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City of San Diego Selects Nationally Recognized Firm to Develop Cultural Plan

CULTURAL PLANNING GROUP WILL HELP DEVELOP THE FIRST CITY CULTURAL PLAN TO GUIDE INVESTMENTS IN ARTS AND CULTURE

SAN DIEGO – The City of San Diego has selected locally-based Cultural Planning Group, LLC, to help create the first-ever comprehensive cultural plan, Creative City. The plan will guide future arts and culture investments in all communities throughout the city.

“This is an exciting time for San Diego, a first-ever opportunity to embark on a transformational initiative for the way we see arts and culture within our planning and investment strategies,” said Mayor Todd Gloria. “During the planning process, we will look to all San Diegans to tell us what matters to form the Creative City plan to advance San Diego as a vibrant artistic practice, creativity and collaboration environment.”

Selection of the Cultural Planning Group follows a request for proposal issued this past June, with interviews of shortlisted proposers that took place in the fall. The consulting firm will help facilitate the cultural planning process, resulting in a 7 to 10-year policy and planning framework that aligns the City’s cultural investments with the priorities of San Diego communities. Creative City will also help advance the City’s strategic plan and other master planning goals.

The Creative City plan incorporates equity as a core value, with racial, cultural, economic and geographic inclusion employed as guiding principles throughout the process. The planning framework will also focus on critical areas such as artist and creative workforce development and retention, creative neighborhood hubs, arts marketing, cultural tourism, and collective impact strategies for regional arts philanthropy.

Additionally, the framework may include strategies to employ artists to address challenges, including mobility, climate and environment, gang prevention, youth development and the housing crisis, and analyze existing conditions to identify opportunities for city programs and initiatives, creative economy, city-owned cultural facilities, cultural equity and cultural tourism. The 20-month effort will begin this winter, with robust stakeholder and public engagement launching in spring 2023, including pop-up, public forum and survey opportunities.

Cultural Planning Group Partner David Plettner-Saunders, a nationally recognized leader in cultural planning, will lead a renowned consultant team that includes Webb Management, a national firm with expertise in citywide cultural facilities assessment and planning, Casa Familiar and The Arts at Works, among other partners.

Cultural Planning Group's selection reflects its unique skills and knowledge base facilitating flourishing arts and cultural plans in major U.S. cities, including Washington D.C., Houston, Boston and Sacramento, and working with other municipalities and public agencies of comparable standing and characteristics to San Diego. The team's practice is grounded in the real-world experience of deep practice community engagement, a demonstrated understanding of the city's arts and culture environment in San Diego and knowledge of the greater Cali-Baja mega-region.

“The team at Cultural Planning Group brings national experience and knowledge of San Diego and the larger bi-national region,” said Commission for Arts and Culture Executive Director Jonathon Glus. “They also get the innovative public engagement expertise we need to shape a forward-thinking cultural plan to guide and strengthen the City’s planning, investment and ongoing development of San Diego’s arts and cultural sectors for years to come. This is an important milestone leading up to our planning process.”

The City of San Diego advances and drives an equitable and inclusive creative economy and cultural ecosystem by investing in the work of artists and creatives and the institutions and systems that amplify creative work and experiences. To learn more, visit sandiego.gov/arts-culture.

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