

CITY OF EL CERRITO

ARTS AND CULTURE MASTER PLAN

Adopted by the Arts and Culture Commission on November 18, 2013



Mission Statement of the Arts and Culture Commission:

Advise the City Council of the needs of the artistic and cultural community; encourage and promote arts programs and events that engage community members and local businesses to build a flourishing and vibrant arts and cultural environment; provide advice to artists and arts/cultural organizations by sponsoring forums, programs, and events; carry out the Arts in Public Places program, and upon request, advise the City with respect to possible sources of funding.

Purpose Statement for Arts and Culture Master Plan:

The purpose of this Master Plan is to shape a vision for arts and culture in the City of El Cerrito. The goals laid out here constitute the policy of the City of El Cerrito regarding the cultural life of the community. This policy will inform and guide decisions made within the City. It is the intention of the Arts and Culture Commission that this be reviewed and updated periodically, as necessary, to be a dynamic document.

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Background on the Commission

In 2002, a group of citizens calling themselves the El Cerrito Committee on Arts and Culture petitioned the El Cerrito City Council to establish an arts and culture commission. Their proposal included the idea of advising the Council on arts and culture within the City and collaboration with existing organizations within the community: “By establishing an art and culture commission the city of El Cerrito would be providing support and encouragement for the growth of all arts. We would be joining the greater Bay Area in dedicating our time and involvement to the promotion of arts, artists and varied arts programs that would enrich our community and enhance our city.” In 2003, the City Council created the Arts and Culture Commission (see next paragraph).

Legal Authority

El Cerrito’s Arts and Culture Commission was created in 2003 by Ordinance 2003-1 amending the El Cerrito Municipal Code (ECMC) Section 2.04.310. Through the establishment of this Commission, authority to create this Plan and other arts and cultural programs rests with the Arts and Culture Commission through the City Council, as well as recommendations for arts and cultural activities within the City.

In 2005, the City Council accepted the Arts and Culture Commission’s recommendation to pass and to create the Art in Public Places Program. Ordinance 2005-5 amending ECMC to include Chapter 13, Art in Public Places.

Goals

Based on the needs assessment and survey data, goals for Arts and Cultural development within the City of El Cerrito were developed with basic suggested actions and objectives for implementation.

Goal A: Increase access to public art in community

Suggested Arts and Culture Commission Actions:

- Develop and maintain a catalog of public art and existing facilities
- Support development of promotional materials highlighting points of interest in El Cerrito
- Explore and identify potential sites for public art
- Place visual art in public places throughout the community
- Promote and participate in Arts & Humanities Month during October of each year
- Partner with WCCUSD and the City's Recreation Department to promote and enhance arts and cultural programming
- Identify ways to utilize the arts to enhance existing City resources towards enriching the lives of all people in our community
- Prepare for Council's consideration a donation policy regarding monetary donations to the Public Art Fund (for either a certain purpose or unrestricted within the Fund) as well as art pieces
- Engage with community (i.e. conduct periodic surveys) to gauge evolving public opinion about public art and the Commission's work

Goal B: Support the local artistic and cultural community

Suggested Arts and Culture Commission Actions:

- Create (or partner) and utilize an artist's resource database and website
- Develop resources and provide support for local artists
- Outreach and connect to other arts organizations

- Encourage and support the development of facilities available for arts
- Identify ways that arts and culture can assist with the City’s efforts to promote economic development and create a strong identity for El Cerrito
- Identify funding sources for groups and individuals and disseminate to the community
- Support City beautification programs that “make El Cerrito a more pleasant environment to live, work, and play.”

Goal C: Promote excellence in the arts

Suggested Arts and Culture Commission Actions:

- Administer the Public Art Fund per the municipal code
- Utilize the Public Art Fund to commission professional quality art
- When considering acquisitions, strive for artworks of the highest quality
- Assist with grant funding, when available and where applicable
- Identify, work with, and partner with other government agencies and organizations to fulfill the goals of this master plan and on specific projects, i.e.: BART, WCCUSD, City of Richmond, Caltrans
- Encourage the City Council to build a community identity, both internal and external, that enriches the lives of residents

Goal D: Beautify El Cerrito

Suggested Arts and Culture Commission Actions:

- Support City beautification programs that “make El Cerrito a more pleasant environment to live, work, and play.”

Public Art Criteria and Guidelines

When the City Council accepted the Commission's recommendation and adopted the Art in Public Places ordinance in 2005, the Council found that:

- the experience of public art will make the City more livable and more visually stimulating and the public areas of buildings and their grounds more welcoming, and will create a deeper interaction with the places we visit and in which we work and live
- the incorporation of public art into private and public development will create a unique sense of community as well as public identity and enhance the visual and aesthetic quality of such developments
- the incorporation of public art and cultural programs in private and public development is in the public interest and enhances the general welfare of the persons living and working in the City of El Cerrito
- this program is consistent with the El Cerrito General Plan, which calls for implementing City beautification programs such as public art "...to make El Cerrito a more pleasant environment to live, work, and play."

In 2007, the Arts and Culture Commission researched and developed a set of criteria that would serve as standards for public art within the City of El Cerrito. The Arts and Culture Commission (Commission) shall consider this public art criteria as it pertains to projects by/for:

- Art in Public Places Program including 1% for Public Art projects
- Commission programs and events
- Accepting donations and loans of public art

These standards are:

1. **Quality:** The work should be of the highest standard with regard to workmanship, materials, assembly, content, placement, and appropriateness in theme and character as determined by the Commission
2. **Elements of Design:** consideration should take into account that public art, in addition to meeting aesthetic requirements, also may serve as focal points, modifiers, definers of public spaces and/or creates identity within the public realm

3. **Context/Style and Nature:** Works of art must be compatible in scale, material, form, and content with their surroundings. Consideration should be given to the architectural, historical, geographical, and social/cultural context of the site. Works may be participatory in nature
4. **Diversity:** The Arts in Public Places program should strive for diversity of style, scale, media, artists—including ethnicity and gender—and equitable distribution of artworks throughout the City
5. **Originality:** edition of one or part of a limited edition
6. **Conservation:** consideration should be given to structural and surface integrity, permanence, and protection against theft, vandalism, weathering, excessive maintenance, and accessibility requirements
7. **Public Safety and Accessibility:** Each work shall be evaluated to ensure that it does not present a hazard to public safety and complies with all applicable building codes and accessibility requirements
8. **Public Liability:** artworks should be examined for unsafe conditions or factors that may bear on public liability
9. **Location:** in addition to reviewing guidelines for public art criteria, the Commission should consider the criteria appropriate to the character of an area of the community in conjunction with other City departments

Desired Sites/Facilities

As the City embarks on development of area specific projects, opportunities for public art thrive. Public art can be included in a single development project or part of a larger planned development. Artworks should be located in an area which is accessible to the public and allow for unrestrained viewing from a variety of vantage points. Sites may include urban gateways, vistas, public spaces and plazas, or other interior or exterior publicly accessible places. The Arts and Culture Commission will periodically review the appropriate places in the City for public art, such as:

- Civic Center Area
- Ohlone Greenway
- San Pablo Avenue
- Parks

- Commercial Districts:
 - Stockton
 - Fairmount
 - Central
 - Cerrito Theater block
 - Moeser Lane between San Pablo Avenue and Navellier
 - Del Norte Area
 - Areas that may be rezoned in the future

Existing City facilities

The inclusion of public art into current City facilities is encouraged, including:

- Senior center
- Library
- Community center
- City Hall
- Recycling and Environmental Resource Center
- Other public buildings

Schools

Working with WCCUSD, private schools and the community, the Commission will encourage the inclusion of public art in El Cerrito schools.

Future Facilities

The Commission will encourage development of new facilities to foster arts and culture, either stand alone or incorporated into planned facilities. The most desirable facilities would be centrally located and/or publicly accessible, with easy access to transportation (such as BART):

- Art center
- Performance space

Financial Resources

Funding Sources

Art in Public Places Program 1% for Public Art Funds:

The Art in Public Places ordinance (adopted by the City Council on December 5, 2005) established the Art in Public Places Program. ECMC Section 13.50.030 details the Program’s contribution requirements, known as the “1% for Public Art”. In summary, private and municipal developments with development costs of two hundred fifty thousand dollars or more shall

devote an amount not less than one percent of such costs for acquisition and installation of public art on the development site, up to one hundred fifty thousand dollars. In lieu of acquisition and installation of public art on the development site, an owner or developer, at its discretion, may make an equal in-lieu contribution to the City's Public Art Fund.

The program applies to:

1. commercial, industrial and municipal projects, and residential projects that create five or more residential units
2. An existing building that is remodeled with a construction value equal to or more than fifty percent of the replacement cost of the building shall be subject to the requirements of this section

All nonprofit agency and non-municipal governmental development shall be exempt from the requirements of this section. The City Council may exempt any municipal building. Please refer to ECMC for exceptions and other details.

Donations:

1. Donations made to the Public Art Fund will be expended in accordance with ECMC Chapter 13, Art in Public Places
2. Donations received by the Commission that are not made into the Public Art Fund will go into the City's General Fund and may be expended by Commission using the same protocol as the Commissions' annual budget

Grants, Sponsors etc:

The Commission may apply for grants or solicit sponsorships to offset the cost of a project, program or event.

Acquisition:

1. Acquisitions should be directed toward artworks of the highest quality
2. Acquisition of artworks into the City's collection implies a commitment to the ongoing preservation, protection, maintenance, and display of the artworks for the public benefit
3. Acquisition of artworks whatever the source of funding should imply permanency within the City's collection so long as physical integrity,

identity and authenticity inherent in the work are retained and so long as the physical sites for the artworks remain intact

4. When possible, artworks should be acquired without restrictions as to future use and disposition

Asset Evaluation

1. The Commission considers arts and cultural assets that may include City-owned objects, locations, and structures
2. City arts and cultural assets will be inventoried and reviewed by the Commission on an annual basis to maintain and preserve the value of such assets
3. The Commission encourages/welcomes public participation in identifying the arts and cultural assets of El Cerrito

Note: It is outside the purview of this Commission to evaluate or give advice to either the Council or the public regarding identifying or preserving historical, architectural and cultural sites. However, the Commission encourages the City Council to identify and maintain a list of historical sites.

Decommissioning

The City of El Cerrito recognizes that the decommissioning of artwork must be handled with great care, as apprehension that public art might be disposed of to pay operating expenses or satisfy the trading desires of the City could discourage potential donors or artists. Moreover, haphazard decommissioning could cause irreparable harm to the City's collection. The City of El Cerrito has a fiduciary obligation to maintain the collection for the benefit of its citizens.

The Commission's intent in this regard is that future commissions keep in mind the long-term and historical value of assets instead of fashion, style or social convention. The City should hold the artwork as an asset, and balance what is kept as an asset as opposed to what is publicly displayed. If possible, the City should keep the work of art.

If artwork sustains damage, the Commission will endeavor to evaluate the possibility and cost of repairs and recommend restoration work if feasible. When artwork cannot be repaired or if repairs are deemed to be too costly,

the Commission shall first offer to sell the artwork back to the artist at a value to be determined at that time; if the artist refuses, it will be up to the Commission to decide the final disposition of the artwork.

Relocation of Artworks

The Commission recognizes the relocation of artwork may be necessary from time to time. This relocation will be done with consideration for artists' original intent for the work and the best interests of the community. All relocations of artworks will be reviewed and approved by the Commission.

Community Outreach/Recruitment

1. Community Interaction: In order to continue to reflect the community's desires, the following actions will be taken:

- Conduct and/or participate in periodic surveys to gauge evolving public opinion about public art and the Commission's work
- Conduct workshops when appropriate to facilitate greater community interaction
- The Commission through the City will take advantage of the most up to date technology to maintain a presence for communication and outreach, notify the public about upcoming events and programs, and for residents to communicate with the Commission. This includes, but is not limited to: electronic mail, website, and social media
- Coordinate and communicate with El Cerrito arts, arts organizations, schools, businesses, and other City departments, library, and senior center
- Establish a database to facilitate all of these resources and to support and expand volunteer opportunities and education within the City

2. Volunteers: The Commission recognizes the value of volunteers in the City and encourages residents and the public to get involved through:

- Development and maintenance a list of volunteer opportunities for arts and culture in El Cerrito

- Development and maintenance of a list of volunteers who are interested in supporting the arts in El Cerrito

3. Education: Educating the public about arts and culture in the City consists of notifying the public not only of the opportunities that exist in and around El Cerrito through the City’s efforts, but also fostering opportunities for residents and volunteers to further their own knowledge and appreciation for arts and culture.

- Educating the public about the Commission’s purpose:
 - Going out in the community—in person and through events and programs
 - Using all available tools to outreach to the community
- Educating the public about El Cerrito’s assets, facilities, activities, and programs:
 - Public relations
 - utilize local publications, website, and other media through press releases of arts and cultural events and resources within the City, and encourage links from other cities, organizations, and individuals
- Offering arts educational opportunities:
 - Explore funding, programs to be consistent with public art criteria section and organizations and individuals
 - Encourage and facilitate collaboration with and among local arts organizations
 - Identify and collect information about local organizations to further the economic and cultural development of El Cerrito
 - Develop atmosphere that is conducive to cooperation between/among these above described groups