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January 24, 2024

The Honorable Mayor Karen Bass
City of Los Angeles
City Hall, Room 303

The Honorable City Council
City of Los Angeles
c/o: Office of the City Clerk
City Hall, Room 395

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS CULTURAL OLYMPIAD PREPAREDNESS AND PLANNING

Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council:

SUMMARY

The Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) is seeking the stewardship of the Offices of the Mayor and City Council as it moves forward to activate and lead planning of the Cultural Olympiad, also known as the Olympic Arts Festival(s) as part of the City of Los Angeles' leadership as the host city and commitment to the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The Cultural Program is a required component of the City's Olympic participation, and is a collection of events, programming, and artistic projects which explore the relationship between arts and culture, and sports including the values they share, such as excellence, inclusion, cultural diversity and universalism.

DCA is committed to executing a program which builds upon the City's Olympic and Paralympic Games planning to support creative-sector jobs, free community programs, and youth arts and education opportunities that advance equity, inclusion, and readiness through the development of local artists, cultural producers, and vendors. The time leading up to and including the Games and Cultural Olympiad will also be an opportunity to uplift and tell the stories of the many diverse cultures in Los Angeles as international athletes and visitors are welcomed from across the globe. The Department is seeking to specifically design new and innovative global-awareness opportunities to provide culturally diverse communities with increased capacity to produce local events, festivals, and cultural experiences in conjunction with the 2028 Games.

This Memorandum details the research and planning that DCA has done and the actions and continued planning it will take in the coming months and years to lead this process, on behalf of the host City. As this is the beginning of the convergence of many related efforts, our work will

continue to evolve and grow, in partnership with the City's artists and arts and cultural organizations, as well as higher education institutions, and other partners.

DCA's efforts for the 2028 Olympics and Paralympic Games are an opportunity to support the arts and cultural sector during three time periods: during the four year time period leading up to the Games from the torch handoff; during the Games; and the development of a long-standing legacy for the sector subsequent to the completion of the Games. DCA envisions a Cultural Olympiad which underscores the Department's commitment to activate our City's neighborhoods in advance of the 2028 Games, and showcase on the world stage, the cosmopolitan and international diasporas and organizations that already exist in, and define, arts and culture in the City of Los Angeles.

The Department has already begun undertaking many key actions to support the City's preparedness in advance of the 2028 Olympics and Paralympics. DCA requests support and input from the City in moving forward the planning of the Cultural Olympiad. The Cultural Olympiad and related arts festivals and activities are an opportunity to uplift the diversity and indigenous history of Los Angeles, build greater cultural equity and inclusion, stimulate local, national, and international cultural exchange, create and enhance youth arts education initiatives, and bolster the arts sector economy and support capacity and legacy building in the arts that will endure beyond the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Council, subject to the approval of the Mayor:

1. Direct the Department of Cultural Affairs to activate arts sector alignment conversations to form partnership-frameworks and planning steps;
2. Authorize resolution authority for two Arts Manager I positions dedicated to supporting the development and coordination of the City of Los Angeles Cultural Olympiad and/or Olympic Arts Festival; and
3. Allocate \$100,000 in Contractual Services funding to support the Department's community-conversations and other efforts.

BACKGROUND

As part of the Games Agreement between the City of Los Angeles and the Los Angeles Organizing Committee for Olympic and Paralympic Games 2028 (C-130679), the Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) has been supporting the City's participation in and commitment to the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games prior to the signing of the agreement. The Department has been engaged in the following broad efforts:

Hosting a preliminary round of listening sessions in 2020;

- Engaging in a global learning exchange in 2022 and 2023 with other Olympic cities (London, Paris, Sydney, Tokyo, Vancouver) relative to previous Cultural Olympiads;
- Establishing a partnership and learning exchange with the cities of Paris and Seine Saint Denis; and
- Developing and continuing an ongoing dialogue with LA28 and the Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture.

DCA's research has created a solid foundation for the Department's work going forward. Through the learning exchange with the cities of Paris and Seine Saint Denis, the Department

has created opportunities through the Public Space Activation Fund to engage artists from Los Angeles and deepen this exchange, and Los Angeles and Parisian artists will be working jointly on projects as part of the 2024 Paris Cultural Olympiad. This effort brings visibility and economic opportunity to local artists in Los Angeles, previews the artistic expression leading up to the 2028 Games, and provides international visibility to the City of Los Angeles. In partnership with the Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture, DCA is also planning a series of convenings to engage the arts and cultural sector in dialogue through readiness and planning sessions. Since the events related to the Games will not solely be held in the City, coordination and communication with the County will assist in creating synergy, mitigate duplication of efforts, and create more opportunities and partnerships for artists and arts and cultural organizations regionally.

These collective efforts underscore the Department's commitment to activate our City's neighborhoods in advance of the 2028 Games. During the past three years, the Department has explored new and innovative ways to create smart, positive momentum in our City's own readiness by developing new partnerships with community and local arts and cultural organizations and activating neighborhoods across the City.

The Department continues to meet regularly with the Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture, working to support the work of our region's artists and arts and cultural organizations. DCA is also collaborating with LA28 as they begin their planning process for the Cultural Olympiad, as part of their broader planning and objectives for the 2028 Olympics and Paralympic Games. The planning and work together is still in development, in alignment with the Olympic and Paralympic values of excellence, friendship, and respect, as well as determination, inspiration, courage, and equality, exploring opportunities to highlight the arts and cultural work of our City's artists, arts organizations, and arts institutions.

Overall, DCA has proposed to design its efforts for the 2028 Olympics and Paralympic Games as an opportunity to support the arts and cultural sector during three time periods: during the four year time period leading up to the Games from the torch handoff; during the Games; and the development of a long-standing legacy for the sector subsequent to the completion of the Games. DCA envisions a Cultural Olympiad which underscores the Department's commitment to activate our City's neighborhoods in advance of the 2028 Games, and showcase on the world stage, the cosmopolitan and international diasporas and organizations that already exist in, and define, arts and culture in the City of Los Angeles.

Prior Research and Learning Efforts

2020 DCA Community Discussions

In January 2020, DCA hosted a series of 10 roundtable listening sessions prompted by the Mayor's mandate to ensure that all departments are Olympic ready by 2028. More than 250 individuals were invited and 150 attended the sessions including practicing artists, higher education leaders, heads of nonprofit arts organizations, producers, architects, regional cultural agencies, local indigenous leadership, and others. Attendees engaged in a robust roundtable discussion on Olympic readiness and what the field will need to prepare in the next 8-10 years.

The roundtable sessions centered on three main questions:

1. What do we want to be known for during this Olympiad?
2. What capacity building is needed leading up to 2028?

3. What defines success after the games conclude?

Additionally, a virtual survey was disseminated to all DCA grantees as well as to all Roundtable invitees, attendees, and their networks. More than 120 responses were received, representing a broad landscape of the arts and culture leaders.

The roundtable sessions both engaged and revealed the priorities of the arts and cultural sector in January 2020. Some of the key findings included:

- Arts and culture organizations want to participate in broader social and environmental climate initiatives and are eager to partner with other sectors to address immediate solutions;
- Olympic readiness is directly tied to capacity building in issues of infrastructure (spaces, facilities), funding, audience development, and the ability to sustain and expand the legacy of the arts and culture sector;
- DCA is a key anchor in facilitating the growth of the field and participating in setting strategy and collective vision for 2028 and beyond; and
- The Games will offer the opportunity for Los Angeles to tell its story to the world. The City's culture makers and preservers want to ensure that the stories are told equitably in the years leading up to 2028 and during the Games experience, highlighting the multifaceted and rich history of this great City.

DCA has continued to be mindful of these key findings as part of its ongoing work, as the concerns continue to be even more relevant, due to the continued impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing challenges faced by the arts and cultural community.

World Cities Culture Forum Participation

The Department's participation in the World Cities Cultural Forum, including two global conferences and one international webinar, has provided the opportunity to learn more about other cities' experiences with planning and executing the Cultural Olympiad. These discussions included how culture engages citizens before, during and after the Games and how major events can shape city identity and their appeal on a global stage. These conversations further underscored the importance of deep community engagement across the arts and cultural sector, the value of recognizing the history of our Indigenous communities, and how the Olympic Games present an opportunity to further deepen a City's investment in culture beyond the time of the Games. Continued engagement with the World Cities Culture Forum will assist DCA in engaging international organizations and cities in the Cultural Olympiad.

Learning Exchange with the Cities of Paris, Seine Saint Denis, and the County of Los Angeles

DCA and the County of Los Angeles, Department of Arts and Culture have been engaged with the Cities of Paris and Seine Saint Denis through a learning exchange about the planning and production of the Cultural Olympiad. This learning exchange was supported by the World Cities Culture Forum, through a grant from Bloomberg Philanthropies and offered an important opportunity to learn collectively about developing a Cultural Olympiad. We all look to the Cultural Olympiad and related arts festivals and activities as opportunities to uplift the diversity

of the region, build greater cultural equity and inclusion, stimulate cultural exchange, grow opportunities for youth arts education, and support capacity and legacy building in the arts that will last post-Olympic games.

Together, the City and County of Los Angeles welcomed a delegation from the Cities of Paris and Seine St. Denis, Paris28, and arts sector representatives to Los Angeles. During this visit, DCA hosted preliminary roundtable discussions with many community arts and cultural stakeholders, including festival producers, dancers, and entities involved in the planning of public art installations in the City. We also had the opportunity to engage with and welcome the delegation to the Getty Museum, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Academy Museum, the Grammy Museum, the World Stage, Sofi Stadium, the LA Philharmonic, the Music Center, and Otis College of Art and Design.

During DCA's visit to Paris, the Los Angeles delegation, consisting of representatives from the City and County of Los Angeles, the discussions focused on organizational structures, themes, planning processes, and legacy. The Paris Cultural Olympiad theme of Arts + Sports, supporting the city's efforts to further gender equity, served as a mechanism to further link the Cultural Olympiad with the Olympics and Paralympics. During this visit, in addition to meeting with representatives from the City of Paris and Paris24, the delegation met with representatives from organizations engaging in the Cultural Olympiad, and discussed current and future partnerships between the participating cities to engage local artists and arts organizations. This ongoing dialogue continues to inform the City's development process, and provide a framework for the City's ongoing collaboration with Paris on opportunities for artist engagement.

International Participation and Promotion Projects - Public Space Activation Fund

To further the collaboration with Paris and to create an avenue for the City to build relationships with international governmental partners, DCA has created the *International Participation and Promotion Projects*, a category of the existing Public Space Activation Fund grant program. This grant category has expanded dialogue and presents international governments with a mechanism to invite artists and arts organizations from Los Angeles to support an arts initiative in the host country.

DCA is currently partnering with Paris on several arts projects, including the design and installation of a joint mural, a poetry relay, an Olympic poster contest between Los Angeles and Paris graphic design students, and participation in one of Paris' largest festivals: Nuit Blanche.

Forthcoming Efforts

Arts Sector Alignment and Partnership-framework (ASAP) Sessions

The City and County of Los Angeles are working in collaboration in planning arts sector convenings to further engage the region's arts and cultural partners in program and strategy development for the Cultural Olympiad. These convenings will focus on various models for delivery of the Cultural Olympiad. They will also be an opportunity to provide arts sector organizations with an update on our planning process - where we are, what has been done, and what the City's goals are for the Cultural Olympiad planning.

The development and structure of these sessions is still underway. The Department will engage with arts and cultural organizations of all sizes across the City. The location and participation will

be representative of the diverse makeup of our City's arts and cultural sector across Council Districts. LA28 will be invited to participate to provide an overview of the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games at each session.

Once the sessions are completed and information has been analyzed, the Department will provide recommendations to the Mayor and Council on next steps to illuminate how the arts and cultural sector can prepare and produce "value-added" arts events and activities, further supporting the City's larger efforts, to the economic advancement and innovative reputation of Los Angeles.

Considerations

As the City looks ahead over the next four years, leading up to the Olympic and Paralympic Games, there will be many options and models to consider with regard to the provision of the Cultural Olympiad. A thematic Cultural Olympiad or Olympic Arts Festival is a community expectation, and DCA looks forward to exploring options of festivals and planning under a selected theme with the possibility of 28, 56, or 84 signature-activities which will meet popular enthusiasm to showcase LA as a highly talented, innovative, and multi-cultural arts community. Additionally, this will be an opportunity to explore numerous initiatives spanning the four years, including partnerships with City Departments and government agencies, opportunities for artists with disabilities, increased youth arts education, and collaboration with other local municipalities. Beyond the work with local municipalities, there will be many partnerships to further explore with the State Government, Federal Government, and work with additional international partners.

Additionally, funding will be a critical component of the success of the Cultural Olympiad, and various models and partnerships should be considered and established to highlight both the creative sector as well as the many diverse cultures that exist and thrive in Los Angeles.

CONCLUSION

The Cultural Olympiad and related arts festivals and activities are an opportunity to uplift the diversity of Los Angeles, build greater cultural equity and inclusion, stimulate cultural exchange, create and enhance youth arts education initiatives, and bolster the arts sector economy and build capacity and legacy in the arts that will endure beyond the Olympic and Paralympic games. The Department will continue to build upon and create opportunities for artists and arts/cultural organizations as it looks ahead to the City's international hosting opportunities in both the immediate and longer-term future.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

The actions recommended in this report would have an impact on the General Fund. The annual cost for two Arts Manager I positions is \$137,808 (Direct Costs). \$100,000 in Contractual Services funding would also be required.



Daniel Tarica
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