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SAN DIEGO BLACK ARTS + CULTURE DISTRICT BUILDS MOMENTUM WITH STRATEGIC PLAN

FIRST YEAR OF IMPLEMENTATION BRINGS NEW INVESTMENT, COMMUNITY
ACTIVATION AND CULTURAL PROGRAMMING TO IMPERIAL AVENUE

SAN DIEGO — The San Diego Black Arts + Culture District is moving forward with a [Strategic Plan](#) designed to guide the continued growth, investment and cultural development of the nine-block corridor along Imperial Avenue, while creating a destination that celebrates Black artists and creators and honors the rich history, cultural legacy and lasting contributions of the Black community throughout San Diego.

In 2024, following Councilmember Henry L. Foster III taking office, the City funded \$25,000 toward development of the Strategic Plan to establish a long-term vision and priorities for the San Diego Black Arts + Culture District. The plan was completed in October 2025 by the San Diego Black Arts + Culture District Advisory Committee in partnership with residents, business owners, artists, and City departments and has now been guiding implementation for nearly a year.

The Strategic Plan establishes priorities for supporting artists and businesses, expanding cultural programming, activating public spaces, preserving Black history and culture, pursuing public and private investment, and strengthening the San Diego Black Arts + Culture District as a destination for residents and visitors.

Since implementation began, work has included a San Diego Black Arts + Culture District-wide marketing initiative, a pilot lighting project along the Imperial Avenue medians and continued activation of Marie Widman Memorial Park as a cultural and community gathering space.

"I am thankful for everyone who put their time, experience and vision into developing this Strategic Plan and for the work that has already gone into implementing it," said Councilmember Henry L. Foster III. "It gives the San Diego Black Arts + Culture District a blueprint to continue growing while creating a place where the work, history and creativity of Black San Diegans can be seen and celebrated. There is still work ahead, but my vision is for this corridor in District 4 to one day be recognized as one of San Diego's premier cultural destinations."

That progress has been shaped by continued collaboration among artists, businesses, community members, and organizations working to advance the Strategic Plan's priorities.

"The Strategic Plan reflects the community's vision and gives us a strong foundation to continue growing the San Diego Black Arts + Culture District," said Giadi Finnie, Executive Director of the San Diego African American Museum of Fine Art. "This first year has created new opportunities for artists, supported local businesses, and brought people together through arts and culture. We look forward to building on that progress."

One example of that continued activation was the Encanto Block Party and Music Festival, held July 12 at Marie Widman Memorial Park. The free celebration brought together live music, art, local food and retail vendors, family activities and community resources while carrying forward a more than 30-year legacy of community celebration in Encanto, including the spirit of the longtime Encanto Street Fair. The event created a new opportunity to bring residents and visitors together to celebrate culture, creativity and community in the San Diego Black Arts + Culture District.

The Strategic Plan builds on work that began when the San Diego City Council established the San Diego Black Arts + Culture District in 2022. The San Diego Black Arts + Culture District is managed by the San Diego African American Museum of Fine Art with guidance from an Advisory Committee of educators, business owners, artists, and cultural practitioners.

Priorities outlined in the plan include strengthening cultural assets such as Marie Widman Memorial Park and the Boys & Girls Club gymnasium; pursuing City, state, federal and philanthropic resources for artists, programming and infrastructure; supporting opportunities for housing and creative workspace; and fostering economic development that complements the cultural identity and long-term vision of the San Diego Black Arts + Culture District.

As implementation continues, the Advisory Committee will use lessons from the Strategic Plan's first year to guide future programming, public improvements, and investment along the Imperial Avenue corridor.

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Councilmember Foster represents San Diego's Fourth Council District, including communities of Alta Vista, Broadway Heights, Chollas View, Emerald Hills, Encanto, Greater Skyline Hills, Jamacha, Lincoln Park, Lomita Village, Mountain View, North Bay Terraces, O'Farrell, Oak Park, Paradise Hills, Ridgeview, South Bay Terraces, Valencia Park, and Webster.

Councilmember Foster is the Chair of the Budget & Government Efficiency Committee, Vice Chair of the Active Transportation & Infrastructure Committee, Vice Chair of the Audit Committee, Member of the Economic Development & Intergovernmental Relations Committee, and Member of the Community & Neighborhood Services Committee.