



## CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS STAFF REPORT

**Meeting Date:** April 1, 2008  
**To:** Honorable Mayor & City Council  
**From:** Brad Meyerowitz, Recreation Services Manager  
**Subject:** Municipal Cultural Planning Initiative

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The City of Beverly Hills has been invited to participate in the Los Angeles County Municipal Cultural Planning Initiative (MCPI), a program sponsored by the Los Angeles County Arts Commission. The initiative will assist the City, through a consultant-led process, in the development and implementation of a Cultural Plan. The City was one of eight agencies selected to take part in the Initiative. To date, the cities of Burbank, Norwalk, and Santa Fe Springs have agreed to participate in the pilot year of this program. The City of Beverly Hills was eligible due to the participation of the Beverly Hills Unified School District in the *Arts for All: Los Angeles County Regional Blueprint for Arts Education* in 2004/2005. The Municipal Cultural Planning Initiative will help build upon the work already undertaken by the School District in restoring and securing arts education in the schools.

### **DISCUSSION**

The Municipal Cultural Planning Initiative will be a valuable tool for the City in evaluating the cultural assets and needs of the community. While the report will be assessing existing cultural programming, resources within the community will also be identified. This includes facilities, both public and private, within the city. The Initiative will give staff a "road map" for cultural programming in the future. Based on information received from the Los Angeles County Arts Commission, the benefits of cultural planning include:

- more responsive programs and services;
- increased civic awareness of local arts and culture;
- improved communications;
- audience development

In addition, according to the report Arts & Economic Prosperity III: The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts and Culture Organizations and Their Audiences, communities that implement a cultural plan realize an economic benefit through an increase in both programming and audiences. It is also anticipated that the findings from the MCPI will help enhance and support the City's General Plan.

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The Municipal Cultural Planning Initiative is in two phases. In Phase 1, the consultant is working with staff in establishing a "working group" of stakeholders from the community who will be involved in an assessment of current arts and cultural programming, resources, and needs of constituents. The consultant will then work with the committee to determine the best method of data collection from the community. Phase 2 will commence with the sharing of the results from the initial Phase. The consultant and committee will then take the findings of the needs assessment, and initial solutions will be tested with an expanded group of stakeholders. The outcome of the meetings with the additional stakeholders will be strategic directions, specific goals, obstacles to achieving those goals, and potential solutions including identifying key responsibilities, timelines, and funding. A draft work plan for the Cultural Plan will then be provided. Once dialogue on the draft plan has taken place and modifications, if any, are made, then the Cultural Plan will be brought to City Council for acceptance and implementation.

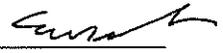
### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Since funding for the consultants is being provided by Los Angeles County through a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, the City has very limited financial responsibility. Were the City to bring in its own consultant to conduct a program as thorough as the MCPI, the cost would be over \$30,000.

Expenses for Phase 1 will be in-kind services, valued at \$7,500. These services will include staff costs, mailings, printing of letters and fliers, providing meeting space, refreshments, etc. The expenditures for these in-kind services will be absorbed in the Community Services 2007/2008 and 2008/2009 Fiscal Year budgets. Expenses for Phase 2 will also include in-kind services, similar to those in Phase 1. At the completion of Phase 2, a final Cultural Plan will be brought before City Council for review. Based on recommendations from the Cultural Plan, a more defined budget will be developed and presented to City Council for review and approval. Based on recommendations included in the City of Santa Monica's 2006/2007 *Creative Capital* Cultural Plan and the 2003 Culver City Community Cultural Plan, it is anticipated that one of the recommendations will be the exploration of funding from private and public sources to implement elements of a Beverly Hills Cultural Plan.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff has begun dialogue with the consultants for the commencement of Phase 1 of the program. The Los Angeles County Arts Commission has been told that the City will continue with Phase 2 once City Council has given approval to proceed. At their most recent respective meetings, the Recreation and Parks and Fine Art Commissions reviewed and informally supported the Initiative. With the support of both Commissions, it is recommended that City Council approves staff to proceed with Phase 1 and 2 of the Municipal Cultural Planning Initiative.

Steve Miller 

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Approved By