CITY OF FRESNO
Cultural Arts Plan

– PUBLIC REVIEW DRAFT –

Include Measure P logo on cover

Month Date, 2023

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the more than 4,000 Fresnans, artists, organizational leaders, nonprofit founders, educators and cultural practitioners who contributed to the research efforts. Your participation was critical to the development of this plan and your efforts to better serve the community are not unnoticed. Thank you to all of the City of Fresno staff who contributed to various stages of the development process.

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Lilia Gonzáles Chavez – Executive Director*

***Cultural Arts Plan Subcommittee**
The Commissioner, Scott Miller, along with Lilia Gonzáles Chavez, of the Fresno Arts Council represented the Cultural Arts Plan subcommittee throughout the project. Commissioners Maiyer Vang and Sarah Parkes participated on the subcommittee through the end of their service with the Commission. Commissioners Laura Ward and Dr. Francine Oputa replaced Commissioners Maiyer Vang and Sarah Parkes June 26, 2023.

City of Fresno Logo Measure P Logo NCAP Logo Fresno Arts Council Logo

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Executive Summary

Pride. Promise. Possibility.

The local established cultural arts scene is the perfect foundation for a city that is dreaming even bigger. Fresno has the chance to become the model for thriving arts and culture—whether it's through supporting artists and performers, providing spaces for cultural arts, supporting the multiple community cultural arts festivals,improved funding systems or, simply, getting the word out about the city's tremendous assets and potential for the future.

The people who live in Fresno take that potential seriously. By passing Measure P in 2018, they prioritized expanding access to local cultural arts programs.

Measure P also calls for a cultural arts plan, created to help the City of Fresno identify the needs of its cultural arts community and prioritize outcomes and investments.

With this plan, the City of Fresno has developed ambitious but achievable goals for cultural arts programs that reflect the city's cultural, demographic and geographic diversity.

The cultural arts plan contains six focused goals to help Fresno achieve its potential and will inform expanded access to the cultural arts grant program. Though the Measure P ordinance does not specifically ask for an implementation timeline, a high-level implementation timeline to keep the momentum moving forward is included to guide how recommendations and strategies can be prioritized with the aid and support of ongoing community engagement.

The plan is not designed to be limiting, fixed or a one-size-fits-all set of solutions. Instead, it is a springboard for new ideas, a key to unlock valuable funding, and a vision for how the world will honor and experience Fresno in the years ahead.

Key Findings

To create this cultural arts plan, the City of Fresno conducted months of research. It was important to interact with Fresnans directly, listen to what residents had to say, and understand what the community wants and needs to achieve its artistic and cultural potential. These are some of the major takeaways that informed this plan:

- Fresno is a unique community, strengthened by its rich diversity and cultural assets.
- Measure P funding is seen as one of the greatest opportunities for the future of arts and culture in Fresno.
- Fresnans look for arts and culture to provide new experiences that help them strengthen connections with loved ones.
- There are barriers to accessing information about cultural arts opportunities.
- Transportation and accessibility are essential to engaging with arts and culture in Fresno.
- The Fresno area has an active artist community—but more support is needed to ensure artists, cultural practitioners and organizations are connected, stable and can thrive.
- Arts and culture support physical and mental health.
- COVID-19 has had a lasting impact on how audiences engage with arts and culture.
- More should be done to increase art in public spaces.
- A sense of safety is important for Fresnans engaging in arts and culture.
- Arts and culture serve as a powerful means to build relationships.
- Cultural arts support the local economy.
- Costs create a barrier to hosting and participating in cultural arts events and programs.
- Fresno's climate impacts the cultural arts scene.
- Lack of affordable housing, transportation and studio/theater space creates barriers for artists and cultural practitioners.
- Time constraints and schedules impact access to arts and culture in Fresno, especially for youth and seniors.
- Parents and youth are seeking cultural arts programs and events for young people citywide.
- Investment in arts education and apprenticeship programs is important.

Goals and Priority Recommendations

The cultural arts plan presents six concrete goals that collectively serve the primary purpose of expanding access to cultural arts for all Fresnans.

Goal 1: GRANT-MAKING & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
Goal 2: STABILIZE, RESTORE & ACTIVATE
Goal 3: EDUCATION & ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Goal 4: CELEBRATE & ENHANCE
Goal 5: ADDRESS BARRIERS, INNOVATE & EXPAND
Goal 6: MUNICIPAL INVESTMENTS AND POLICIES TO SUPPORT CULTURAL ARTS

Each goal comes with a set of recommendations and strategies for implementation.

Recommendations include:

- ensuring **accessibility to arts and culture** and prioritizing **underserved, marginalized and at-risk populations**
- developing a **grant program that expands upon research with ongoing community outreach and input**
- offering cultural arts programming that **bridges generations**
- creating an **events calendar, a map of Fresno's cultural arts offerings and an online hub**
- incorporating arts and culture into **neighborhoods across the city**
- expanding and further promoting **Cultural Arts Districts**
- ensuring access to **affordable venues and studio spaces**
- providing **new school-based, after-school and mental health-focused programs**
- establishing **residency programs, apprenticeships, internships and externships**

Background

Overview

Fresno is home to a sizable and talented community of artists and cultural practitioners. In fact, according to surveys collected as part of this plan, nearly 50% of surveyed Fresnans produce or practice art that contributes to the active, proud, and established arts scene in the community. A number of cultural arts events regularly bring together people of all ages and backgrounds. Community gatherings such as the Fresno Armenian Festival, Fiestas Patrias, ArtHop, Reel Pride, Langar Sewa, the Native Youth Summit, the Taco Truck Throwdown and annual Hmong New Year celebration (among many examples) highlight some of the breadth and depth of cultural diversity in Fresno.

The findings in this document are the product of hundreds of hours of research, thousands of surveys, in-depth interviews and several community meetings that drew upon the experiences of Fresno's artists, advocates, organizations, cultural practitioners and everyday people.

Fresno Clean and Safe Neighborhood Parks Transactions and Use Tax (Measure P)

In 2018, Fresnans voted to support the Fresno Clean and Safe Neighborhood Parks Transactions and Use Tax, more commonly known as "Measure P." The ballot measure was the work of a diverse coalition of parents, seniors, arts advocates and community leaders who came together to support Fresno's parks and arts and find a solution to the community's needs. Measure P established a 3/8-cent sales tax (37.5 cents on every $100) that is expected to raise $38 million per year for the next 30 years. The adoption of Measure P resulted in an ordinance that outlines the ways in which the funding can be used.

Measure P funds are allocated for programs and projects that do one of the following:

1. Provide clean, safe neighborhood parks for all Fresno residents
2. Reduce crime and homelessness in parks
3. Update and maintain park bathrooms and playgrounds
4. Reduce graffiti and vandalism in parks
5. Maintain and improve after-school, youth and senior recreational programs
6. Provide job training for at-risk youth and veterans
7. Beautify landscaping and remove weeds and litter along major roads and highways
8. Create parks in neighborhoods that don't have easy access to parks, including soccer and sports fields
9. Improve walking and biking access to parks and trails, including the San Joaquin River Parkway
10. Expand access to local arts and cultural programs

The Measure P ordinance includes expenditure categories that guide how funding can be spent on programs and projects.

Expenditure Category **One (1)** makes funding available to City-owned arts, cultural and recreational facilities located in parks. Expenditure Category **Three (3)** makes funding available for the planning and delivery of arts projects and programs as part of youth recreation, senior recreation and after-school programming. It also requires programming that provides job training, career development or both to youth, young adults and veterans, including education and/or certification for jobs within the arts. Expenditure Category **Four (4)** sets aside 12% of the funds made available from Section 7-1504 of the ordinance on an annual basis to invest in competitive grants for nonprofit organizations that support and expand access to arts and cultural programming. A full copy of the ordinance can be referenced in Appendix A.

Why a Cultural Arts Plan?

The purpose of this plan is to identify a vision for expanding access to arts and culture in the City of Fresno—and develop goals and strategies to implement it. The plan will guide investment of Measure P funding consistent with the ordinance. Under Expenditure Category Four (4), the ordinance requires the City, in partnership with the Fresno Arts Council and other local arts and cultural stakeholders, to develop a cultural arts plan before distributing competitive grants to nonprofit organizations to support and expand access to cultural arts programming.

Creating this plan has helped the community outline its needs, clarify its vision for the future, and reflect the desires of its culturally, demographically and geographically diverse community members. The information in this plan will be used to guide and prioritize investment in programs and projects. It also will be used to identify and apply for additional funding opportunities to leverage Measure P, multiplying the resources available to expand access to cultural arts programming in Fresno. Once the plan is adopted, based on the recommendations outlined in this plan and with additional community input, grant guidelines will be developed in partnership with the Fresno Arts Council or its successor local arts agency. With guidelines in place, multiple solicitations will be released, and funding will be allocated annually.

A cultural arts plan is also a form of public policy. Policymaking is thus one of the primary tools that can be used by the City of Fresno to expand access to arts and culture.

For the purposes of this plan, policymaking refers to two kinds of policies: policies that become part of the Fresno Municipal Code (FMC) through the Fresno City Council legislative process, and policies that are used to guide day-to-day operations and procedures. There currently are various laws, regulations, policies and procedures that influence arts and culture in Fresno. For example, there are policies promoting high-quality architecture and sustainable design in the Citywide Development Code and implementation policies for design, public art and graphic identity outlined in Fresno's General Plan. On the other hand, there also are policies, such as the recently adopted Artistic Crosswalk Policy, that require the public to follow an outlined process. The cultural arts plan will guide the development of both kinds of policy—policies that become part of the FMC and policies that are used to guide day-to-day operations.

About the City of Fresno

The land on which Fresno now sits is the traditional territory of the Yokuts and Mono people. Nestled in the San Joaquin Valley, Fresno is the fifth-largest city in California and the 35th largest in the United States. More people than ever call Fresno home; its population has been growing steadily for decades. In 2021, the city reported 537,100 residents within city limits, up 8.58% from the 2010 census, making it the most populous inland city in California.

Fresno's semi-arid climate allows for year-round events and activities; however, periods of prolonged drought, poor air quality and temperatures well in excess of 100 degrees impact participation in cultural arts activities.

Demographics

Fresno is home to ethnic and culturally diverse communities. Many groups have thrived socially and culturally, enriching Fresno with their talents, perspectives, and unique arts and cultural activities—even in the face of historical and systemic obstacles. According to the U.S. Census, Hispanic and Latino community members, many from Mexico, comprise half of the population, 7% of people identify as African American or Black, 24% identify as White, 14% identify as Asian, 0.6% identify as American Indian and Alaska Native, and 0.1% identify as Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.

Please note that the following graph will be professionally designed and incorporated into the plan prior to the public review period

Census numbers do not fully represent Fresno's rich diversity. The city's Indigenous population is composed of many tribes. Fresno is also home to some of the largest Hmong, Armenian American and Punjabi communities in the nation. Community members originating from all over the world enrich Fresno by sharing their heritage, customs and values.

Fresno's diversity can be further observed in the demographics of children and youth ages 0 to 17.

Fresno (City)	Percent
African American/Black	8.0%
American Indian/Alaska Native	1.0%
Asian American	13.4%
Hispanic/Latino of Any Race	61.3%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.1%
Non-Hispanic/Latino White	14.9%
Multiracial	6.7%

Estimated percentage of the child population ages 0-17, by race/ethnicity in the City of Fresno
Data Source: Kids Data: Child Population, by Race/Ethnicity (2014-2018)

Economics

Agriculture and related industries are the economic driver of the local economy. Data from the Fresno County Farm Bureau (FCFB) indicates that much of America's produce is grown in California's Central Valley. According to the FCFB, farmers in Fresno County raise more than 300 different crops, contributing $8.08 billion to the California economy and supporting 20% of all jobs in the Fresno area. Based on FCFB estimates, every $1 generated on the farm produces another $3.50 in the local and regional economy. According to the Bureau of

Labor Statistics, Fresno's top non-farm industries are: education and health services; trade, transportation and utilities; government; leisure and hospitality; professional and business services; manufacturing and construction.

In Fresno, surveys conducted as a part of this planning process indicate that 6% of respondents derive their primary source of income from their art. Although considered part of the leisure and hospitality sector, cultural activities contribute to economic vitality across many industries. Many forms of artistic and cultural expression are included in careers such as marketing, graphic design, engineering, journalism, architecture, landscape architecture, web design and education.

The City of Fresno's unemployment rate is higher than state and nationwide rates, but significantly lower than historical trends. According to the California Economic Development Department's January 2023 report, the unemployment rate in Fresno County was 6.2% in December 2022, down from 6.6% in November 2022 and below last year's estimate of 6.9%. While local unemployment is higher than the unemployment rate in California (3.7%) and nationwide (3.3%) during the same time period, these values represent some of the lowest unemployment rates in the last two decades.

When compared to the state of California, Fresno households are slightly larger (3.1 persons) than average (2.92 persons). The average household income in Fresno is $47,746. That figure is 44% lower than the state average of $84,097. As a result, Fresnans have relatively less disposable income, illustrating the need for low- to no-cost cultural arts events and programming.

According to the 2021 American Community Survey, 26% of the population 25 years and older in Fresno had a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 36% of people in the state of California. This demonstrates the need for various forms of educational opportunity and is consistent with community voices that highlighted the need for access to education.

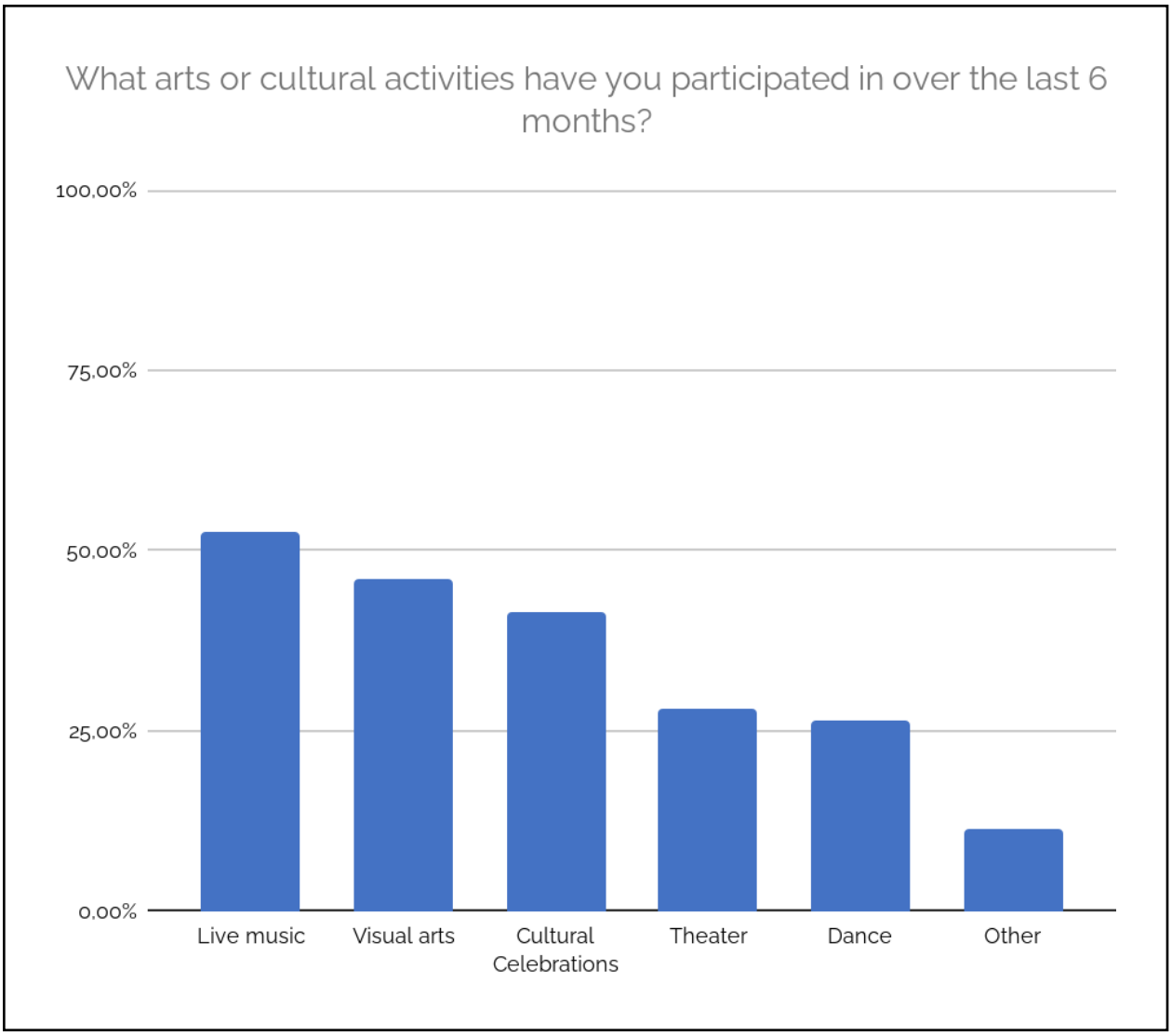
Cultural Arts in Fresno

The diverse artistic talents and cultural practices of the people who call Fresno home are too numerous to count. Art includes many forms of expression: animation, painting, sculpting, architecture, literature, music, film, song, dance, Phulkari, spoken word, theater, poetry, sculpture, textiles, sewing, quilting, mosaics, origami, collage, Paj Ntaub, basketry, beadwork, calligraphy, pottery, digital art, fashion and film. It is important to acknowledge that some of the communities that produce these works have had to overcome historical and systemic inequities that have limited their visibility, hindered their impact and restricted their growth.

Please note that the following graph will be professionally designed and incorporated into the plan prior to the public review period

According to the 4,024 respondents from the community survey, Fresnans participate in many arts and cultural activities:

53% Live music
46% Visual arts
42% Cultural celebrations
28% Theater
27% Dance performance
12% Other



Arts and culture in Fresno are closely connected to agriculture. For many people, their livelihood, sense of self, community, traditions and civic pride are related, at least in part, to agricultural practices, which create a fertile environment for artistic and cultural expression. This connection is reflected in the works of art on display at local museums, in murals and compositions.

Fresno is home to established and emerging cultural arts organizations of all sizes. The city also is known as an inspirational place for artists, writers and poets (including California's Poet Laureate, Lee Herrick, and national Poets Laureate, Philip Levine and Juan Felipe Herrera), famous stage performers like Audra McDonald, or novelists and playwrights such as William Saroyan.

The term "culture" or "cultural arts" is defined by the Alliance for California Traditional Arts (ACTA) as: "a part of the cultural life of a group or people whose members share a common

heritage, language, religion, occupation or region. These expressions are deeply rooted in and reflective of a community's shared standards of beauty, values and life experiences. Traditional arts are often passed on from one generation to the next, or from one community member to another, and express a collective wisdom, rather than only a unique personal aesthetic." The ACTA further recognizes that,

> "... traditional arts have been brought to California from other countries or regions and have taken root ... to become interwoven with the state's cultural landscape and identity ... Japanese bonsai; Cowboy poetry; Hmong reverse appliqué embroidery; Mexican corridos (ballads) and mariachi music; African American quilts; Native American basketry, ceremonial regalia construction and ritual music/dance; South Indian Bharata Natyam dance; Western saddle making; Chinese qin instrumental music; Portuguese fado singing; Native Hawaiian Kahiko Hula chant and dance; and Filipino rondalla music ensembles are but a few of the many hundreds of distinctive forms found in this tremendously diverse and culturally rich state [of California]."

It isn't feasible to define or describe a singular cultural arts identity for Fresno—doing so would oversimplify the unique and distinct traditions of the many cultures that enrich the city. Each member of the community contributes to a dynamic expression of pride and possibility that shapes the active and established local arts scene, which is rich with public art displays, arts education centers, museums, studios, cultural centers, art galleries and more. The cultural arts are the artistic manifestation of culture, presented through various artistic disciplines. Throughout the plan, the term "cultural arts scene" will be used to refer to places, spaces and activities that shape arts and culture in Fresno.

Research and Community Engagement

Methodology

Researchers used a mixed methods approach and multichannel communications strategy to collect the perspectives of Fresno's various communities. A mixed methods approach uses surveys, interviews, community meetings and more to gather both quantitative (numerical) and qualitative (experience/opinion) data. Many methods were used to seek firsthand insights from artists, advocates, community members, cultural practitioners and organizations. A multichannel communications strategy was also developed and implemented to ensure transparency and increase community awareness and participation in the planning process. The methods used to reach, collect input and learn from the community are discussed below.

Communication Strategies

Before collecting data, research and communications plans were developed (Appendix D) to ensure all approaches collected the perspectives of Fresno's multifaceted community. Through focused messaging and outreach efforts, the City of Fresno encouraged the community to take a public survey and participate in community meetings. A communications plan laid out strategies for increasing awareness of the cultural arts plan and inviting participation in the process.

Three sets of strategies were used to introduce the planning process, create interest, invite community participation and develop community engagement opportunities:

- weekly social media posts on Instagram and Facebook promoting the survey and community meetings
- a cultural arts page on the City of Fresno's website to explain how community members can engage in the process
- emails to lists including the Fresno Arts Council and other stakeholder groups to share updates and information

This section will likely feature professional graphic design and/or textual design to showcase the comms campaign components

The remaining strategies focused on inviting community participation in the surveys and community meetings, including:

- Flyers distributed at two ArtHop events, as well as 18 City of Fresno community centers serving youth and seniors.
- Flyers posted at 10 public library branches.

- Working with local schools to make parents aware of the survey through "Peachjar", the online application used for sending flyers home to parents and guardians.
- Door-to-door ambassadors, who canvased neighborhoods, attended community events, and distributed flyers and posters. To gather input from Fresno's diverse population, the City worked with two community-based organizations: Reading and Beyond and the Southeast Fresno Community Economic Development Association. These organizations went door-to-door, distributing flyers in multiple languages that promoted the survey, community meetings and information about the plan. They also conducted outreach to residential households, businesses and events. A total of 9,000 flyers were distributed.
- Paid advertising and marketing, including print, digital, radio and social media advertising on Valley Public Radio, Univision, Munro Review, Fresno Bee, Vida en el Valle and the Fresno Business Journal.
- Paid printed advertisements citywide on FAX buses.
- Signs and banners displayed at arts and culture venues in the city, such as the Fresno Chaffee Zoo and Gazebo Gardens.
- Paper surveys and lockboxes, placed at partner organizations, community centers and various events.
- Conversations with local artists and cultural practitioners about Fresno's cultural scene and their vision for the future
- In-person and virtual community meetings to gather input and build trust.

The survey opened on Sept. 22, 2022. Communication materials were offered in English, Hmong, Punjabi and Spanish. After completing the online survey, participants were able to upload a piece of original artwork or writing that could be featured in the final plan.

Foundational Research

Over the course of six months, researchers reviewed plans from similar cities, consulted sources that could provide context on the area and its culture, developed a communications strategy and plan, interviewed key community stakeholders, created an online survey and conducted community meetings. To get an accurate pulse of Fresno's arts and cultural scene, researchers consulted 100 sources of information, including:

- scholarly books and articles
- websites
- government reports
- historical documents
- news stories
- presentations
- in-person conversations
- demographic data
- cultural plans from several peer cities of a similar size and demographic

The research team brought the information together in a complete bibliography (Appendix F). Several themes proved consistent across multiple sources addressing historic social, cultural and economic trends (Appendix B).

Community Survey

From July-October 2022, an online survey (Appendix C) was developed and deployed to better understand the ways community members engage with arts and culture. The questionnaire was designed to be completed in 10–15 minutes and was open to the community for four weeks. The survey's score-based quantitative and short-answer qualitative questions were developed through conversations with Fresno's artistic and cultural stakeholders. The survey was made available in English, Hmong, Punjabi and Spanish. Prior to distribution of the materials, native speakers of each language reviewed and provided feedback. Additionally, to ensure the city's demographic makeup was accurately reflected, the final section of the survey asked a series of optional demographic questions. Data collected about the respondents' race, gender, age, income and home ZIP code ensured outreach efforts could be adjusted to achieve a representative sample.

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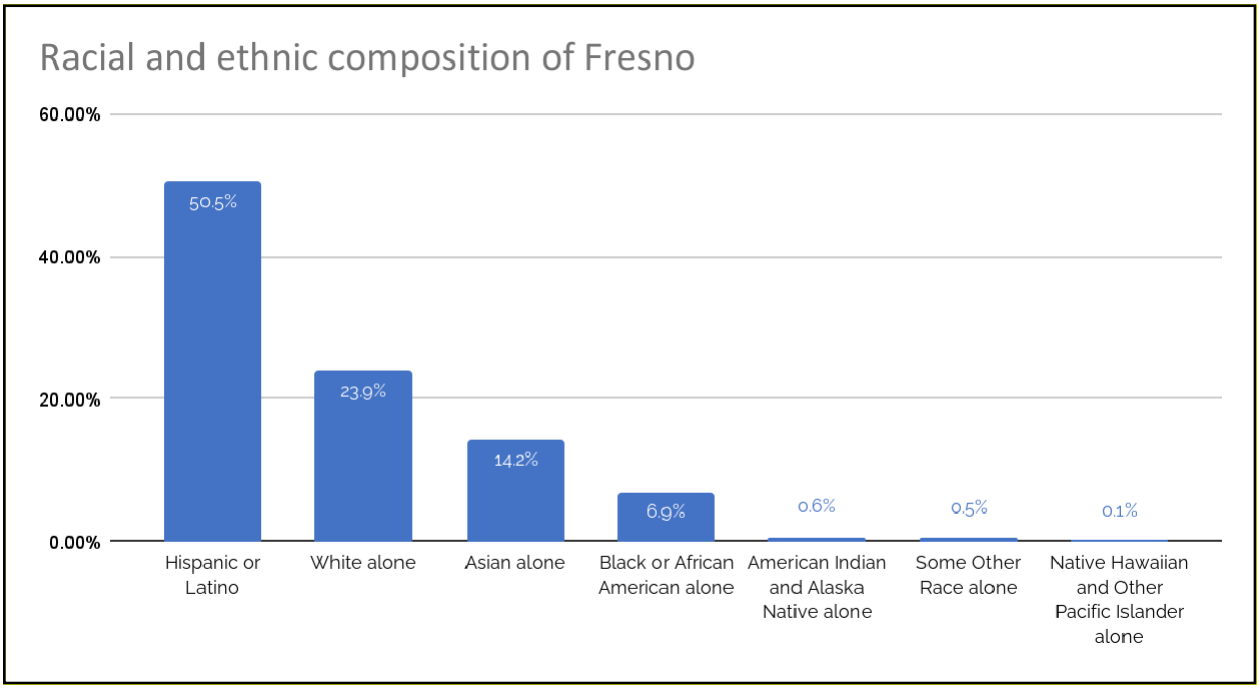
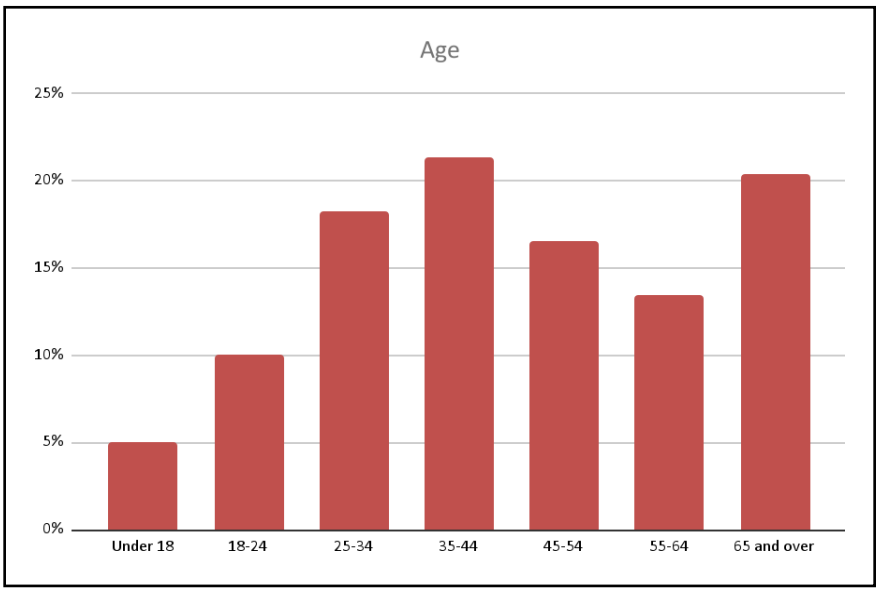
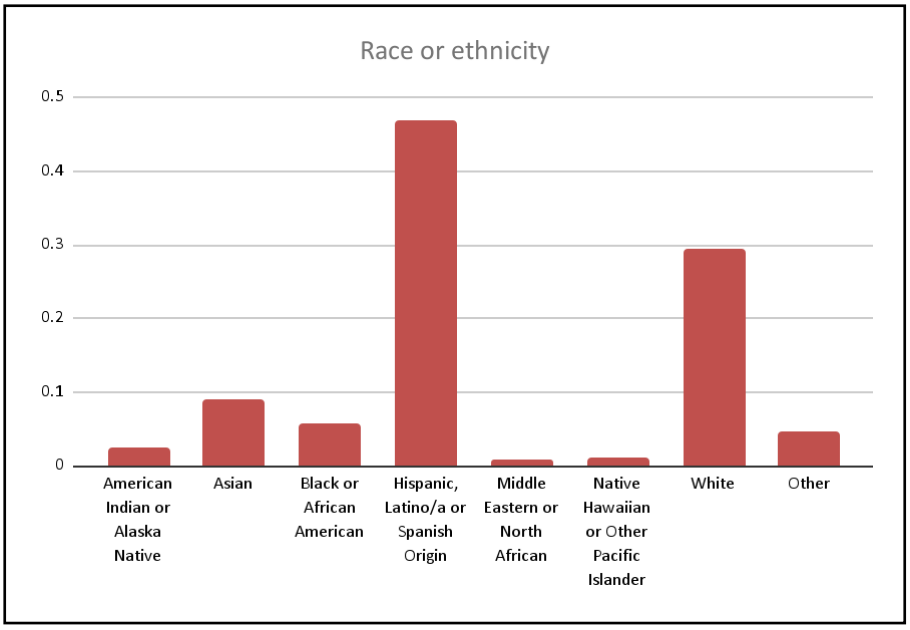


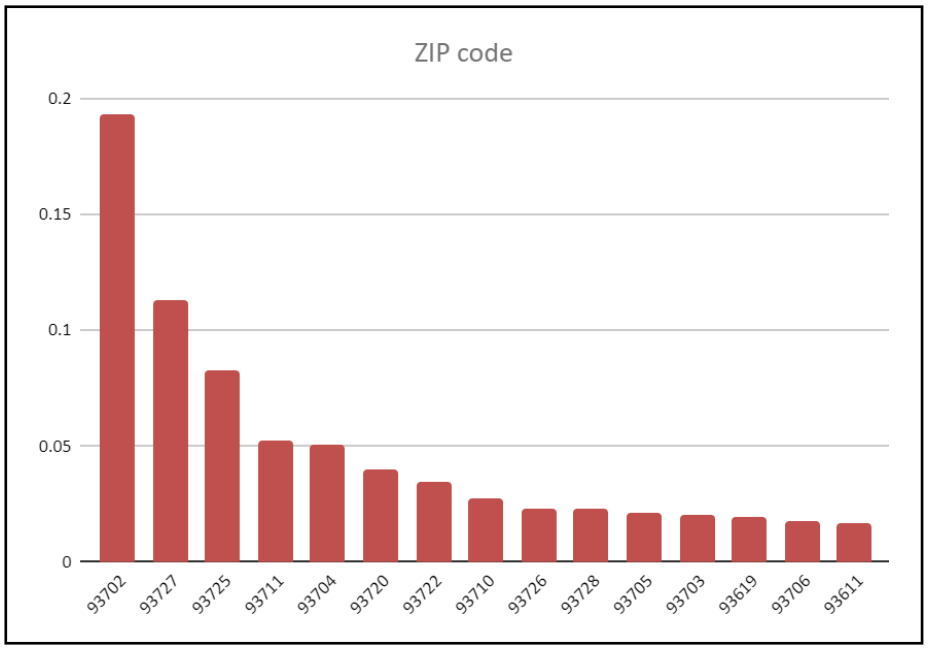


Under 18: 5%
18-24: 10%
25-34: 18%
35-44: 21%
45-54: 17%
55-64: 13%
65 and above: 20%

This section will likely feature photography and/or submitted community artwork



American Indian or Alaska Native: 2%
Asian: 9%
Black or African American: 6%
Hispanic, Latino/a or Spanish Origin: 47%
Middle Eastern or North African: 1%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander: 1%
White: 30%
Other: 5%



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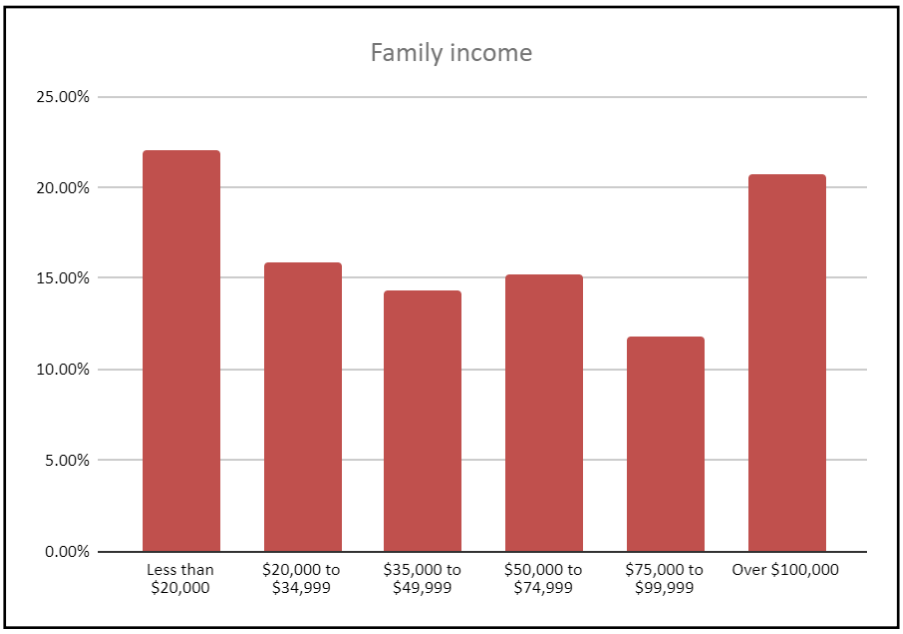
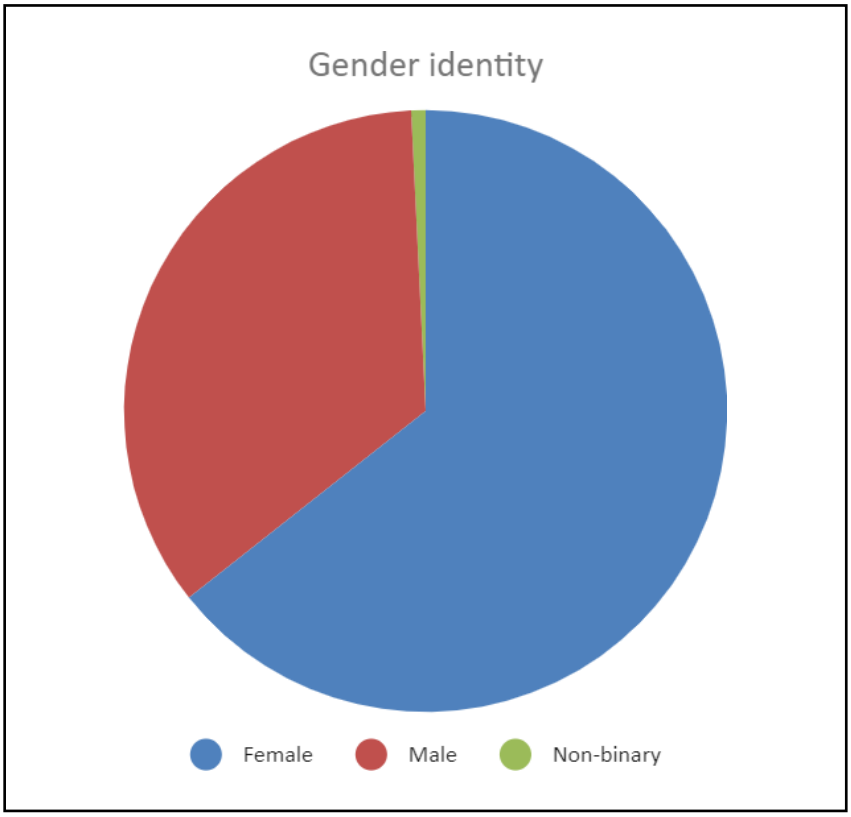


Less than $20,000: 22%
$20,000 to $34,999: 16%
$35,000 to $49,999: 14%
$50,000 to $74,999: 15%
$75,000 to $99,999: 12%
Over $100,000: 21%



Female: 64%
Male: 35%
Non-binary: 1%

This section will likely feature photography and/or submitted community artwork

In-Depth Interviews

In-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 18 individuals from a cross section of Fresno community members, artists and cultural practitioners. The City of Fresno, the Cultural Arts Plan Subcommittee, local foundations, universities and artistic organizations helped create a preliminary list of people who could be interviewed. Researchers worked to ensure the pool of interviewees reflected the diversity of Fresno's community. Interviews were conducted in English with the option of having the questions provided in the interviewee's native language. On-site interpreters were available as needed.

Interview responses were anonymized, transcribed and coded, allowing the research team to find themes that were articulated in multiple conversations. This analysis helped develop the community survey, informed the agenda for community meetings, and informed the findings and recommendations included in the plan.

Council District Meetings

Virtual, one-on-one listening sessions were conducted with Fresno City Council districts. During these conversations, council district representatives described the demographic makeup of their districts, shared arts and cultural practices in their communities, identified their district's strengths and challenges, and shared suggestions to expand access to arts and culture.

Local Artist and Cultural Practitioner Engagement

During in-depth interviews, conversations with City of Fresno employees, Council district meetings and foundational research, the research team received numerous recommendations for additional local artists and cultural practitioners who could provide details about the city's arts and cultural scene and helpful context to craft a vision for Fresno's future. Communications and invitations to connect were sent to nearly 100 people, including representatives from seven educational institutions, representatives from advocacy and nonprofit organizations, local artists, musicians and writers. Twenty-four (24) people agreed to provide anonymous input through a five-question, open-answer feedback form (Appendix C). This feedback was coded and analyzed to identify the strengths, challenges and recommendations highlighted in this plan.

Community Meetings

The City of Fresno hosted six in-person meetings and two virtual community meetings. Each event was free and open to the public. In-person events were located at local schools or community centers that were accessible by public transportation. Hmong, Punjabi and Spanish interpreters were available at each event, and all event materials were made available in English, Spanish, Hmong and Punjabi, allowing attendees to respond to prompts in their preferred language. Activities for children and food were provided to reduce barriers to participation. One of the meetings was specifically focused on gaining the input of a youth audience. To reduce barriers to attendance, youth were provided with transportation through collaboration with the Youth Leadership Institute. Community meetings reached a total of 175 community members with 120 joining the in-person sessions and 55 joining the virtual sessions. Twenty attended the youth session. The sessions were live streamed on CMAC's Facebook page, which brought an additional 1,390 views. The in-person sessions were held on:

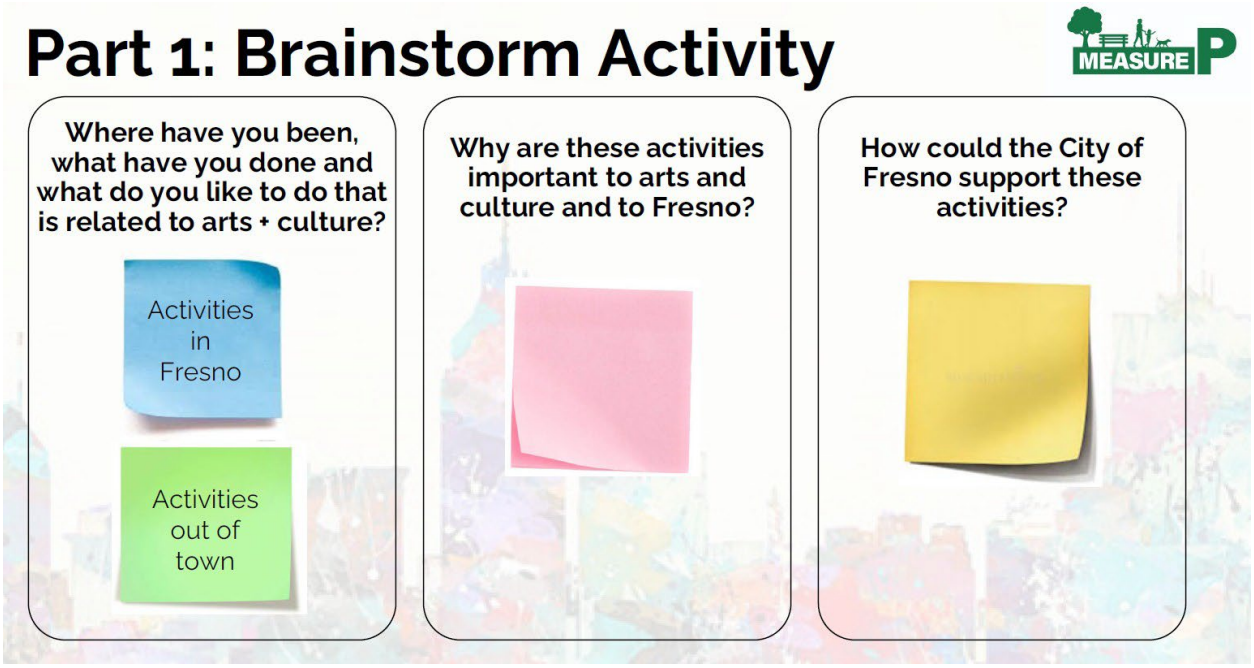
- Oct. 24, 2022, 6–8 p.m., Fresno High School
- Oct. 25, 2022, 6–8 p.m., Roosevelt High School
- Oct. 26, 2022, 6-8 p.m., Edison High School
- Oct. 27, 2022, 6-8 p.m., Vinland Elementary School
- Nov. 2, 2022, 6-8 p.m., Virtual
- Nov. 3, 2022, 6-8 p.m., Pinedale Community Center

- Nov. 8, 2022, 6-8 p.m., Virtual
- Nov. 9, 2022, 6-8 p.m., Ted C. Wills Community Center (Youth-focused Meeting)

This section will likely feature photography and/or submitted community artwork

Community meetings created a space for attendees to provide their feedback and input for shaping the future of Fresno's cultural arts environment. Meeting facilitators encouraged open dialogue and discussion and led brainstorming activities, both in small groups and as part of larger group conversations.

Please note that the following takeaway stats and placeholder community meeting slide will be professionally designed and incorporated into the plan prior to the public review period



Reach

- Implementation of the communications plan resulted in more than **1 million impressions** in the Fresno community during the four-week period the survey was open.
- More than **4,000 survey responses** were received.
- Advertisements on 114 FAX buses resulted in nearly **730,000 impressions**.

- **700+** stakeholders received a series of eight emails resulting in **5,600 impressions**.
- The Measure P Cultural Arts Plan webpage received **5,300 visits** (3,900 unique visitors) in the month of October; visitors averaged more than five minutes on the page.
- Messaging resulted in more than **450,000 impressions** across The Fresno Bee, Fresno Business Journal, Vida en el Valle, Valley Public Radio, Munro Review and Univision, resulting in **nearly 2,000 clicks.**
- Door-to-door outreach resulted in collection of more than **1,000 hard copies of the survey.**
- A total of 120 people attended in-person community meetings, of which 20 attended the youth-focused community meeting. Additionally, 55 attended virtual meetings, and **2,800 comments** were received and categorized into **194 themes** by community members.

Community Voices

This section will likely feature photography and/or submitted community artwork

The following detailed findings were distilled from a robust research and outreach program involving foundational research, in-depth interviews and multichannel public engagement efforts. Multifaceted and extensive, the findings spotlight the needs of the local cultural arts scene as well as how Fresnans aspire to expand access to arts and culture. The following subsections are conclusions drawn from those responses and additional foundational research.

Fresno is a unique community, strengthened by its rich diversity and cultural assets.

There are numerous arts institutions, nonprofits and cultural groups located in Fresno that have a history of serving the community and have laid the foundation for cultural arts in Fresno. In fact, 70% of artists and cultural practitioners whose feedback we solicited (n=24) shared that Fresno's cultural arts scene is anchored by several long-standing organizations, and that any cultural arts plan should make sure established institutions are supported and celebrated, while encouraging new organizations to take hold. Institutions such as the Fresno Art Museum, Fresno Arts Council, African American Museum, Armenian Museum, Arte Américas and more have remained a constant access point for cultural arts in Fresno. One of the city's greatest assets is its diversity. One-third (1/3) of artists and cultural practitioners who shared feedback cite Fresno's cultural diversity as one of its most important and cherished assets. People of all ages, abilities, identities, backgrounds and cultures live in Fresno.

"Stories & experiences & history of our ancestors are living and breathing within us, not in a textbook or through an observer or a colonizer's lens. We carry within us traditions and creative expression through dance, poetry, muralism, hand crafts & festivals." – Fresno Arts Practitioner

This pull quote will be professionally designed and incorporated into the plan prior to the public review period

Existing organizations have worked to highlight artists from a variety of nationalities and backgrounds, uplift marginalized communities and host cultural exchange events for the public. Whether these organizations have a long-standing presence in the community, such as Arte Américas, or have recently emerged, such as African Drum Interactive, their efforts have provided expanded access to arts and culture. Throughout foundational research,

interviews and conversations with community practitioners, institutions and events such as the Hmong New Year, African Drum Interactive drumming circles, Roger Rocka's, Juneteenth Festival, Chinese New Year, Arte Américas, Greek Festival, Armenian Museum, African American Museum, Fresno Rainbow Pride Parade and Festival, Polynesian Dance, Fresno Chaffee Zoo, and ArtHop were frequently mentioned for the opportunities they provide community members to engage with many forms of arts and culture. Community meetings held across Fresno made it clear that the larger community is a patchwork of vibrant cultural areas. The city has undergone a recent demographic evolution that has positioned it as a metropolis made up of many different communities and cultures. As a result, residents who identify as Hmong, Punjabi, Armenian, African American, Latino or of another ethnicity bring rich, varied perspectives to the table.

Destinations including the Tower District, Mural District, Fulton Street, Chinatown, Storyland and the Fresno Water Tower are just a few of the iconic representations of local arts and culture. The City of Fresno also has many assets, including theaters, that provide spaces for events and gatherings, among them the Tower Theater, Veterans Memorial Auditorium, and the Fresno Convention and Entertainment Center, which includes four venues: the Selland Arena, the Saroyan Theatre, the Fresno Convention Center and Valdez Hall. Other City of Fresno venues often utilized for outdoor events include the Rotary Amphitheater at Woodward Park and the Cultural Arts District Park. The Cultural Arts District Park is located in downtown Fresno and features an interactive lighting installation that creates a dynamic atmosphere. While listing all of Fresno's existing cultural arts assets is outside of the scope of this plan, it must be acknowledged that the community includes a number of historic art installations, structures, neighborhoods and arts institutions that have laid a foundation for cultural vibrancy.

"You won't find Hmong poetry as vibrant anywhere else in the country as perhaps here."

This pull quote will be professionally designed and incorporated into the plan prior to the public review period

The community actively participates in a wide range of programs, events and groups, and there is interest in a variety of cultural arts activities. Survey responses highlighted hundreds of events and activities that the community participated in within the last six months. Examples include: Fresno Master Chorale, Fresno Philharmonic, Kearney Pirate Faire, lectures and art exhibitions, art classes, Art Hop, the Van Gogh exhibit, Summer Arts, Art of Life Healing Garden, Shinzen Gardens, Flamenco Dance, Hmong New Year, African Drum Interactive Drum Circles, Tai Chi, Block Parties, Town Hall lectures, literary events, Car Shows, the Greek Festival, the Fresno Art Museum, Fiestas Patrias, hula dance, Polynesian dance, live performances, theater, the Koi show and concerts. Several respondents indicated their involvement was tied to churches, schools or other public spaces such as parks. Survey data suggested a particular interest in literature, whether in print or through audiobooks and podcasts. An interest in film also emerged, with 40% of respondents indicating they go to

the movies at least once per month or more. Overall, survey responses suggested that Fresnans participate in actively attending cultural arts activities as well as passively enjoying arts and culture by viewing murals and sculptures on the street.

Foundational research identified a wide variety of activities currently available for adults and families, ranging from participation in arts through the Fresno Summer Orchestra Academy and Bhangra Dance Competitions, to enjoying live music as part of a Norteño Concert, Gazebo Gardens or Fresno Street Eats.

Measure P funding is seen as one of the greatest opportunities for the future of cultural arts in Fresno.

"In many ways, it's Fresno's arts renaissance. We will be able to bring back many of the programs we lost. We are at the precipice of creating new opportunities in the arts."

This pull quote will be professionally designed and incorporated into the plan prior to the public review period

Measure P will infuse much-needed investments into arts and culture in Fresno. As a result of Measure P, the City of Fresno will have the ability to expand access to cultural arts programming and projects. In both in-depth interviews and the feedback received from artists and cultural practitioners, Measure P funding was cited as one of the greatest opportunities for the future of cultural arts in Fresno, a clear indication that the ordinance brings forth the much-needed dedicated funding for cultural arts that has been missing.

At community meetings, participants were asked what the City could do to help expand access to arts and culture in Fresno. Responses included providing funding, prioritizing investments, and promoting and celebrating cultural arts through programs and projects. While Measure P is one source of financial support, to achieve all that this plan outlines and to sustain a robust cultural arts environment, more funding sources will need to be explored. The Measure P funds, in turn, serve as a way to advance organizations and programming, as well as establish a foundation and gateway for exploring additional state, national and/or private-public funding opportunities.

"Funds will also help establish community and diversity as the basis of Fresno's cultural identity, and will facilitate more inclusive and impactful collaboration between organizations."

This pull quote will be professionally designed and incorporated into the plan prior to the public review period

Fresnans look for cultural arts to provide new experiences that help them strengthen connections with loved ones.

Fresno's culture is vibrant, varied and treasured by its residents, artists and cultural practitioners. Existing art reflects the diverse people who make it and the communities they live in. As a result of more than 2,800 community meeting responses and 18 in-depth interviews, community members expressed pride in their identities, indicating that they utilize the arts to connect with one another and build relationships with others.

Surveys show that locals are highly engaged with arts and culture, whether they create it or consume it. Nearly half of people surveyed (n=3,981) have participated in live music or visual arts activities in the last six months. Fresnans report the use of arts programming to cultivate new experiences or learnings (48%), spend quality time with loved ones (47%), engage with their local community (39%), and celebrate their own (38%) or other people's cultures (34%).

This section will likely feature photography and/or submitted community artwork

There are barriers to accessing information about cultural arts opportunities.

At meetings and in survey responses, Fresnans expressed a widespread desire for arts and cultural organizations to share more information with the community, especially as the cultural arts plan is implemented over time. Open-ended survey responses mentioned a lack of promotion on social media for cultural arts events and cited a need to share posts on Facebook and Instagram to reach audiences who may prefer one platform over the other. In the early stages of this plan's development, the existing Measure P website saw more than 5,000 visitors during a one-month period and nearly 4,000 unique visitors. These metrics further indicate an interest in accessing web-based information for Fresno's cultural arts offerings.

Additionally, in community meetings and in-depth interviews, Fresnans frequently noted that there was no single source they could reference to learn of all the cultural arts activities and offerings available. It was expressed that closure of the Fresno Bee's Arts and Culture section left a gap in traditional media coverage that members of the community still feel today. Limited awareness about cultural arts information was reflected in survey responses as well. More than 154 survey respondents indicated (using open-ended responses) that they lack information about programming and opportunities to engage with arts and culture, often learning of events "after the fact." One response summarized the

sentiment of many, stating “[I] find out about them [cultural arts events] after they are over and wish I could have attended.”

Foundational research indicated that there are several active event calendars available online, including those produced by the Downtown Fresno Partnership and the Fresno County Convention and Visitors Bureau. Both organizations currently provide a calendar of events and identify local cultural arts attractions. Despite these tools, feedback explicitly expressed in open-ended community survey responses stated that there is no singular source of event information available and no directory or hub that identifies artists and cultural practitioners. Developing a comprehensive directory was also a theme among group discussions during the community meetings.
“It is hard to access information about when events are taking place. I miss things because I never heard about them. We need a clearing house/regular forum for events. Other large cities have pink sections of the local paper where events are posted,” said one survey respondent.

Although arts and culture are abundant in Fresno, information is siloed. As the City of Fresno moves forward with implementation of this plan, it is important, as the community noted, that it maintains direct and responsive engagement with arts and cultural organizations and individuals in the community. A review of other cultural plans revealed that several cities—including Boston, Massachusetts; Chicago, Illinois; Denver, Colorado; and Sacramento, California—recognized the importance of designating an arts and culture-focused individual and/or department to answer questions and connect communities with cultural event opportunities.

Further compounding the issue, cultural art practitioners whose feedback we solicited (n=24) indicated that arts organizations struggle with visibility and audience-building (22%), despite an extensive and diverse arts ecosystem (100%). Other cities have successfully implemented a centralized online hub for cultural arts information. For example, Sacramento maintains a public arts database, Sacramento365, which highlights all of the community’s public works and events. This digital hub houses funding information, performance information and more.

Visibility is also limited for existing city assets, including murals, sculptures and the Cultural Arts District. Foundational research revealed a lack of awareness about Fresno’s current Cultural Arts District. People at community meetings and participants in in-depth interviews voiced a desire for the dedication of formal districts. As an added challenge, organic web results fail to consistently identify one area of the city as the Cultural Arts District. Fresno can address this challenge by identifying, designating, and uplifting several burgeoning Cultural Arts Districts throughout the city. The City of Las Cruces, New Mexico, demonstrated that investment in such districts can be highly successful. When it designated its district, Las Cruces saw increases in tourism, local pride, and participation in arts and culture activities (Cook, 2020). With the right strategies in place, Fresno’s Cultural Arts District can achieve the same goals.

Transportation and accessibility are essential to engaging with cultural arts in Fresno.

The City of Fresno's geographic expanse (115 square miles), periods of extreme heat and poor air quality create obstacles around access to arts and culture—especially for senior audiences.

Across multiple community meetings and in many interviews, expanded walking and biking routes, coupled with walkability improvements to better access cultural arts opportunities were repeatedly requested. The city's community survey revealed that Gen Z (born between 1997–2012), Latinos and people with incomes below $50,000 are less likely to attend events that can't be accessed easily by foot and/or public transit.

The location of existing events also posed challenges for the community. For example, when discussing ArtHop, several practitioner feedback forms and community meeting responses mentioned how the event is held downtown—making it difficult for residents from other neighborhoods to attend if they cannot afford transportation or have an easy way to access the area. There was a very clear need to further enhance the transportation system to expand access to arts and culture in Fresno, including active transportation and public transit.

While downtown acts as a central location for cultural arts, these should be infused everywhere to meet the cultural, demographic and geographic diversity of Fresno. The Measure P ordinance states, "Grants funded ... shall prioritize organizations and programs that support and expand diverse public or youth engagement and equity." Comments at the community meetings reflect the importance of this: "Making sure the outreach reaches everyone equally."

"I think what makes Fresno's arts community amazing is its diversity."

This pull quote will be professionally designed and incorporated into the plan prior to the public review period

Accessibility was also cited as a barrier by many seniors and people with limited mobility. They identified that walking long distances or navigating facilities with mobility devices like canes or wheelchairs is difficult. Examples of survey comments that identified accessibility as an issue, included: "I'm disabled and some venues are not easily accessible" and "Not often easily accessible for disabled, sometimes seem too exclusive, would love to see more family-friendly/sensory-friendly times/venues and more inexpensive entries with more opportunities to support artists directly. "

The Fresno area has an active artist community—but more support is needed to ensure artists, cultural practitioners and organizations are connected, stable and can thrive.

Fresno is home to many artists; 44% of survey respondents self-identified as someone who produces or practices art, and 27% of these self-identified artists (12% of *all* respondents) reported regularly earning an income from their artistic work. 14% of self-identified artists (6% of *all* respondents) rely on their art as a main source of income. In addition to artists, the cultural arts community encompasses large, well-established organizations and smaller emerging organizations. Many feel Fresno's art institutions only represent or showcase certain communities, creating a stratified scene and leaving underserved groups (primarily communities of color) on the outside looking in. Despite the desire to network and collaborate, research conducted for this plan uncovered repeated concerns about the lack of cohesion within Fresno's cultural arts sector.

This section will likely feature photography and/or submitted community artwork

Multiple organizations provide support to local artists and organizations. They should be encouraged to continue these efforts, with a focus on emerging nonprofits such as those that have formed within the last 10 years. In-depth interviews and practitioner feedback revealed that groups serving communities of color often do not receive the same level of resources or widespread support as those that serve predominantly white communities. Prioritizing relationships with organizations that primarily serve marginalized and underserved communities could serve to reduce this.

"There's a perception amongst the community of some of the communities of color here that art is not a place for them. Like they're not welcome in these spaces ... or we feel out of place in these spaces. We don't feel like this is a place that welcomes us."

This pull quote will be professionally designed and incorporated into the plan prior to the public review period

Artists communicated a desire to build relationships with one another, but lacked opportunities to do so. Local artists feel an absence of financial support and communicate that the assistance that does exist is often composed of one-time grants, frequently won by established "high-arts" organizations. In community meetings, artists expressed frustration that expanded access to arts and culture grants is restricted to nonprofit organizations as required by the ordinance.

Organizations face similar challenges. Multiple in-depth interviews and practitioner responses showed a common interest in collaboration, relationship building and connectedness. However, many groups said they have been unable to focus on long-lasting relationships with organizations sharing similar objectives and interests because of a lack of consistent resources. It was communicated that limited grant opportunities, the competitive nature of requests for proposals and other funding structures create barriers to collaboration. Fresno's cultural arts organizations clearly communicated a need for support, including funding. Many interviewees expressed the need to operate on shoestring budgets to pursue their goals, while coping with the impacts of vandalism and deferred maintenance. 14.4% of these interviewees emphasized the need for money and funding for all institutions, artists and organizations in Fresno. Some in the community feel the city's art institutions only represent certain communities and do not engage enough with underserved communities. Local artists feel an absence of financial support. Nontraditional arts groups and communities of color feel they have to rely on personal funds to stay afloat. Without more government support, local organizations say the community becomes more segregated and stratified, more heavily influenced by wealthy patrons who can afford to donate money to the organizations they care about most.

While Fresno has an impressive breadth of cultural arts practitioners and organizations (as reported in in-depth interviews and artist and practitioner surveys, as well as indicated in foundational research), financial constraints, staffing shortages and geographic barriers prevent them from working together. Organizations and individual artists do not have the resources to focus on collaboration, community building or pursuing new connections when they operate in "survival mode." Many local artists and emerging organizations (groups with an annual budget under $500,000) communicated the need for additional resources to sustain themselves and their operations. More support is needed to ensure artists, cultural practitioners and organizations can thrive. This support can be offered in the form of grant funding and technical assistance to obtain and manage additional sources of funding. Both grants and capacity building were identified as critical to artists or organizations that have not historically had access or experience managing grant revenue.

"As we strengthen arts organizations, we also strengthen individual artists because now organizations can hire and can access individual artists and can commission their works."

This pull quote will be professionally designed and incorporated into the plan prior to the public review period

Arts and culture support physical and mental health.

A 2019 World Health Organization report found that participating in arts and cultural activities can have a significant positive impact on mental health and overall well-being

(Fancourt and Finn, 2019). Supporting cultural arts organizations that work directly with at-risk youth, veterans, seniors, justice-involved populations, etc., can extend these benefits to the groups that need them most. There are many opportunities, such as art classes, museum visits and performances, that can be designed specifically for these populations. When building these programs, it is important to rely on the models of outreach programs already in place in Fresno (such as the Fresno Art Museum and Arte Américas), and to partner with non-arts entities that are already serving these groups.

Participation in arts and culture is expressive and reflective, with activities that support mental health and well-being. Arts and culture also provide an outlet and sense of connection with others. Twenty-six percent (26%) of survey respondents chose "for physical and mental health" as one of the top reasons why they engage with cultural arts. Local events such as ArtHop feature local artists and consistently draw large crowds. This level of interest, paired with Fresno's large, diverse cultural expression, lends itself to tremendous potential for incorporating cultural arts into educational, mental health and public health programs. Studies reviewed as part of foundational research indicated that art can be used as a form of therapeutic intervention for veterans, individuals undergoing cancer treatments and individuals who have been formerly incarcerated (Elimimian et al., 2017; Tiret, 2017). There are distinct ways in which physical health and wellness also interact with arts and culture. Cultural arts activities promote physical activity through walking, dance and other exercises that strengthen mind-body connections such as tai chi.

COVID-19 has had a lasting impact.

COVID-19 has affected artists, organizations, events and the way individuals choose to participate in arts and culture. As shared by one community member, "Covid was certainly a showstopper." COVID-19 has had a negative impact on local artists, who communicated that they are still trying to recover from the effects of the pandemic. Many organizations shared that they are still working to rebuild audiences, which declined as a result of the pandemic. Many survey respondents indicated that ongoing concerns about COVID-19 impeded their ability to participate in arts and culture. Several reported not feeling comfortable returning to their prior participation. Outdoor and remote events were identified as a way to reduce risks and engage more people. Based on survey responses, 56% of Fresnans would like to see more cultural arts activities offered virtually.

"Lately I want outdoor events only."
"I'd like to attend all of these, but Long Covid/Autoimmune issues prevent me. I'd like opportunities to enjoy them online."

This pull quote will be professionally designed and incorporated into the plan prior to the public review period

More should be done to increase art in public spaces.

“I hope that we just have more public art installations, where I don't have to make time to go to an event, per se, but will just see them driving by or walking around.”

This pull quote will be professionally designed and incorporated into the plan prior to the public review period

While there is a strong presence of art throughout Fresno in the tower district and mural district, feedback at community meetings indicated that residents desire more. The various community meetings revealed an often-voiced desire for increased artwork throughout the city.

During the community meetings, community members frequently recommended increasing the number of murals as a way to add to neighborhoods and uplift the community. Specific comments during community meetings mentioned the ways additional art can help beautify neighborhoods and strengthen communities, uplift individuals, and bring awareness to the various identities in different communities. Multiple interviewees cited the importance of Fulton Street as a location for public art—as well as the need for increased installations throughout Fresno.

Foundational research outlines the many benefits of public art. Public art increases visibility for artists, allows community members to access arts in a variety of ways and boosts the overall city appearance. For example, other cultural arts plans outline the ways public art can help revitalize communities and make neighborhoods more inviting. Cultural plans in Chicago and Oakland include a specific designation of funds for the installation and maintenance of public artwork. These plans discuss the ways public art can contribute to a sense of identity at the city level.

Practitioner feedback also highlighted the desire to maintain current installations and the value these add to the community in terms of exposing residents to art. Both interviews and practitioner feedback included ideas for real estate developers to partner with local artists when building new businesses in the area as a way to spread public art throughout the city. Fresno City Hall has long featured local artists on its walls, thanks to the efforts of the Fresno Arts Council (Matlosz, 2007). During community meetings held to develop this plan, community members consistently failed to acknowledge this location as a place to interact with or view the arts. While the space has been successful in featuring a variety of artists, the Fresno Arts Council can work with community members to attract new viewers and maximize the number of artists featured.

This section will likely feature photography and/or submitted community artwork

Activating public spaces across all neighborhoods is another way to bring art to the community and is commonly called placemaking. Placemaking refers to designing spaces that represent, engage and attract the community. According to the American Planning Association, successful creative placemaking highlights unique community characteristics. Projects can focus on connecting local history with the present, bringing cultural influences into the spotlight and creating new traditions. It builds connections between people and places by encouraging collaboration and visualization. Whether in the form of additional murals, painted utility boxes, or other public opportunities to showcase creative expression, arts in public spaces can contribute to expanded access to arts and culture in Fresno. An example of the way other cities have expanded access to art in public spaces comes from Oklahoma City's Cultural Arts Plan, which recommended incorporating arts into its Master Parks System to involve people of all ages. In the years since its adoption, the subsequent *Arts in the Park* initiative has provided regular arts programming to Oklahoma City's youth and earned the city national media attention for successfully distributing public art in the community (Lackmeyer, 2022).

A sense of safety is important.

More than 23 respondents in the community survey explicitly mentioned safety as a top barrier for them to engage more with cultural arts in Fresno. Respondents used the open-ended text space in this question to express this concern. Responses related to safety indicated a request for better lighting, parking and increased security to create a sense of safety at venues, events and in the surrounding areas.

"Best thing is to revitalize downtown so we feel safe going down at night. Art Hop is great but lighting and parking need improvement."

This pull quote will be professionally designed and incorporated into the plan prior to the public review period

Arts and culture serve as a powerful means to build relationships.

This section will likely feature photography and/or submitted community artwork

In its many forms, art can provide a chance for people to learn more about one another and share experiences in a meaningful way. This is especially important given the historical

legacy of segregation, red-lining and other discriminatory policies across cities in California. As the community takes steps to heal and address injustice in all forms, cultural arts offer powerful ways to bring people together.

Whether the art in question is a drawing, poem, dance or homemade dish, every creative medium reveals something about the person behind it. Cultural arts practitioners interviewed as part of this planning process believe cultural arts can bridge divides. Interview respondents identified that arts can help open dialogue across groups. An example of this can be found in the way in which the National Gallery of Art uses art as a medium to open dialogue on race in America through a variety of art lessons and activities offered as a part of its “Uncovering America” series.

Participants at the youth community meeting expressed the ways in which cultural arts can bring people together to “help combat prejudice, stereotypes and racism.” When asked about the importance of arts and culture, approximately 14% of youth responses spoke about equitable representation and ensuring that everyone across all backgrounds, especially LGBTQ+ and Indigenous populations, was properly acknowledged and supported through cultural arts.

Cultural arts support the local economy.

“I believe a thriving arts community creates a thriving city.”

This pull quote will be professionally designed and incorporated into the plan prior to the public review period

Foundational research indicated that existing cultural events, such as the Danzantes Unidos Festival and the Bhangra Dance Competition, draw thousands of individuals to Fresno for multiday events. These events provide space to learn and celebrate culture and have a positive economic impact on the local economy—particularly for the local hotel and restaurant industries. Community meeting attendees expressed a desire to bring more events, installations and art exhibits to Fresno to minimize the need to travel to Los Angeles or the Bay Area in pursuit of cultural arts activities.

Costs create a barrier to hosting and participating in cultural arts events and programs.

Findings indicate that there are cost barriers for artists, cultural practitioners, organizations and the community. Many cultural organizations in particular struggle to receive the same level of financial support as arts groups and organizations. Practitioner feedback and in-

depth interviews revealed a lack of access to the arts for those living in poverty. These barriers are, in part, related to admission costs and programming fees, which many lower-income families cannot afford. Community surveys also indicated that fees and other costs prohibited some organizations from holding events. For example, one community member shared that “some groups don't have public performances or presentations because they can't cover operations costs.”

As part of community meetings conducted to inform the cultural arts plan, attendees expressed a need for more affordable cultural arts opportunities. Community members consistently mentioned a desire to see public art dispersed throughout the entire city and indicated that costs prevent them from engaging with the arts. Survey results concurred with this finding and often identified the cost of parking as a barrier to participation.

Fresno’s climate impacts the cultural arts scene.

While Fresno’s climate can allow for outdoor events for most of the year, several interview respondents indicated that periods of high heat limited their ability to participate in outdoor events. For example, one respondent stated: “It's too hot in the summer for me personally to enjoy outdoor venues.” Incorporating climate-resilient design into cultural arts venues, parks and other public places can help address these barriers. Climate-resilient design includes such things as shade structures, urban greening, and architecture that conserves natural resources, supports climate adaptation and is consistent with the Parks Master Plan.

Lack of affordable housing, transportation and studio/theater space creates barriers for artists and cultural practitioners.

“Speaking for both myself and other cultural bearers, if you find us a way to get us our own space for our specific culturally based arts, help with funding the needs of our programs—supplies, paying instructors—you will give us more than what we have now to work with. Many cultural practitioners like me had to sacrifice our own personal finances and time to even get our programs to be available in the Valley.”

This pull quote will be professionally designed and incorporated into the plan prior to the public review period

Throughout the research and outreach process, creators continually cited the need for affordable studio spaces and climate-controlled work environments, whether to create art or host programs for the community. These groups expressed a need for dedicated work

areas within the city that can be leased on a long-term basis. The affordability of an artist's space depends upon many factors, such as location, proximity to other cultural assets, size, floorplan, distance to public transportation infrastructure and/or parking, and whether utilities or other amenities are included in rent. These factors should be considered when setting appropriate rates for studio spaces.

Arts organizations and practitioners (n=18) remain ambitious but expressed that they feel isolated from peers (22%) and lack government support (38%). As part of community events, artists expressed the need for space, stating that "permanent spaces equal permanent programs."

According to the 2021 American Community Survey, the median housing value in Fresno was $273,900. The median monthly rent was $1,115. Additionally, 57.5% of Fresnan renters are housing cost burdened, meaning that they paid more than 30% of their income in rent. Rent increases in Fresno have been among the nation's highest (Garibay, 2022).

Affordable housing, access to affordable transportation and dedicated studio/theater spaces are essential to expanding access to arts and culture.

Time constraints and schedules limit access to arts and culture in Fresno, especially for youth and seniors.

Time was an often-cited barrier by survey respondents. Many indicated that their work schedules left little time during the day for participation in cultural arts, and attending events on weeknights was challenging. Several respondents asked for more weekend options.

"I work 6 days a week. not enough free time."
"I don't drive, so getting to Art Hop in the evenings is difficult for me. Plus, I work from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., so I'm exhausted when I get home."

This pull quote will be professionally designed and incorporated into the plan prior to the public review period

Others noted that events during evening hours were challenging for families with young children. "Mainly just a busy schedule working full time with young children." "It is difficult to take young children to performances at 7 p.m. or later, so more performances during the day would be helpful." Responses also suggest the need for family-friendly performances where parents with young children could feel welcome.

Notably, seniors indicated an interest in events held earlier in the day. When asked about difficulties participating in cultural arts in Fresno, senior respondents highlighted that

many events occur at night. Several seniors communicated that as they have gotten older, they have stopped going out in the evening times. “I am 74 now so I don't go out at night as much as I used to.”

It is clear from community member responses that there is a need to offer programming at a variety of times. There is also a need to offer passive forms cultural arts, such as outdoor installations and murals that can be accessed at the convenience of the community.

Parents and youth are seeking cultural arts programs and events for young people citywide.

Notably absent from Fresno’s cultural arts scene were children’s art museums. Respondents indicated that the 2010 closure of the Fresno Metropolitan Museum of Art and Science left a void in the community. Many respondents indicated a desire for programming for young children and programming built with families in mind. Although there are a number of destinations where children can learn about the natural sciences, including the Fresno Chaffee Zoo, Discovery Center and City of Fresno Highway City Science Center, and literature, including local libraries and Storyland, there are no arts and cultural museums in Fresno designed exclusively for the interests and needs of children.

Additionally, several of Fresno’s long-standing institutions struggle to cultivate an audience. Current efforts fail to strongly resonate with residents who do not have a background in the arts, which can prevent young people from getting involved.

Youth voices from the youth community meeting indicated that teenage youth seek greater access, safe spaces and representation in arts and culture. As part of the youth community meeting, youth were asked what the City of Fresno can do to provide better support to cultural arts. In total, youth community meeting attendees provided 97 responses—approximately 24% of which included requests pertaining to youth support both in and outside of school, especially those residing in neighborhoods with fewer resources.

Comments included:

“Safe environment to express ourselves.”

Other areas of research highlighted the importance of increasing youth opportunities throughout the community:

“There are students or young people that are willing to learn about the importance of art history and art making—we as a community have the tools and knowledge, we just need to let the students be aware of it.”

“When kids see people making art, they feel they can make art.”

“We just have to be more inclusive about raising people up in a community because each one of those people are prospective buyers, creative people and intellectual assets. I mean, they have so many resources we don’t even know about because they’re never allowed to develop them.”

This pull quote will be professionally designed and incorporated into the plan prior to the public review period

Investment in arts education and apprenticeship programs is important.

Community members clearly shared that arts in education is important. Over half of in-depth interview participants (n=18) cited arts education as essential for any successful wide-ranging arts investment. There are many ways the community can participate in arts education, including as a part of primary, elementary, middle and secondary schooling and higher education. In addition to the “traditional” education system, arts education can occur in many forms, including internships, externships, fellowships, artist residencies, apprenticeships and community-based education.

“From my experience, there is a lot of art talent here; it’s just that I think the opportunities are very rare ... they have a hard time getting access to resources that really uplift their community.”

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Foundational research provides examples and definitions for arts education outside of the traditional educational settings.

Internships: The *University of Maryland Career Center* classifies internships as typically short-term supervised work experiences in a chosen field, designed for students or recent graduates. The goal of an internship is to gain hands-on experience, develop skills and network within the industry. Internships may be paid or unpaid; though paid internships are essential to reducing barriers to participation and are strongly encouraged.

Externships: In a 2022 article analyzing the differences between internships and externships, Genevieve Carlton designates the latter as short-term jobs or shadowing opportunities for students or recent graduates to observe and learn about a particular job or industry. Like an internship, externships provide a professional learning experience. Unlike an internship,

externs do not complete job tasks—their primary role is to shadow and observe. Externs are typically unpaid but may be provided with a stipend to reduce barriers and enable participation in the program. Externships may be used to determine interest in various fields prior to pursuing other longer-term education in the arts.

Fellowships: The *Columbia University Undergraduate Research and Fellowships* webpage categorizes fellowships as opportunities awarded to postgraduate students or professionals to receive training, conduct research or gain specialized experience in their field of study. Fellowships are paid and often sponsored by foundations, associations, organizations, college institutions or government organizations. Fellowships in the arts typically include a competitive application process. Once awarded, fellowships may last between six months to two years.

Artist Residency: In a 2016 article, Henri Neuendorf describes residencies as programs that give artists the opportunity to live and work outside of their usual environments, providing them with time to reflect, research or produce work. Residencies usually last several months to a year. Typically, applicants are required to submit a project proposal, résumé, and letter of motivation or similar documentation. Some host centers have restrictions or conditions on the work produced, whereas others provide few guidelines to enable creative expression. Artist-in-residence programs are short-term, ranging in length from six months to one year.

Apprenticeships: In an article [no date] on the importance of apprenticeships, the ASVAB Career Exploration Program emphasizes how they provide structured, on-the-job training where an individual learns a skilled trade through hands-on experience under the guidance of a skilled worker or mentor. In many industries, apprenticeships are registered and include a mix of classroom education and hands-on learning. Registered apprenticeships are typically full time and result in certifications that create a pathway to a career. In the arts, apprenticeships have historically been less formal. The length of apprenticeships offered vary from short duration (weeks) to longer terms. Apprentices may be paid hourly or through a stipend, depending on the time commitments.

Community education brings arts education to the community through short-term programs offered at community centers, schools, senior centers and other community spaces. Community education builds knowledge and skills while providing a space for the community to connect with one another. Programs are typically low- to no-cost and are offered as one-time events or as part of a short-term series (4–12 weeks). Community education is a low-barrier way to be exposed to all forms of art and learn new skills. Examples of community education opportunities in Fresno include the senior ceramics program, tai chi classes and music lessons offered at community centers.

Meaningful arts education is the groundwork for a healthy, vibrant cultural arts scene. These programs will give students a much-needed space for expression, teach them to

carry their individual traditions and train them in hard skills they will use for the rest of their lives. Tracking the effectiveness of these programs will illuminate areas for improvement, as well as strengths that can be replicated elsewhere.

This section will likely feature photography and/or submitted community artwork

Vision, Goals, and Grant Funding Priorities

The cultural arts planning process inspired an aspirational, ambitious and achievable vision for the future.

VISION

Cultural arts in Fresno will be recognized, prioritized, inclusive, accessible, and continue to reflect, celebrate and connect the community.

This vision will be realized by focusing efforts around six goals. Developed on the basis of key findings, these goals can be realized through the implementation of recommendations accompanied by actionable strategies designed to energize, invest in and elevate Fresno's arts and cultural environment. There is no specific funding allocated for each goal and associated recommendation, and the recommendations may require additional entitlement and CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) processes. Goal six recognizes that the overarching purpose and responsibility of city government, its programs, and services, will intersect with and contribute to the success of the other goals of this plan.

GOALS

The following goals establish desired outcomes:

Goal 1: GRANT-MAKING & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Goal 2: STABILIZE, RESTORE & ACTIVATE

Goal 3: EDUCATION & ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Goal 4: CELEBRATE & ENHANCE

Goal 5: ADDRESS BARRIERS, INNOVATE & EXPAND

Goal 6: MUNICPAL INVESTMENTS AND POLICIES TO SUPPORT CULTURAL ARTS

This section will likely feature professional graphic design and/or textual design to showcase the goals

Priority Recommendations & Strategies

The following recommendations identify priority investments to achieve the goals.

Goal 1: GRANT-MAKING & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This section will likely feature photography and/or submitted community artwork

Desired outcome: Establish a strong foundation to support and expand access to arts and culture through grant-making and community engagement.

"Involving cultural community leaders, organizations and artists in the government's processes [...] will strengthen a relationship of trust and dialogue between the two parties."

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Recommendation 1.1: Utilize Fresno's designated arts agency, The Fresno Arts Council or its successor local arts agency, to expand citywide arts and culture.

Strategy: Act as the liaison to the Fresno Parks, Recreation and Arts Commission, City of Fresno departments, local arts and culture organizations, and artists and cultural practitioners.

Strategy: In partnership with the Fresno Parks, Recreation and Arts Commission, implement an annual grants process to invest in competitive grants for nonprofit organizations that support and expand access to arts and cultural programming.
Strategy: Create a process to track implementation data and evaluate performance to achieve cultural arts plan goals.
Strategy: Update expanded access to cultural arts grant program guidelines annually, including community engagement.
Strategy: Update cultural arts plan every five years, including addressing shifts in needs for Fresno's cultural arts scene.
Strategy: Ensure cultural arts information is made available in languages as requested.
Strategy: Ensure all materials are provided and communicated in Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible formats.
Strategy: Ensure information is provided for age-specific audiences. For example, identify programming intended for children and seniors.

Strategy: Ensure accessibility services at cultural arts events such as American Sign Language interpreters, closed captioning, audio description, access ramps, dedicated spaces and more for people with mental and/or physical disabilities (e.g., accessibility seating and parking spaces).

Recommendation 1.2: Develop the expanded access to arts and culture grant program guidelines to ensure a transparent and competitive process consistent with the ordinance requirements, including regular evaluation and review of the process.

Strategy: Develop and fund grant programs for core operating and project-support grants, including the requirements for eligibility. Development of these programs will require ongoing community outreach and input to build upon the foundational research and key findings from this cultural arts plan.
Strategy: Adhere to SEC. 7-1506 (b)(4)(E) of the ordinance which states "Grants funded pursuant to subparagraph (B) shall prioritize organizations and programs that support and expand diverse public or youth engagement and equity."
Strategy: Manage expanded access to cultural arts grant solicitations and ensure all grantees provide timely project delivery, reporting, funding and invoicing.
Strategy: Facilitate community engagement process to ensure community voices are heard for annual development of grant programs.
Strategy: Make funding available for an independent evaluator to evaluate process, outcomes, and investments to ensure transparency.
Strategy: Include evaluation and key performance indicators in grant agreements.
Strategy: Develop a streamlined, equitable and flexible grant application process for the expanded access to arts and culture grant program accessible to all Fresno cultural arts organizations.

Strategy: Require programs seeking expanded access to arts and culture funding to report the number of individuals the project intends to serve and the demographics including Council Districts it intends to serve.

Recommendation 1.3: Leverage and multiply expanded access to arts and culture funding by seeking additional sources of revenue.

Strategy: Identify and apply for grant funding and sponsorships to expand local cultural arts events, programs, and assets: for example, the Challenge America and Our Town grants run by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).

Recommendation 1.4: Collaborate with city departments and partners to address identified barriers and expand access to arts and culture.

Strategy: Partner with Fresno County Social Services to promote cultural arts programs and events.

Strategy: Engage with the City of Fresno's Disability Advisory Commission to seek input on expanding access to cultural arts.

Strategy: Partner with foundations and corporate sponsors to offer free and reduced museum admissions.

Goal 2: STABILIZE, RESTORE & ACTIVATE

This section will likely feature photography and/or submitted community artwork

Desired outcome: Cultural arts organizations and assets will be stabilized, restored and activated to expand access to arts and culture.

Desired outcome: Provide all Fresno residents with access to a variety of cultural arts resources.

Recommendation 2.1: Existing cultural arts assets should be maintained.

Strategy: Invest in maintenance and conservation of the city of Fresno's existing cultural arts assets.

Recommendation 2.2: Develop opportunities for intergenerational engagement and family-centered access to cultural arts, including museums, programs, and events citywide.

Strategy: Provide funding opportunities to support more family-oriented cultural arts programs and events—for example, family discounts in organization pricing models.

Strategy: Encourage collaboration between organizations with the same cultural traditions but audiences of different ages.

Strategy: Make grant funding available for museums and exhibits tailored to the needs and interests of youth.

Strategy: Prioritize investments to organizations that provide cross-cultural experiences for all ages to build understanding of traditions, practices and heritage.

Strategy: Incentivize organizations to provide youth - and teen-focused programming.

Strategy: Prioritize investments in cross-cultural and intergenerational programs that provide opportunities for preserving traditional arts.

“It’s critical that youth in Fresno have access to robust arts and culture programs.” – Community Member

This pull quote will be professionally designed and incorporated into the plan prior to the public review period

Goal 3: EDUCATION & ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

This section will likely feature photography and/or submitted community artwork

Desired Outcome: Expand access to a variety of arts and cultural education programs to provide educational opportunities for people of all ages.

Desired Outcome: Equip artists, cultural practitioners and organizations with the skills and organizational resources to stabilize and expand operations.

Recommendation 3.1: Offer capacity-building opportunities for existing and emerging organizations and artists.

Strategy: Make funding available through an established grant program for emerging organizations and local artists to learn more about marketing, self- promotion, establishing a nonprofit, alternate funding sources and organizational best practices.
Strategy: Allocate resources for technical assistance and economic development workshops to build the capacity of artists and grassroots organizations to create business plans, apply for grants and increase economic stability.
Strategy: Incentivize long-standing organizations to share resources and best practices with emerging cultural groups.
Strategy: Provide technical assistance for existing and emerging cultural arts organizations to help bring in additional resources to expand arts and culture.

Recommendation 3.2: Partner with organizations to provide networking opportunities for local artists and cultural practitioners.

Strategy: Invest grant funding and/or sponsorships to host professional development workshops throughout the year, focused on nonprofit leaders and individual artists. Workshops could also focus on funding sources, career opportunities and other areas for growth.
Strategy: Incentivize collaboration across the arts and culture community with new and established organizations and programs.
Strategy: Form an alliance of cultural organizations with a focus on inclusiveness and diversity in representation. Leaders across the arts, government and private sectors should focus on long-term community participation in the arts.

"These opportunities would increase the viability of arts careers in Fresno and deepen connections between the Fresno arts community and learners of all ages."

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Recommendation 3.3: Invest in arts and culture education and preservation programs.

Strategy: Support capacity building through grant programs for Fresno arts and cultural organizations that strengthen their ability to provide arts education.
Strategy: Make grant funding available for paid internships, externships, fellowships, apprenticeships, and art residency programs.
Strategy: Build partnerships with school districts to promote, support and provide continued educational arts and culture programs.
Strategy: Develop funding opportunities for nonprofits to establish mentor-apprentice programs focused on the practice and preservation of a cultural art or tradition.
Strategy: Provide job training, career development or both to youth, young adults and veterans, including education and/or certification for jobs within the arts.

Strategy: Invest in arts and culture programs to educate the community on Fresno's racial and cultural history and ensure that cultural awareness and dialogue remain a priority.
Strategy: Seek additional grant funding to expand after-school arts programs and provide local artists and cultural practitioners teaching opportunities.

Recommendation 3.4: Use data and metrics to identify and track students' arts education and/or training experiences.

Strategy: Track participation, demand, student success rates, and/or effectiveness of school-

day and after-school arts programs as a means of identifying community needs.

"These measures will establish public feedback as vital to all decisions made regarding arts and culture in Fresno."

This pull quote will be professionally designed and incorporated into the plan prior to the public review period

Goal 4: CELEBRATE & ENHANCE

This section will likely feature photography and/or submitted community artwork

Desired Outcome: Elevate and celebrate arts and culture to strengthen a sense of community.

Recommendation 4.1: Amplify and celebrate Fresno's diversity through Cultural Arts Districts to increase awareness within the community, encourage new meeting places and attract visitors to the city.

Strategy: Evaluate expanding the boundaries of the current Cultural Arts District to include areas long known for their public arts, such as the Fulton Street Mall. Adding more of Fresno's street art into the district will boost its recognition and create a stronger cultural identity for the city as a whole.

Strategy: Identify and support multiple Cultural Arts Districts throughout Fresno.
Strategy: Seek state certification for the Cultural Arts Districts to increase recognition across the state and increase funding opportunities.
Strategy: Develop a brand guidelines toolkit for artists, practitioners and venues in Fresno to incorporate in their marketing and spaces to highlight their place within the district to help further establish the brand identity of the Cultural Arts Districts.
Strategy: Increase the presence of local art in the Cultural Arts Districts.
Strategy: Invest in art attractions, signage, entry points and other creative ideas to highlight Fresno's diversity.

Strategy: Use ArtHop to highlight new installations, grassroots events and public artworks downtown. Support the Fresno Arts Council to tap into ArtHop's audience to cross-promote events held throughout Fresno. Events such as Fresno LitHop or PorchFest can benefit from collaborative efforts to encourage community participation on a regular basis. This also will help expose community members to alternative forms of artwork.

Recommendation 4.2: Support and expand neighborhood placemaking citywide.

Strategy: Encourage projects that engage the community, including youth and seniors, reflect or celebrate local heritage and culture, enliven the cityscape, and increase the availability of cultural resources in neighborhoods with fewer cultural assets.
Strategy: Further establish citywide brand identities in arts and culture.
Strategy: Make grant funding available for placemaking in public spaces.
Strategy: Make grant funding available for public art installation projects, including murals, in public spaces.

Recommendation 4.3: Incorporate arts, culture and creativity into the transportation system.

Strategy: Encourage the Fresno Yosemite International Airport and FAX Transportation Department to continue to expand arts and cultural installations at their facilities.
Strategy: Encourage and support projects that engage local artists and cultural practitioners.

Recommendation 4.4: Embrace arts and culture as catalysts for shared traditions and new experiences.

Strategy: Celebrate and recognize individuals, organizations and others who have made an impact in the cultural arts community annually.

Goal 5: ADDRESS BARRIERS, INNOVATE & EXPAND

This section will likely feature photography and/or submitted community artwork

Desired Outcome: Expand access to arts and culture by eliminating barriers and investing in innovation.

“Provide dedicated city resources to act as a directory for museums, arts and cultural experiences.”

This pull quote will be professionally designed and incorporated into the plan prior to the public review period

Recommendation 5.1: Develop and maintain an online cultural arts information hub to increase awareness and address barriers to information.

Strategy: Allocate resources to inventory existing cultural arts event calendars,

directories, maps and resources.

Strategy: Allocate resources to inventory cultural arts assets**,** organizations and destinations, including museums, art galleries, arts and culture-focused nonprofit organizations, media centers, theaters, artist studios, authors, musicians and other local creative professionals.

Strategy: Make grant funding available for nonprofit organizations to assist with the development or enhancement of a cultural arts information hub to include the following:

- a cultural arts asset map including, but not limited to, public art and sculptures
- a directory of local creative professionals, organizations, and establishments in the city
- a citywide calendar of events focused on cultural arts events
- grant opportunities
- educational and other job opportunities
- a resource-sharing platform

Strategy: Allocate resources and staffing to maintain the online hub and engage the community and organizations in submitting cultural arts assets and events.

Strategy: Cross-promote the online hub with partners such as schools, public libraries, senior centers and at community locations, including city-owned facilities.

Strategy: Work with economic-development institutions and visitors bureaus to attract cultural arts events and investments.

Recommendation 5.2: Increase equitable access to information across all demographics.

Strategy: Establish a grant program for nonprofit media organizations to provide arts and culture coverage through a multichannel strategy, including newspaper, radio, social media, etc.

Strategy: Organizations with dedicated email lists, should be encouraged to further highlight community events, art installations and local artists.

Recommendation 5.3: Address transportation barriers limiting access to arts and culture.

Strategy: Make grant funding available to subsidize transportation costs to provide accessible options for residents to attend arts and culture activities and events.

Recommendation 5.4: Prioritize projects and programs that improve accessibility for seniors and people with disabilities.

Strategy: Invest in mobile arts and culture programs that bring arts and culture to seniors and people with limited mobility to expand access citywide.

Strategy: Make grant funding available to provide accessibility services at cultural arts events such as American Sign Language interpreters, closed captioning, audio description, access ramps, dedicated spaces and more for people with mental and/or physical disabilities (e.g., accessibility seating and parking spaces).

Recommendation 5.5: Support and encourage organizations and projects that promote mental health and well-being through cultural arts practices.

Strategy: Prioritize cultural arts programming with health and wellness co- benefits.
Strategy: Make grant funding available to communicate and evaluate the positive impact cultural arts engagement can have on mental and physical wellness.

Recommendation 5.6: Encourage consideration of public health in arts and culture programs and events.

Strategy: Make grant funding available for cultural arts programming and events offered virtually.
Strategy: Make grant funding available for public health precautionary measures, as appropriate (e.g., face masks, cooling measures, and hand sanitizer).
Strategy: Activate outdoor spaces at night for arts and cultural events to combat extreme heat.

Recommendation 5.7: Address safety concerns that limit access to arts and culture.

Strategy: Make grant funding available for safety-related precautions and improvements at cultural arts institutions, events, programs, and activities to ensure residents feel safe and comfortable.

Recommendation 5.8: Provide incentive programs to increase access to arts and culture.

Strategy: Make grant funding available to subsidize or reduce admission fares for low-income households to attend arts and cultural events, programs, and activities.
Strategy: Seek additional grant funding to offer reduced or no-cost cultural arts programming to low-income households.
Strategy: Develop operating grant programs for organizations in need of funding dedicated specifically toward increasing overall accessibility of operations and programs.
Strategy: Develop funding opportunities for small-scale arts organizations to expand their virtual offerings.
Strategy: Make grant funding available for nonprofit organizations to provide no- or low-cost cultural arts events and programs while prioritizing underserved communities.
Strategy: Provide free parking during cultural arts events.

Recommendation 5.9: Address time barriers limiting access to arts and culture.

Strategy: Make grant funding available to expand operating and programming hours to include participants of all ages.

Strategy: Incentivize expanded operating hours to reach senior, youth, families and audiences at times that reduce participation barriers**.**
Strategy: Make grant funding available for cultural arts programming and events offered virtually.
Strategy: Make grant funding available for programs that partner with employers to expand access to arts and culture in the workplace.
Strategy: Encourage organizations to evaluate operating hours using patron surveys, focus groups and listening sessions to expand access to arts and culture.
Strategy: Invest in passive forms of arts and culture, including attractions, installations, etc. that are publicly accessible.

Recommendation 5.10: Increase access to affordable theater, performance and studio spaces for artists and nonprofit organizations within Fresno.

Strategy: Encourage property owners to rent spaces to smaller or emerging cultural arts organizations at low or no cost.

Strategy: Create grant opportunities that allow artists to receive funding for a physical studio space.

GOAL 6: MUNICIPAL INVESTMENTS AND POLICIES TO SUPPORT CULTURAL ARTS

This section will likely feature photography and/or submitted community artwork

Desired Outcome: Establish a strong foundation to support and expand access to arts and culture through policy planning and municipal investment.

"Involving cultural community leaders, organizations and artists in the government's processes [...] will strengthen a relationship of trust and dialogue between the two parties."

This pull quote will be professionally designed and incorporated into the plan prior to the public review period

Recommendation 6.1: Invest resources and staffing to adhere to the requirements of the Measure P Expenditure Plan outlined in the ordinance.

Strategy: Expand cultural arts programming as part of after-school, senior, recreation and community service programming offered through PARCS.

Strategy: Coordinate expanded access to arts and culture through citywide and neighborhood-specific plans and policies.

Recommendation 6.2: Existing cultural arts assets should be maintained.

Strategy: Develop a policy and plan to restore city-owned cultural arts assets.
Strategy: Invest in maintenance and conservation of existing city-owned cultural arts assets.
Strategy: Make grant funding available for accessibility assessments, improvements and equipment.
Strategy: Plan and implement safety improvements consistent with Parks Master Plan.

Recommendation 6.3: PARCS department should collaborate across city departments to address transportation barriers.

Strategy: Serve as a stakeholder throughout planning processes.
Strategy: Explore opportunities to support grant applications that improve the transportation system.
Strategy: Engage with the City of Fresno's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee to seek input on incorporating art within the active transportation network.

Recommendation 6.4: Establish plans and policies to install art in all public places.

Strategy: Develop process for identifying available locations for installation, maintenance, accessibility and other pertinent factors.
Strategy: Incorporate arts and culture into FAX's public transportation facilities, plans, design standards and operations.
Strategy: Incorporate arts and culture into active transportation plans, design standards and facilities.
Strategy: Convene a working group composed of PARCS staff, the City of Fresno's departments and Fresno Arts Council to identify opportunities to incorporate arts and culture into city facilities, plans and operations.
Strategy: Establish a public art policy to expand access to arts and culture in public spaces.
Strategy: Establish a citywide mural policy.

Recommendation 6.5: Encourage and incentivize urban development and redevelopment projects to incorporate Fresno's cultural arts sector.

Strategy: Hold listening sessions with developers to identify potential barriers to expanding access to arts and culture through urban development and redevelopment projects.
Strategy: Convene a working group composed of representatives from the City of Fresno Planning and Development Department, PARCS Department and other relevant departments to discuss and identify potential incentives to address identified barriers.
Strategy: Ensure urban development plans encourage and incentivize redevelopment of live-work spaces, art galleries and creative spaces that will house and provide space for active local artists.

Strategy: Develop a policy for cultural arts sponsorships, donations and additional sources of revenue.
Strategy: Incentivize the adoption of artwork in high-traffic spaces, such as medical buildings, schools and businesses, to increase the presence of art throughout the city.

Recommendation 6.6: Incorporate climate-resilient design in city-owned facilities.

Strategy: Collaborate with Public Works Department to assess existing design standards for climate adaptation, including design standards for shade structures, trees, etc**.**

Recommendation 6.7: Evaluate PARCS operations to identify ways to expand access to arts and culture.

Strategy: Update and promote PARCS online reservation system and website and facilitate reservations for indoor and outdoor rental spaces as an affordable option to host cultural arts gatherings.
Strategy: Ensure the City of Fresno's Master Fee Schedule continues to identify fee reductions for nonprofit cultural arts organizations.
Strategy: Evaluate the benefits and fiscal impacts of setting aside a period of time when local cultural arts organizations, schools and emerging performance groups can access city-owned rehearsal and performance spaces at a lower cost.
Strategy: Evaluate the benefits and fiscal impact of providing government subsidies, grants and waivers to help local organizations access city-owned and privately owned theater or performance spaces.
Strategy: Evaluate the special event permit process to identify barriers for organizations to hold special events in Fresno, especially for small and emerging organizations.
Strategy: Explore opportunities to provide letters of support for public safety grants.
Strategy: Collaborate with Public Works Department to evaluate existing citywide lighting standards.
Strategy: Work with the City of Fresno Economic Development Department to assess affordable studio spaces for artists and identify unoccupied or underutilized spaces in buildings across Fresno. Evaluate the feasibility of transforming identified locations into subsidized studio spaces for artists and cultural practitioners.
Strategy: Collaborate with the City of Fresno Economic Development Department to further promote the rental of city-owned facilities by arts and culture organizations.

GRANT FUNDING PRIORITIES

The following grant funding priorities shall help to guide the investment over time in achieving the

visions and goals of the Cultural Arts Plan.

Goal 1: GRANT-MAKING & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Strategy: In partnership with the Fresno Parks, Recreation and Arts Commission, implement an annual grants process to invest in competitive grants for nonprofit organizations that support and expand access to arts and cultural programming. (1.1)

Strategy: Develop and fund grant programs for core operating and project-support grants, including the requirements for eligibility. Development of these programs will require ongoing community outreach and input to build upon the foundational research and key findings from this cultural arts plan. (1.2)
Strategy: Adhere to SEC. 7-1506 (b)(4)(E) of the ordinance which states "Grants funded pursuant to subparagraph (B) shall prioritize organizations and programs that support and expand diverse public or youth engagement and equity." (1.2)
Strategy: Make funding available for an independent evaluator to evaluate outcomes and investments to ensure transparency. (1.2)

Goal 2: STABILIZE, RESTORE & ACTIVATE

Strategy: Invest in maintenance and conservation of the city of Fresno's existing cultural arts assets. (2.1)

Strategy: Provide funding opportunities to support more family-oriented cultural arts programs and events—for example, family discounts in organization pricing models. (2.2)
Strategy: Encourage collaboration between organizations with the same cultural traditions but audiences of different ages. (2.2)
Strategy: Make grant funding available for museums and exhibits tailored to the needs and interests of youth. (2.2)
Strategy: Prioritize investments to organizations that provide cross-cultural experiences for all ages to build understanding of traditions, practices and heritage. (2.2)
Strategy: Incentivize organizations to provide youth- and teen-focused programming. (2.2)
Strategy: Prioritize investments in cross-cultural and intergenerational programs that provide opportunities for preserving traditional arts. (2.2)

Goal 3: EDUCATION & ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Strategy: Make funding available through an established grant program for emerging organizations and local artists to learn more about marketing, self- promotion, establishing a nonprofit, alternate funding sources and organizational best practices. (3.1)
Strategy: Allocate resources for technical assistance and economic development workshops to build the capacity of artists and grassroots organizations to create

business plans, apply for grants and increase economic stability. (3.1)
Strategy: Incentivize long-standing organizations to share resources and best practices with emerging cultural groups. (3.1)
Strategy: Provide technical assistance for existing and emerging cultural arts organizations to help bring in additional resources to expand arts and culture. (3.1)

Strategy: Invest grant funding and/or sponsorships to host professional development workshops throughout the year, focused on nonprofit leaders and individual artists. Workshops could also focus on funding sources, career opportunities and other areas for growth.

Strategy: Support capacity building through grant programs for Fresno cultural arts organizations that strengthen their ability to provide arts education. (3.3)
Strategy: Make grant funding available for paid internships, externships, fellowships, apprenticeships and art residency programs. (3.3)
Strategy: Develop funding opportunities for nonprofits to establish mentor-apprentice programs focused on the practice and preservation of a cultural art or tradition. (3.3)
Strategy: Provide job training, career development or both to youth, young adults and veterans, including education and/or certification for jobs within the arts. (3.3)

Strategy: Invest in cultural arts programs to educate the community on Fresno's racial and cultural history and ensure that cultural awareness and dialogue remain a priority. (3.3)
Strategy: Seek additional grant funding to expand after-school arts programs and provide local artists and cultural practitioners teaching opportunities. (3.3)

Goal 4: CELEBRATE & ENHANCE

Strategy: Encourage projects that engage the community, including youth and seniors, reflect or celebrate local heritage and culture, enliven the cityscape, and increase the availability of cultural resources in neighborhoods with fewer cultural assets. (4.2)

Strategy: Make grant funding available for placemaking in public spaces. (4.2)
Strategy: Make grant funding available for public art installation projects, including murals, in public spaces. (4.2)
Strategy: Encourage and support transportation projects that engage local artists and cultural practitioners. (4.3)

Goal 5: ADDRESS BARRIERS, INNOVATE & EXPAND

Strategy: Allocate resources to inventory existing cultural arts event calendars, directories, maps and resources. (5.1)
Strategy: Allocate resources to inventory cultural arts assets, organizations and destinations, including museums, art galleries, arts and culture-focused nonprofit organizations, media centers, theaters, artist studios, authors, musicians and other local creative professionals. (5.1)
Strategy: Make grant funding available for nonprofit organizations to assist with the

development or enhancement of a cultural arts information hub to include the following (5.1):

- acultural arts asset map including, but not limited to, public art and sculptures
- a directory of local creative professionals, organizations and establishments in the city
- a citywide calendar of events focused on cultural arts events
- grant opportunities
- educational and other job opportunities
- a resource-sharing platform

Strategy: Allocate resources and staffing to maintain the online hub and engage the community and organizations in submitting cultural arts assets and events. (5.1)

Strategy: Establish a grant program for nonprofit media organizations to provide arts and culture coverage through a multichannel strategy, including newspaper, radio, social media, etc. (5.2)

Strategy: Make grant funding available to subsidize transportation costs to provide accessible options for residents to attend arts and culture activities and events. (5.3)

Strategy: Invest in mobile cultural arts programs that bring arts and culture to seniors and people with limited mobility to expand access citywide. (5.4)

Strategy: Make grant funding available to provide accessibility services at cultural arts events such as American Sign Language interpreters, closed captioning, audio description, access ramps, dedicated spaces and more for people with mental and/or physical disabilities (e.g., accessibility seating and parking spaces). (5.4)

Strategy: Prioritize cultural arts programming with health and wellness co-benefits. (5.5)

Strategy: Make grant funding available to communicate and evaluate the positive impact arts and cultural engagement can have on mental and physical wellness. (5.5)

Strategy: Make grant funding available for cultural arts programming and events offered virtually. (5.6)

Strategy: Make grant funding available for personal protective equipment and other precautionary measures (e.g., face masks and hand sanitizer). (5.6)

Strategy: Make grant funding available to subsidize or reduce admission fares for low-income households to attend cultural arts events, programs and activities. (5.8)

Strategy: Develop operating grant programs for organizations in need of funding dedicated specifically toward increasing overall accessibility of operations and programs. (5.8)

Strategy: Develop funding opportunities for small-scale arts organizations to expand their virtual offerings. (5.8)

Strategy: Make grant funding available for nonprofit organizations to provide no- or low-cost cultural arts events and programs while prioritizing underserved communities. (5.8)

Strategy: Make grant funding available to expand operating and programming hours to include participants of all ages. (5.9)

Strategy: Incentivize expanded operating hours to reach senior, youth, families and audiences at times that reduce participation barriers**.** (5.9)

Strategy: Make grant funding available for safety-related precautions and improvements at cultural arts institutions, events, programs and activities to ensure residents feel safe and comfortable. (5.7)

Strategy: Make grant funding available for programs that partner with employers to expand access to arts and culture in the workplace. (5.9)

Strategy: Encourage organizations to evaluate operating hours using patron surveys, focus groups and listening sessions to expand access to arts and culture. (5.9)

Strategy: Invest in passive forms of arts and culture, including attractions, installations, etc. that are publicly accessible. (5.9)

Strategy: Create grant opportunities that allow artists to receive funding for a physical studio space. (5.10)

Implementation

This cultural arts plan distills 31 recommendations under six primary goals to be implemented through short-, mid- and long-term milestones to account for resources that need to be established and evaluated over the coming years. Being as effective as possible with the resources and timing of each recommendation is critical to the success of this implementation, in addition to opportunities for ongoing community engagement. An evaluation methodology shall be used for the grant program once formally established. This evaluation methodology will monitor implementation progress and provide visibility to the public to see when milestones are achieved.

Short-term

- Allocate resources including grant funding to inventory existing cultural arts organizations, assets, directories and calendars.
- Share information and updates on implementation progress across social media and other communication outlets.
- Launch full-scale cultural arts online events calendar, informational hub and resource-sharing platform. Updates should include a list of recurring as well as new cultural arts events *(*e.g., gatherings held in parks, offered through libraries, co-sponsored by local businesses, revealing public art installations*)* and useful resources (e.g., grant criteria, media toolkits).
- Identify opportunities for ongoing community engagement throughout the implementation period.
- Begin widespread messaging around the physical and mental wellness benefits of engaging with arts and culture, in conjunction with the presentation and implementation of this plan.
- Utilize the city's designated arts agency, the Fresno Arts Council or its successor local arts agency, to expand citywide arts and culture and act as liaison to the Parks, Recreation, and Arts Commission, City of Fresno Departments, arts and cultural organizations and the greater Fresno community.
- Develop a grant system complete with processes for community input, implementation timelines, recipient selection criteria and evaluation methodology.

- Pursue official state certification (and associated benefits) for Fresno's Cultural Arts Districts to increase awareness within the community, encourage new meeting places and attract visitors to the city.

Mid-term

- Continue to share information and updates on implementation progress across social media and other communication outlets.
- Maintain and update cultural asset and public art mapping across the city as the cultural arts scene evolves from year to year.
- Evaluate the grant program using the predetermined metrics and measures, and adjust the program as necessary.
- Develop necessary partnerships among the City of Fresno, school districts, arts organizations, etc., to solidify an expansive arts education network and consistent professional development opportunities (internships, residencies, etc.).
- Direct resources to amplify and celebrate Fresno's Cultural Arts Districts to increase awareness within the community, encourage new meeting places and attract visitors to the city.
- Evaluate the current state of local arts residency programs, fellowships, internships, externships and related school programming.

Long-term

- Assess the value and strength of the cultural arts online events calendar, informational hub and resource-sharing platform. Take steps to feature the repository and its tools as a central access point for the entire arts and culture community.
- Undertake maintenance and refinement of the cultural asset and public art mapping effort across the city as the cultural atys scene evolves from year to year.
- Continue to share information and updates on implementation progress across social media and other communication outlets.
- Ensure the availability of well-paying, meaningful internship and externship opportunities in the cultural arts scene.

- Update the grant system based on evaluation of successes over the previous grant cycles. Overarching goals in this period should be to have a regular reporting mechanism in place to provide updates on grants issued to date, recorded achievements of grantees, and upcoming objectives based on emerging needs of the greater arts and culture community.
- Ensure aggregate grant reporting during this period to track how the system has cultivated and advanced in the following areas, including but not limited to: cross-organizational partnerships; workspace studio availability, residencies and educational opportunities for cultural practitioners; supporting established and long-standing institutions; empowering entities looking to serve marginalized communities; health and wellness initiatives connected to arts and culture; and intergenerational exchange.

City of Fresno Implementation Priorities OBJ

- Plan and implement improvements consistent with the Parks Master Plan, investing in the maintenance and restoration of city- and non-city-owned assets.
- Begin inventorying all citywide plans to explore adding arts and culture components.
- Expand access to information about city resources (e.g., PARCS guidelines for public areas, spaces available for use).
- Evaluate the current state of accessibility in Fresno's cultural arts scene and begin providing necessary support (financial or otherwise) for making improvements.
-
- Convene a working group of city representatives and developers to identify opportunities of expanding access to arts and culture through urban development and redevelopment projects, as well as through improvements to transportation options.
- Establish a reporting mechanism at meetings between city officials, PARCS staff and/or developers to collaboratively advance reporting on the extent to which arts and culture initiatives are incorporated into citywide and neighborhood-specific plans.

Conclusion

Fresno has a lot to look forward to. The city stands upon a diverse cultural foundation, and local residents are determined to take their community to new heights. The collective enthusiasm they showed in surveys, interviews and community meetings is a sign they are ready to fulfill Fresno's potential.

Measure P is key to expanding access to arts and culture in Fresno. Its directive is clear: Identify the cultural arts community's needs; prioritize outcomes and investments; and develop a vision and goals for programming that reflects Fresno's cultural, demographic and geographic diversity. The plan, with these findings and recommendations, shall inform the expanded access to cultural arts grant programs. Although Measure P is a tremendous step in expanding access to arts and culture for Fresnans, additional funding will be needed to implement all of the strategies outlined in this plan.

The strategies and recommendations laid out in these pages are intended to be acted upon over the next five years to ensure the community's vision is achieved. Several of the strategies and recommendations identified in the plan will require the City of Fresno, or other organizations, to identify funding sources as well as complete appropriate entitlement and CEQA processes before implementation.

With this plan’s guidance and the fresh perspectives it inspires, residents can create the city they have dreamed of: a bustling, thriving artistic center, accessible to everyone.

Appendix A: Measure P Ordinance

- PDF version
- Online version

Appendix B: Cultural Planning Process

Foundational research

- Foundational research takeaways
- Please see Appendix F for bibliography of works cited and consulted texts.

List of cultural plans reviewed

Research for the above cultural arts plan drew upon a variety of other cultural plans developed in cities across the United States. The cities selected were considered similar to Fresno, whether in terms of size, density, industry, proximity, demographics or population. The plans were analyzed to identify common themes and implementation timelines of specific projects. The information gathered from outside cultural arts plans will help the City of Fresno implement and execute its plan as it moves forward.

The following external cultural arts plans were used as part of foundational research:

- Athens Public Arts Master Plan 2017
- City of Berkeley Arts & Culture Plan 2018-2027 Update
- City of Boise Cultural Master Plan 2017
- Boston Creates Boston Cultural Plan 2015
- Chapel Hill Cultural Arts Plan 2016
- City of Chicago Cultural Plan 2012
- Imagine 2020: Denver's 2013 Cultural Plan
- Arts and Culture Master Plan: Fort Pierce, FL
- Greensboro Cultural Arts Master Plan 2018
- Iowa City Public Art Strategic Plan 2019
- Iowa Arts Council: Strategic Plan 2019-2021
- Las Cruces Arts & Cultural District Plan 2018
- Cultural Awareness Plan: Madera County 2021-2023
- Newark Creates: A Community Cultural Plan For Newark 2018-2028
- Belonging in Oakland: A Cultural Development Plan, 2018.
- Amp Up OKC: An Art Master Plan for the City of Oklahoma City 2015
- Creative Life: Raleigh Arts Plan 2016
- Creative Edge: Sacramento's Arts, Culture and Creative Economy Plan 2018
- Sioux Falls Imagined: A Cultural Plan for a Vibrant and Prosperous City 2014

The following cultural arts reports from the Fresno Arts Council were also used during the research process:

- Fresno Arts Council: Fresno Cultural Plan Assessment Report September 2003
- Fresno Arts Council 2010 Cultural Arts Plan

Methodology + Original Data Analysis

A mixed-methods approach of quantitative and qualitative data collection was used in the preparation of this plan.

Qualitative data was analyzed by multiple team members and placed in a bibliography containing all written sources. Notes from PRAC meetings and council district sessions were transcribed for review, as were in-depth interviews and additional practitioner feedback. The data gathered at community meetings was collected and transcribed, including group themes, sticky notes and event feedback forms. Quantitative data gathered from the survey was compiled in a workbook for team analysis. The workbook holds the raw responses from virtual and paper surveys in all languages (translated to English). It also provides a crosstab analysis with summary statistics for all questions by gender, age, race/ethnicity, geography and family Income.

Appendix C: Original Data Collection Tools

Cultural Arts Plan Community Survey

- English
- Hmong
- Punjabi
- Spanish

City of Fresno Cultural Arts Plan — Artist and Advocate Input

- Artist and Cultural Practitioner Input Form

In-depth Interviews

- In-depth Interview Question Guide

Appendix D: Breakdown of Public Outreach and Input

Communications Strategy and Plan

The communications plan was developed between June and August 2022, before launching at the beginning of September 2022. The multichannel plan included a mix of digital, print and in-person outreach elements to maximize the number of people reached. All communications materials were translated and shared in English, Hmong, Punjabi and Spanish.

A variety of strategies were used as part of the overall communications plan to inform and facilitate feedback across the City of Fresno:

Strategy	Tactics	Timeline
Social Media Campaign	The City of Fresno PARCS Department utilized Facebook and Instagram to share information on the development process. Relevant posts were pinned to the top of the profile pages.	September 2022 - April 2023
Website Updates	The City of Fresno's Measure P website was updated to include relevant information on the progress of the plan.	September 2022 - April 2023
Targeted Emails	Emails were sent to the Parks Recreation and Arts Commission distribution list to share information on the status of the plan and ways to participate.	September 2022 - April 2023
Utilizing ArtHop	Canvassers were present at various ArtHop events to distribute flyers to encourage survey responses and attendance at community meetings. Printed materials had a QR code to take users to the survey and the Measure P website.	September 2022 - October 2022
Reaching	Flyers and posters were	September - October

Community Partners	distributed to various community partner organizations and local businesses across the City of Fresno, such as recreation centers and senior centers to share survey and meeting information. There was also an information booth with flyers stationed at the 2022 Big Fresno Fair.	2022
Incorporating Public Libraries	Flyers were placed at 10 public libraries within city limits to help reach residents without computer access and provide opportunities for survey participation.	September - October 2022
Fresno Unified School District and Central Unified School District	Information regarding survey and community event participation was shared with the district using Peachjar.	September - October 2022
Canvassing	Door-to-door ambassadors from several community-based organizations were utilized to distribute flyers and posters in person to promote the survey and share information for the community meetings.	September - October 2022
Paid Advertising	Paid digital and print advertisements were used to share information on the survey and community meetings through multiple outlets, including: Univision Fresno, The Munro Review, The Fresno Bee, The Fresno Business Journal, Valley Public Radio, Fresno Hmong Radio, and Fresno Punjabi Radio. Interior cards on FAX buses were also used to advertise the development of the cultural arts plan.	September - October 2022
Printed Signage	Banners were printed and stationed at 27 Fresno parks with information on the survey and community meetings.	September - October 2022
Lock Boxes in the City	Paper copies of the survey and lock boxes for submission were	September - October 2022

	placed at all community centers and placed at various events within Fresno. Paper copies of the survey were also offered at local events during the months of September and October.	

Appendix E: Organizations and Institutions

List of organizations and institutions reviewed and/or discussed during research and interviews

- 2nd Space Theater
- Advocates for Indigenous California Language Survival
- African American Theater Contingent
- African-American Historical and Cultural Museum of the San Joaquin Valley
- Alliance for California Traditional Arts Fresno Office
- Armenian Museum
- Art of Life Cancer Foundation
- Arte Américas
- ArtHop
- Ballet Folklorico Academy
- Big Fresno Fair
- Break the Barriers
- Breakbox Thought Collective
- California Arts Academy
- Central Valley Community Foundation
- Children's Musical Theatre Works
- Cultiva La Salud
- Cultural Arts Rotary Club
- Dulce UpFront
- Fig Tree Gallery
- Forestiere Underground Gardens
- Fresno LGBT Youth Alliance
- Fresno African American Coalition
- Fresno African Drumming
- Fresno Art Museum
- Fresno Arts Council
- Fresno Barrios Unidos
- Fresno Community Chorus
- Fresno Discovery Center
- Fresno Folklore Society
- Fresno Interdenominational Refugee Ministries
- Fresno Musical Club
- Fresno Opera and Orchestra Summer Academy
- Fresno Pacific University, Department of Arts and Culture
- Fresno Philharmonic
- Fresno State Summer Arts
- Fresno State, Departments of Music, Arts, and Humanities
- Fresno Water Tower
- Fresno Zoo
- Fulton 55

- Gallery 25
- Gazebo Gardens
- Good Company Players
- Hmong 40
- Hmong Americans Writers' Circle
- Hmong New Year
- LitHop Fresno
- Mariachi Academy
- Music Together Fresno-Clovis
- Pan Valley Institute
- Polynesian Club of Fresno
- Tower District Porchfest
- Purposed II Praise School of Dance
- Radio Bilingüe
- Revive Dance Company
- Roger Rocka's Dinner Theater
- Rogue Festival
- Saroyan Theatre
- Selland Arena
- Shinzen Japanese Friendship Garden
- Stone Soup Fresno
- Teatro Campesino
- Tower Theatre
- Warnors Theatre
- Woodward Park
- Youth Orchestras of Fresno

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