

# CITY OF LOS ANGELES

CALIFORNIA

## CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION

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## DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS

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DANIEL TARICA  
GENERAL MANAGER

April 22, 2025

Honorable Members of the Budget and Finance Committee  
Office of the City Clerk  
200 North Spring Street  
City Hall, Room 395  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Honorable Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-26 Proposed Budget for the Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA). DCA would like to thank the Mayor, the City Administrative Officer, and their respective staff for consideration of DCA's budget requests, and for their work to address the City's fiscal challenges.

As requested by the Committee Chair, DCA details its six top-line core services below:

1. Administer a grant support program for artists and arts/cultural organizations to provide economic opportunity to arts groups for the delivery of a diverse portfolio of high-quality, free or low-cost arts and cultural services to residents and visitors of all ages throughout the City;
2. Provide free or low-cost services to the community, including classes in various artistic disciplines, art exhibitions, and programming in DCA community arts centers, partnered centers, galleries, and historic sites;
3. Manage and utilize revenue-generating public art programs such as the private Arts Development Fee (ADF), Public Works Improvement Arts Program (PWIAP), Community Redevelopment Agency art program, and other public art programs, such as the City Art Collection and Murals program;
4. Provide affordable rental spaces to artists and arts, cultural, and community organizations and support performing arts programming through DCA's six performing arts centers, and deliver festival and performing arts programming in the City's diverse communities;
5. Direct development and fundraising efforts, promote arts projects, programs, and services of DCA and its partners, conduct community outreach, and special projects; and
6. Provide architectural services in support of the Cultural Affairs Commission, DCA facilities, and design reviews of construction/development projects on City property, and support the administrative operations of the department including budgeting, accounting, payroll, personnel, contracting, facilities maintenance, etc.

The Proposed Budget includes increased funding in the Salaries As-Needed account to support part-time staffing for the Department. In addition, the Proposed Budget includes three positions to support the development and production of the Cultural Olympiad/Programme. These items will help reinforce the Department's commitment to using the power of arts and culture to support our City's residents and visitors. Considering the City's current fiscal environment, the Department understands that shared responsibility is necessary in times of fiscal constraints; however, the reductions included in the Proposed Budget will have a significant negative impact on the Department's staff and communities that we serve.

The Proposed Budget includes the deletion of 24 positions (14 filled and 10 vacant) and proposes to cut nearly all budgeted FY26 arts programming funds, as well as significantly reduce the funds available to grantees consisting of artists and arts/cultural organizations. In combination with the reduction of positions in the FY25 Adopted Budget (wherein the Department lost 15 positions - a 40 percent overall staffing reduction in two years), this will further increase the service reductions that have already begun across the Department, and increase the already high workload for existing staff. In FY25, the community has experienced: reductions in Community and Performing Arts programming; a slow down of public art projects and programs for its multi-million dollar arts programs, which were previously administered by multiple staff - now managed by only half (.5) or one (1) Full-Time-Equivalent staff; and due to the flat budget provided for the provision of arts/cultural grants to community organizations and artists, with rising costs, the Department is experiencing an oversubscription of grant dollars with decreased services and significant delays in vendor payments.

The impacts of the adoption of the FY26 Proposed Budget are summarized below:

- Administrative Services - The elimination of the three (3) filled positions in this division would result in further delays in contract processing, vendor payments, and financial transactions/reporting. The Department continues to receive negative feedback regarding the length of time for contract approvals and vendor payments, and these eliminations would result in additional delays.
- Community Arts - The elimination of five (5) vacant positions and eight (8) filled positions will result in - one (1) remaining staff member to manage the Lincoln Heights Youth Arts Center and one (1) for Hollyhock House (and potential closure of both sites for regular tours and programming), potential loss of Hollyhock House's UNESCO World Heritage designation due to breach of the Department's World Heritage staffing commitments. In addition, the deletion of Administrative Clerks and Arts Education Coordinators at multiple Arts Centers and Historic Sites will require absorption of administrative and programmatic work by existing staff which will result in reduced programming, arts classes, and exhibitions. Lastly, staffing reductions at the Watts Towers Arts Center Campus and the Hollyhock House will significantly reduce revenue (tours).
- Grants Administration - The layoff of an Arts Associate and the reduction to the grants program in the amount of approximately \$516,000 may result in extensive delays in grant contract and payment processing, loss of essential support for programming produced by the arts and cultural sector, the potential elimination of the Arts Workers Webinar Series which supports the arts workforce, and the elimination of 355 creative sector jobs.
- Marketing and Development - The elimination of two (2) filled positions would no longer support special projects such as cultural asset mapping, an online class registration system to enhance the Department's revenue and data collection, the Department's performance metrics program, and cultural district support. The Council Civic Fund

program would be required to be administered by another DCA division or department. Lastly, the Department would be unable to support operations and updates for the website, language access, and social media platforms.

- Performing Arts - The elimination of the one (1) filled position, four (4) vacant positions, and cultural hub programming funding in this division would result in: shifting of contract and administrative work to all other existing division staff, and elimination of most, if not all of the performing arts, cultural, and festival programming in the communities and Performing Arts Centers. The elimination of the Warner Grand Theatre Art Center Director would require the Performing Arts Director to oversee the construction (in addition to overseeing the entire division), and the Department would have no venue manager to open the Theatre upon its anticipated grand opening in 2026. The Barnsdall Gallery Theatre would lose an operations manager, which is necessary to continue rentals to artists and arts/cultural organizations at DCA's highest revenue-generating theater. Rental revenue at Performing Arts Centers will be considerably reduced as a result of the position cuts.
- Public Art - While this division did not see reductions in the FY26 Proposed Budget, it is still negatively impacted by the four position eliminations in FY25. Particularly, the Arts Development Fee program (which is 100 percent funded by developer fees) has 1.5 Full-Time-Equivalent positions to manage a portfolio of over \$13 million in projects and contracts. This has resulted in significant backlogs, deferral of existing projects, and inability to timely manage new projects. The Murals program also continues to contend with staffing challenges.
- Cultural Olympiad/Programme - The addition of two (2) full-time positions will assist in Cultural Olympiad planning and special events. However, the Cultural Programme also accounts for leveraging all existing programs (at the current funding/staffing levels) in addition to fundraising and additional planning and programmatic staff, to achieve a world-class Cultural Programme in association with the 2028 Games. The reductions in this budget and understaffing for this project will likely impact the scale of the City's Cultural Programme.
- Special Appropriations III (Programming Funds) - The cuts to Special Appropriations III account will virtually eliminate the majority of the department's programming funds, as summarized below: Performing Arts/Festival programming; art exhibition funding; Watts Towers Jazz and Drum Festivals funding; funding for heritage month publications; Central Avenue Jazz Festival; El Grito; Northeast Jazz Festival (aka Musica y Poemas); and Council Civic Funds.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

DCA has identified solutions to the aforementioned concerns relative to the proposed reductions contained in the FY26 Proposed Budget, as detailed below:

- A. **RESTORE 13 filled positions to be fully offset by current-year savings in the Department's Available Cash Balance in the amount of \$1.36M (includes direct and indirect costs) (Fiscal Impact - \$0).** DCA requests restoration of 13 filled positions are critically needed to continue to provide essential services to the communities with the highest need and with limited access to arts and cultural services, and to preserve economic opportunity for artists and arts/cultural organizations. The Department has recently completed a cash balance reconciliation, including anticipated remaining expenditures through FY 25. Sufficient funds exist within the Available

Cash Balance to offset and restore the aforementioned funds. These positions would be fully offset using the current year's estimated year-end Available Cash Balance.

A1. If recommendation A is not adopted, the Department recommends that the Council **RESTORE one Arts Associate and TRANSFER this position to the Public Art Division - Arts Development Fee (ADF) program (Fiscal Impact - \$0)**. The ADF program provides ongoing revenue to the department and provides special funds which fund 100 percent of position costs including direct and indirect salaries.

- B. **RESTORE 10 vacant positions with six months funding and ADD a corresponding amount in funds (\$655K - includes direct and indirect costs) from Cultural Affairs Department Trust Fund, Fund No. 844 additional receipts to the "Reimbursement from Other Funds" line item in the Arts and Cultural Facilities Trust Fund (Fiscal Impact - \$0)**. DCA requests restoration of 10 currently vacant positions also critically needed to continue to provide essential services to the communities with the highest need and with limited access to arts and cultural services, and to preserve economic opportunity for artists and arts/cultural organizations. These positions would be fully offset using additional receipts from the Cultural Affairs Department Trust Fund, Fund No. 844.
- C. **RESTORE \$516,395 in funding in the Special Appropriations I account and ADD a corresponding amount in funds from Cultural Affairs Department Trust Fund, Fund No. 844 additional receipts to the "Reimbursement from Other Funds" line item in the Arts and Cultural Facilities Trust Fund to avoid the possibility of eliminating 355 community jobs (Fiscal Impact - \$0)**. The Department has recently completed a cash balance reconciliation, including anticipated remaining expenditures through FY 25. These costs would be fully offset using additional receipts from the Cultural Affairs Department Trust Fund, Fund No. 844.
- C1. If recommendation C is not adopted, the Department recommends that the Council **INSTRUCT the Department of Cultural Affairs to report with a revised Special Appropriations I schedule**, which rescinds the recommendation to reduce each grantee/arts organization's individual grant awards by a percentage, with a new schedule that instead recommends restoration of all grantee funding amounts, with the exception of the deletion of the lowest scoring grantees from the peer-review process to allow highest scoring recipients full allocations to be able to fully execute their grant projects, programs and events. The reduction of lowest-scoring grantees would be in an amount that equals or slightly exceeds the Proposed Budget (\$516,395). This alternative recommendation would have no Fiscal Impact.
- D. **RESTORE \$1,798,000 in funding in the Special Appropriations III account, to be fully offset by current-year savings in the Department's Available Cash Balance (Fiscal Impact - \$0)**. DCA proposes to address this one-time cut with a one-time solution. Special Appropriations III consists of programming funds for community arts and cultural services and Council discretionary funds including, but not limited to funding for: art exhibitions and community arts programming, performing arts and festival programming, Central Avenue Jazz Festival, El Grito, and Council Civic Funds. The Department has recently completed a cash balance reconciliation, including anticipated remaining expenditures through FY 25. Sufficient funds exist within the Available Cash Balance to offset and restore the aforementioned funds.
- E. **DELETE one Arts Associate (Festivals and Performances Coordinator (Item 16 in the Proposed Budget), and RESTORE one Arts Associate in the Performing Arts Division**

**(Fiscal Impact - \$0).** The restored Arts Associate will be assigned as the Festivals and Performances Coordinator.

- F. **AMEND** the Special Appropriations Budget Footnotes (Page 108 of the Proposed Budget) to include the Special Appropriations II portion of DCA's budget to Footnote 1, consistent with the 2010 amendment to Executive Directive (ED) 3 (Villaraigosa series) creating an exemption to ED 3 for **all** DCA grants/contracts that are peer-reviewed and listed by organizational name and amount in the annual City budget **(Fiscal Impact - \$0)**.

With the restoration of the aforementioned funding and positions, the City's strategic investments will ensure that DCA continues to: provide and market accessible, well-managed, and well-stewarded facilities; arts and cultural projects, events, and programming; and educational initiatives for as many as possible, reinforcing the City's commitment to supporting the arts economy and services to the community. We sincerely appreciate the City's ongoing efforts to continue providing arts and cultural services to the City's highest-need communities.

Sincerely,



Daniel Tarica  
General Manager  
Department of Cultural Affairs

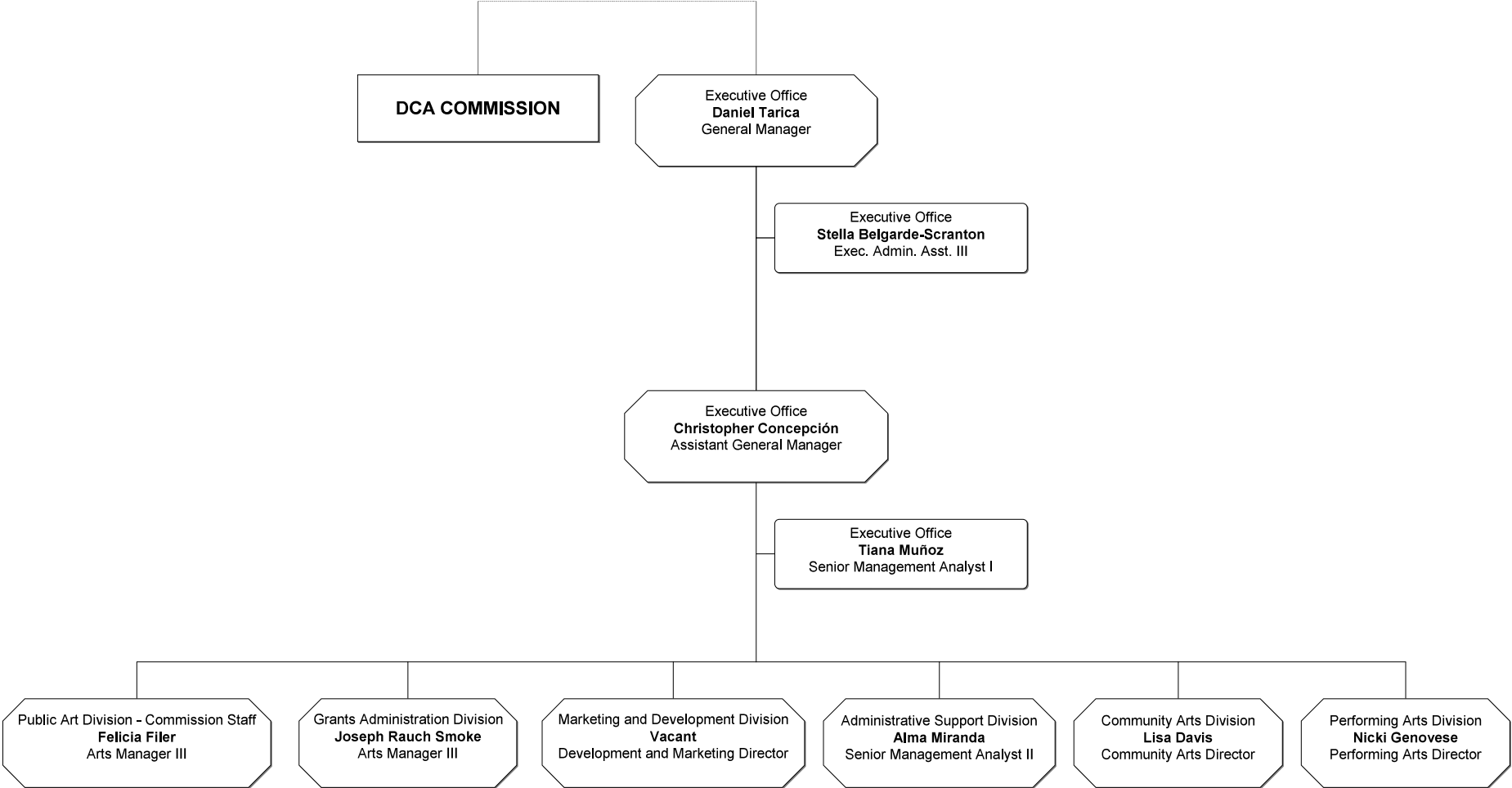
ATTACHMENT: DCA Organizational Chart & Program Descriptions

cc: Honorable Councilmembers  
Matt Hale, Deputy Mayor for Finance, Operations, and Innovation  
Jacqueline Hamilton, Deputy Mayor for Neighborhood Services  
Bernyce Hollins, Mayor's Office Budget Chief  
Sharon Tso, Chief Legislative Analyst  
Erin Bromaghim, Chief of Staff, Council District 5  
Matthew Szabo, City Administrative Officer  
Maria Gutierrez, Office of the City Administrative Officer  
Daniela Cuevas, Office of the City Administrative Officer

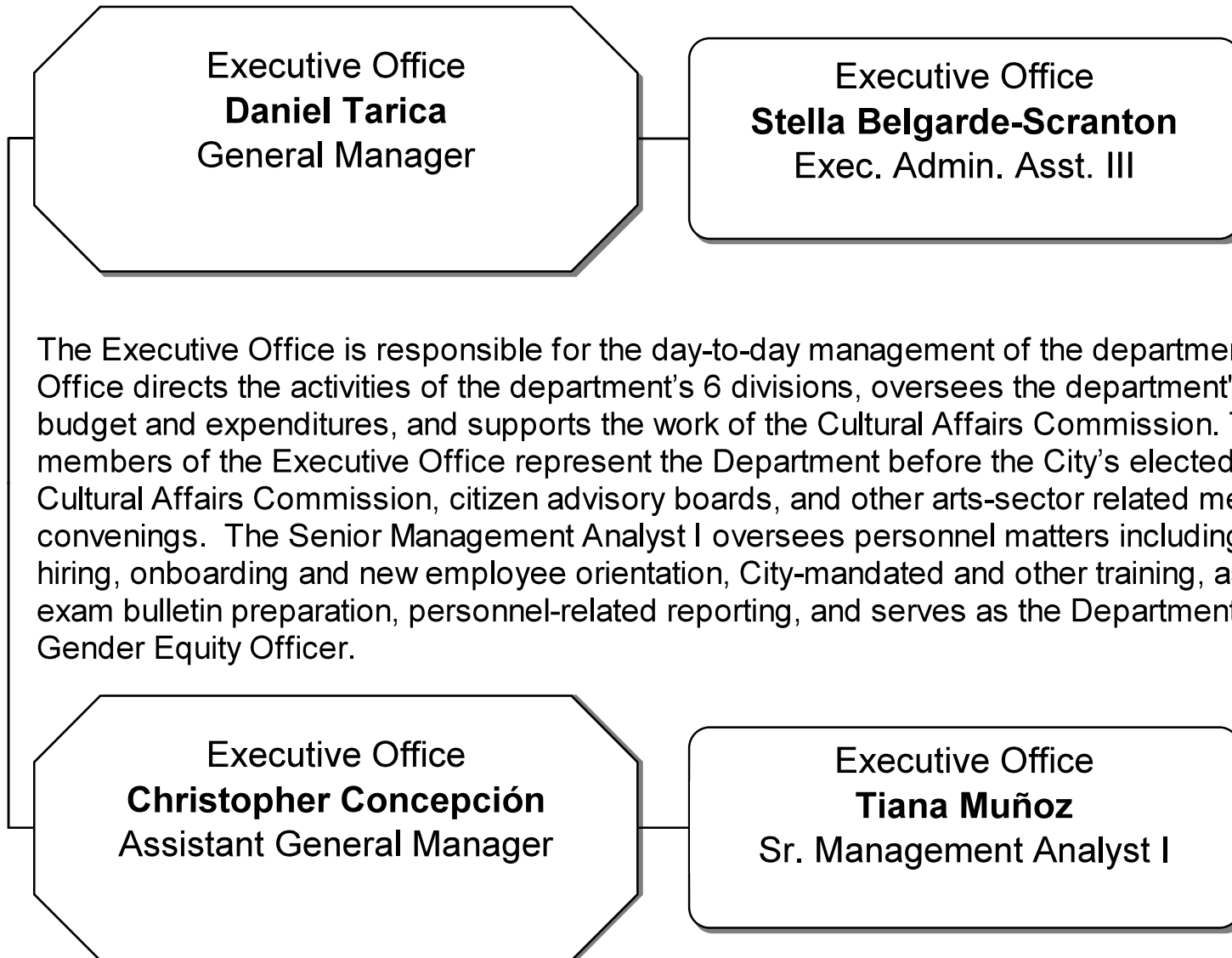


# Department of Cultural Affairs

## Adopted Organization Chart Fiscal Year 2024-2025



**Department of Cultural Affairs**  
**Adopted Organization Chart Fiscal Year 2024-2025**  
**Executive Office**

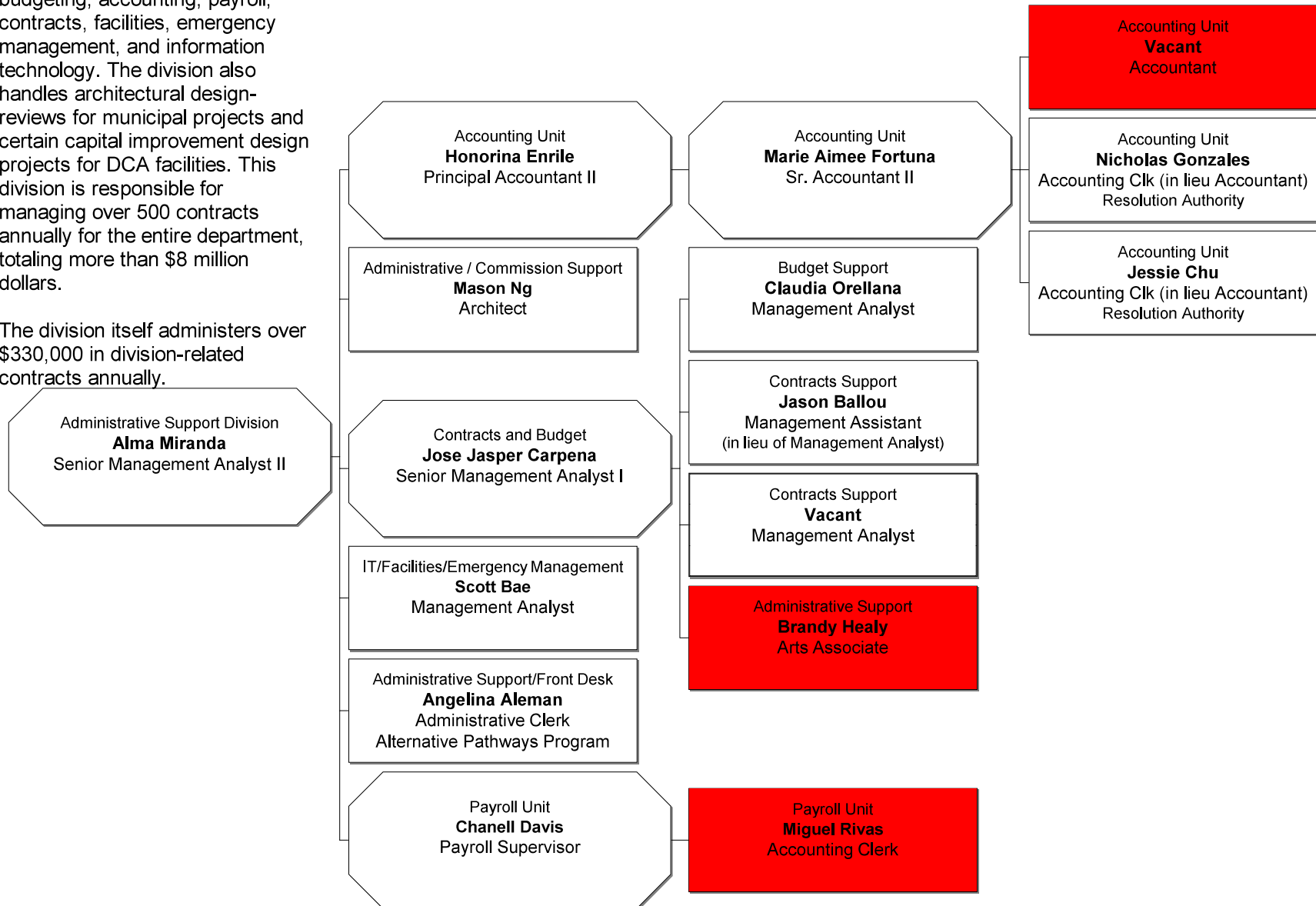




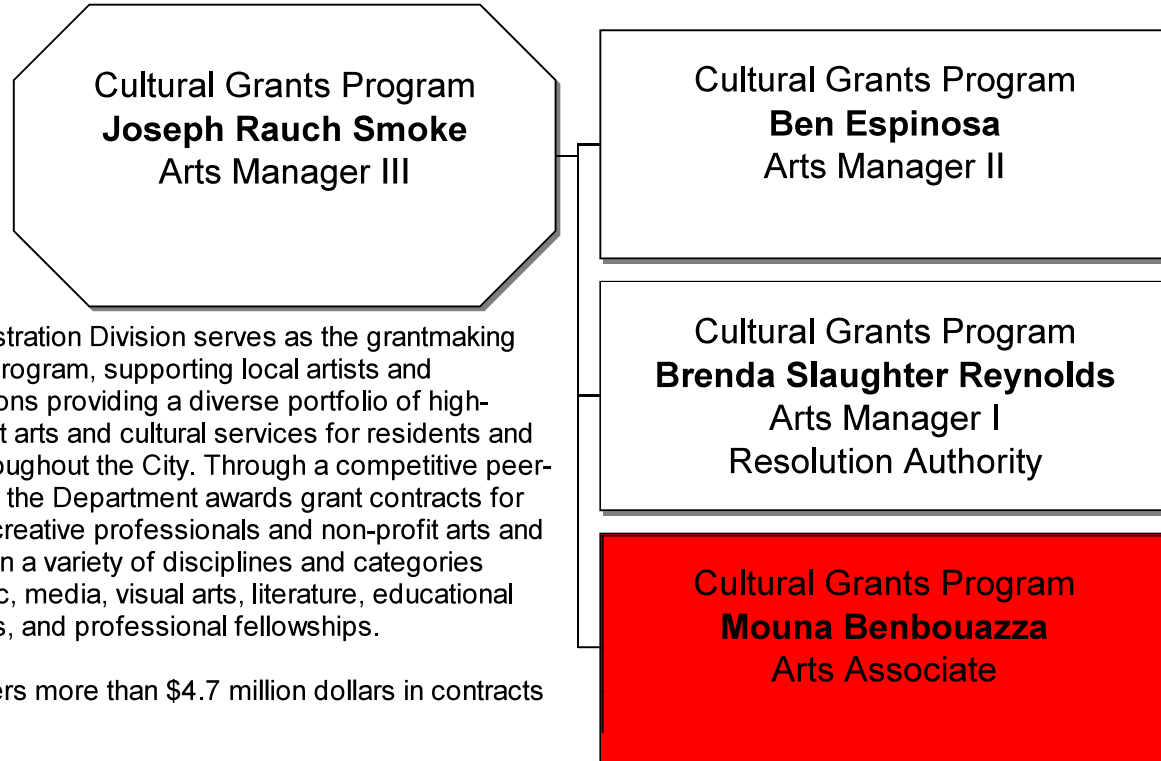
## Department of Cultural Affairs Adopted Organization Chart Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Administrative Services Division

DCA's General Administrative and Support Program division manages budgeting, accounting, payroll, contracts, facilities, emergency management, and information technology. The division also handles architectural design-reviews for municipal projects and certain capital improvement design projects for DCA facilities. This division is responsible for managing over 500 contracts annually for the entire department, totaling more than \$8 million dollars.

The division itself administers over \$330,000 in division-related contracts annually.



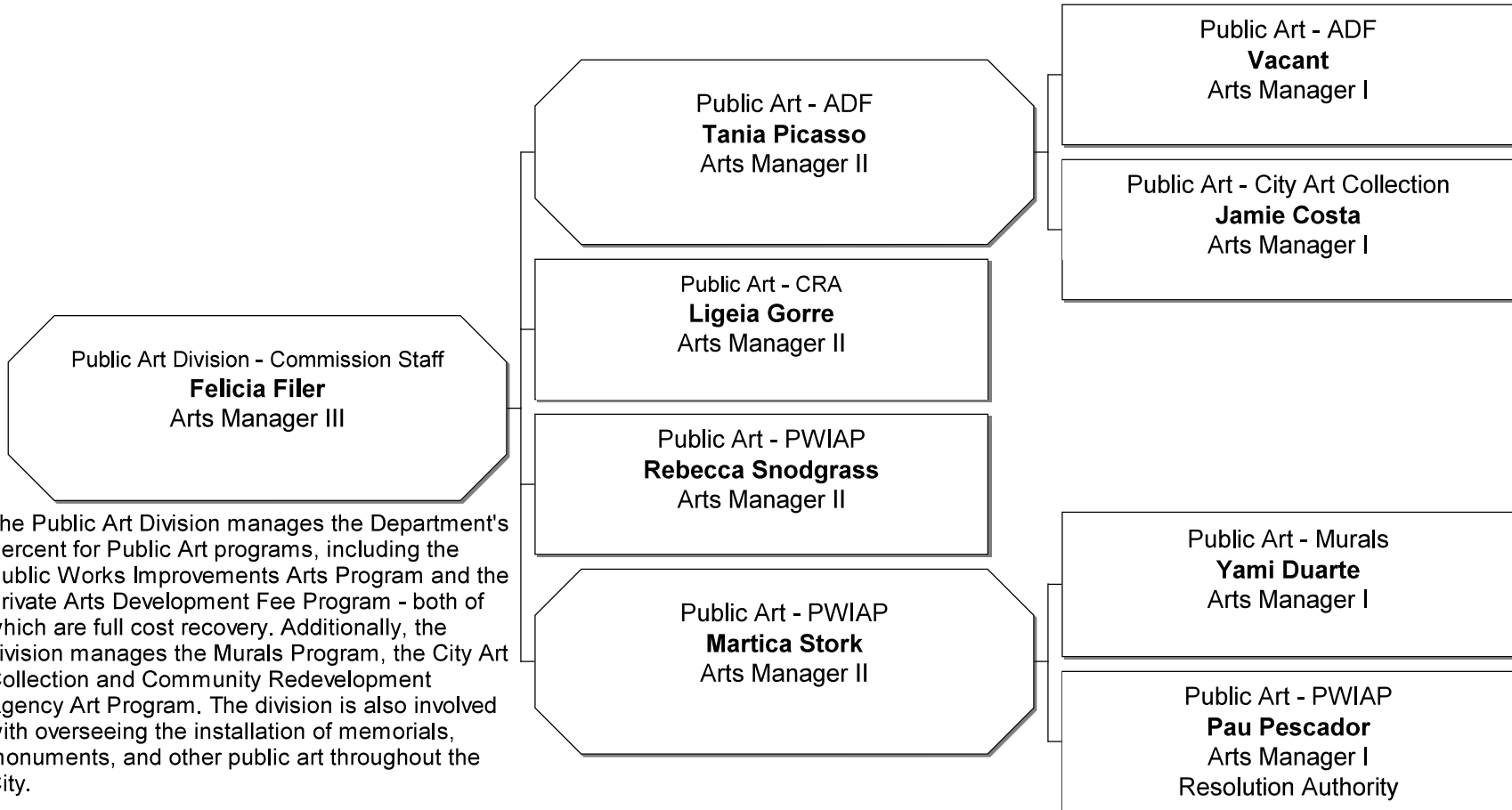
**Department of Cultural Affairs  
Adopted Organization Chart Fiscal Year 2024-2025  
Grants Administration Division**



DCA's Grants Administration Division serves as the grantmaking economic generator program, supporting local artists and arts/cultural organizations providing a diverse portfolio of high-quality free or low-cost arts and cultural services for residents and visitors of all ages throughout the City. Through a competitive peer-panel review process, the Department awards grant contracts for services to over 300 creative professionals and non-profit arts and cultural organizations in a variety of disciplines and categories including dance, music, media, visual arts, literature, educational programs, residencies, and professional fellowships.

The division administers more than \$4.7 million dollars in contracts annually.

**Department of Cultural Affairs  
Adopted Organization Chart Fiscal Year 2024-2025  
Public Art Division**



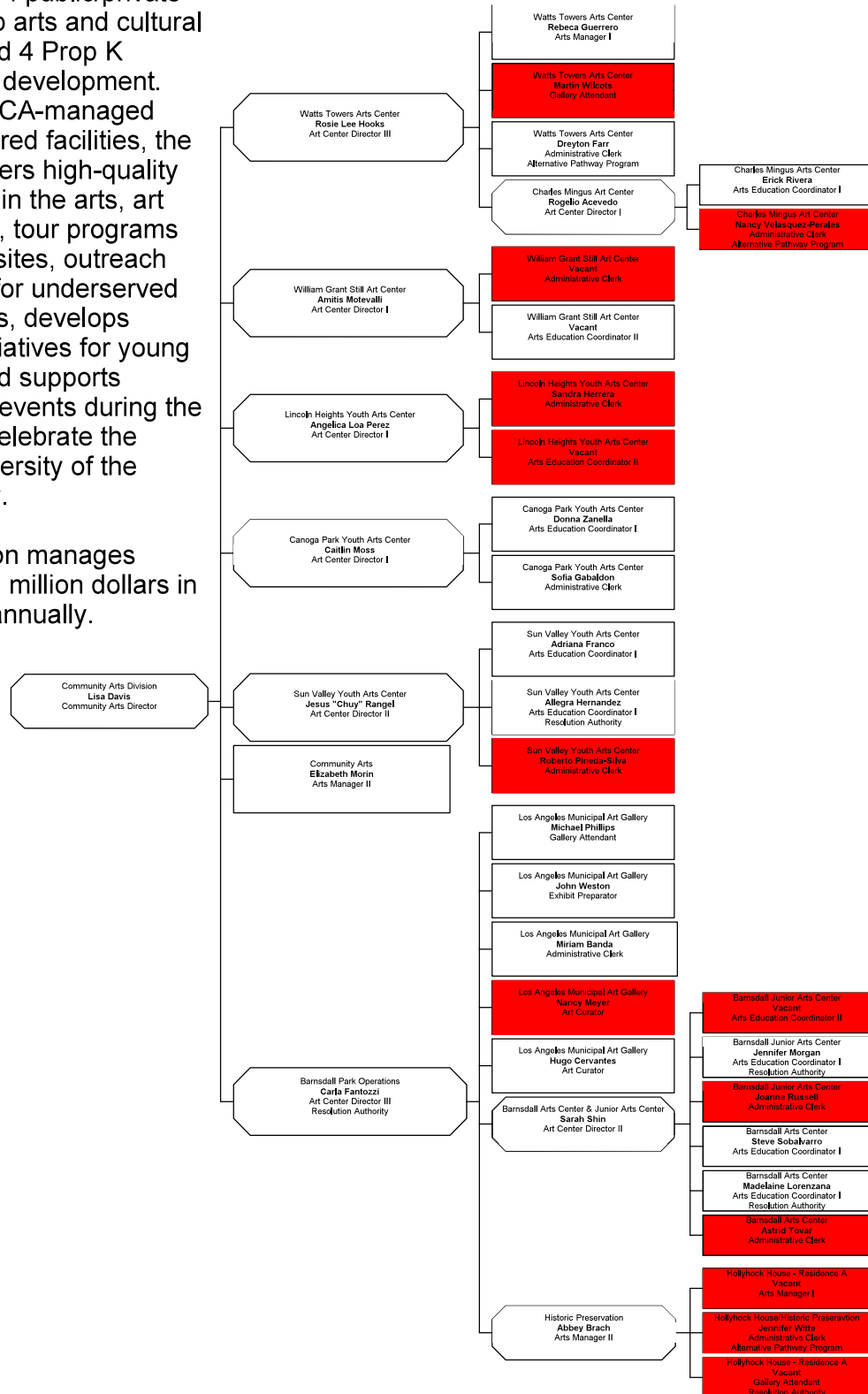
The Public Art Division manages the Department's Percent for Public Art programs, including the Public Works Improvements Arts Program and the Private Arts Development Fee Program - both of which are full cost recovery. Additionally, the division manages the Murals Program, the City Art Collection and Community Redevelopment Agency Art Program. The division is also involved with overseeing the installation of memorials, monuments, and other public art throughout the City.

The division administers more than \$1.1 million dollars in contracts annually.

**Department of Cultural Affairs  
Adopted Organization Chart Fiscal Year 2024-2025  
Community Arts Division**

The Community Arts Division manages and oversees 9 neighborhood arts and cultural centers, 7 galleries, 2 historic sites, in addition to 4 public/private partnership arts and cultural centers and 4 Prop K facilities in development. Through DCA-managed and partnered facilities, the division offers high-quality instruction in the arts, art exhibitions, tour programs of historic sites, outreach programs for underserved populations, develops special initiatives for young people; and supports numerous events during the year that celebrate the cultural diversity of the community.

This division manages close to \$2 million dollars in contracts annually.

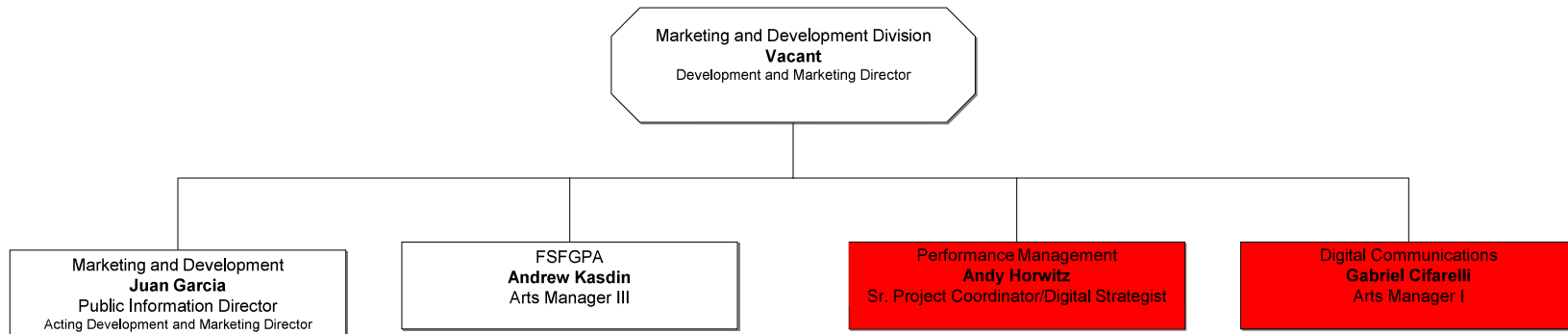


Department of Cultural Affairs  
Adopted Organization Chart Fiscal Year 2024-2025

Marketing and Development Division and Federal, State & Foundation Grants and  
Program Administration (FSFGPA)

The Marketing and Development Division is responsible for the Department's development and fundraising, communications, and promotion of facilities and activities, media/public relations, publications, community outreach, and special projects such as systems implementation and metrics. This program collaborates with local, state, national, and international arts organizations to promote cultural awareness and increase access to arts and cultural opportunities in Los Angeles. In FY24, the division worked to secure almost \$4 million in funds from foundations, corporations, donor cultivation and grant acquisition to subsidize arts, cultural, educational, and/or leisure programs in the City.

The division administers approximately \$163,000 in contracts annually.



# Department of Cultural Affairs

## Adopted Organization Chart Fiscal Year 2024-2025

### Performing Arts

The Performing Arts Division manages, maintains and oversees 6 theaters and 2 public/private partnership theaters. The division provides affordable rental space to artists, and arts/cultural/community organizations, and implements initiatives to create festivals and platforms to select artists to create and/or present site-specific performing arts projects and/or programming.

The division administers approximately \$700,000 in contracts annually.

