

**Unifying  
California's  
Cultural Districts  
to advance  
advocacy and  
collaboration in  
arts and culture.**

**CALIFORNIA  
CULTURAL  
DISTRICTS  
COALITION**

Balboa Park Cultural  
District

Barrio Logan Cultural  
District

Downtown San Rafael  
Arts District

Eureka Cultural Arts  
District

Grass Valley-Nevada  
City Cultural District

Little Tokyo

Oceanside CA  
Cultural District

Redding Cultural  
District

Rotten City -  
Emeryville Cultural  
Arts District

San Pedro Arts &  
Cultural District

SOMA Pilipinas –  
Filipino Cultural  
Heritage District

The BLVD Cultural  
District

The Calle 24 Latino  
Cultural District

Truckee Cultural  
District

The Honorable Gavin Newsom  
Governor of California  
1303 10th Street, Suite 1173  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom,

As you know, in 2015, AB189 authorized the creation of pilot California Cultural Districts. In 2017, fourteen Cultural Districts were recognized. A formal evaluation of the program was released in late 2019 that celebrated the impact of the Cultural Districts, and enthusiastically recommended expansion and funding.

We were very grateful in 2020 that you included \$9 Million in your budget for the current California Cultural District Program. While it was difficult, we also understood that the funding needed to be retracted because of the uncertainty of the budgetary impact of COVID-19. **At the time, you stated that funds would return when Federal funding became available**, and we now respectfully ask that the investment in California Cultural Districts return as a priority of your administration.

We understand that the budget now stands with the legislature. **Therefore, the strongest and most impactful means to reintroduce support for California Cultural Districts, that will deliver the greatest sustainable recovery for our communities, would be for you to support and encourage the \$1 Billion arts budget proposal as championed by Senators Allen and Rubio and Assemblymembers Friedman, Nazarian and Quirk-Silva.**

**In addition to other carefully developed plans to increase the rate of recovery for the creative sector to bring back jobs, rebuild our communities and drive economic impact, this budget proposal includes a \$75M investment in California Cultural Districts, funded in year one but with expenditures spread over 3 years.**

The continued and expanded involvement of California Cultural Districts will be pivotal to the success of the recovery in our communities and for our creative

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The California Cultural Districts Coalition, proudly facilitated by the Balboa Park Cultural Partnership, is an independent coalition of the  
14 pilot Cultural Districts in California.

**Attachment 2**

# CALIFORNIA CULTURAL DISTRICTS COALITION

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economy in general. **Cultural Districts have strong administrative operations, are inherently aware of the specific and defined needs of their communities, and are well positioned to quickly serve and support those needs.**

As agencies with unparalleled, deep and extensive collaboration as the core tenet of their existence, your Cultural Districts drive non-profit, municipal, artist and business engagement.

Assemblymembers and Senators with California Cultural Districts in their regions enthusiastically support the critically important and collaborative role that Cultural Districts play. The return of funding for the existing Cultural Districts would drive strong and quick support for communities, artists and economic development through a multi-faceted and locally applied equity lens.

**Importantly, this funding would also allow for the strategic, careful, and rapid expansion of the Cultural District Program to double the number of Cultural Districts within the first year and then double again by 2024, for a total of up to 60 Cultural Districts.** As some equity opportunities were identified in the evaluation of the Cultural District Program, this targeted broadening, managed by the California Arts Council, would directly address those opportunities.

**Such an expansion and support for programs and operations of your Cultural Districts would be transformative across the State.**

The California Cultural Districts Coalition and the fourteen member-districts stand ready to work together to help existing and new Cultural Districts learn, share and invest in their communities.

This critical investment will be important in:

- Recognizing annual operating support, program funding and community engagement for the existing and new Cultural Districts for the next three years;
- Securing funding to implement an expedited expansion plan for the next three years for the California Arts Council to designate new California Cultural Districts with a focus on the equity gap analysis that has already been presented to the California Arts Council; and
- Enabling the California Arts Council to focus on facilitating the selection of new Cultural Districts, re-certifying existing Cultural Districts and engaging Cultural Districts through virtual and in-person gatherings.

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With the experienced focus and guidance of the California Arts Council Members and staff, led by Anne Bown-Crawford, the momentum for the Cultural Districts program will continue to provide the much-needed support for our communities and continue to celebrate and share our diverse arts and culture.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or any of your Cultural Districts to request additional information or to hear more about just how important this funding would be for the recovery and success of Arts and Culture in California.

Yours sincerely, signed for and on behalf of the members of the California Cultural Districts Coalition,

*Peter Comiskey*

Peter Comiskey

Executive Director - Balboa Park Cultural District  
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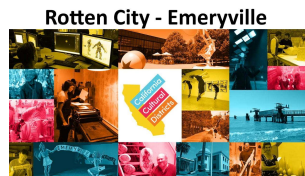
5/23/2021



REDDING  
CULTURAL  
DISTRICT



*Calle 24*  
Latino Cultural District



Cc    Assemblymember Philip Ting  
      Assemblymember Wendy Carrillo  
      Assemblymember Richard Bloom  
      Assemblymember Anthony Rendon

      Senator Ben Allen  
      Senator Susan Rubio

      Assemblymember Laura Friedman  
      Assemblymember Sharon Quirk-Silva  
      Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian

***Members with California Cultural Districts in their regions:***

      Senate President proTem Toni Atkins  
      Senator Ben Hueso  
      Senator Mike McGuire  
      Senator Maria Elena Durazo  
      Senator Patricia Bates  
      Senator Nancy Skinner  
      Senator Steven Bradford  
      Senator Scott Wiener  
      Senator Scott Wilk  
      Senator Brian Dahle

      Assemblymember Chris Ward  
      Assemblymember Lorena Gonzalez  
      Assemblymember Marc Levine  
      Assemblymember Jim Wood  
      Assemblymember Miguel Santiago  
      Assemblymember Tasha Boerner Horvath  
      Assemblymember Buffy Wicks  
      Assemblymember Patrick O'Donnell  
      Assemblymember David Chiu  
      Assemblymember Tom Lackey  
      Assemblymember Megan Dahle