

CIVIC ARTS COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING AGENDA REVISED

**Wednesday, July 22, 2026
6:00 PM**

Meeting Location: Tarea Hall Pittman South Branch Library
1901 Russell St, Berkeley, CA 94703

Commission Members:

Chair Montgomery, Vice Chair Bachrach, Commissioner Woo, Commissioner Vaughn Scott,
Commissioner Bullwinkel, Commissioner Pineda, Commissioner Blecher,
Commissioner Truc-Dao Kramer, Commissioner Dutta- Choudhury

This meeting will be conducted in a hybrid model with both in-person and virtual attendance. Attend this meeting remotely using **Zoom**: <https://cityofberkeley-info.zoomgov.com/j/1659423391> To request to speak, use the “raise hand” function in Zoom. To join by phone: Dial **1-669-254-5252 or 1-833-568-8864 (Toll Free)** and enter **Meeting ID: 165 942 3391**. To provide public comment, Press *9 and wait to be recognized by the Chair. To submit a written communication for the public record, email civicarts@berkeleyca.gov.

This meeting will be conducted in accordance with the Brown Act, Government Code Section 54953. Any member of the public may attend this meeting, however, if you are feeling sick, please do not attend the meeting in person. Questions regarding this matter may be addressed to the Commission Secretary, Carianna Arredondo 510-981-7007, carredondo@berkeleyca.gov cc: civicarts@berkeleyca.gov

Roll Call

Chair Peter Montgomery (District 8)
Vice Chair Jonathan Bachrach (District 1)
Commissioner Cameron Woo (District 2)
Commissioner Sean Vaughn Scott (District 3)
Commissioner Lisa Bullwinkel (District 4)
Commissioner Eduardo Pineda (District 5)
Commissioner Dana Blecher (District 6)
Commissioner Audrey Truc-Dao Kramer (District 7)
Commissioner Devi Dutta-Choudhury (Mayor),

Land Acknowledgement

The City of Berkeley recognizes that the community we live in was built on the territory of Huchiun (Hooch-yoon), the ancestral and unceded land of the Chochenyo (Cho-chen-yo) speaking Ohlone (Oh-low-nee) people, the ancestors and descendants of the sovereign Verona (Vuh-roh-nuh) Band of Alameda County. This land was and continues to be of great importance to all of the Ohlone Tribes and descendants of the Verona Band. We acknowledge and honor the original inhabitants of Berkeley, the documented 5,000-year history of a vibrant community at the West Berkeley Shellmound, and the Ohlone people who continue to reside in the East Bay. We recognize that Berkeley residents have and continue to benefit from the use and occupation of this unceded stolen land since the City of Berkeley's incorporation in 1878. As stewards of the laws regulating the City of Berkeley, it is not only vital that we recognize the history of this land, but also recognize that the Ohlone people are present members of Berkeley and other East Bay communities today. The City of Berkeley will continue to build relationships with the Lisjan (Lih-Shawn) Tribe and create meaningful actions that uphold the intention of this Land Acknowledgement

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Matters

1. Communication from Berkeley Art Center (Attachment 1)

Chairperson's Report

The Commission Chair may make announcements or provide information to the Commission in the form of an oral report. The Commission will not take action on such items but may request the items be placed on a future agenda for discussion.

Commission Action Items

*The public may comment on each item listed on the agenda for action as the item is taken up. Following review and discussion of the items listed below, the Commission may continue an item to a future Commission meeting. **No Action can be taken on items that are not noticed on the published agenda.***

1. **Qualification of A People's History of Telegraph Avenue Mural Preservation as On Site Publicly Accessible Art for 2455 Telegraph Avenue / 2506 Haste Street**
From: Carianna Arredondo, Assistant to the City Manager; Public Art Subcommittee (Attachment 2)
Recommendation: Authorize the Commission Secretary to transmit the memorandum regarding A People's History of Telegraph Avenue mural preservation at 2455 Telegraph Avenue / 2506 Haste Street to the Zoning Adjustments Board.
2. **Jean LaMarr: Ohlone Park Artwork Elements**
From: Carianna Arredondo, Assistant to the City Manager; Public Art Subcommittee (Attachment 3)
Recommendation: Approve the updated final design for Jean LaMarr's Ohlone Park artwork elements, including the sculptural benches and grinding stone, and

authorize staff to proceed with fabrication, coordination, and installation of the artwork at Ohlone Park.

3. **Civic Arts Grants Program 2027 Awards**

a) **FY27 Individual Artist Projects Grant Awards**

From: Carianna Arredondo, Assistant to the City Manager; Grants Subcommittee (Attachment 4)

Recommendation: Approve the Fiscal Year 2027 Individual Artist Projects Grant Awards

b) **FY27 Community Festivals Grant Awards**

From: Carianna Arredondo, Assistant to the City Manager; Grants Subcommittee (Attachment 4)

Recommendation: Approve the Fiscal Year 2027 Community Festivals Grant Awards

c) **FY27 General Operating Support (Year 2) Grant Awards**

From: Carianna Arredondo, Assistant to the City Manager; Grants Subcommittee (Attachment 4)

Recommendation: Approve the Fiscal Year 2027 General Operating Support (Year 2) Grant Awards

Presentations

4. **Youth Art Awards**

From: Chair Montgomery (Attachment 5)

Recommendation: The Civic Arts Commission may request additional information or edits to the information, reserving an opportunity to review and take action at a later meeting.

5. **Background Memo: Public Art on Private Development Nexus Study**

From: Carianna Arredondo, Assistant to the City Manager (Attachment 6)

Recommendation: The Civic Arts Commission may request additional information or edits to the information, reserving an opportunity to review and take action at a later meeting.

Information Items and Updates

5. **Grants, Public Art and Civic Arts Programs Updates**

From: City Staff

a) Grants Program Updates, Hilary Amnah

b) Public Art Program Updates, Mark Salinas

c) Civic Arts Program Updates, Carianna Arredondo

Committee Updates

6. Grants, Public Art, and Policy Subcommittee Updates

From: Civic Arts Subcommittees

a) Grants

- Dana Blecher, Chair
- Lisa Bullwinkel
- Cameron Woo

b) Public Art

- Eduardo Pineda, Chair
- Jonathan Bachrach
- Devi Dutta-Choudhury

c) Policy Subcommittee

- Lisa Bullwinkel, Chair
- Dana Blecher
- Cameron Woo
- Audrey Truc-Dao Kramer

d) Representative on Design Review Committee

- Devi Dutta-Choudhury

Items for Future Agendas

These items are not scheduled for discussion or action at this meeting. The Commission may schedule these items to the Action Calendar of a future Commission meeting.

- **Requests by Commission members to add items to the next agenda**

Minutes for Approval

Draft minutes for the Commissions consideration and approval.

7. Minutes of June 24, 2026

From: Commission Secretary (Attachment 7)

Recommendation: Approve the draft minutes of the June 24th, 2026, Regular Civic Arts Commission Meeting

Commissioner Announcements

Adjournment

Notices

Notice of Public Record

Communications to Berkeley boards, commissions or committees are public record and will become part of the City's electronic records, which are accessible through the City's website. Please note: E-mail addresses, names, addresses, and other contact information are not required but, if included in any communication to a City board, commission, or committee, will become part of the public record. If you do not want your e-mail address or any other contact information to be made public, you may deliver communications via U.S. Postal Service or in person to the secretary of the relevant board, commission, or committee. If you do not want your contact information included in the public record, please do not include that information in your communication. Please contact the secretary to the relevant board, commission, or committee for further information.

Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the commission regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection at the City Manager's Office located at 2180 Milvia Street, 5th floor, Berkeley, CA 94704



Communication Access Information

This meeting is being held in a wheelchair accessible location. To request a disability-related accommodation(s) to participate in the meeting, including auxiliary aids or services, please contact the Disability Services specialist at ada@berkeleyca.gov, (510) 981-6418 (V), or (510) 981-6347 (TDD) at least three business days before the meeting date. Attendees at public meetings are reminded that other attendees may be sensitive to various scents, whether natural or manufactured, in products and materials. Please help the City respect these needs.

Video and audio recordings of the Civic Arts Commission meetings are available upon request. Please contact the Commission Secretary at carredondo@berkeleyca.gov cc: civicsarts@berkeleyca.gov or 510-981-7007 to obtain a recording.

Certification of public posting

I hereby certify that the agenda for this meeting of the Berkeley City Commission was posted at the display case located near the walkway in front of the Maudelle Shirek Building, 2134 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, as well as on the City's website, on July 19, 2026

Carianna Arredondo, Secretary

From: [Salinas, Mark](#)
To: [Salinas, Mark](#)
Subject: BAC Funding
Date: Monday, July 20, 2026 9:44:04 AM

From: Thet Win <thetswin2@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2026 9:31 PM
To: council@berkeley.ca.gov; Civic Arts <civicarts@berkeleyca.gov>
Subject: BAC Funding

WARNING: This is not a City of Berkeley email. Do not click links or attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

June 24, 2026

Good evening, and thank you to Mayor Ishii, Honorable City Councilmembers and Civic Arts Commissioners for all you do for Berkeley.

Thank you especially for your support of Berkeley Art Center.

My name is Thet Shein Win and I'm a Berkeley resident and homeowner in District 5.

I'm also Board Chair of the Berkeley Art Center. I'm writing to ask you to please continue to support BAC through the General Fund.

BAC has been a vital part of Berkeley's visual arts community for nearly 60 years. Our beautiful gallery nestled in Live Oak Park activates and enriches the neighborhood, while offering dynamic programming by contemporary and underrepresented Bay Area artists.

With our tiny budget, 1.5 person staff, and a dedicated group of volunteers, we recently hosted an intergenerational art workshop, a potluck exploring memory and migration, and an Artist Rights workshop. Our current show is the Annual Juried Members' Exhibition featuring nearly 60 local artists.

In a climate where arts funding is shrinking, our city funding is critical for our survival, and our ability to continue to serve Berkeley and the Bay Area.

Thank you again for your support of Berkeley Art Center.

Sincerely,

Thet Shein Win

BAC Board President

Thet Shein Win

www.thetsheinwin.com

*Lahpet Thoke Writing Circles: Only You Can Tell Your Story and Your Story
Needs to be Told*



Civic Arts Division

To: Civic Arts Commission

From: Carianna Arredondo, Assistant to the City Manager, Civic Arts Division

Date: July 1, 2026

Subject: Civic Arts Coordinator Determination – Qualification of *A People's History of Telegraph Avenue* Mural Preservation as On-Site Publicly Accessible Art for 2455 Telegraph Avenue / 2506 Haste Street

I. Civic Arts Coordinator Determination

As the City's Assistant to the City Manager, responsible for managing the Civic Arts Division, I have determined that the proposed **retention, restoration, preservation, and long-term protection of *A People's History of Telegraph Avenue* qualifies as On-Site Publicly Accessible Art under Section V.A of the City of Berkeley's *Public Art in Private Development Program Guidelines and Procedures***.¹ Section V.A provides that the placement of pre-existing artworks, as well as the restoration or preservation of existing historic artworks and artist-designed elements on building façades and other publicly accessible areas, may be considered On-Site Publicly Accessible Art in limited circumstances if, by determination of the Civic Arts Coordinator, the artwork is appropriate to the site and integrated into the design of the development project.

This is a threshold eligibility determination. Final credit toward the project's Public Art requirement remains subject to presentation to the Civic Arts Commission for review and feedback, submission of a complete restoration and preservation plan, documentation of eligible costs, and submission of a long-term maintenance and upkeep plan.

This determination is based on the exceptional facts of this project. The mural is an existing historic artwork; it is located on a publicly accessible building façade; it is directly tied to the cultural, political, and social history of Telegraph Avenue, People's Park, and Berkeley; and the proposed development has been designed to retain and integrate the mural into the public-facing ground-floor condition of the project.

II. Project Background

The proposed project is located at **2455 Telegraph Avenue and 2506 Haste Street**², at the southwest corner of Telegraph Avenue and Haste Street within the Telegraph Avenue Commercial District. The site currently includes the one-story commercial building at 2455 Telegraph Avenue, occupied by Amoeba Music for more than 35 years, and the building at 2506 Haste Street. The project proposes to preserve and restore the historic mural at 2455 Telegraph Avenue, demolish the building at 2506 Haste

¹ <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/2022-01/Guidelines%20Public%20Art%20in%20Private%20Development%20Program%2009-26-18.pdf>

² https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/2026-05/2026-06-04_LPC_Item%207A_2455%20Telegraph_Staff%20Report.pdf

Street, and construct an approximately 85,000-square-foot, eight-story mixed-use building with a ground-floor record store and 68 residential units, including seven Very Low-Income units.

The project proposes to retain the west, or primary, Telegraph Avenue façade and the north Haste Street façade of the existing 2455 Telegraph Avenue building. The north façade is the location of [People's History of Telegraph Avenue](#), also known as the Bicentennial Mural. The project would remove the remainder of the existing building while retaining the publicly visible façades and associated artwork along Haste Street and Telegraph Avenue as the base of the new development.

The Landmarks Preservation Commission staff report notes that the unreinforced masonry wall the mural is painted on and the Telegraph Avenue façade would be preserved, reinforced, and structurally incorporated into the proposed mixed-use residential building. The Haste Street design would allow the upper-story overhang and second-level relief to frame the mural and provide an opportunity for dramatic lighting.

At its June 4, 2026 meeting, the Landmarks Preservation Commission approved a Structural Alteration Permit for the project, which approves the preservation of the Telegraph and Haste Street frontages while demolishing the remaining components of the building to accommodate the associated project.

III. Mural Background and Significance

A People's History of Telegraph Avenue is painted on the north-facing Haste Street wall of 2455 Telegraph Avenue. The building was constructed in 1933, and the mural was originally created in 1976 by the People's Wall Muralists, including Osha Neumann, Janet Kransberg, Daniel Galvez, and O'Brien Thiele. ARG's analysis describes the mural as depicting politically charged scenes from Berkeley's history in the 1960s, particularly events connected to the Free Speech Movement and the establishment of People's Park³.

The mural commemorates significant political and community events in Berkeley, including the Free Speech Movement, anti-Vietnam War activism, Third World solidarity demonstrations, the creation of People's Park, and the violent confrontation known as "Bloody Thursday." The mural was originally community-supported, with funding from community donations and labor contributed by as many as 30 people.

The mural is not limited to a flat painted surface. It incorporates architectural and functional building elements into the artwork, including door openings, a metal infill panel, shaped iron bars, a weatherhead painted as an eye, a downspout, a vent, and other façade elements. The Landmarks Preservation Commission staff report identifies character-defining features of the mural, including the long uninterrupted flat exterior façade, depictions of sociocultural and political forces in Southside Berkeley, representations of events such as the Free Speech Movement and People's Park, and the incorporation of building elements such as windows and doorways into the overall design.

On April 3, 1990, the Berkeley City Council designated *A People's History of Telegraph Avenue* as a Berkeley City Landmark. The designation recognized the mural's educational and historic value, including its depiction of Berkeley in the 1960s, the Free Speech Movement, the People's Park Riot,

³ https://drive.google.com/file/d/170VBuUOl3Y_nfKFhngtKnd0L1Ffg5Mib/view?usp=sharing

and the revolutionary movement of the 1960s. The landmark designation applies to the mural itself, rather than to the entire 2455 Telegraph Avenue building.

IV. Applicable Public Art Standard

Section V.A of the City's *Public Art in Private Development Program Guidelines and Procedures* provides that:

"The placement of pre-existing artworks and restoration or preservation of existing historic artworks and Artist-designed elements on building facades and other Publicly Accessible areas may be considered On-Site Publicly Accessible Art in limited circumstances if, by the determination of the Civic Arts Coordinator, they are appropriate to the site and integrated into the design of the Development Project."

I have determined that this project meets that limited-circumstance standard.

The mural is a pre-existing historic artwork. It is located on a publicly accessible building façade. It is appropriate to the site because its imagery, history, and meaning are inseparable from Telegraph Avenue, People's Park, and Berkeley's public memory. It is integrated into the design of the Development Project because the project has been organized around retaining the mural and façade in place as the public-facing ground-floor base of the new building.

V. Staff Analysis Supporting Determination

A. The mural is an existing historic artwork.

The mural is a designated Berkeley City Landmark and a community-created public artwork with documented educational, cultural, and historic value. It is not a decorative feature added for the development project, nor is it a private branding element. It is an existing public artwork with a long-standing role in Berkeley's civic and cultural landscape. The artwork therefore falls directly within the category contemplated by Section V.A: restoration or preservation of an existing historic artwork on a building façade.

B. The mural is publicly accessible.

The mural is located on the north-facing Haste Street façade and is visible from the public right-of-way. The proposed project retains the mural at the ground-floor level, where it will continue to be experienced by pedestrians, visitors, residents, and the broader public. This is central to the determination. The proposal preserves the mural as part of the public realm, not as an interior private amenity or inaccessible architectural remnant.

C. The mural is uniquely appropriate to the site.

The mural is site-specific in the strongest sense. It depicts Berkeley's social and political history, including the Free Speech Movement, People's Park, and the cultural identity of Telegraph Avenue. The mural's significance is tied to the corridor where it is located and to the history of the Southside area. Because the artwork depicts the history of the place where it is located, preserving it in place maintains the relationship between artwork, site, and public memory. This is a key basis for my determination that the mural is appropriate to the site.

D. The mural is integrated into the design of the Development Project.

The proposed development does not treat the mural as an afterthought. The project is designed to retain the Haste Street mural façade and the Telegraph Avenue frontage as the base of the new building. The upper residential floors are set back and visually differentiated from the retained façade. The LPC staff report notes that this approach creates a visual break between the original building base, which features the landmarked mural, and the new construction above it. It further notes that the addition's subdued palette would help ensure that the new construction does not visually compete with the mural's dense and colorful graphic character. The mural will remain a defining feature of the ground-floor public-facing elevation. The proposed massing, setback, and façade treatment support the mural's continued visibility and legibility.

E. The project provides a meaningful preservation benefit.

The project proposes more than passive retention of an existing wall. The preservation measures identified in the LPC staff report include high-resolution photographic documentation, contractor qualification requirements, construction protection requirements, retention of the wall in place, physical barriers and protective layers, retention of existing openings, removal and reinstallation of protruding landmark features, visual and vibration monitoring, structural support for the existing brick masonry substrate, and post-construction review by a qualified historic architect or conservator. ARG's analysis concludes that the proposed project would not adversely affect *A People's History of Telegraph Avenue*, that the project does not propose direct alteration of the mural's physical elements, and that protective measures would preserve the significant visual and material character of the mural during construction and following project completion. These measures support a meaningful public art preservation outcome and justify treating the preservation effort as On-Site Publicly Accessible Art.

F. This may represent an important preservation precedent for the Public Art Program.

The Public Art in Private Development Program is often understood as a pathway for commissioning new artwork or paying an in-lieu fee. This project presents a different and important public art outcome: the on-site preservation of an existing, historically significant, publicly accessible artwork in its original context. This may be among the first significant examples of using the On-Site Publicly Accessible Art pathway to support preservation of a landmarked public artwork as part of a private development project. For that reason, the determination should be clearly framed as project-specific and limited to the exceptional facts of this case.

VI. Eligible Cost Review

This determination confirms that the preservation of *A People's History of Telegraph Avenue* qualifies as On-Site Publicly Accessible Art. The applicant shall provide a detailed public art budget identifying costs proposed for credit, including costs associated with mural restoration, conservation, artist or conservator work, construction-phase protection, structural support directly necessary to retain or secure the artwork, documentation, and public-facing interpretive materials.

The budget should clearly distinguish between:

- costs directly related to restoration, preservation, protection, and presentation of the mural;

- base construction or façade-retention costs that would be required regardless of the Public Art requirement;
- long-term maintenance, upkeep, or endowment costs;
- consultant, administrative, insurance, or other costs that may not be eligible for credit under the Guidelines.

Only costs determined to be eligible under the Public Art in Private Development Program may be credited toward the project's Public Art requirement. If the verified eligible costs do not satisfy the full required amount, the applicant will be responsible for paying any required in-lieu amount consistent with the Guidelines.

VII. Required Next Steps

Before final Public Art credit is confirmed, the applicant shall present the proposal to the Civic Arts Commission for review and feedback. The presentation should provide sufficient information for the Commission and staff to understand the public art value of the proposal, the preservation methodology, the public accessibility of the mural, and the long-term stewardship commitments.

Because the project has not yet reached the demolition-permit stage, staff recommends that the Civic Arts Commission forward the five core requirements below to the Zoning Adjustments Board as recommended conditions of approval for issuance of the demolition permit. This approach would allow the project to proceed through the final entitlement hearing, give the applicant and project team time to prepare detailed preservation resources and cost estimates once a contractor is in place, and require the applicant to return to the Civic Arts Commission prior to demolition.

The applicant shall submit the following materials for Civic Arts review:

1. A comprehensive mural restoration, preservation, and long-term maintenance plan consistent with the Visual Artists Rights Act (VARA) and the California Art Preservation Act (CAPA). This plan shall satisfy the applicable Zoning Adjustments Board conditions of approval and be submitted before issuance of the building's demolition permit.
2. A detailed, itemized budget identifying eligible and ineligible public art costs.
3. Documentation describing the roles and qualifications of participating conservators, preservation professionals, artists, and/or original muralists.
4. Confirmation that the mural will remain publicly visible and accessible from the public right-of-way.
5. Any proposed public-facing interpretive signage, plaques, or educational materials.

Attachments:

1. Presentation | 2455 Telegraph Avenue & 2506 Haste Street Mixed Use Project

2455 Telegraph Avenue & 2506 Haste Street Mixed Use Project

Civic Arts Commission

July 22, 2026



People's Park Mural

1976

Originally painted



1990

Landmarked by City

1999

Restored, enlarged



2025

water intrusion,
seismic risk,
preliminary
restoration



Project Data

- 85,000 sq. ft. mixed use project
- 8-stories/85 feet
- 68 units (including 7 Very Low Income)
- 7,200 sq. ft. retail (Amoeba Music)



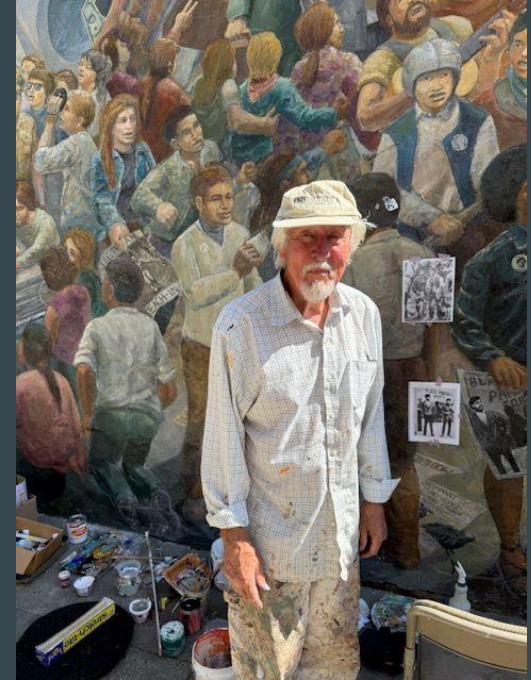
Mural Context

- Mural forms the base of the building with 7 floors of apartments set back and above
- Preserved facade visually separated from the above floors with a second-floor setback
- New sidewalk and lighting to improve access and visibility
- Project supports existing yellow curb to improve visibility and maintain loading



Preservation Commitment - Overview

- Historic mural to be restored and protected
- Project team includes architectural conservator and the original mural designer and artists
- Protect in place during construction, monitor vibration
- Improve structural integrity
- Clean, inpaint, protective coating after construction
- Annual stipend for ongoing restoration



Preservation Commitment - Appurtenances & Openings

Pedestrian door, electrical weatherhead, downspout, small vents, and second opening with shaped bars to be removed and stored during construction, then reinstalled

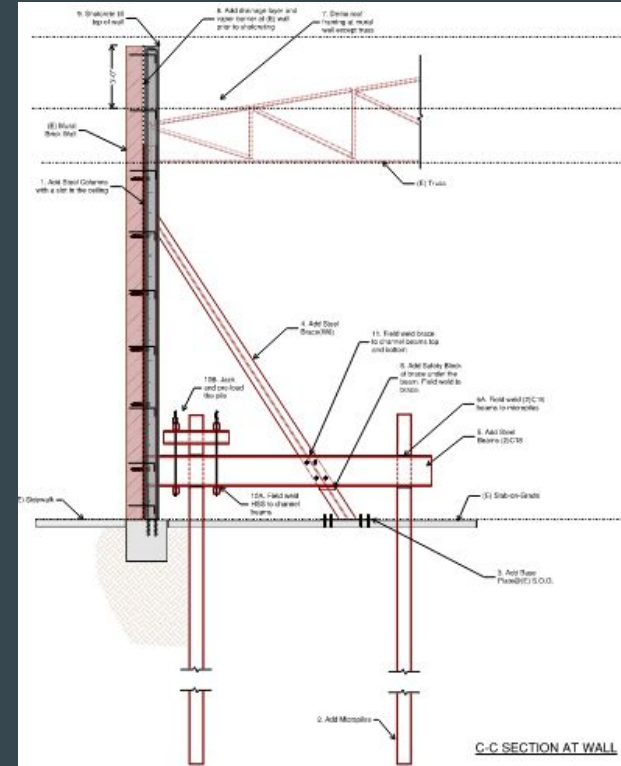


Preservation Commitment - Egress Gate

- New egress gate will be installed in the existing central opening, which has been partially infilled with a painted metal panel
- Panel and iron bars will require careful removal and storage during construction
- After construction, panel and iron bars will be reattached to the new gate and reused in the same opening



STAGE 3



STAGE 5

STAGE 6

STAGE 6: SEC

lar
ural Design

C-C SECTION AT WALL

Percentage for Public Art

- City's guidelines allow for pre-existing art to qualify toward requirement if it's deemed appropriate to the site and integrated into the design of the project
- However, only certain costs are eligible



Protection and Restoration Measures and Eligible Costs

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Public Art Restoration and Preservation Costs, By Type and Eligibility	
Phase/Task	Potentially Eligible?
Pre-Construction	
Complete high resolution photographic documentation	Yes
Establish vibration monitoring protocol and take preliminary readings	Yes
Incorporate contractor qualification requirements into the contract specifications to ensure that personnel are knowledgeable, experienced, and sensitive to the mural	No
Incorporate protection requirements into the contract specifications to prevent damage to the mural	No
During Construction	
Remove, transport, and store metal panel, iron bars, and protruding features (e.g., painted weatherhead, downspout)	Yes
Installation of facing paper, foam, and physical barrier (e.g., plywood, plexiglass) to protect mural from physical impact while maintaining selective visibility	Yes
Excavation and installation of shoring to strengthen brick masonry substrate	Yes
Placement of new foundations	Yes
Replacement of Haste Street sidewalk	No
Periodic visual monitoring by qualified conservator	Yes
Continuous vibration monitoring throughout major structural activities	Yes
Reinstall metal panels and iron bars	Yes
Install new egress gate	Yes
Post-Construction	
Conduct post-construction survey to assess any damage	Yes
Prepare treatment plan (if damaged/required) to restore mural	Yes
Engage community artists to restore mural imagery	Yes
Establish endowment for the life of the project	No
Building Valuation Estimate	\$20,441,672
Public Art Requirement (1.75% of hard costs/building valuation estimate)	
\$357,229	

Protection and Restoration Measures and Eligible Costs

- If eligible costs are less than Percentage for Public Art requirement, project will pay remainder as in-lieu fee
- Any costs for repainting Amoeba Music sign will not be eligible toward meeting requirement
- Construction, restoration and preservation plan will outline:
 - protocol for stop-work provisions in case of damage during construction
 - responsibilities of owner, in consultation with the original artist or their designee, to maintain mural over time

Next Steps/Construction

- September 2026: ZAB Hearing
- Mid-2027: Return to Civic Arts with construction and restoration plans
- Late 2027: Possible demolition start
- 20-month construction timeline
- Vibration, noise and air quality mitigations
- Construction traffic plan
- Website updates and mailings



An architectural rendering of a modern multi-story building with a mix of beige, grey, and white facades. The ground floor features a vibrant mural and a rainbow archway. A sign for 'REPUBLIC OF CLEVELAND' is visible on a street lamp to the right. The scene includes cars, pedestrians, and a clear blue sky.

THANK YOU!



Civic Arts Division

To: Civic Arts Commission

From: Carianna Arredondo, Assistant to the City Manager, Civic Arts Division

Date: July 1, 2026

Subject: Ohlone Park Public Art Revitalization Update — Jean LaMarr Public Art Project

Purpose

This memorandum provides an update on the Ohlone Park Public Art Revitalization project¹, including conservation of Jean LaMarr's existing mural and the development of new sculptural artwork elements for the Ohlone Park Mural Garden.

Background

Jean LaMarr's 1995 mural at Ohlone Park is a longstanding part of Berkeley's public art collection and an important cultural and community asset within the park². Civic Arts has supported efforts to revitalize the existing mural and complete new artwork elements that complement the mural and surrounding park landscape.

The project originated through community advocacy by Friends of Ohlone Park. Beginning in 2018, Friends of Ohlone Park advanced the concept for an "Ohlone Mural Art Garden" and received a Chancellor's Community Partnership Grant to support the proposed artwork elements. In 2019 project correspondence, Stephen Most noted that Friends of Ohlone Park had received a \$5,000 Chancellor's Community Partnership Grant toward a then-estimated \$39,000 project budget and requested City/Civic Arts approval so the project could proceed in coordination with the Civic Arts Program.

The early concept included a garden setting with Indigenous plants around the existing four-sided mural, as well as sculptural seating and an acorn grinding rock element. The rendering,

¹

https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Ohlone%20Park%20%28East%29%20Improvements%20Program_0.pdf

² https://www.artworkarchive.com/profile/civcartscollection/artwork/ohlone-murals?_cf_chl_f_tk=VN61H89Dyq9lPwc5CNU2ljPcO5ZyBCOiXrmL_n0lk70-1783377865-1.0.1.1-L8NXC9DERErDWZtp2vN4JkGgCIfR.Gq21qrMeLMeOEQ

titled “Ohlone Park Mural Garden — Design by Jean LaMarr,” reflects the project’s intent to create a more integrated mural garden environment³.

Project Development and Approvals

To support the project, the City entered into a series of agreements for project coordination, design, and implementation consultation:

Jeremy Kaplan Project Coordination Services for the Jean LaMarr Public Art Project, Contract No. **32200128**⁴, executed in 2022. Jean LaMarr Design of Artwork Elements for Ohlone Park, Contract No. **32300049**⁵, executed in 2022 and Contract No. **32600041**⁶, executed in 2025 (to amend the first contract and support continued) design development, fabrication coordination, installation consultation, and project closeout.

The project was reviewed by the **Public Art Subcommittee on October 19, 2023**⁷, during a meeting at Ohlone Park. The final design was then brought to the full **Civic Arts Commission on October 25, 2023**⁸, where the Commission approved the final design of the artwork elements — benches and grinding rock — by Jean LaMarr for Ohlone Park. The motion passed unanimously by the Commissioners present, with no public comment.

Following approval, Jean LaMarr continued refining the artwork elements to better complement the existing mural, respond to the park setting, and align the materials and design with the cultural intent of the project. Civic Arts staff are working with Gizmo Fabrication services for the fabrication and installation support under Contract No. **32600121**⁹ (Purchase Order NTE: \$94,607.95).

³ https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Ohlone%20Park%20%28East%29%20Improvements%20Program_0.pdf

⁴ records.cityofberkeley.info/PublicAccess/api/Document/AXL9JZ8zÉÉLfeaWyÁpWRoqWJcOQaPAOdKHZj86TPwFwGcOe0U5QAXiQF7C8BHfJSTvJOH61UOgSurfHX46EUn3M%3D/

⁵ <https://records.cityofberkeley.info/PublicAccess/api/Document/AceJvNpuVNB3oit4%C3%89qPB1Xu6XsARmE2i43%C3%81WD2yJD25IlGujyw%C3%81DiC8eNyfrSbVeJB86vDDX4nSVKQyzOdLrEks%3D/>

⁶ <https://records.cityofberkeley.info/PublicAccess/api/Document/Ae2oh3yUONJ5Ph01j%C3%811KPQqUdTwi8fzvSm mKlrwHeu%C3%81WJlKf%C3%89pllWYi1Nsa83mnugnR2spXS0gdDXbKv22Lxgc%3D/>

⁷ <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/legislative-body-meeting-agendas/10.19.23%20Public%20Art%20Subcommittee%20Agenda%20Packet.pdf>

⁸ <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/legislative-body-meeting-minutes/10.25.2023%20Civic%20Arts%20Commission%20Meeting%20Minutes%20FINAL.pdf>

⁹ <https://records.cityofberkeley.info/PublicAccess/api/Document/AYi8wEjZQAsp3Im2Xyf0FDQTFLhiPnzCS6FLsJj54pKF8D%C3%89WhmVp6aH6WVtluVIIH7gGC%C3%895bFeU9sUErNbaOBGQ%3D/>

Current Status

Civic Arts staff have been working closely with Jean LaMarr, Gizmo, Stephen Most and Friends of Ohlone Park, and project partners to move the project toward completion.

Currently, Preservation Arts is completing mural conservation and restoration work on the existing Jean LaMarr mural (July 6-15, 2026). In parallel, the project team (Gizmo and Concrete Works) is advancing fabrication and installation planning for the new sculptural artwork elements.

The goal is to complete installation of the artwork elements by **September 2026**, in time for the California Native Ways Festival.

Civic Arts staff will continue coordinating with Jean LaMarr, Friends of Ohlone Park, Preservation Arts, and fabrication/installation partners (Gizmo and Concrete Works) to complete the remaining project milestones. Staff will provide additional updates to the Commission as conservation and installation work progresses.

OHLONE PARK



BACKGROUND

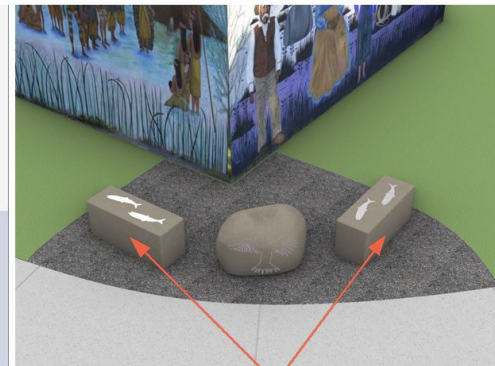
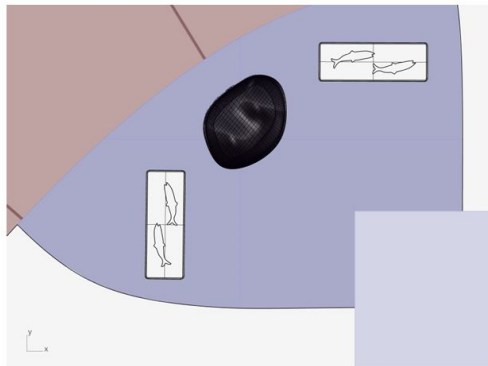
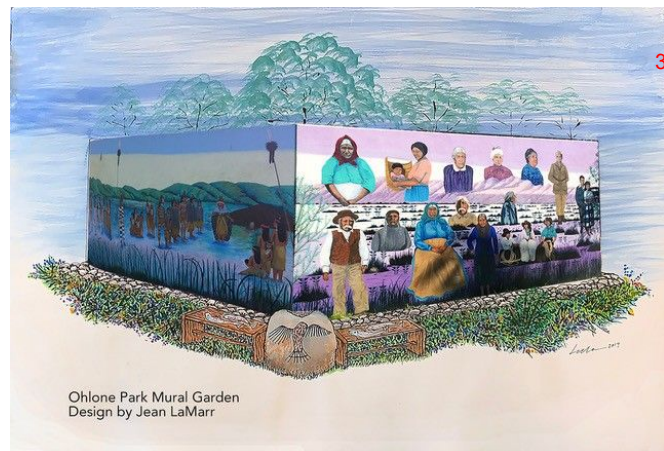
Background: Jean LaMarr's 1995 Ohlone Park mural, *Ohlone Journeys*, is being revitalized as part of the park's improvements.

Approvals: The project was reviewed by the Public Art Subcommittee on [October 19, 2023](#) and approved by the Civic Arts Commission on [October 25, 2023](#). The project has most recently been approved by the Public Art Subcommittee on [July 9, 2026](#).

Design Development: Following approval, Jean refined the sculptural elements to better complement the mural.

Current Status: Civic Arts is working closely with Jean LaMarr, Gizmo, Concrete Works, Stephen Most/Friends of Ohlone Park, and Preservation Arts.

Mural conservation is underway (7/6-7/15), with artwork installation targeted for September, ahead of the California Native Ways Festival.



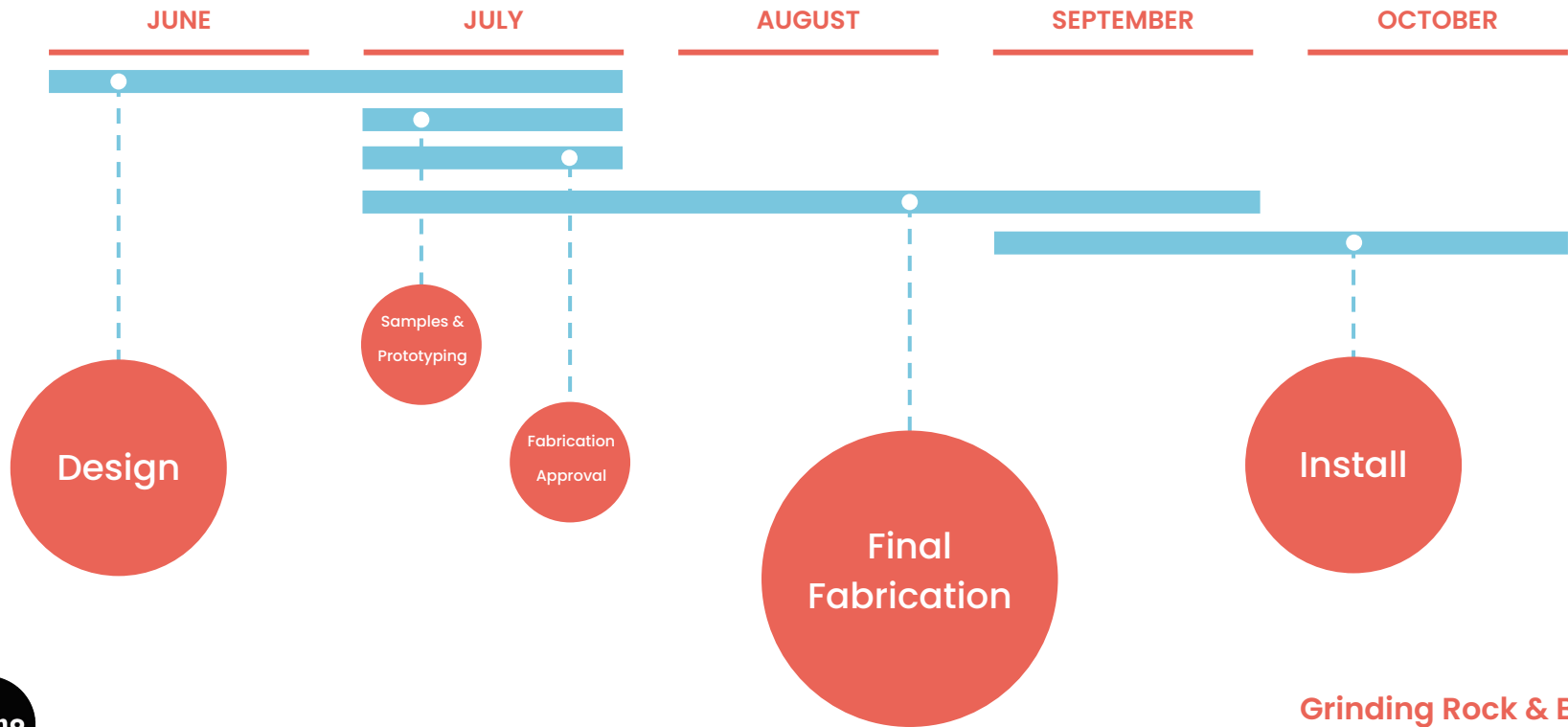
Benches 42" L x 15" D x 18" H

Sandblasted small triangle designs representing salmon with infill iridescent color

Grinding Rock & Benches
Jean LaMarr

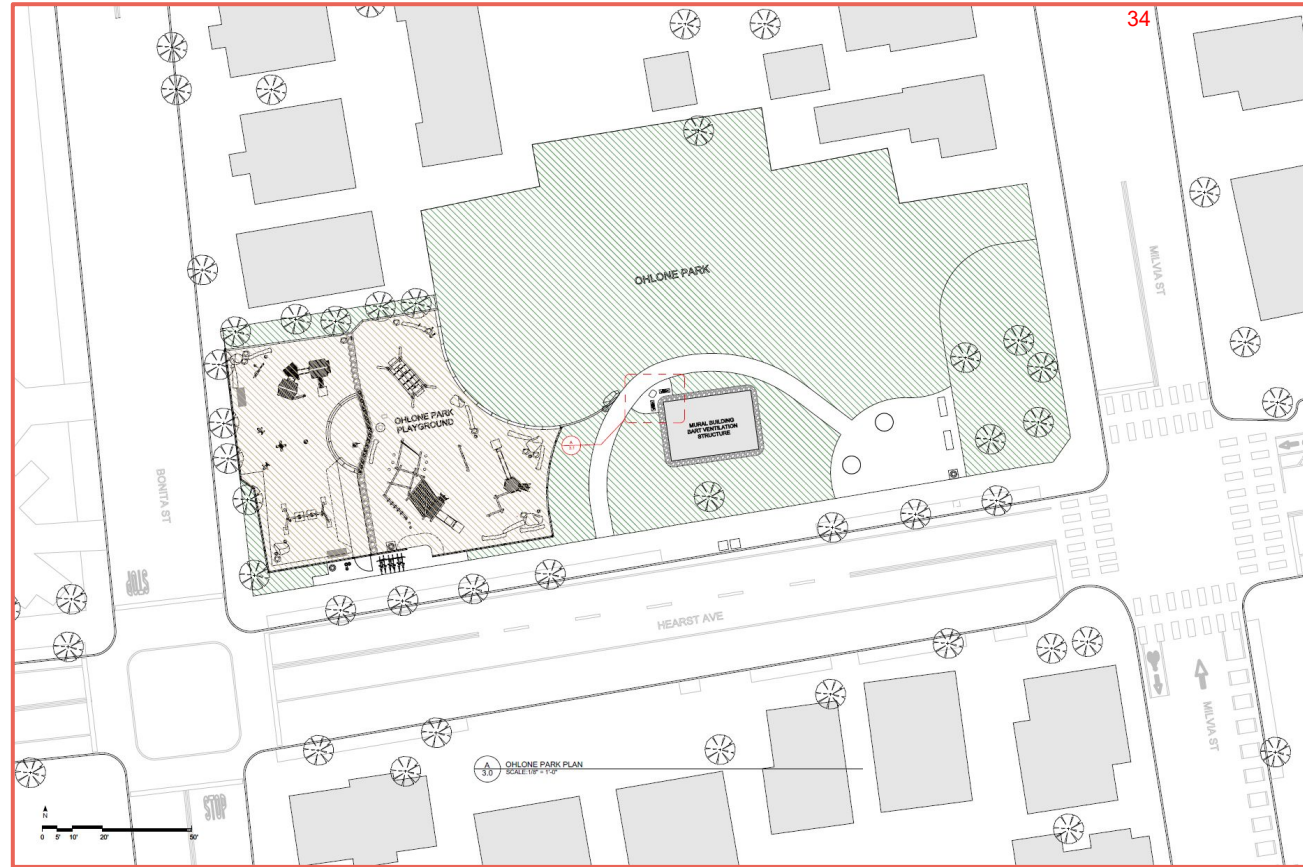
TIMELINE

33



PLAN

This project is designed by the artist Jean LaMarr, comprising of two custom benches with a grinding stone in the center. This will be placed in Ohlone Park, Berkeley.



[illegible]

Benches will be made of 3 main components:

- Inlaid stainless steel fish
- Terrazzo bench top
- Concrete legs

Granite Grinding Stone will have a sandblasted condor design

CONCEPTUAL RENDER

36



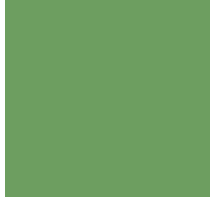
FISH

Concept:

- Salmon swimming upstream
- Dots along the top ridge of fish
- Triangular pattern along the belly, significant to Ohlone people
- Blue waves represent water
- Clear marbles represent terrazzo

Finish:

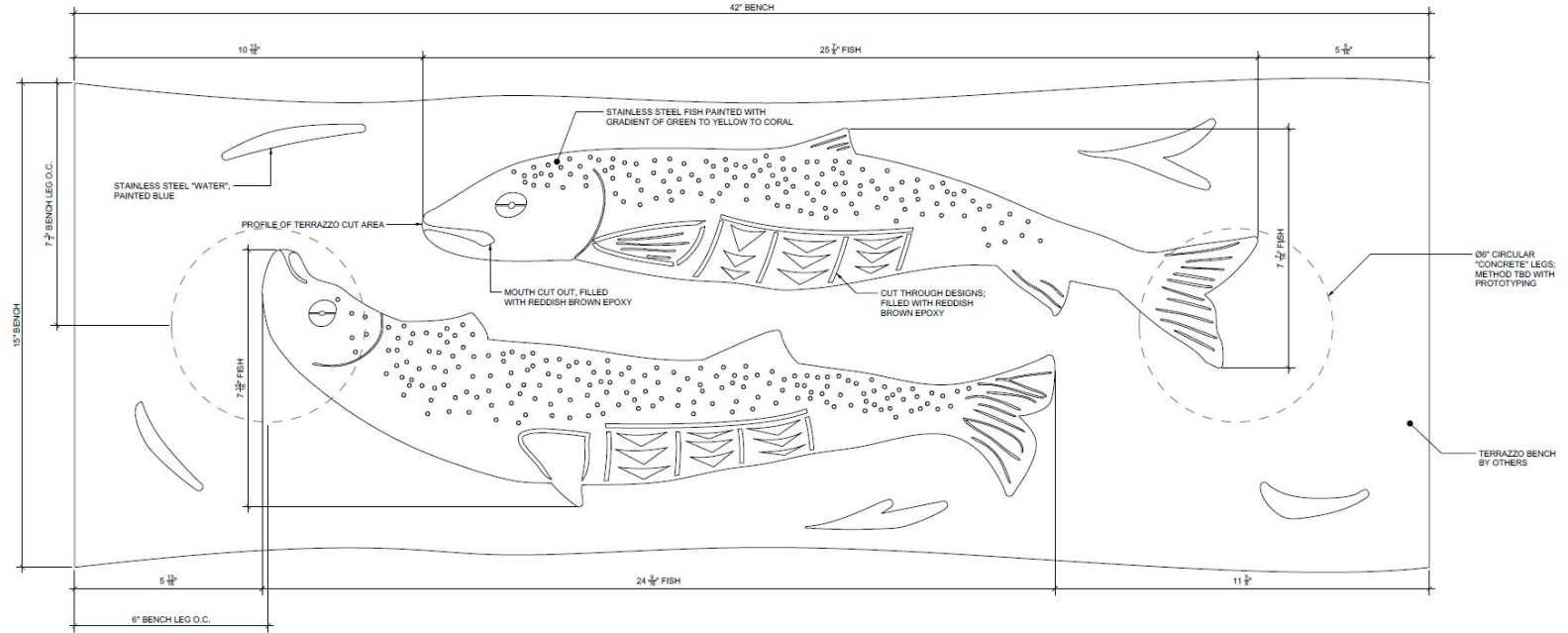
- Stainless steel fish with painted gradient of green to tan to red
- Details to be a reddish-brown colored epoxy
- Stainless steel waves painted blue
- All exterior grade paint with clear coat
- Add studs to back of fish and insert into drilled holes in terrazzo and epoxy to secure.



FISH

38

Technical Drawing:



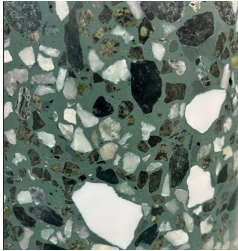
A
4.0 FISH DESIGN FOR BENCH PLAN
SCALE: 8" = 1'-0"

TERRAZZO

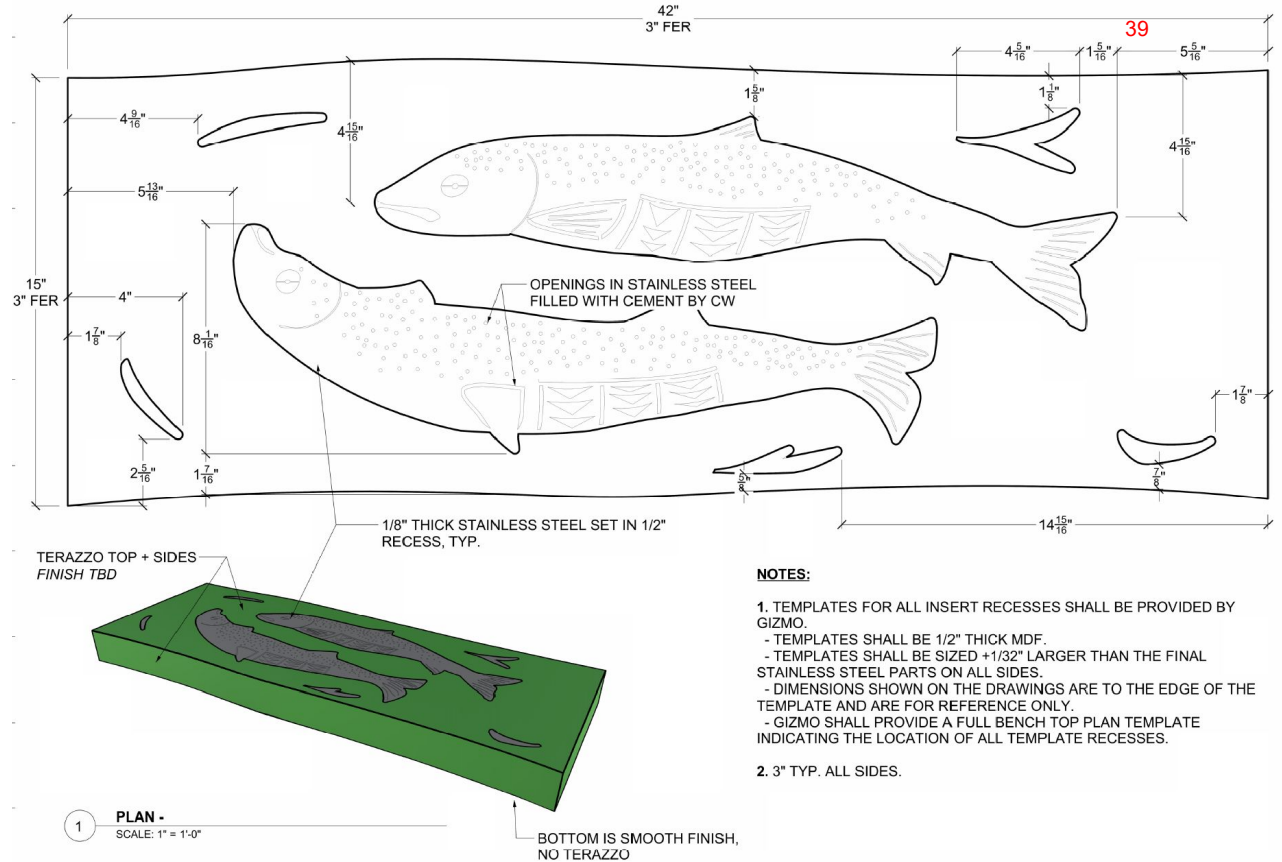
Custom terrazzo by Concreteworks

Finish:

- Galaxy Mix:



- Fish & water outlines recessed for Gizmo to install stainless steel pieces
- "Live" edge on bench top on long sides



LEGS

40

Concept:

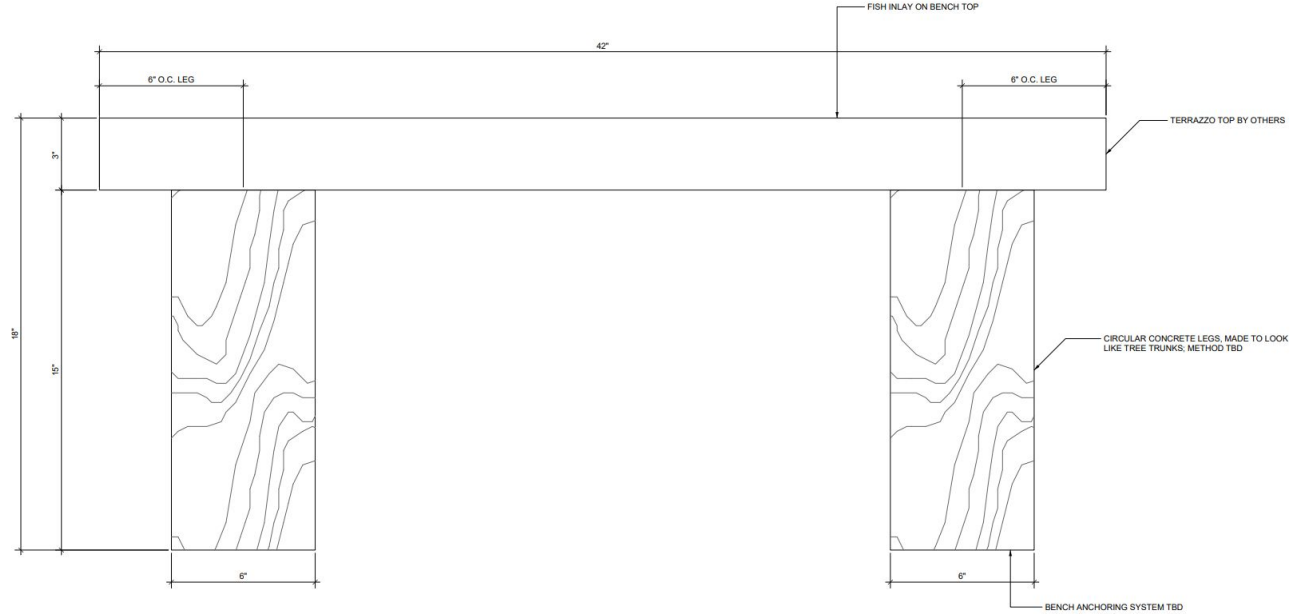
- Cylindrical legs to look like tree trunks
- 2 legs per bench

Finish:

- To be made of either an epoxy mix or concrete:



- Anchoring to ground TBD



A
4.1 BENCH ELEVATION
SCALE: 6" = 1'-0"



Grinding Rock & Benches
Jean Lamarr

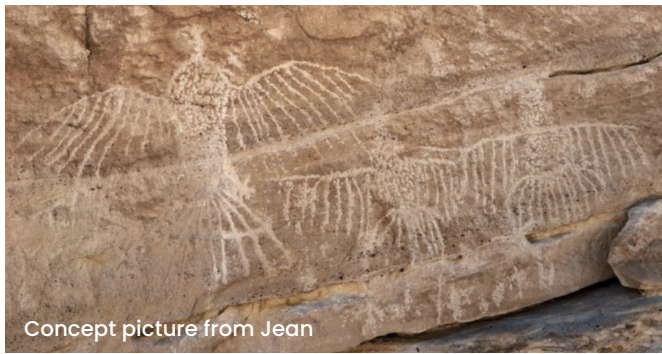
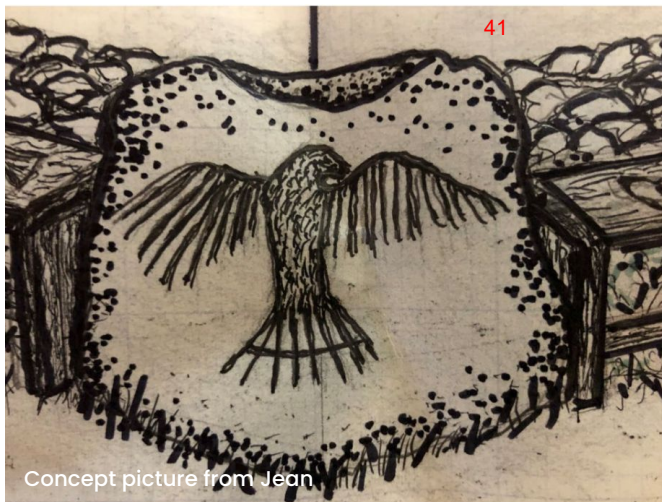
GRINDING STONE

Concept:

- Etching of a condor into rock face

Finish:

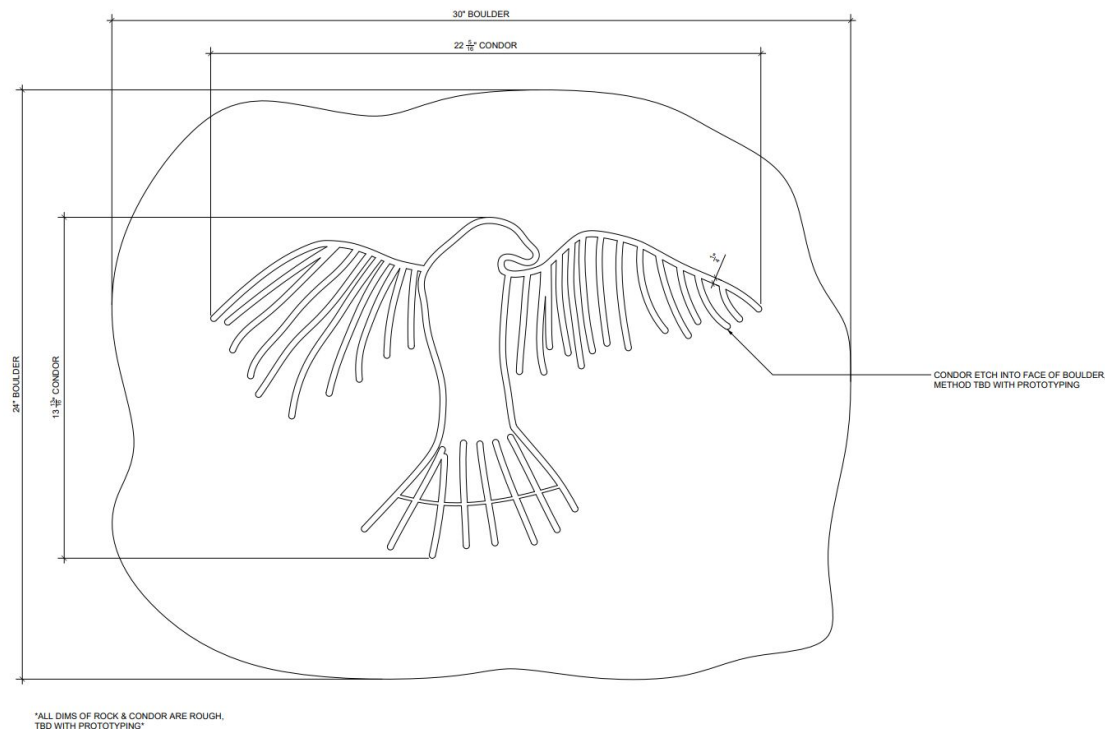
- Sand-blasted line art
- Reddish brown epoxy paint to emphasize design and provide longevity against erosion



CONDOR

42

Technical Drawing:



A
5.0 CONDOR DESIGN FOR BOULDER
SCALE: 8"=1'-0"

Grinding Rock & Benches
Jean Lamarr

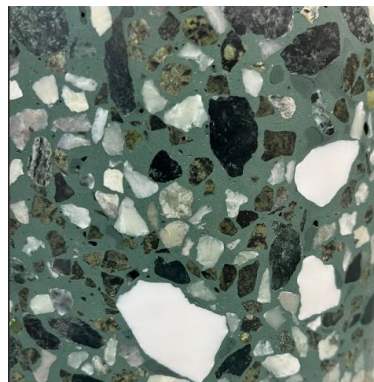
MAINTENANCE

Stainless Steel Fish & Paint Touch-Up:

- For spot cleaning use mild soap and water and/or Sheila Shine Cleaner/Polish
- Remove stubborn stains/vandalism with Motsenbocker's Lift-Off cleaner
- Avoid abrasive cleaners and coarse scrubbers
- Clear coat applied over artwork
- Paint product specs to be provided by Gizmo to match

Terrazzo Top, Bench Legs & Granite Grinding Rock:

- Use a pH-neutral stone cleaner & warm water
- Apply an outdoor-rated penetrating sealer every 1-3 years? (ask concreteworks)



To: Civic Arts Commission

Subject: FY27 Civic Arts Grant Cycle and Awards

This memorandum summarizes the Fiscal Year 2027 Civic Arts grant process and presents funding recommendations for the Individual Artist Projects, Community Festivals, and Year 2 General Operating Support grant programs. The recommended awards reflect the funding levels included in the City's adopted FY27 budget.

1. Guidelines Development

The Grants Subcommittee reviewed the FY27 Individual Artist Projects, Community Festivals, and Arts Programs grant guidelines at meetings held on October 10 and October 31, 2025. The Subcommittee's discussions addressed program eligibility, application requirements, review criteria, award amounts, and other administrative and policy considerations.

On December 3, 2025, the Civic Arts Commission approved the FY27 guidelines for the Individual Artist Projects, Community Festivals. The guidelines and panelist slate were approved unanimously by the Commissioners present. December 3, 2025 Commission minutes.

The FY27 Individual Artist Projects program accepted applications in the following artistic disciplines:

- Dance
- Folk and Traditional Arts
- Literary Arts
- Music
- Theater

These disciplines were established as part of the two-year discipline rotation described in the grant guidelines.

2. Grant Opportunity Outreach and Application Period

The FY27 Individual Artist Projects and Community Festivals grant opportunities opened in January 2026. The opportunities were promoted through the Civic Arts newsletter, City communications channels, social media, outreach to prior applicants, and the Civic Arts website.

The application deadlines and maximum grant amounts were as follows:

Grant Program	Application Deadline	Maximum Grant Amount
Individual Artist Projects	March 4, 2026, at 11:59 p.m.	\$5,000
Community Festivals	March 11, 2026, at 11:59 p.m.	Up to \$7,000

Staff conducted informational webinars for prospective applicants:

- Individual Artist Projects: January 7, 2026, at 5:30 p.m.
- Community Festivals: January 9, 2026, at 12:00 p.m.

Recordings of both webinars were made available through the [Civic Arts Grants webpage](#). Staff also provided individualized technical assistance throughout the application period.

General Operating Support grants are awarded on a two-year cycle. Consequently, organizations selected through the FY26 competitive process did not submit new applications for FY27. Instead, eligible organizations were considered for their second year of operating support.

3. Applications and Eligibility Screening

Civic Arts staff conducted application eligibility checks after the deadlines using the eligibility criteria outlined in each grant program.

A total of 37 Individual Artist Projects applications were received and determined eligible for panel review.

The Community Festivals program received 59 applications. Of these, 58 were determined eligible for panel review and one was deemed ineligible.

Grant Category	Applications Received	Eligible	Ineligible
Individual Artist Projects	37	37	0
Community Festivals	59	58	1
Total	96	95	1

4. Panelist Recruitment and Selection

In March 2026, staff recruited panelists from the Commission-approved [panelist eligibility pool](#). Because approved panelists remain eligible for two years, staff selected from individuals approved during the current and prior recruitment cycles.

Panelists were selected based on relevant artistic, cultural, nonprofit, and festival-production experience, as well as their ability to evaluate the disciplines and project types represented in the applicant pool. Staff also considered the City's commitment to assembling panels that reflect a range of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives.

Panelists were provided with resources to support their evaluations and prepare for the public grant review panel meetings.

- **Panelist Handbook:** The handbook included conflict-of-interest requirements, instructions for using the grants management system, guidance for preparing constructive panelist comments, and other information relevant to panel service.
- **Panelist Orientation and Training:** Panelists received orientation and training on the review process, program criteria, scoring, public meeting procedures, and recusals.
- **Technical Assistance:** Staff were available to panelists by email, telephone, and virtual appointment throughout the review period.

5. Application Review Process

Panelists independently reviewed and scored eligible applications using the criteria established in the Commission-approved guidelines. Panelists with an actual or potential conflict of interest were required to recuse themselves from reviewing, scoring, or discussing the affected application. Public panel meetings were conducted during the spring 2026 review period. Panelists discussed the applications and finalized their scores following the procedures established in the panelist handbook and grant guidelines.

The final scores were used to rank eligible applications and develop funding scenarios for consideration by the Grants Subcommittee and Civic Arts Commission.

Each panel included four grant review panelists who independently evaluated and scored applications using the program's approved review criteria. Panelists who had conflicts of interest with an applicant recused themselves from reviewing and scoring the application and from participating in the related discussion.

Because of the volume of eligible Community Festivals applications, staff divided the 58 applications between two panels. FEST1 reviewed 29 applications, and FEST2 reviewed 29 applications.

Panel	Date and Time	Applications Reviewed
Individual Artist Projects	June 2, 2026, 1:00–5:00 p.m.; June 3, 2026, 9:00 a.m.–2:30 p.m.	37
Community Festival (FEST 1)	June 8, 2026, 10:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m.	29
Community Festivals (FEST 2)	June 10, 2026, 8:00 a.m.–3:30 p.m.	29

Individual Artist Projects Panel

- Will Hammond Jr.
- Karina Arenas
- Jennifer Andrea Porras
- Hanne Williams-Baron

Community Festivals Panel 1

- Rena Tom
- Michal “MJ” Jones
- Jeffrey Gan
- Elaine Fong

Community Festivals Panel 2

- Aireene Espiritu
- Bhumi Patel
- Nyjah Tauheed
- Jay Lotus Allen

Applicants could attend the public review panel meetings and respond when panelists requested clarification. Following the meetings, panelists finalized their scores and comments. Panelists were paid an honorarium of \$25 per application reviewed.

6. FY27 Budget and Grant Allocations

On June 23, 2026, the City Council adopted the FY27 budget. The adopted budget included a 10% reduction to [Civic Arts grant funding](#). The resulting FY27 allocations are:

Grant Program	FY27 Funding Available
Individual Artist Projects	\$45,000
Community Festivals	\$142,484
General Operating Support—Year 2	\$405,000
Total	\$592,484

The budget reduction required staff to develop funding scenarios that remained within the final appropriations. Because final award recommendations could not be completed until the City's FY27 grant allocations were confirmed, the grant award process occurred later than originally anticipated.

7. Grants Subcommittee Review

The Grants Subcommittee met on July 15, 2026, at a meeting rescheduled from July 10, to review FY27 funding scenarios for:

- Individual Artist Projects
- Community Festivals
- General Operating Support—Year 2

The Subcommittee reviewed the final scores, available funding, proposed award methodologies, and the effect of the adopted 10% budget reduction.

8. Individual Artist Projects Recommendation

The FY27 Individual Artist Projects program received 37 eligible applications and has \$45,000 available.

The recommended scenario funds the ten highest-scoring applicants at \$4,500 each. This represents 90% of the \$5,000 grant amount stated in the guidelines and distributes the budget reduction equally across the ten highest-ranked applicants.

- Eligible applications: 37
- Recommended awards: 10
- Award per recipient: \$4,500
- Total recommended funding: \$45,000

The detailed rankings and recommended awardees are included in Attachment 1.

9. Community Festivals Recommendation

The FY27 Community Festivals program received 59 applications, of which 58 were eligible for panel review. The program has \$142,484 available.

The recommended scenario provides tiered awards based on each application's final ranking. Under this approach, higher-ranked applications receive a larger percentage of their requested amount while available funding is distributed across 32 festivals.

- Applications received: 59
- Eligible applications: 58
- Ineligible applications: 1
- Recommended awards: 32
- Total recommended funding: \$142,484

The recommended tiered methodology is:

- Ranks 1–5: 90% of the request, with the highest-ranked award adjusted to use the remaining available funds
- Ranks 6–10: 80% of the request
- Ranks 11–15: 70% of the request
- Ranks 16–20: 60% of the request
- Ranks 21–32: 50% of the request

Awards may vary where an applicant requested less than the \$7,000 maximum. The detailed rankings, requests, and recommended award amounts are included in Attachment 2.

10. General Operating Support—Year 2 Recommendations

General Operating Support grants were approved as two-year awards through the FY26 competitive process. FY27 represents the second year of funding for organizations that remain eligible and in compliance with program requirements.

The adopted FY27 budget provides \$405,000 for General Operating Support and Individual Artist grants combined. After allocating \$45,000 to Individual Artist Projects, \$405,000 remains available for General Operating Support awards.

Because the available FY27 funding is 10% below the prior award level, staff developed funding scenarios applying the reduction across eligible Year 2 grantees. Final awards remain contingent upon each organization's continued eligibility, compliance with grant requirements, and Berkeley-based operating status.

The recommended Year 2 awards are included in Attachment 3.

Attachment 1: FY27 Individual Artist Projects Funding Recommendations

Attachment 2: FY27 Community Festivals Funding Recommendations

Attachment 3: FY27 General Operating Support (Year 2) Funding Recommendations

Individual Artist Grants Program | 37 Eligible Applications | \$45,000 Grant Funds Available

Name	Pronouns	Title or summary of proposed project:	Discipline	Score	RECOMMENDED
Faye Carol	she/her/hers	The Funky Latin Getdown	Music	498	\$ 4,500
Koh Yamakawa	he/him/his	Recording New Traditions in Berkeley: Bringing Taiko and Asian American Jazz Together	Folk and Traditional Arts	495	\$ 4,500
MK Chavez	she/they	Animal Berkeley: Notes from the Enclosure	Literary Arts	493	\$ 4,500
Renuka	she/her/hers	The Home in Hastas: A Bharatanatyam Archive of South Asian Berkeley	Dance	478	\$ 4,500
AALIGN	He / They	Ode to the Outcast	Dance	473	\$ 4,500
Paula deJoie	she/her/hers	Last Words	Literary Arts	458	\$ 4,500
SanSan Kwan	she/her/hers	How to Make a Passive Dance	Dance	458	\$ 4,500
Nazelah Jamison	she/her	What Didn't Kill Me	Literary Arts	455	\$ 4,500
Cristina Ibarra	she/her/hers	"Heels Upon the Ground": The Sampaguitas Performance	Music	438	\$ WITHDRAWN
Trisha	she/they	Taiko in Community: Reclaiming Rhythm in Berkeley	Music	438	\$ 4,500
Kriss	they/them	Resonant Bodies	Dance	435	\$ 4,500
Sudhu Tewari	he/him	Street Piano and Sound Garden	Music	428	\$ -
Joyce Young	she/her/hers	More Than Enough: How I Learned to Value Myself Through Being a Caregiver	Literary Arts	425	\$ -
Vincente	He/They	Hip-Hop Poetics: The Textures of Sound	Literary Arts	423	\$ -
Molly Skuse	She/Her/Hers	Curbs	Music	410	\$ -
Joe Warner	he/him/his	The Bay Area Cats	Music	410	\$ -
River Bermudez Sanders	they/them/theirs	Lilith	Theater	408	\$ -
Molly Rose Williams	they/she	Practicing Community Practice	Dance	403	\$ -
Irene Sazer	she/her	New Composition for Resistance performed on violin, cello and piano (Piano Trio)	Music	403	\$ -
Aynur Sadet	she/her/hers	"The Bear": the play written by Anthon Chekhov	Theater	393	\$ -
Lizzie Calogero	she/her/hers	BEOWULF – from a modern translation by Maria Dahvana Headley	Theater	378	\$ -
Alex	he/him/his	Blueprint for Now: Shared Ownership, Berkeley Soundscapes, and Collaborative Groove Music	Music	375	\$ -
Ellie F Ganelin	she/her	Vimata: Original Balkan Folk Song & Video Celebrating Unity	Music	373	\$ -
Joanne Furio	she/her/hers	The memoir Wild Blue Wonder	Literary Arts	368	\$ -
Minna Dubin	she/her	We Do What We Want - a Berkeley cis/het couple's journey into non-monogamy and queerness	Literary Arts	365	\$ -
Norma Smith	she/her or they/them	Abandoning the Premises	Literary Arts	365	\$ -
Savannah	she/her/hers	Wings: a contemporary dance duet exploring gender expression and femininity	Dance	360	\$ -
Rebecca Hass	she/her	Sounding Berkeley: A Musical Map in Neighborhood Portraits	Music	348	\$ -
Mestra Papagaio	she / her / hers	Honoring our nature, using traditional and sustainable materials in our arts	Folk and Traditional Arts	343	\$ -
Jamie Greenblatt	she/her/hers	Pigeon Project	Theater	343	\$ -
Karen Obidah	she/her/hers	Now's the Time — A five-song EP recording three new original compositions.	Music	343	\$ -
Alli	she/they	Penny is a Cat, a children's storybook about a curious cat's day of playing pretend	Literary Arts	338	\$ -
Betsy Davids	she/her	Voice from the Fire: storytelling about the lives and work of William and Catherine Blake	Literary Arts	305	\$ -
Zappo Whiterabbit Dickinson	he/him	Script the Flip: Changing our story, to change our lives.	Literary Arts	298	\$ -
Keenan	he/him	Cynical Calendar	Music	275	\$ -
J. S. MacLean	She/her/hers	Short Takes On A Long Life	Literary Arts	180	\$ -
Chas Halpern	he/him	Pants on Fire, a novel	Literary Arts	170	\$ -

\$ 45,000.00

Community Festivals Grants Program | 58 Eligible Applications | \$142,484.00 Grant Funds Available

Festival Title	Brief summary of festival activities:	Applicant	District	Request Amount	Score	RECOMMENDED
Dance & Create Berkeley! — A YLM Foundation Community Celebration	<i>A free, multicultural celebration of South and West Berkeley youth featuring dance performances, interactive art, and community resources.</i>	YLM Foundation (DBA Berkeley Jr. Jackets)	District 2	\$ 7,000	489	\$ 6,784
Comunidad en La Placita	<i>Annual Berkeley Latino Heritage Month festival featuring live music, dance, family activities, artists, food vendors, and community resource booths.</i>	Latinos Unidos de Berkeley	District 4	\$ 7,000	460	\$ 6,300
8th Annual California Native Ways - California Indian Arts & Cultural Festival	<i>The 8th California Native Ways Festival, Saturday, June 12th, 2027, features 60 California Indian traditional cultural artisans/demonstrators/performers/vendors in Ohlone Park.</i>	California Institute for Community, Art & Nature	District 1	\$ 7,000	456	\$ 6,300
Frida Kahlo's Birthday Tianguis: A Summer Community Block Party	<i>An outdoor marketplace and community celebration full of flavor, creativity, and connection, our annual Tianguis uplifts 60+ local BIPOC/immigrant vendors.</i>	La Peña Cultural Center	District 8	\$ 7,000	455	\$ 6,300
Pawongan Festival—A Community Celebration of Balinese Arts, Music, Dance and Cuisine featuring Performance, Local Merchants, and Balinese Food	<i>Celebration of Balinese arts, music, dance and cuisine with performances by Gamelan Sekar Jaya, local artist works, and Balinese Food</i>	Gamelan Sekar Jaya	District 8	\$ 7,000	453	\$ 6,300
Berkeley Art Center Artist Market	<i>An art market for Bay Area artists and makers to celebrate creativity, sell artworks and share their creative process.</i>	Berkeley Art Center	District 5	\$ 7,000	449	\$ 5,600
Community Health Day: The Art of Living Medicine	<i>Free cultural festival celebrating Brazilian music, dance, herbal medicine, wellness consultations, workshops, artisan vendors, and multicultural healing traditions.</i>	Berkley Herbal Center	District 2	\$ 7,000	448	\$ 5,600
Berkeley Makam Festival	<i>Makam Festival presents concerts, lectures, workshops, culinary heritage, cultural artifacts, and stage design exploring deep Makam music+cultural traditions.and belonging</i>	Anatolian Arts Institute	District 5	\$ 7,000	446	\$ 5,600
Berkeley Bird Festival	<i>Berkeley Bird Festival celebrates local birdlife through field trips, arts and crafts, performances, educational presentations and more.</i>	Golden Gate Bird Alliance	All Districts	\$ 7,000	444	\$ 5,600
BORP Adaptive Sports Expo	<i>Expo is a free, daylong event where participants with disabilities and the public can try over 10 adaptive activities.</i>	Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program	District 1 District 2	\$ 7,000	438	\$ 5,600
Black Women's Roots Festival	<i>The sixth annual Black Women's Roots Festival celebrates powerful, pioneering Black women of blues, jazz, gospel, country, and roots music.</i>	School of The Getdown	District 4	\$ 7,000	435	\$ 4,900

Community Festivals Grants Program | 58 Eligible Applications | \$142,484.00 Grant Funds Available

Festival Title	Brief summary of festival activities:	Applicant	District	Request Amount	Score	RECOMMENDED
34th Annual Indigenous Peoples Day Powwow & Indian Market	<i>A family-friendly, inclusive Pow-Wow and Indian Market centering on Native culture with drummers, singers, dancers, food and authentic vendors.</i>	Indigenous Peoples Day Committee	District 4	\$ 7,000	433	\$ 4,900
Jazzschool Free Winter Music Festival	<i>Over 12 days in December, the Jazzschool celebrates music and community with a student concert series and all-star faculty showcase</i>	The Jazzschool	District 4	\$ 7,000	431	\$ 4,900
Ashkenaz Global Music & Dance Festival	<i>A free community celebration featuring global music performances, dance demonstrations, and participatory workshops</i>	Ashkenaz Music & Dance Community Center	District 1	\$ 7,000	428	\$ 4,900
30 Points of View: A Sneak Peek into Dance Making	<i>30 Points of View spotlights 30 diverse choreographers in a 3-day festival that engages audiences with the creative process.</i>	Luna Kids Dance, Inc. dba Luna Dance and Creativity	District 2	\$ 7,000	428	\$ 4,900
Give The Drummer Some	<i>A celebration of the Bay Area's rich traditions of Black drumming including a panel discussion, concert, and drum equipment showcase</i>	Jazzline INSTITUTE	District 4	\$ 7,000	424	\$ 4,200
40TH ANNUAL BERKELEY CA JUNETEENTH FESTIVAL	<i>Celebrating the art, culture and history of African Americans is at the core of all Berkeley Juneteenth Festival activities.</i>	BERKELEY JUNETEENTH ASSOC, INC dba: BERKELEY JUNETEENTH CULTURAL CELEBRATIONS	District 3	\$ 7,000	423	\$ 4,200
Litquake Festival 2026	<i>10 free events celebrating Berkeley's literary history and providing a vibrant forum for the Berkeley writing community</i>	Litquake Foundation	District 1 District 2 District 4 District 6 District 7 District 8	\$ 7,000	420	\$ 4,200
Berkeley Poetry Festival	<i>Weeklong festival of poetry reading, performances, workshops, and community gatherings celebrating diverse voices and strengthening Berkeley's vibrant literary culture.</i>	Berkeley Poetry Festival	All Districts	\$ 7,000	416	\$ 4,200
The Harvest Festivals of South Asia	<i>Celebrate South Asian harvest festivals through arts & crafts, traditional foods, games, storytelling, and farmworker advocacy activities for all ages.</i>	The Banyan Tree	District 7	\$ 7,000	415	\$ 4,200
38th Annual Maya's Spring Music Festival	<i>Maya's Spring Music Festival showcases performances from over 40 amateur musicians with developmental disabilities in a free afternoon festival.</i>	Maya's Music Therapy Fund	District 3	\$ 4,000	413	\$ 2,000
Contemporary Performance Diasporas Festival	<i>A two day celebratory event showcasing artists from different cultures sharing with the Berkeley community their music, theater, and dance.</i>	Inferno Theatre	District 2	\$ 7,000	411	\$ 3,500

Community Festivals Grants Program | 58 Eligible Applications | \$142,484.00 Grant Funds Available

Festival Title	Brief summary of festival activities:	Applicant	District	Request Amount	Score	RECOMMENDED
Nā Mea Ola: A Festival of Hawaiian Healing Arts	<i>Community festival celebrating Hawaiian healing arts through 'ohe kapala printmaking, traditional instruments, lā'au lapa'au demonstrations, mele, rhythm, and cultural storytelling.</i>	Holistic Honu Wellness Center	District 1	\$ 7,000	410	\$ 3,500
Latino Visual Arts Festival	<i>The Latino Visual Arts festival is to celebrate the inspirational and creative art of local Latinx artists and musicians.</i>	La Colectiva de Berkeley	District 4	\$ 7,000	410	\$ 3,500
Watershed Environmental Poetry Festival	<i>The Watershed Environmental Poetry Festival explores concern for the environment through poetry, music, a guided nature walk, and environmental education.</i>	Poetry Flash	District 4	\$ 7,000	409	\$ 3,500
EBCLC's Community Health Day	<i>EBCLC is committed to actualizing community power and upholding the social safety net by hosting a free health& wellness festival.</i>	East Bay Community Law Center (EBCLC)	District 3	\$ 7,000	405	\$ 3,500
SF Bay Brazilian Day & Lavagem Festival 2026	<i>Celebration of African Brazilian cultural arts featuring music and dance, craft and food vendors and a ceremony for world peace</i>	BrasArte the Damasceno Brazilian Cultural Exchange	District 3	\$ 7,000	404	\$ 3,500
West Berkeley Community Print Festival	<i>A gathering on Kala's grounds where neighbors and businesses engage in artmaking, printmaking, build community, and learn about Kala's history.</i>	Kala Art Institute	District 2	\$ 7,000	404	\$ 3,500
Lalo Guerrero Legacy Festival	<i>The Lalo Guerrero Legacy Festival will honor the iconic Mexican-American singer, songwriter, and guitarist with performances, workshops, and discussions.</i>	Berkeley Society for the Preservation of Traditional Music	District 4	\$ 7,000	401	\$ 3,500
Berkeley Pride 2027: From Joy to Justice	<i>Berkeley Pride: Joy to Justice is a festival celebrating LGBTQIA+ community and providing LGBTQIA+ resources to Berkeley and East Bay.</i>	Pacific Center for Human Growth	District 4	\$ 7,000	394	\$ 3,500
Berkeley Festival of Choro 2027	<i>The festival celebrates Brazilian music and culture with a community jam session and main event concert featuring Brazilian guest artists.</i>	Berkeley Choro Ensemble	District 5	\$ 7,000	393	\$ 3,500
Berkeley Storytelling Festival	<i>A storytelling festival featuring curated performances, community storytelling, workshops, and cultural programs sharing personal narratives of migration, identity and place.</i>	Diaspora Arts Connection	District 4	\$ 7,000	384	\$ -
The Gilman District Street Fair	<i>The Gilman District Street Fair features live music, artisan vendors, food, drinks, interactive art, family activities, and local business showcases.</i>	The Gilman District	District 1	\$ 7,000	384	\$ -

Community Festivals Grants Program | 58 Eligible Applications | \$142,484.00 Grant Funds Available

Festival Title	Brief summary of festival activities:	Applicant	District	Request Amount	Score	RECOMMENDED
Community Music Day 2026	<i>Annual free music festival featuring performances, hands-on instrument exploration, and activities celebrating Bay Area's diverse musical organizations and community.</i>	Crowden Music Center	District 1	\$ 7,000	381	\$ -
The Dragon Singers 53rd Annual Concert - Voices of Light	<i>Celebration of community and culture through choral performance with singing-along, and free lantern making workshop and showcase</i>	The Dragon Singers	District 4	\$ 7,000	381	\$ -
Storyland at Bay Area Book Festival	<i>Storyland Collective will host readings & art activities outside Berkeley Public Library (Central Branch) during the Bay Area Book Festival.</i>	Storyland Collective	District 4	\$ 3,000	374	\$ -
The Potters' Studio Holiday Sale	<i>The Holiday Sale showcases handmade ceramics, giving visitors the opportunity to experience and purchase beautiful pottery directly from local artists.</i>	The Potters' Studio	District 1	\$ 7,000	370	\$ -
East Bay Open Studios - Berkeley	<i>East Bay Open Studios is a free community event where artists open their studios to the public, celebrating Berkeley arts.</i>	Oakland Art Murmur Inc	All Districts	\$ 7,000	368	\$ -
Closer to the Ground: A Tribute to Berkeley's Joy of Cooking	<i>A live music mini-festival paying tribute to legacy Berkeley band, Joy of Cooking.</i>	Pretty Beat	District 1	\$ 7,000	368	\$ -
Community Art and Culture Festival	<i>Community arts festival featuring local visual artists, African drumming and dance, poetry, youth performances, and cultural education celebrating Berkeley creativity.</i>	Community Services United	District 3	\$ 7,000	368	\$ -
North Shattuck Block Party	<i>An outdoor celebration of arts and community in Berkeley - wine, local musicians, family friendly activities, and sustainability activations.</i>	North Shattuck Association	District 5	\$ 7,000	368	\$ -
San Lázaro-Babalúayé Festival with Raíces en Movimiento (Roots in Motion)	<i>It will be dedicated to blending folkloric & contemporary with live music, drumming, cultural performances of Cuban & Haitian tradition.</i>	Herencia Guantanamera (HG)	District 1	\$ 7,000	366	\$ -
Music in the Elmwood Festival	<i>A free one-day music festival with two stages, a community stage, artisan booths, food, and free children's activities.</i>	The Elmwood Business Association	District 8	\$ 7,000	364	\$ -
Berkeley Old Time Music Convention	<i>Five days featuring diverse styles of old-time music: concerts, dances, workshops, family activities, hosted jamming; national, regional and local musicians.</i>	Berkeley Old Time Music Convention	District 1 District 3 District 4 District 5	\$ 7,000	363	\$ -
Telegraph Second Sundays	<i>Second Sundays showcases the unfiltered spirit of Berkeley. It attract visitors with free activities and direct attention to local businesses.</i>	Telegraph Business Improvement District	District 7	\$ 7,000	360	\$ -

Community Festivals Grants Program | 58 Eligible Applications | \$142,484.00 Grant Funds Available

Festival Title	Brief summary of festival activities:	Applicant	District	Request Amount	Score	RECOMMENDED
Persian New Year Festival-Chaharshanbeh Suri	<i>Bonfire jumping, Persian music and dancing, traditional foods, crafts, children's activities, and a Haft-Seen display celebrating spring and Persian culture.</i>	Persian Center	District 4	\$ 7,000	358	\$ -
Voice of Roma 2027 Herdeljezi Festival	<i>Voice of Roma presents its annual spring renewal Herdeljezi festival of Romani music, dance, community, and culture.</i>	Voice of Roma	District 1	\$ 7,000	350	\$ -
Diamano Coura: Berkeley Dance, Drum, & Community Summer Festival	<i>Join Diamano Coura for a day joyful movement with West African rhythms for Berkeley's children, families, and community.</i>	Diamano Coura West African Dance Company	District 2	\$ 7,000	348	\$ -
Sacred Music Fellowship's Earth Day Concert and SingJam	<i>Celebrate Earth Day with a concert and music jam in a Berkeley park! Unite diverse communities through love of Earth.</i>	Sacred Music Fellowship	District 1	\$ 7,000	346	\$ -
19th Annual BCM Horror Film Fest-Evil	<i>Community horror film festival featuring independent films, filmmaker discussions, food trucks, and Halloween-themed outdoor activities in downtown Berkeley's Civic Center.</i>	Berkeley Community Media	District 4	\$ 7,000	344	\$ -
Legados IV: Vozes que Encantam	<i>Musical concert, Dinner concert, and three more days of music, movement, and health based workshops and conversations in community</i>	The Capoeira Arts Foundation, INC (CAF)	District 1 District 2 District 4	\$ 7,000	341	\$ -
International Dance and Culture Showcase	<i>In October 2026, the Center for International Dance will present a day of Polynesian, Indian, Brazilian, and Zimbabwean performance traditions.</i>	Mahea Uchiyama Center for International Dance	District 4	\$ 7,000	341	\$ -
Art Day at The Berkeley School	<i>Community arts festival featuring drop-in workshops led by local artists, interactive activities for all ages, and live music performances.</i>	The Berkeley School	District 1	\$ 7,000	333	\$ -
Together We Heal: A community festival celebrating immigrant and refugee art & creative expression	<i>Free, community-centered event featuring interactive art and creative performances by Bay Area Southeast Asian & Central American refugees and immigrants.</i>	REALSOUL x SEAs RISE	District 3	\$ 7,000	328	\$ -
Bay Area Independent Chinese Dancers Spring Show 2027	<i>Our annual spring show will be a series of traditional, contemporary/fusion Chinese dances, moderated/introduced by local Bay Area musical storytellers.</i>	Bay Area Independent Chinese Dancers	District 8	\$ 7,000	301	\$ -
Junior Bach Festival	<i>The goal of the Junior Bach Festival is to enrich the lives of young people by sponsoring annual concerts series</i>	JUNIOR BACH FESTIVAL ASSOCIATION, INC.	District 5 District 7	\$ 7,000	290	\$ -
Berkeleys Emerging Playwright ShowcaseThe B.E.P.S Theater Festival	<i>The festival requires recruitment both online and boots on the ground. We must maintain diverse approaches to reach playwrights.</i>	Black Repertory Group	District 3	\$ 7,000	191	\$ -

\$142,484

General Operating Support Grants Program Awardees \$405,000 Grant Funds Available			
Applicant Organization	Award Amount (FY 26)	10% reduction	10% reduction (Scenario B)
Actors Ensemble	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714
Alternative Music Foundation	\$ 3,500	\$ 3,150	\$ 3,264
Anatolian Arts Institute	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714
Ashkenaz Music & Dance Community Center	\$ 8,000	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,314
AXIS Dance Company	\$ 10,000	\$ 9,000	\$ 9,114
BELLA MUSICA INC	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,800	\$ 1,914
Berkeley Art Center Association	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714
Berkeley Capoeira Collective Incorporated	\$ 3,914	\$ 3,523	\$ 3,636
Berkeley Chamber Performances	\$ 3,000	\$ 2,700	\$ 2,814
Berkeley Choro Ensemble	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714
Berkeley Commonplace	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714
Berkeley Community Chorus & Orchestra	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714
Berkeley Community Media (BCM)	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714
BERKELEY JUNETEENTH ASSOCIATION, INC	\$ 8,000	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,314
Berkeley Playhouse, Inc.	\$ 8,000	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,314
Berkeley Poetry Festival	\$ 10,000	\$ 9,000	\$ 9,114
Berkeley Repertory Theatre	\$ 8,000	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,314
Berkeley Society for the Preservation of Traditional Music	\$ 8,000	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,314
Berkeley Symphony Orchestra	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714
Black Repertory Group	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714
BrasArte the Damasceno Brazilian Cultural Exchange	\$ 9,000	\$ 8,100	\$ 8,214
California Institute for Community, Art & Nature	\$ 10,000	\$ 9,000	\$ 9,114
California Jazz Conservatory	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714
Capoeira Arts Foundation (CAF)	\$ 9,000	\$ 8,100	\$ 8,214
Cazadero Performing Arts Camp	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,240	\$ 3,354
Central Works	\$ 8,000	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,314
Danse Lumière	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714
David Brower Center	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714
Four Seasons Arts, Inc.	\$ 10,000	\$ 9,000	\$ 9,114
Gamelan Sekar Jaya	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714

General Operating Support Grants Program Awardees \$405,000 Grant Funds Available			
Applicant Organization	Award Amount (FY 26)	10% reduction	10% reduction (Scenario B)
Girls Garage	\$ 10,000	\$ 9,000	\$ 9,114
Heyday	\$ 8,000	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,314
Holistic Honu Wellness Center	\$ 10,000	\$ 9,000	\$ 9,114
Inferno Theatre	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714
JUNTOS Collective, Inc.	\$ 8,000	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,314
Kairos Music Academy	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714
Kala Art Institute	\$ 9,000	\$ 8,100	\$ 8,214
Korsa Musical Theater (formerly Youth Musical Theater Co)	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714
La Peña Community Chorus	\$ 8,000	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,314
La Peña Cultural Center, Inc.	\$ 10,000	\$ 9,000	\$ 9,114
Lark Traditional Arts	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714
Left Margin LIT	\$ 8,000	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,314
Luna Kids Dance, Inc. dba Luna Dance and Creativity	\$ 9,000	\$ 8,100	\$ 8,214
Makers Paradise	\$ 3,500	\$ 3,150	\$ 3,264
MBIRA	\$ 8,000	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,314
New Apollo Youth Symphony Orchestra Inc	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714
pateldanceworks	\$ 8,000	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,314
Play Cafe, Inc.	\$ 8,000	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,314
PlayGround	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714
Poetry Flash	\$ 9,000	\$ 8,100	\$ 8,214
Sacred & Profane Chamber Chorus	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714
Sacred Music Fellowship	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714
Sage and Needles	\$ 8,000	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,314
School of The Getdown	\$ 10,000	\$ 9,000	\$ 9,114
Sense Object	\$ 9,000	\$ 8,100	\$ 8,214
Shawl-Anderson Dance Center	\$ 7,200	\$ 6,480	\$ 6,594
Shotgun Players	\$ 9,000	\$ 8,100	\$ 8,214
The Berkeley FILM Foundation	\$ 9,000	\$ 8,100	\$ 8,214
The CODEX Foundation	\$ 8,000	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,314
The Mahea Uchiyama Center for International Dance (MUCI)	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714

General Operating Support Grants Program Awardees \$405,000 Grant Funds Available			
Applicant Organization	Award Amount (FY 26)	10% reduction	10% reduction (Scenario B)
The Potters' Studio	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714
The Regents of the University of California at Berkeley / Ca	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714
The San Francisco Early Music Society	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714
Theatre Lunatico	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714
Transit Books	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714
UC Alumni Chorus	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714
Vital Arts	\$ 9,000	\$ 8,100	
West Edge Opera	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714
Wild Projects	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714
Women Eco Artists Dialog	\$ 10,000	\$ 9,000	\$ 9,114
Young People's Symphony Orchestra Association (YPSO)	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,600	\$ 3,714
Youth Spirit Artworks	\$ 8,000	\$ 7,200	\$ 7,314
	\$ 449,714	\$ 404,743	\$ 404,728

PROPOSAL

City of Berkeley Youth Arts Awards Program

A Citywide Recognition Program for Young Artists in Grades 6 through 12

Peter Montgomery, Chair, Civic Arts Commission

Executive Summary

This proposal recommends that the City of Berkeley establish an annual Youth Arts Awards Program to recognize outstanding artistic achievement among the city's young people. Each year, the program would present a Gold, Silver, and Bronze award in each of three artistic groupings, two-dimensional fine arts, three-dimensional fine arts, and performance, within each of two age divisions, for a total of eighteen awards annually. The program would serve youth ages roughly 11 through 18. Unlike school-based arts recognitions, it would be open to all Berkeley youth in the eligible age range, regardless of where or whether they attend school. Middle and high school students enrolled in the Berkeley Unified School District (BUSD), independent and parochial schools, homeschool programs, and youth who are unenrolled or between school placements would all be eligible to enter on equal footing.

The program is designed to be low-cost, high-visibility, and easy to administer within existing city and community infrastructure, while sending a clear civic message: that Berkeley values the creative contributions of all its young residents, not only those enrolled in a particular school system.

Program Rationale

Municipal youth recognition programs are frequently tied to a single school district, which inadvertently excludes a meaningful share of the city's youth population, including students at private and parochial schools, homeschooled students, students in independent study or online programs, and youth who are temporarily unenrolled. Berkeley is home to a diverse mix of educational settings outside BUSD, and a citywide award program is one of the few civic mechanisms that can reach all of these young people equally.

An arts-focused award also fills a recognition gap: academic and athletic achievement are frequently celebrated through school-based honors, but creative and artistic achievement often receives comparatively little civic recognition, particularly for students outside the traditional school system. A city-sponsored award signals that the City itself, not just a school, sees and values this work.

Program Structure

Award Groupings, Tiers, and Age Divisions

Within each of the two age divisions, awards would be organized into three primary artistic groupings, each carrying its own Gold, Silver, and Bronze recipient:

- Two-Dimensional Fine Arts: Painting, drawing, photography, printmaking, and related flat-format work
- Three-Dimensional Fine Arts: Sculpture, ceramics, and other dimensional or object-based work
- Traditional Cultural Arts: Indigenous and culturally specific practices, folk arts, craft traditions, social-practice art, community-based work, and other forms grounded in cultural knowledge or collective participation.

This yields nine awards per age division (three groupings × three tiers) and eighteen awards program-wide each year, as shown below:

Middle School Division (Grades 6–8)	Gold	Silver	Bronze
Two-Dimensional Fine Arts	1 award	1 award	1 award
Three-Dimensional Fine Arts	1 award	1 award	1 award
Traditional Cultural Arts	1 award	1 award	1 award

High School Division (Grades 9–12)	Gold	Silver	Bronze
Two-Dimensional Fine Arts	1 award	1 award	1 award
Three-Dimensional Fine Arts	1 award	1 award	1 award
Traditional Cultural Arts	1 award	1 award	1 award

Organizing awards around these three groupings, rather than a single undifferentiated “arts” category, ensures that a young sculptor is not competing directly against a young painter or a young dancer, whose work cannot be fairly judged by a common yardstick. It also gives the program a natural structure for recruiting jurors with matching expertise, discussed below.

The Middle School Division would encompass ages roughly corresponding to sixth through eighth grade, and the High School Division would encompass ages roughly corresponding to ninth through twelfth grade. Because eligibility is age-based rather than grade-based, the program can accommodate homeschooled entrants and others whose grade level may not map neatly onto a conventional school calendar; a simple age cutoff (for example, based on age as of a fixed date each program year) is recommended as the operative standard, with grade level offered only as a descriptive reference point.

To be clear, the High School Division extends through twelfth grade. Graduating seniors are eligible to enter and compete for the Gold, Silver, and Bronze awards in their division on the same terms as ninth, tenth, and eleventh graders.

Eligibility

To fulfill the program's civic purpose of reaching all Berkeley youth, eligibility would extend to any young person within the applicable age range who:

- Resides within the City of Berkeley, or
- Is enrolled at a school (public, private, parochial, or charter) located within the City of Berkeley,
- regardless of school district enrollment, including students in BUSD, independent and parochial schools, homeschool or independent study programs, and youth who are currently unenrolled.

A residency-or-enrollment standard (rather than a BUSD-enrollment standard) ensures that a Berkeley resident attending school in another city, and a non-resident student attending a Berkeley private school, are both eligible, closing the two gaps a single-criterion rule would otherwise leave open. The City may choose to tighten or loosen this definition, but some form of dual residency-or-enrollment standard is recommended so that no meaningful group of Berkeley youth is inadvertently excluded.

Submission Format by Grouping

Submission mechanics would necessarily differ by grouping. Two- and three-dimensional fine arts entries would be submitted as physical work (or high-resolution photographs of physical work, where transport is impractical) for in-person or photographic review. Performance entries would be submitted as recorded video, given the impracticality of live adjudication for a citywide open-entry program; the City may wish to consider a live component (such as a finalists' showcase) in later program years once submission volume is established.

Creative writing and digital/film media are not treated as standalone groupings in this proposal, since the three groupings above were specified as the program's primary structure. The City may consider adding additional groupings in future years, following the same Gold/Silver/Bronze, two-division pattern, once the program is established and administrative capacity allows.

Program Administration

Jury Structure

Each of the two age divisions (Middle School and High School) would be served by its own dedicated panel of jurors, rather than a single jury covering both. This allows jurors to calibrate their expectations to the developmental stage of the entrants they are reviewing, and avoids the fairness problems that arise when a fourteen-year-old's work is judged against a seventeen-year-old's by the same undifferentiated standard.

Within each divisional jury, membership would be drawn to provide expertise spanning both fine arts practice and education, specifically:

- Practicing artists or arts professionals with direct experience in one or more of the three groupings (two-dimensional fine arts, three-dimensional fine arts, and performance), to evaluate technical and creative merit.
- Arts educators or youth education professionals, to ensure entries are evaluated with an appropriate understanding of age-appropriate skill development, rather than solely against adult professional standards.

A recommended starting point is a jury of four to six members per division, composed so that each of the three groupings has at least one juror with directly relevant expertise available to weigh in, supplemented by one or two members with a general arts-education background who can weigh in across all three groupings. The same juror may serve on both divisional juries if their expertise and availability allow, though the City may prefer to rotate membership to broaden community involvement over time.

To preserve fairness and public confidence, jurors should: review entries anonymized by number rather than name where practicable; disclose and recuse themselves from any entry involving a personal or professional connection to the entrant; and score against a written rubric established before the submission window opens, rather than through open-ended discussion alone. Jury service is proposed as an unpaid, volunteer civic role (consistent with keeping the program's budget minimal) with jurors recommended for appointment through the Civic Arts Commission, and confirmed by whatever body the City deems appropriate (Commission vote, Council liaison sign-off, or similar).

Role of the Berkeley Civic Arts Commission

This proposal recommends that the Berkeley Civic Arts Commission serve as the program's primary administrative and civic home, with responsibility for three core functions:

Parenthetical comments: The Civic Arts Commission is an advisory public body, not an independently staffed nonprofit or operating department. Commissioners can recommend policy, provide subject-matter expertise, participate in defined selection processes, and support outreach, but the full Commission can't necessarily manage it all because of the brown act :(

A majority of commissioners could not informally plan or administer the program outside properly noticed meetings, and any standing subcommittee may have its own public-meeting obligations.

The Commission: advises on program design, recommends jurors or panelists, participates in evaluation, and reviews annual outcomes.

Civic Arts staff: administer City-approved processes within available staffing and budget. (Not sure about this. Do not want to burden an already potentially overworked staff)

- Organizing the jury: Recruiting, vetting, and convening the Middle School and High School juries described above, and maintaining the judging rubric from year to year.
- Organizing submissions: Managing the open call for entries, eligibility verification, intake logistics for physical and recorded work, and outreach to schools and community organizations to ensure broad awareness across BUSD, private and parochial schools, homeschool associations, and unaffiliated youth.
- Organizing the awards event: Planning and hosting the annual gala or awards presentation at which the eighteen winners are publicly recognized, alongside any accompanying exhibition of finalist work.

Housing these three functions within the Commission gives the program a natural, ongoing civic sponsor with existing ties to Berkeley's arts community, rather than requiring the City to build new administrative infrastructure from scratch. City staff support would still be useful for logistics such as venue booking, insurance, and promotional coordination, but the Commission would hold overall programmatic ownership and continuity from year to year.

Recognition and Ceremony

Winners would be honored at a public awards gala organized by the Civic Arts Commission. Two venue directions are worth exploring in particular:

- A vacant or underused retail space in downtown Berkeley, temporarily activated for the event. This has the added benefit of bringing visible civic life and foot traffic to the city center, and may be available through a short-term community-use or pop-up arrangement.
- The Berkeley Art Center in North Berkeley, an established arts venue already aligned with the program's mission, which could offer a more turnkey venue solution with existing gallery infrastructure suited to displaying finalist work.

Whichever venue is chosen, the gala should be planned as a genuine public event: one that press outlets can cover, and that parents, mentors, teachers, and civic leaders are invited to attend alongside the young award recipients. Bringing these groups together in one room, honorees, families, members of the arts community, and city officials, is itself part of the program's value: it is a bonding experience for the youth being honored and for the broader community of people invested in their development, and it gives the City a visible, positive, low-cost civic moment each year.

A companion exhibition displaying finalist and winning work: Physical for the two- and three-dimensional groupings, and a recorded or live showcase for performance, would extend the program's visibility and give all entrants, not only winners, a form of public recognition.

Annual Program Timeline

Period	Activity
Late Summer	Program announcement, promotional outreach to BUSD, private and parochial schools, homeschool associations, and youth-serving community organizations.
Fall	An open submission window. Entrants register and submit work along with a signed eligibility and consent form.
Early Winter	Submissions close. Panel review and judging take place.
Winter	Winners notified privately, followed by a public awards ceremony and exhibition of finalist work.

Following Year	Cycle repeats; program evaluation and adjustments incorporated for the next cohort.
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Budget Considerations

Because juries are proposed as unpaid volunteer positions, the largest discretionary line items are the gala itself and program materials. Core costs to anticipate include: promotional outreach materials, awards or certificates for eighteen annual winners, venue costs for a public gala (which may be reduced or waived if a downtown retail space is secured through a short-term community-use arrangement, or if the Berkeley Art Center offers in-kind or reduced-rate use), light refreshments, and any exhibition or printing costs associated with displaying finalist work across all three groupings. Because the program does not require new facilities, ongoing staff, or paid jurors, it is well suited to a modest annual line-item budget or a City arts grant administered through the Civic Arts Commission, and could also attract sponsorship from local businesses or a Friends-of-the-Library-style nonprofit partner interested in youth arts.

Reasons for the Program

At its core, this program is motivated by a desire to put the City's civic weight behind its youth, particularly in the arts, an area where Berkeley's young people are rarely recognized by name at the municipal level. Berkeley already has a strong civic identity as a city that values arts and culture; extending that identity explicitly to its youngest residents, in a way that reaches beyond any single school system, reinforces that every young person in the city, however and wherever they are educated, is seen as part of Berkeley's creative community and part of the broader civic life of the city and society around them.

As a reference, the Berkeley arts and culture plan echo and reinforce these motivations (see page 47):

<https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2019-09-17%20WS%20Item%2001%20City%20of%20Berkeley%20Arts.pdf>

The reward this program offers is deliberately non-monetary. What it offers instead is recognition: recognition among a young person's peer group, recognition within the arts community, and recognition from the City itself. For a young person, being publicly named as a Gold, Silver, or Bronze recipient by their own city carries a form of validation that a cash prize does not. It tells them that their work, and their effort, was seen and valued by the place they live.

A specific and practical benefit of this recognition is the award as document of achievement. A civic arts award of this kind gives Berkeley's high schoolers something distinctive and credible to point to, in a landscape where many other extracurricular honors are less clearly defined or less independently verified.

Administrative Philosophy

This proposal is deliberately structured to minimize the ongoing staff-hour burden on the City. The program is designed so that its three recurring functions, organizing the jury, organizing submissions, and organizing the awards event, can be carried out largely by the Civic Arts Commission and volunteer community members, with City staff involvement limited to light coordination (venue logistics, insurance, and promotional support) rather than day-to-day program management. Juries are proposed as unpaid, volunteer positions, drawing on community members' existing goodwill toward youth and the arts, which both keeps the program's budget minimal and reinforces its character as a genuine civic, rather than purely administrative, undertaking.

Anticipated Civic Benefits

- Extends municipal recognition to youth outside the BUSD system, reinforcing the City's commitment to all its young residents.
- Strengthens the visibility of the arts as a valued civic priority alongside academics and athletics.

- Gives high school entrants a credible, well-documented civic honor to include in future endeavors, a concrete and highly sought-after form of value for students and families.
- Creates a low-cost, high-visibility annual civic tradition that can grow over time, achievable with minimal City staff time given its volunteer jury structure and Commission-led administration.
- Builds a public record of youth artistic talent that can be referenced by families, schools, and local media.

Recommendation

The City Council is encouraged to approve the establishment of a Youth Arts Awards Program along the lines described above, direct staff to identify an appropriate administrative home and modest first-year budget, and authorize outreach to BUSD, private and parochial schools, and homeschool associations to ensure the broadest possible awareness of the program among eligible youth ahead of its first submission cycle.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Montgomery

Chair, Berkeley Civic Arts Commission



Civic Arts Division

To: Civic Arts Commission, Public Art Subcommittee

From: Carianna Arredondo, Assistant to the City Manager, Civic Arts Division

Date: July 1, 2026

Subject: Background Memo | Public Art on Private Development Nexus Study

Purpose

This memo provides high-level background on the City's **Public Art on Private Development Requirement** and the purpose of the upcoming nexus study. The nexus study is a necessary step before the City can responsibly evaluate potential updates to the ordinance.

Background

The City's **Public Art on Private Development Requirement** was established by ordinance in **2017** and is codified in **Berkeley Municipal Code Chapter 23.316**¹. The requirement was created to ensure that qualifying private development contributes to Berkeley's public arts realm, cultural identity, and long-term public art infrastructure.

At a high level, the ordinance requires eligible private development projects to either:

- **Provide on-site publicly accessible art** valued at **1.75% of construction cost**;
- **Pay an in-lieu fee** equal to **0.80% of construction cost**; or
- Use a combination of on-site art and an in-lieu fee when the on-site art value is less than the full requirement.

The program generally applies to larger private development projects, including new multifamily residential projects, new commercial and industrial structures, and large building additions. Certain project types, including qualifying affordable housing, religious assembly, nonprofit arts/cultural uses, and transitional housing, are exempt. See more details here:

¹ <https://berkeley.municipal.codes/BMC/23.316>

<https://berkeleyca.gov/construction-development/permits-design-parameters/design-parameters/public-art-private-development>

Since the ordinance was established, the City's development environment has changed. State housing laws, Density Bonus provisions, and local zoning regulations have evolved, and staff and the Civic Arts Commission have identified areas where the current ordinance may need clarification or modernization.

The Civic Arts Commission previously identified several policy questions for future review², including:

- **Clarifying applicability** where certain project types may not be clearly addressed in the current ordinance;
- **Aligning thresholds** with other zoning and development fee methodologies;
- **Evaluating whether additional compliance options** should be considered, such as arts/cultural space or other public-facing cultural infrastructure;
- **Understanding the impact of Density Bonus concessions** on the City's ability to collect fees or secure on-site public art;
- **Ensuring the program continues to support public art acquisition, installation, administration, maintenance, and conservation.**

What the Nexus Study Is Intended to Support

The nexus study, led by Willdan Financial Services³ and project managed by the City of Berkeley's Planning Department, will provide the legal, financial, and policy foundation needed to evaluate potential updates to the Public Art on Private Development Requirement.

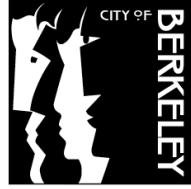
Specifically, the study is intended to help the City:

- **Confirm the relationship between new development and public art needs;**
- **Evaluate whether the current fee structure remains appropriate;**
- **Identify a range of fee options;**
- **Compare Berkeley's approach with similar fees in neighboring jurisdictions;**
- **Support future ordinance amendments, if pursued;**
- **Help ensure continued compliance with State law requirements for development impact fees.**

² <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2024-09-24%20Item%2007%20Civic%20Arts%20Commission%20Fund%20Request.pdf>

³ <https://berkeleyca.gov/sites/default/files/2026-06/2026-07-07%20Item%2003%20Contract%20Willdan%20Financial%20Services.pdf>

The July 7, 2026 Council item proposes a contract with **Willdan Financial Services** to update five City nexus studies, including the Public Art on Private Development nexus study. The scope includes background research, review of existing fee justifications, comparison to neighboring jurisdictions, updated nexus analysis, recommended fee ranges, and a final report.



**DRAFT MINUTES
CIVIC ARTS COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, June 24, 2026
6:00 PM**

Meeting Location: Tarea Hall Pittman South Branch Library
1901 Russell St, Berkeley, CA 94703

Commission Members:

Chair Montgomery, Vice Chair Bachrach, Commissioner Woo, Commissioner Vaughn Scott,
Commissioner Bullwinkel, Commissioner Pineda, Commissioner Blecher,
Commissioner Truc-Dao Kramer, Commissioner Dutta- Choudhury

Call to Order: 6:07 PM

Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Bachrach, Blecher, Bullwinkel, Dutta-Choudhury, Montgomery, Truc-Dao Kramer, Woo

Commissioners Absent: Pineda (LoA), Scott

Staff Present: Carianna Arredondo, Assistant to the City Manager, Mark Salinas, Public Art Program Lead, Hilary Amnah, Grants Program Lead, David White, Deputy City Manager

General Public Present: 4

Land Acknowledgement, led by Commissioner Kramer

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Matters: 1

Chairperson's Report, discussed city budget process.

Commission Action Items

1. Action Item: Cube Space Exhibition

M/S/C (Bullwinkel/ Dutta-Choudhury) to approve the Approve Abiam Alvarez for the July 27 to October 16, 2026 Cube Space Exhibition.

Vote: Ayes — Bachrach, Blecher, Bullwinkel, Dutta-Choudhury, Kramer, Montgomery, Woo; Nays — None; Abstain — None; Absent — Pineda (LoA), Scott.

Public Comment: 1

2. Action: Civic Arts Commission 2026 Meeting Schedule

M/S/C (Blecher/Kramer) move to approve revisions to the remaining 2026 Civic Arts Commission meeting schedule as recommended by staff, while retaining the October 28, 2026 date.

Vote: Ayes: — Bachrach, Blecher, Bullwinkel, Dutta-Choudhury, Kramer, Montgomery, Woo; Nays — None; Abstain — None; Absent — Pineda (LoA), Scott.

Public Comment: 0

3. Action: Civic Arts Commission FY 27 Work Plan

M/S/C (Montgomery/ Woo) to approve the Civic Arts Commission FY27 Work Plan

Vote: Ayes — Bachrach, Blecher, Bullwinkel, Dutta-Choudhury, Kramer, Montgomery, Woo; Nays — None; Abstain — None; Absent — Pineda (LoA), Scott.

Public Comment: 0

4. Action: Civic Arts Commission Memo FY27 – FY28 Civic Arts Budget Recommendations

M/S/C (Bullwinkel/Blecher) to not transmit memo to City Council and to direct the Grants Subcommittee to rework materials for use as part of education campaign.

Vote: Ayes — Bachrach, Blecher, Bullwinkel, Dutta-Choudhury, Kramer, Montgomery, Woo; Nays — None; Abstain — None; Absent — Pineda (LoA), Scott.

Public Comment: 1

Presentations

5. Presentation Items Held:

5a - 5b: FY 2026 and FY 2027 Civic Arts Budget Staffing and Program Information

Public Comment: 0

Information Items and Updates

6. Grants, Public Art and Civic Arts Programs Updates Received:

- a) Grants Program Updates, Hilary Amnah
- b) Public Art Program Updates, Mark Salinas
- c) Civic Arts Program Updates, Carianna Arredondo

Committee Updates

7. Grants, Public Art, and Policy Subcommittee Updates Received:

- a) Grants – Meeting next month to go over funding scenarios and awarding.
- b) Public Art –Workplan complete, discussed current and upcoming Cube Space Exhibits.
- c) Policy Subcommittee – Workplan complete.
- d) Representative on Design Review Committee – Discussed 2128 Oxford Street “Hub at Berkeley” Development.

Items for Future Agendas

These items are not scheduled for discussion or action at this meeting. The Commission may schedule these items to the Action Calendar of a future Commission meeting.

- None

Minutes for Approval

Draft minutes for the Commissions consideration and approval.

8. Minutes of May 20, 2026

M/S/C (Montgomery/ Bullwinkel) to approve Draft Minutes of May 20, 2026, Meeting

Vote: Ayes — Bachrach, Blecher, Bullwinkel, Dutta-Choudhury, Kramer, Montgomery, Woo; Nays — None; Abstain — None; Absent — Pineda (LoA), Scott.

Public Comment: 0

Commissioner Announcements

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:19 PM by unanimous consent.

Vote: Ayes — Bachrach, Blecher, Bullwinkel, Dutta-Choudhury, Kramer, Montgomery, Woo; Nays — None; Abstain — None; Absent — Pineda (LoA), Scott.

Staff Contact:

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