



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

CONTACT: Victoria L. Hamilton, Executive Director  
619-236-6778, vhamilton@sandiego.gov

## City Council Votes to Restore Arts and Culture Funding

Investing in arts and culture is an investment in San Diego

**San Diego, CA** – October 22, 2012- Today, San Diego City Council voted unanimously to adopt a resolution approving a funding plan that would increase arts funding from the City’s Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) and help ensure a brighter future for San Diego’s arts and culture community. By approving the “Penny for the Arts Five-Year Blueprint,” the City Council agreed with Mayor Jerry Sanders to restore funding to Fiscal Year 2002 levels over the next five years. This would result in a 129% increase to \$17.9 million by 2017. According to the Mayor, this funding “will help San Diego remain a world class arts city. Arts and culture are part of the soul of our City. They support our quality of life, benefit diverse communities and neighborhoods and help makes our City a vibrant place to live and visit.”

Under the Penny Blueprint, the City will begin to restore funding for local arts groups, through the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture (Commission), which can be used for operations, programming, supporting underserved communities and schools, deferred maintenance of buildings and public art, and planning major cultural events and festivals. Most notably, this restoration of funding is possible due to an increase in TOT revenues, and can be accomplished without reducing funding to any other City service.

“Today’s success was a decade in the making,” explained Victoria Hamilton, Executive Director of the Commission. “The arts and culture community has consistently proven their value to the City and we have demonstrated that *Penny for the Arts* will give San Diego a great return on investment. Today, that tenacity and hard work has been rewarded.”

“Restoring *Penny for the Arts* is absolutely critical, both for our economy and our neighborhoods” said City Council member Lorie Zapf. “Having a vibrant arts and culture community will help San Diego attract and retain the companies that create good-paying local jobs.”

Included in the *Penny for the Arts* plan is a request for an additional million dollars from TOT to help support the large-scale celebration planned for the 100 year anniversary of Balboa Park that would be added during the FY 2013 Mid-Year Budget adjustment.

“With the Balboa Park Centennial Celebration right around the corner, it is imperative that the City invest in the arts and culture organizations that will make this event a success,” said Mayor Sanders. “The 2015 Celebration will attract tourists and generate millions in revenue for the City—restoring funding couldn’t come at a better time.”

“It’s an exciting time for the arts and culture community,” said Commission Chair Vicki Reed. “We talk a lot about the financial return on investment but we shouldn’t forget the ROI on smiles, wonder and creative spark. Thanks to this increase, thousands of school children throughout the community will keep smiling.”

Last year, the Commission’s [Economic and Community Impact Report](#) defined arts and culture as a significant economic engine, noting that City’s investment in the 68 nonprofit arts and culture organizations have a large positive impact on the local economy. In 2011, the City directed \$5.8 million in organizational support to arts organizations which in turn leveraged \$107 million in earned revenue and \$95 million in contributed revenue. Arts organizations and art-centric businesses in the region employ over 22,500 people, and are the backbone for the City’s cultural tourism.

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*The mission of the **City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture** is to vitalize the city by integrating arts and culture into community life while supporting the region’s cultural assets and showcasing San Diego as an international cultural destination. For more information call (619) 236-6778 or visit [www.VibrantCultureVibrantCity.com](http://www.VibrantCultureVibrantCity.com)*

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