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CALIFORNIA



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DANIELLE BRAZELL  
GENERAL MANAGER

April 23, 2019

The Honorable Paul Krekorian  
Budget and Finance Committee Members  
%: City Clerk, City Hall, Room, 395  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Honorable Members:

In accordance with the Budget and Finance Committee Chair's request dated March 21, 2019, the Department of Cultural Affairs is providing the following comments on the Proposed FY 2019-20 Budget.

I thank the Mayor, the City Administrative Officer, and their staff for the diligent and thoughtful preparation that accompanied this budget process. The Mayor's Proposed 2019-20 Budget addresses funding for critical resources needed to deliver cultural services to residents and visitors through the Department's five core areas: Community Arts; Grants Administration; Marketing, Development, Design, and Digital Research; Public Art; and the Performing Arts.

The Department of Cultural Affairs respectfully requests that the Budget and Finance Committee consider the following adjustment to include in the 2019-20 Proposed Budget:

Request: Restore \$13,000 in the Department's Special III budget to fund the inadvertent omission of Latino Heritage Month. Funding can be taken from the Department's Landscaping and Miscellaneous Maintenance Account. This funding will provide continued funding for the Department to produce the Latino Month Heritage Calendar and Cultural Guide, highlighting the City's events and artists celebrating Latino Heritage month.

### **FY 2019-20 Budget Highlights**

The proposed FY19-20 budget for the Department of Cultural Affairs reflects the values, positions, and funding the Department needs to increase access and equity and to provide cultural services commensurate with the population and scale of our city. In alignment with the Mayor's priorities and DCA's 2019-22 Strategic Operating Plan, this budget demonstrates an essential investment made through the FY 19-20 budget.

Cultural Facilities - DCA is currently invested in an \$80 million capital improvement program, including restoration and renovation of several of the City's theaters, a 3-year restoration of



Nuestro Pueblo/Towers of Simon Rodia/Watts Towers, and two Proposition K facilities. In addition, DCA is involved in several large-scale public works improvement projects including: the expansion and modernization of the Los Angeles Airport (LAX), the largest public works program in the State of California; the 6th Street Bridge; and over a dozen new public facilities from police stations to concrete factories to pumping stations, which all carry a percent for public art obligation. This budget provides funding and additional staffing to continue to support these infrastructure projects and maintenance for DCA's arts and cultural facilities.

Personnel Infrastructure - The confluence of rebuilding staff levels, reinforcing existing programs, and launching new programs has illuminated several new challenges which previously hindered the optimization of the agency. This budget addresses many of those issues, including adding staffing support for DCA's personnel management in both the Department as well as in Personnel's Liaison Services. Exhibit H includes a recommendation to conduct a classification study to ensure that examining and recruitment satisfy the unique needs of the department for all classifications; to improve recruitment, hiring, and onboarding; training and professional development; and maintaining institutional knowledge.

Community Arts Centers – The Community Arts Division provides high-quality arts instruction in some of our city's most underserved communities. Baseline staffing at each community arts center is accomplished with this budget along with increased operating funds. These resources will ensure an equitable service delivery of arts education throughout this program.

Performing Arts Program – The Performing Arts Program is committed to providing resources to enhance the capacity of performing arts to thrive in the public realm. This budget provides staffing for the Vision Theatre reopening, staffing for part-time theater operations staff, and activation of the Madrid Theatre and Leimert Park Cultural Hubs.

Public Art Programs - The Public Art Division manages more than \$30 million in public art programs, including the Arts Development Fee Program, the Public Works Improvement Art Program, the LAWA Art Program, the City Art Collection, and the City's Mural Program. This budget adds position authority and funding for the LAWA Art Program; as well as, for the City to administer the former California Redevelopment Agency, Los Angeles (CRA/LA) Trust Funds and Art Covenants.

Grants for Families and Youth – As a result of increased visibility of DCA's grants program, the Department received 51 new grant applications, 25 of which received fundable scores to provide additional arts and cultural services to the city's communities and families. The FY19-20 budget increase in grant funding will help address the growing need for cultural arts programming without taking funds from current grantees. This increase in the grants portfolio will generate more than 75 additional cultural events, serving approximately 75,000 residents and visitors. It also provides funding for the Artist in Residence Social Justice Program, increasing the Department's work in South Los Angeles.

Youth Programming – The Proposed Budget includes dedicated funding to conduct a comprehensive study to expand youth arts programming citywide.

Financial Sustainability – The Proposed Budget includes support for the Reserve for Revenue Fluctuations fund to offset Transient Occupancy Tax revenue during economic downturns. As the Department seeks to maximize additional sources of revenue, Exhibit H provides critical instructions to review and update its fees.

## **Citywide Programming**

In addition, DCA has developed several innovative new cultural programs such as the **Arts Activation Fund** to invest in creative placemaking events in public spaces; **Promise Zone Arts and Social Justice Artist in Residence** to bolster economic opportunity for traditional artists in underserved communities; the **Artist in Residence Program** to collaborate with city departments like the Department of Transportation on creative solutions to save lives; **Hire LA Youth** to provide work experience to LA's future employees; **Current: LA Public Art Triennial** to bring public art to everyone outdoors for free; and the **Citywide Mural Program** to help strengthen mural resurgence in LA. The Department also launched the **Neighborhood Youth Arts Profile**, an online mapping tool that visualizes youth arts and wellbeing data of our neighborhoods. Each of these service delivery enhancements advances DCA's commitment to foster creativity at all levels in our city.

The Department is working to build signature events or place-based initiatives in every Council district, ranging from festivals, to murals, to large community gatherings. These events and artworks increase representation across the City, recognizing our differences in race, culture, cultural affiliation, and artistic disciplines.

At the crossroads of culture, Los Angeles demonstrates how a multiethnic city thrives in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. And, while creativity fuels our signature industries, it is culture that binds community. It provides neighborhood vitality; builds a sense of belonging for communities around shared experiences; and recognizes otherness while emphasizing togetherness. Combined, **arts**, **culture**, and **creativity** are essential aspects of what makes our city vibrant.

We look forward to our continued partnership with the City Council through this budget process and the upcoming fiscal year. Thank you for your consideration of our comments and for your ongoing commitment to arts, culture, and creativity for all in our city.

Sincerely,



DANIELLE BRAZELL  
General Manager  
City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs

cc: Barbara Romero, Deputy Mayor, Office of the Mayor  
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