

# Agenda Report

DATE: JULY 25, 2005  
TO: CITY COUNCIL  
FROM: CYNTHIA J. KURTZ, CITY MANAGER  
SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF *CULTURAL NEXUS: AN ACTION PLAN FOR THE CULTURAL SECTOR IN PASADENA*

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that City Council:

- 1) Approve the draft Cultural Nexus Plan (Attachment A),
- 2) Approve the first year of the Implementation Plan (Attachment B),
- 3) Appropriate \$80,000 from the unappropriated General Fund balance to account #8114.101.442000 to fund a contract for services to implement the first year Implementation Plan (Attachment B), and
- 4) Direct the City Attorney to prepare an ordinance within 60 days amending the Pasadena Municipal Code, changing the name of the Arts Commission to Arts & Culture Commission.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM COMMISSIONS:**

On June 8, the Arts Commission unanimously approved the draft Cultural Nexus Plan for recommendation to City Council, and a recommendation to change the name of that body to Arts & Culture Commission. On July 11, the Commission approved the first year Implementation Plan and funding recommendation as above.

The draft Plan was presented to the following commissions and committees for review and comment: Design Commission, Community Development Committee, Library Commission, Northwest Commission, Recreation and Parks Commission and Planning Commission. Although none of the commissions and committees took formal action, each commission and committee commented favorably.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Cultural Nexus is the City's first comprehensive arts and culture plan. The Plan proposes a new Element to the Comprehensive General Plan that will advance the arts and culture during the next decade. Staff will draft that element based on the policy recommendations set forth in Cultural Nexus, for review and recommendation to City Council by Arts Commission and Planning Commission. Cultural Nexus articulates four overarching community principles for arts and culture and recommends nine cultural policies that establish a flexible framework for implementation. The policies are supplemented by potential implementation tasks or initiatives, community partners and stakeholders, and a 5-year implementation timeline. From the

beginning of the planning process, the intent was to develop a plan that may be implemented through community partnerships.

The Cultural Nexus information is organized into two primary documents, the draft Cultural Nexus Plan (Attachment A), and the Cultural Nexus "Attachments" (Attachment C). In addition, the Implementation Plan for years one and two is attached (Attachment B). Year one of the Implementation Plan is recommended for approval. The Plan is the policy document submitted herewith to City Council for review and approval. The "Attachments" (Attachment C) are intended as a guide or resource for implementation of the proposed policies, and are submitted for information only. They include potential implementation tasks, an implementation time line for the first five years of the ten-year plan, and supporting research information.

**BACKGROUND:**

Upon approval of Cultural Nexus, the arts and culture will be identified as one of the City's policy priorities, recognizing the arts and culture as a \$100+ million sector of the local economy and as a vital element in expanding and supporting other sectors - including tourism, education, recreation, public space and human services - as well as attracting technology-based, research-based and design-based corporations to Pasadena. Further, adoption of Cultural Nexus recognizes the arts and culture for their intrinsic value in creating neighborhood communities, forging intra-cultural dialogue, documenting history, promoting international relationships and reaffirming Pasadena's tradition as a center for innovation and creativity.

The adopted Plan will, for the first time, formally identify the community's collective priorities for support of the arts and culture, and identify the intersection between the priorities of this sector and others, thereby recognizing potential efficiencies and partnerships in leadership, funding, implementation and long-term stability.

**COMMISSION NAME CHANGE:**

During the community planning phase it was identified that the role of the Arts Commission has expanded since it was originally established primarily to provide oversight to the Public Art Program. It was also identified that the term "arts" does not encompass the ethnic and cultural arts, humanities and history – all identified as part of a community's cultural identity. Therefore, "Arts and Culture Commission" is recommended as more inclusive and reflective of that body's perview.

**IMPLEMENTATION OF YEAR ONE TASKS:**

During the first year of implementation a series of tasks will be completed that will develop infrastructure to support subsequent implementation of the Plan. The Cultural Nexus Trust will be created, designed to raise funds for implementation of Nexus and provide an additional funding source for the arts and culture beyond the life of Nexus. The Arts Commission will craft cultural equity standards. Current Arts & Culture Grants Program guidelines will be reviewed for compliance and revised to better reflect the recommendations and goals set forth by Nexus. At the recommendation of Nexus, a "vision" for Public Art in Pasadena will be established. The guidelines and procedures for the Private Development and CIP Public Art Programs will be reviewed and revised to reflect that new "vision".

Among the highest priorities established by the community during this planning process was arts education. This priority responds to a current need to address new state-wide arts education standards.

PUSD is currently in the third and final year of participating in a state-wide initiative to establish sequential, standards-based arts education in the classroom. In addition, the state has

mandated that within the coming few years, entrance standards for incoming students to the University of California and California State university systems will include high school-level art education courses. Pasadena is fortunate and unique among cities of its size to have the cultural resources within the community to deliver the services necessary to meet these new standards. However, it is necessary to provide training to staff at cultural institutions and artist service providers to prepare them in delivery of services within this new context.

Nexus proposes a series of tasks over a two-year period to provide training and development of on-going resources for in-school educators as well as arts and culture service providers. Those tasks include: 1) provide professional development training to teaching artists, arts administrators, volunteers and schoolroom teachers; 2) provide technical assistance to community arts education providers in standards-based arts education; 3) provide arts education information to a community arts and culture resource directory.

The series of tasks accomplishes a number of goals set forth in Nexus: 1) identify efficiencies in service delivery; 2) provide opportunities for local artists and arts providers to better integrate in the community, 3) develop new audiences.

In the spirit of community partnership, the contractor will design and deliver programming and training to all cultural institutions and teaching artists who elect to provide arts education services. The training will equip cultural institutions and artists to deliver on-going, sequential arts instruction to meet state standards. The training principles may be applied to arts instruction in other environments as well, including recreation, youth services, senior programming and adult instruction. With this training, cultural institutions can remain competitive among regional arts service providers in garnering service contracts. On-going partnerships may be developed or enhanced among arts service providers, educators and social services providers.

The contractor will also work closely with community organizations to conduct the research and create a plan for a web-based arts service directory, also a task set forth in Nexus for year two. Ultimately the directory is intended to be a resource for educators, working artists, cultural workers and cultural institutions. The directory was identified as a high priority during the community process by working artists, educators and cultural institutions.

Within the context of Cultural Nexus, "arts education" refers to standards-based, sequential arts education as identified by the state board of education. In addition, "arts education" refers to professional career development in the arts and culture and all facets of life-long learning in the arts and culture. A recent study published by RAND confirms that early exposure to the arts and culture develops life-long interest in the arts and culture. The report states that greater exposure will lead to adults who value the arts and culture more, purchase tickets, support museums, volunteer and eventually become a new generation of cultural leadership.

After completion of years one and two, the intent is that the community will be prepared to raise funds to support the remaining implementation of Nexus, cultural institutions and other arts service providers will more efficiently create, administrate and deliver arts and culture services, and a new vision will be established for the community's quickly developing public space collection of art. By funding the first year, the City is endorsing the plan and supporting infrastructure development so that the community can assume leadership in implementation of the remainder of the Plan.

The recommended \$80,000 funding is for a contract for services not to exceed one year. The scope of services for year one will include identifying funding for a second year. The Plan recommends that the work can be completed in two years.

**COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PROCESS:**

In August 2003 City Council approved a contract with Los Angeles-based Cultural+Planning Group to conduct a community-wide cultural planning process and draft a city-wide cultural plan. The contract was funded by the Cultural Trust Fund at the recommendation of Arts Commission.

An extensive community planning process was developed. Three town hall meetings were held, one at the Civic Auditorium, one at Robinson Park Center and one at Pasadena City College. Seven topic-specific workshops were conducted with subsequent focus groups. The meeting process resulted in more than 500 community participants in the process.

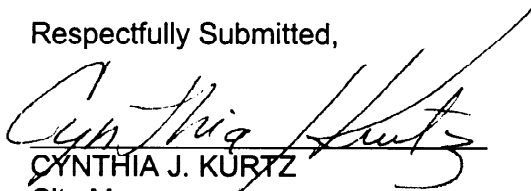
An initial mailing list of more than 5,000 community members was created, comprised of board leadership, volunteers and staff at cultural institutions, local developers, City commission members, hoteliers and other travel industry professionals, educators and education leadership, neighborhood association leadership, artists, social service providers and ecumenical leadership.

Direct mail was distributed to the entire mailing list. In addition, flyers were distributed through community centers, libraries, arts and culture institutions, colleges and universities, and through PUSD. An e-mail address was created for members and recommendations from community members and a webpage was created on the City's website.


**FISCAL IMPACT:**

Approval of the policy document and proposed name change has no fiscal impact. Approval of the contract for services will impact the unappropriated General Fund by \$80,000. Second year funding will be identified as part of the scope of services in year one.

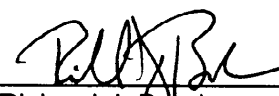
Respectfully Submitted,

  
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