

DATE ISSUED: April 25, 2001

REPORT NO. 01-080

ATTENTION: Natural Resources and Culture Committee
Docket of May 2, 2001

SUBJECT: City Arts Funding

SUMMARY

Issue - Should the City assist local arts organizations in increasing funding received from federal and state programs?

Manager's Recommendation - Approve the recommendation.

Other Recommendation - None.

Fiscal Impact - None.

BACKGROUND

An article in the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, "Missing Out On Arts Money", on February 11, 2001, revealed that funding for San Diego arts organizations ranks well below the normal average. The author of the article, David Washburn, reported that San Diego ranks twenty-seventh among fifty cities in per-capita National Endowment for the Arts funding. This article was timely on two counts. The first count being, Governor Gray Davis has included in his FY 2002 proposed budget \$20 million for a Cultural Infrastructure Development fund managed by the California Arts Council (CAC). This is in contrast to past funding practices of "member requests" from the legislature and will allow our local arts and cultural organizations to compete for state funding under a fair and equitable process. The Governor has also put an additional \$6 million dollars into the CAC budget which will support a number of programs including organizational support, arts education and public art.

The second item of note is that the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) staff is well aware of the lack of funding to San Diego arts organizations and had already scheduled a technical assistance workshop here on April 10, 2001. The workshop was well attended by over 40 representatives of local arts and culture organizations. President George Bush requested funding level of \$105,219 million represents an increase of approximately \$450,000 to the NEA. Though this is good news, allocations to the NEA were as high as \$176 million in FY 96.

DISCUSSION

Some strategies recommended for the Mayor and City Council to assist the arts and culture community in receiving an increase in federal and state arts funding include the following:

1. Direct the City's lobbyist to support federal and state arts initiatives and funding proposals that will benefit local arts and culture organizations.

2. Nominate to our local representatives at the state and federal level as well as the President, Governor, State Legislature, the National Endowment for the Arts and the California Arts Council community arts leaders to serve on the National Council for the Arts, the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities, NEA grant review panels, California Arts Council board and CAC grant review panels.
3. Write letters of support to accompany local applications for federal and state arts funding.
4. Encourage the City funded arts and culture organizations to attend Commission hosted workshops on City, State and Federal funding programs and to submit competitive applications. Leveraging City dollars with federal and state funding makes an application more competitive.

Finally, although the Commission agrees federal and state funding to our city needs to improve, the *Union Tribune* article failed to mention that \$680,000 in NEA grants were awarded to the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture (Commission) since 1988. This funding was recycled into our community supporting neighborhood arts and youth programs, cultural tourism, public art projects and services to arts and culture organizations. Thanks to the leadership of the Mayor and City Council, the Commission continues to gain NEA and CAC funding to support City initiatives.

ALTERNATIVE

Do not approve the recommendations.

Respectfully submitted,

Victoria L. Hamilton
Executive Director
Commission for Arts and Culture

Approved: Bruce A. Herring
Deputy City Manager

HAMILTON/LS