

OFFICE OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS (OCA) REPORT FOR AUGUST 2023

Selected activities organized by goals in *Cultural Connection: San Jose's Cultural Plan*

The Arts Commission meetings are convening in person at City Hall and virtually on Zoom for members of the public.

Support Diverse Cultural Spaces & Places Throughout the Community

The Community and Economic Recovery Task Force recommended several arts-related recovery strategies to the City Council, including removing cost barriers for small and mid-sized art organizations access to venues. The Council appropriated \$100,000 to implement this recommendation. OCA staff is working with City-owned theater operators to develop criteria and a process to provide a partial or full subsidy for venue costs. OCA will allocate \$25,000 respectively to the operators of the Montgomery Theater, California Theatre, Hammer Theatre and Mexican Heritage Plaza Theatre for FY 23-24.

Integrate High Impact Public Art & Urban Design throughout the Community

The City of San José Public Art Program inspires community through artworks and exhibitions. We expand community participation opportunities and impact the economic and visual dynamics of the city. Our priorities are guided by the goals and values of project partners and the community. Through active engagement between artists and project stakeholders, we celebrate diversity, innovative spirit, rich history, present and envisioned future. The program facilitates projects that are recognized nationally and internationally for innovative programming. For the most recent update on public art projects, please visit: <https://www.sanjoseca.gov/home/showdocument?id=104069&t=638266830267527553>

Strengthen the Cultural Community's Infrastructure

Cultural Funding Portfolio - Investments in Art, Creativity and Culture includes three large grant programs: Operating Grants (provides partial support to San José arts organizations with professional staff and year-round programming); Festival, Parade, and Celebration Grants (provides partial support for community events held in San José and organized by nonprofit organizations); and take pART (provides partial support for publicly accessible San José arts activities by San José organizations). Grant recommendations were approved on June 13th in June as part of the FY 2023-24 Operating Budget. Grantees have been notified and staff is beginning the development of grant agreements.

Enhance Support for Creative Entrepreneurs and the Commercial Creative Sector Arts

This year OCA brought back The Creative Economy Fund (formerly known as the Creative Industries Incentive Fund), the popular program supporting San José creative businesses. Applications opened on May 21st and closed on July 12th. Applicants applied for up \$8,000 in funding for a total of \$40,000 available funds. This opportunity is a partnership between

OCA and the Center for Cultural Innovation which administers the fund. Grant recipients will be announced on September 19, 2023. More info at:

https://www.cciarts.org/San_Jose_CEF.html

Twenty-five San José creative practitioners, or “Artrepreneurs” were selected to participate in the “Business of Art” ten-week course starting in September 2023. This is a free program valued at \$14,000. The Business of Art is administered by the Center for Cultural Innovation in partnership with OCA. More information can be found at:

<https://www.cciarts.org/cgi/page.cgi/calendar.html?evt=1024>

San José Climate Art Program

OCA recently received a \$200,000 grant from the California Arts Council and San Francisco Foundation through the Bay Area Creative Corps Grant to launch the San José Climate Art program in September. A “Cultural Strategist” will lead the program to engage San José artists and cultural spaces in the City’s Climate Art Program, the goal of which is to build energy and community support around the City’s 2030 goal of carbon neutrality by enlisting the help of and reducing the carbon impact of the San José arts and culture sector. As part of this Climate Art Pilot year, OCA will invite selected artists to participate in a paid participation as a Resilient Art Cohort. This will include participating in workshops, a sustainability assessment, and taking steps towards decarbonization environmental resilience in their practice.

Support Residents’ Active, Personal Participation in Arts and Culture

San José Creates and Connects

Launched in 2016, the San José Creates and Connects initiative aims to connect San José residents across communities and within neighborhoods through creative, participatory experiences. The initiative includes Make Music Day San José, #WeCreate408, and the Creative Ambassadors Program.

Creative Ambassadors Program - OCA is seeking up to five Creative Ambassadors for 2024. The role of the Creative Ambassador is to champion the power of creative expression and engage members of the public in finding their own creative voice. The Creative Ambassador’s efforts will seek to recognize, celebrate, and promote diverse creative experiences citywide. Application to the Creative Ambassadors Program will open on August 14, 2023. For more information about the Creative Ambassadors Program, visit

<https://www.sanjoseca.gov/your-government/departments-offices/cultural-affairs/participate/creative-ambassadors>

Destination Events in San Jose

Outdoor Event Highlights: Over 60,000 people were able to celebrate 4th of July at the Discovery Meadow 4th of July Celebration and the 4th of July Family Fireworks Festival at Almaden Lake Park. There were many other events to celebrate this day including the Bloom Energy Stars and Strides 5k/10k run on July 1st and a lot of neighborhood celebrations. July also saw the first Music in the Park concert of this summer’s series and a new festival, the Pacific Feats Festival, that brought over 10,000 people over the weekend. Hundreds of K-

Pop fans gathered at the Circle of Palms to enjoy a night of K-Pop during July's CityDance, the second of this year's series. The team also supported Culture Night Market with their first Feast Mode event which brought in many food vendors to Market St. and complemented the Viva Parks event at Plaza de Cesar Chavez. The Pobladores Night Market has been a great series where people can come together in downtown on a Thursday night to enjoy some live music and food, this series runs every Thursday until the end of August.

Upcoming Outdoor Events: We have a busy rest of the Summer as we kick off August with the STREET MRKT then go into a busy weekend with one of San Jose's most beloved events, the San Jose Jazz Summer Fest. Thousands will be able to enjoy this three day festival with food, vendors, live bands, and more. They have partnered with the San Jose Museum of Art to add a Community Fest at Circle of Palms that will focus on family friendly activities, art projects, and more. The group will also have a stage on Park Ave., the first time in years that this space will be activated since it's closure due to construction. A favorite from the past couple of years, the Salsa Fest stage is returning to S. First St. between San Salvador and San Carlos, festival goers will be able to walk from S. First St. to Plaza de Cesar Chavez to enjoy both areas, plus the other Summer Fest event sites. The season will continue with a Salsa night at CityDance and Music in the Park then the Silicon Valley Pride Parade and Festival at the end of the month.

On-Going Outdoor Event Support: As the outdoor event industry continues to evolve, so do the services that are established to support our event organizers. Our team remains focused on facilitating the permitting process and have been very supportive in working through updates to the Regulatory Permit background-check process for events with carnival rides or games, as well as informing organizers of fee increases to various department permitting and staffing costs. Our Special Events Team also continues to develop an opportunity to connect event organizers with various event and permitting professionals through a monthly Brown Bag Event Permitting Series. The team continues to work on the Downtown Vibrancy Event Initiative, which is aimed at facilitating increased vibrancy in the public realm through the removal of barriers to activation at dedicated plazas and parks. We look forward to sharing more details in the coming month.

For a full list of upcoming events overseen by the Office of Economic Development and Cultural Affairs' Special Events team, please visit [SanJoséCulture.org](https://www.sanjoseculture.org).

Operating Budget for FY 23-24

As part of the FY 23-24 Operating Budget the City Council approved the cultural art grant recommendations as well as \$1 M from the General Fund to augment the available TOT resources. In response to [Manager's Budget Addendum 58 on Arts, Culture, and Hospitality Funding](#) as part of the adoption of the [Mayor's June Budget Message for FY 23-24](#), the Mayor and Council approved a [recommendation from Councilmember Torres](#) that the Administration should report back to the full Council as part of a study session on different possible models for additional arts and tourism funding including those that may require being placed on a ballot measure for Council consideration.

