



County of San Mateo

Inter-Departmental Correspondence

Department: BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
DISTRICT 2
File #: 22-601

Board Meeting Date: 8/2/2022

Special Notice / Hearing: None
Vote Required: Majority

To: Honorable Board of Supervisors
From: Supervisor Carole Groom, District 2
Supervisor Warren Slocum, District 4
Subject: Establishment of the Office of Arts and Culture

RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt a resolution authorizing and directing the County Executive, or designee(s), to take all steps necessary to establish an Office of Arts and Culture within the County Executive's Office (CEO).

BACKGROUND:

On June 1, 2021, the CEO initiated an Office of Arts and Culture for the purpose of strengthening the organizational structure of the San Mateo County Arts Commission (SMCAC). The mission of the SMCAC is to champion the arts as essential for a healthy and vibrant community by shaping innovative cultural policies, creating inclusive and diverse programming, investing in the creative economy, and ensuring access to arts and culture for all. The ultimate goal of the SMCAC is to elevate the significance of arts and culture as a key driver in enhancing the quality of life, education, and economy in San Mateo County through coordination of art and culture-related comprehensive policies and programs.

The SMCAC is currently undergoing a dynamic transformation, including the recent hiring of the new Executive Director and the adoption and successful roll-out of several strategies identified in the SMCAC Strategic Cultural Plan, which was developed by the SMCAC and adopted by the Board of Supervisors on February 25, 2020. There is also an increasing recognition of the value and multi-faceted contributions of arts and culture in San Mateo County, with a growing focus on the arts as a means to support Board priorities in the areas of community wellness and vitality, equity, and education, and as an economic driver.

DISCUSSION:

Formally establishing an Office of Arts and Culture housed in the CEO, with appropriate staffing and clear organizational mandates, would position the Office of Arts and Culture to work as an essential point of contact within a creative economy comprised of other County departments, cities, the Office

of Education and school districts, non-profits, and private enterprises. With these collaborations, the Office of Arts and Culture would be able to expand how arts and culture can deliver innovative, vital programming and services to communities throughout San Mateo County, create pathways to equitable careers in the arts, and enhance and improve educational experiences and opportunities for our youth and young adults.

Thus, we recommend that the Board authorize and direct the County Executive, or designee(s), to take all steps necessary to formally establish the Office of Arts and Culture within the CEO, retaining the SMCAC as an advisory body to the Board housed within the Office of Arts and Culture. The County Executive, or designee(s), will work with the Office of Arts and Culture to develop a sustainable funding and staffing plan, which includes appropriate resources to support the Office of Arts and Culture and its workplan, and report back to the Board during the FY2023-24 budget development cycle on a recommended, sustainable budget for the Office of Arts and Culture.

The County Attorney has reviewed and approved the accompanying resolution as to form.

FISCAL IMPACT

The fiscal impacts associated with establishing an Office of Arts and Culture within the CEO is not currently known at this time. However, the County Executive, or designee(s), will report back to the Board during the FY2023-24 budget development cycle on a recommended, sustainable budget for the Office of Arts and Culture.