

SUPPORT SACRAMENTO CREATIVE ECONOMY REBOUND FROM COVID-19

WHY SUPPORT SACRAMENTO'S CREATIVE ECONOMY

On March 12, Sacramento's City Council adopted a "Base Budget" for 2020-21 reflecting the impact of COVID-19 and the anticipated loss of revenue to fuel city services. No Department escaped the axe, but the tragically insufficient allocation to the City's Department of Arts and Culture would leave it incapable of responding in any meaningful way to the impact of the crisis. Business as usual will not cut it when our badly wounded creative industry is facing such a tenuous future.

The Mayor, who has been leading a renaissance in arts and culture since his election in 2016, responded with a letter to his council colleagues and city management proposing, among other things, that \$20 million of the \$89 million federal relief grant to the City be devoted to the arts, the creative economy and tourism.

In his letter he said:

"Sacramento's creative economy, the arts and the overall travel and tourism sector have been among the hardest hit by the COVID-19 shutdown. These industries make up a significant part of city's cultural and economic fabric and have been simply decimated by virtue of immediate and faithful compliance with public health orders issued by the county, state and federal governments. Their economic recovery will likely be the most complex because the initial funding sources have gone to address health, safety and medical needs. But these industries and organizations are critical to mental and emotional health and overall successful recovery of the city. It is therefore essential to ensure the recovery, stability and sustainability of the city's cultural assets so they are poised to contribute to the reemergence of our creative economy."

Without trying to predetermine the specific investments ultimately to be made in the sector, the Mayor proposed that emphasis be placed on four broad priorities:

- Grants or forgivable loans to selected city arts and cultural institutions best positioned to lead to the rebuilding of the creative economy.
- Grants or forgivable loans to artists/creatives and arts and culture related nonprofits focused on equity and underserved populations, corridors and neighborhoods extraordinarily affected by the shutdown.
- Grants to arts education initiatives designed to move skill-based instruction, arts related enrichment activities and exposure to the various art forms on-line until schools reopen and then to move artists in residence back into schools and students back into the city's arts and cultural facilities.
- Substantial investments in the city's partner, Visit Sacramento, which is tasked with bringing conventions, festivals and other major cultural events back within the "new normal" of a COVID-19 and post crisis environment. Tourism is an indispensable part of the city's economy and will be vital to reinvigorating businesses disrupted by the pandemic.

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FACTS ABOUT SACRAMENTO'S CREATIVE ECONOMY

The federal government has recognized arts and culturally related nonprofits as small businesses and dubbed them eligible for relief under the CARES Act.

Nonprofit arts and cultural organizations and their audiences have enormous impact on the economy of Sacramento County and the City which hosts most of the drivers of the creative economy.

- Total industry expenditures by arts and cultural institutions and their audiences in Sacramento County is more than \$167 million dollars annually.
- The arts and culture sector supports over 6,000 full time jobs in the City and county.
- Household income generated by the sector is over \$135 million dollars annually.
- Revenue to local government is over \$9 million annually.
- Over 3.5 million people attend arts and cultural events every year with an average event related expenditure of approximately \$30.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP OUR LOCAL ARTISANS & BUSINESSES

Every artist/creative, nonprofit leader/staffer/board member/donor, previous grantee, business owner and other arts supporters should kindly reach out to the Mayor and City Council and let them know how important this funding will be to you and your organization.

Call the Mayor's office at 916-808-5300. Let him know how his push for the \$20 million proposal for the creative sector will help you or your organization during this time. Be specific, so he has a clear understanding, but be concise so he can easily repeat your story to emphasize the need. Templates are available on the following pages.

Call your city councilmember's office. Tell your Council Member your name, where you live in the district. Let them know how this \$20 million proposal for the creative sector will help you during this time. Be kind and respectful so they can truly listen, because they are not creatives and may not understand how things work in our world. The more they understand your impact on the community, the more they will want to help you.

MAYOR: Darrell Steinberg

(916) 808-5300

MayorSteinberg@cityofsacramento.org

DISTRICT 1: CM Angelique Ashby

916-808-7001

aashby@cityofsacramento.org

DISTRICT 2: CM Allen Warren

916-808-7002, awarren@cityofsacramento.org

DISTRICT 3: CM Jeff Harris

916-808-7003, jsharris@cityofsacramento.org

DISTRICT 4: CM Steve Hansen

916-916-808-7004, shansen@cityofsacramento.org

DISTRICT 5: CM Jay Schenirer

916-808-7005, jschenirer@cityofsacramento.org

DISTRICT 6: Vice-Mayor Eric Guerra

916-808-7006, eguerra@cityofsacramento.org

DISTRICT 7: CM Rick Jennings

916-808-7007, rjennings@cityofsacramento.org

DISTRICT 8: CM Larry Carr

916-808-7008, lcarr@cityofsacramento.org

WHEN TO MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

This is most likely the only source of funding that can help save and sustain vital elements of our creative economy!

At a meeting in early June, the city council will vote to augment the city's "Base Budget" with the federal relief money. Because of the profound needs across the board in the community, there will be robust competition for the limited funds available and those not assertively at the table will be literally out of the money!

Email the Mayor and your City Council member with your messages of support, citing where you live and how you are involved in the sector, again, personalizing your comments from your own experience and include relevant data from the attached fact sheet.

Write a letter to the Mayor and your city council member. This is a longer form opportunity to state your case more thoroughly and is especially effective for organizations, experts in the field, or artists/creatives in the district of the representative who are known to him/her. Elected officials often raise stacks of such letters in the air at meetings to demonstrate support for their positions.

Cultivate and engage relevant and influential allies and ask them to speak up in the same manner you are. (Bankers, donors, clients, students, teachers, restaurant and other business owners are dependent on art activity, etc.)

Speaking up. Be prepared to register to speak for 2 minutes at the Council meeting (to be announced and likely on-line) where the decisions will be made. Script your 2 minutes in advance, speak from the heart with kindness, find data to push your most persuasive points and practice to ensure you get to your strong close within the two-minute mark.

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TEMPLATES TO HELP YOU EMAIL & CALL YOUR CITY COUNCIL MEMBER

- **Calls to Mayor's office: 916-808-5300**

Hi. My name is _____ and I am *(Tell him where you live and how you're associated with arts and culture.)* I'm calling to thank you and to express my support for your proposal to direct \$20 million dollars of the federal stimulus money to arts and culture. I know you already understand that the creative economy and tourism and the jobs and revenue they produce will be essential as we rebuild the city's economy. But I also want you to know why I, personally, feel so strongly about the need for the city to protect and grow the arts and arts education in our city. *(Add here a SHORT but emotionally persuasive personal comment about why the arts and cultural activity in which you are involved are so important to you, your family and the city.)*

- **Calls to Council Offices**

Hi. My name is ____ and I am *(Tell him/her where you live and how you are associated with arts and culture.)* I am calling you to express my strong support for the Mayor's proposal to direct \$20 million dollars of the federal stimulus money to arts and culture and tourism. The shut down that came with COVID-19 has had a devastating effect on the city's artists, nonprofits and our cultural institutions and many will not survive if the city does not intervene. I know you have been a steadfast supporter of the arts and understand the role they will play in rebuilding our economy, but I also want you to know why I, personally, feel so strongly about the need for the city to protect and grow the arts and arts education in our city. *(Add here a SHORT but emotionally persuasive personal comment about why the arts and cultural activity in which you are involved are so important to you, your family and the city.)*

- **Emails to the Mayor's office: dsteinberg@cityofsacramento.org**

Hello Mayor,

Just a brief message to let you know that I want to be counted as a big supporter of your proposal to allocate \$20 million dollars of the federal stimulus grant to ensure the survival and future growth of the badly wounded arts, culture and tourism industries in our City. These industries contribute thousands of jobs and millions in revenue for the City while improving the quality of life of its people and attracting the entrepreneurial creatives needed to ensure future economic development. *(Personalize your email here by suggesting how you engage with arts, culture and/or tourism and why it is so important to you)*

- **Emails to Councilmembers**

(Personalize from the beginning if you are known to the councilmember and especially if you live in his/her district)

Just wanted you to know that I am a big supporter of the Mayor's proposal to allocate \$20million dollars of the federal stimulus grant to ensure the survival and future growth of the badly wounded arts, culture and tourism industries in our city. These industries contribute thousands of jobs and millions in revenue for the city while enriching the quality of life for our people. But I strongly urge your support of this proposal for another reason. We need to continue to identify and fund programs that bring children from underserved neighborhoods into our theatres and museums and other cultural institutions. And we need to support artists and nonprofits that bring arts related instruction, exposure and fun into the lives of our children through the schools, libraries and community centers where they live. *(Add here a compelling personal anecdote or reason for why you are so involved in and devoted to the arts.)*

TEMPLATES TO HELP YOU EMAIL & CALL YOUR CITY COUNCILMEMBER

- **Letters to Mayor and Council members**

*(Letters should be addressed to the Mayor and individual members of the council and sent to:
City Hall, Fifth Floor, 915 J St. Sacramento, CA 95814)*

Dear Mayor or Councilmember,

I *(or organization)* am writing to support the Mayor's proposal to allocate \$20 million dollars of the federal stimulus funds to the arts, culture, creative economy and tourism.

The arts, our cultural institutions and tourism are the basic elements of our creative economy which was flourishing until just a few weeks ago. But now these important industries are among the hardest hit by the COVID-19 shutdown and their recovery will continue to be challenged because of the understandable diversion of funding to pressing health, safety and medical needs.

Ultimate decisions about specific investments will no doubt be made when city staff proposes a transparent process for decision making and funds distribution.

But I support the Mayor's proposal to emphasize grants to the city's arts and cultural institutions most critical to the rebuilding of the creative economy, grants to artists and nonprofits focusing on underserved populations, corridors and neighborhoods, grants to arts education initiatives that bring instruction and enrichment activity back to our kids and investments in Visit Sacramento which is tasked with bringing conventions, festivals and other cultural events back into a post COVID-19 environment. This will be vital to the reinvigoration of the many businesses dependent on arts and culture related activity and tourism.

(Personalize your letter with a persuasive close that highlights why you are so supportive of the arts and how you are connected. And don't forget to end with the ask, I urge you to vote for the \$20 million dollar allocation to arts, culture, tourism and the creative economy they fuel.)