

OFFICE OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS (OCA) REPORT FOR APRIL 2024

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 coordinated with City-owned theater operators to develop criteria and a process to provide partial venue rental subsidies. OCA allocated \$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=110029&t=638470759858020550>.

Strengthen the Cultural Community's Infrastructure

Cultural Funding Portfolio - Investments in Art, Creativity, and Culture

FY24-25 Cultural Grants – Grant panels for OCA's three core grant programs were convened throughout the month of March.

- take pART Grant – March 7, 2024
- Festival, Parade, and Celebration Grant (FPC) – March 14 & 15
- Operating Grant (OpG) – March 28, 2024

Recommendations of grant awards for our three core grant programs will be brought forward to the Arts Commission at their May 2024 meeting.

Deepest thanks to those Arts Commissioners who offered their time to serve on one of these grant panels.

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.

#WeCreate408 – The month of April is Arts, Culture & Creativity Month in California and what better time to showcase creativity in San José through the #WeCreate408 Challenge! The official launch event for this year's #WeCreate408 will be at the 6th Annual [San José Day](#) on Saturday, April 6 hosted at Empire Seven Studios in San José Japantown. Please see wecreate408.org to learn more about this year's campaign and how to participate.

Make Music San José – Plans are underway for Make Music San José 2024, a free community-curated celebration of music held on the summer solstice on June 21st. Keep updated on this year's locations and opportunities to engage musically by checking out www.makemusicday.org/sanjose/

San José Creative Economy Fund – The San José [Creative Economy Fund](#) is a partnership with the Center for Cultural Innovation (CCI) and provides grants to local, small arts-based businesses involved in the production or distribution of the arts, contributing to the City of San José's cultural vibrancy. Competitive applicants will reflect the City's diverse cultural communities and creative-based commercial landscape. Grants are up to \$8K. Applications open April 24 and will close June 17, 2024.

Cornerstone of the Arts: The nomination guidelines for the 2024 Cornerstone of the Arts were released in March and are available at www.sanjoseculture.org. The deadline to submit a nomination is Friday, May 3, 2024, by 5:00 pm. The event is scheduled to take place on Friday, October 11 at the Hammer Theatre Center.

Destination Events in San Jose

Outdoor Event Highlights: The Special Events team welcomed the first Downtown Vibrancy Event Initiative (DVEI) event at Parque de los Pobladores on March 1st. Through this cost-free process, a brand-new event organizer was able to host a Friday Artisan Market for the SoFA community. The annual San Jose Shamrock Run returned to downtown on March 16th as a 5K and 10K experience with thousands of runners filling the streets in green St. Patrick's Day colors. The race concluded and included post-race festivities at San Pedro Square. Downtown San Jose also welcomed a full week of one of the largest tech conferences – the GPU Tech Conference at the Convention Center hosted by NVIDIA. The Events team worked on logistics with various stakeholders across downtown to host all conference goers and manage traffic control. Lastly, March wrapped up with a couple of Holi Festival events permitted by the Special Events team. The San Jose Sharks utilized Barack Obama Boulevard in front of the SAP Center while the Association of Indo Americans celebrated

within Discovery Meadow Park. Both Holi events brought thousands of participants to rejoice in color. The vibrancy of colors is known to bring positivity and joy as people come together.

Upcoming Outdoor Events: April is filled with fourteen (14) diverse events that will be supported and permitted by the Special Events team. First, Special Events is working with the Department of Transportation to organize another set of VivaEscuela SJ events. Viva EscuelaSJ is an “open streets” event where elementary school students at a chosen school will be able to walk, bike and scooter on a car-free street in front of campus. Council District 3 is hosting San Jose Day near the streets of Japantown and is an outdoor cultural festival that welcomes all to celebrate all things San Jose. There are also two (2) cultural festivals that will be hosted at Discovery Meadow Park: OMG Family Festival and Harajuku San Jose. The end of April will conclude with Japantown’s beloved annual events: the Japantown Fun Run/Walk and Nikkei Matsuri Festival on April 21st. On this same date, Viva CalleSJ returns with a new course that extends from SoFA District to Santa Clara County Fairgrounds and Martial Cottle Park. Lastly, the SoFA Street Fair will claim South 1st Street on April 28th to host another local music festival.

On-Going Outdoor Event Support: The Special Events team is heading into the new year full steam ahead, continuing to work to evolve our services and best practices to accommodate the ever-changing needs of event organizers. As the outdoor event industry continues to evolve, so do the services that are established to support our event organizers. Our work to develop monthly Brown Bag Event Permitting Series is making headway, and we expect to begin offering these meetings later this year. The team is also working on how to support event organizers navigating the increasingly changing City which prompts for new event layouts, new routes, or in some cases understanding updates to policies or guidelines from other city or county departments that provide permits or services to these events. Additionally, there is work to expand 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, continues as we seek to figure out how to extend the benefits of the program beyond Downtown. This expansion has prompted a discussion on the renaming of the program as the pilot extends beyond the Downtown space. We look forward to sharing more details as our processes develop.

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).

Arts, Destination Marketing, and Destination Events Funding City Council Study Session

The City Council Study Session on Arts, Destination Marketing, and Destination Events was held on February 18, 2024. The OCA has engaged the Cultural Planning Group to research funding models, with community stakeholder input, and presented their report for consideration by the City Council. As an outcome, the [Mayor’s March Budget Message for FY 24-25](#) included direction for the Administration to return to the full Council evaluating the establishment of an Admissions Fee and other funding strategies.

2023 Arts and Economic Prosperity 6 Study

The newly released [Arts & Economic Prosperity 6 Study \(AEP6\)](#) is an economic and social impact study of the local nonprofit arts and culture industry conducted by Americans for the Arts in partnership with the City of San José's Office of Economic Development and Cultural Affairs (OEDCA) and SVCcreates. The report highlights that San José's nonprofit arts and culture sector generated \$292 million in economic activity in 2022 – nearly \$100 million in spending by San José arts and culture organizations and an additional \$192 million in event-related expenditures by their audiences.

Other key figures include:

- Nonprofit arts and culture organizations in San José support 4,738 jobs, from direct support of employing staff and artists to indirect support of printers, hospitality staff, graphic designers and more.
- These arts and culture organizations generated \$18.1 million in local, state and federal government revenue.
- The typical attendee spends \$43.88 per event in San José, not including the cost of admission.
- 23.7% of arts and culture attendees were from outside Santa Clara County. They spent an average of \$65.69, vital income for local businesses.
- 86.4% of San José respondents agreed that the activity or venue they were attending was “a source of neighborhood pride for the community.”
- 85.2% said they would “feel a sense of loss if that activity or venue was no longer available.”