and nationally acclaimed coalition of arts providers, funders, and school districts (including the Oakland Unified School District), to achieve mutual goals of increasing arts education in Oakland schools.

- Approved the Funding Advisory Committee's recommendations of 77 grants for the arts, totaling \$1.14 million, through the FY 2007/08 Cultural Funding Program and forwarded these recommendations to the Life Enrichment Committee and City Council for approval.
- Approved the Public Art Advisory Committee's recommendation to select West Oakland artist Eesuu Orundide to develop public art for Raimondi Park.
- Identified potential outside funders to support Commission-driven initiatives.
- Built partnerships with arts agency counterparts in surrounding municipalities.

The Commission is currently reviewing its own charter, and will, in a separate report, forward to the LEC and Council recommendations for potential amendments to the establishing ordinance to increase the effectiveness of the CAC. Ideas include adjusting the number of required Commissioners, and revisiting the current structure of the CAC and its committees.

In this reporting period, with the support of the CAC, Cultural Arts Programs staff:

- Conducted ten grant applicant workshops across all Council districts, in addition to the eight regularly offered workshops at City Hall, in preparation for the Fiscal Year 2008/09 Cultural Funding Program grants cycle.
- Completed and dedicated "El Corazón de la Comunidad: The Heart of the Community," a mural by Fruitvale resident Joaquin Alejandro Newman, at Carmen Flores Recreation Center on Fruitvale Avenue.
- Completed and dedicated "Woven Stories," a tile artwork project by Oakland artist Laurel True in collaboration with youth from West Oakland and West Africa, for the new Willow Park Playground in West Oakland.
- Inaugurated "The Great Wall of Oakland," a collaborative project with local businesses, screening contemporary media works by Bay Area artists outdoors in the Uptown area adjacent to the *Art Murrur* galleries on First Fridays.
- Organized and presented the first annual "Oakland Arts Day" in conjunction with California Arts Day (a California Arts Council initiative) and in celebration of National Arts & Humanities Month. Oakland Arts Day honored the FY 2007/08 Cultural Funding grantees with performances, certificates and refreshments offered during a free public event in City Hall.
- Made a concerted effort to analyze where public artwork exists currently and to focus on underserved neighborhoods. Staff is in the planning and development stages of multiple projects in East Oakland, including the 81st Avenue Branch Library, the East Oakland Sports Center, Fire Station 18 and various Redevelopment Agency streetscape projects.
- Advised on public art integration into the West Oakland 7th Street/BART Transit Village project streetscape improvements, with the goal of enhancing the pedestrian experience in ways not previously attempted in Oakland.
- The Oakland Artisans Marketplace program participated in various special events including the Art & Soul Festival, Jack London Square Crabfest, Older Americans Month Celebration, Juneteenth Celebration, Lighted Yacht Parade, Fourth of July Celebration and JLS Tree Lighting Celebration. Further, three participating artisans have been successful in opening their own stores.
- Began sending regular announcements to the arts community about CAC meetings, funding opportunities and other items of interest.

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Challenges

The CAC is putting a concerted effort into building its effectiveness as an advisory board through deepening its connections to elected officials and community and is continually working on achieving greater visibility and improving the public perception of the Commission. Active and motivated Commissioners are frustrated by the extended leaves of absences taken by some members; by the nominal presence on the CAC roster of members who never attend meetings; and by the multi-year issue of vacancies that remain unfilled.

Encouraged by the establishment of regular liaisons with City Council (Councilmember Nadel) and the Mayor's Office (Special Assistant Trina Barton), the Commission will strive to enhance the chain of communication between the Commission and the Mayor's Office, City Council, and other stakeholders. Further, the Commission seeks greater collaboration with Councilmembers toward the goals of arts-funding equity among Council districts and optimal effectiveness of the CAC.

Another continuing challenge faced by the City is the inability to meet the demand for funding from the Oakland arts community with the existing Cultural Funding Program grants budget; in the FY 2007/08 cycle, total funds requested exceeded available revenue by 45%.


ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

This report is for informational purposes only, and no action is requested of the City Council at this time.

Respectfully submitted,

Forwarded by:


LORI ZOOK, Acting Chair
Cultural Affairs Commission


SAMEE ROBERTS, Manager
Cultural Arts & Marketing Division
Office of the City Administrator