

Request: Support of the City of Merced’s grant application to the NEA to establish four local Arts and Culture Districts to support and market specific artistic works and themes.

Description: The City of Merced Arts and Culture Advisory Commission was established by the City Council in 2018. Over the course of its first year, the Arts and Culture Advisory Commission began the foundational work to establish a citywide mission to “Advise the City Council of how to encourage and promote arts programs and events that engage community members and local businesses; acknowledge the role the arts and culture contribute to the quality of life, and the vitality innovation and inclusion of the community; and preserve the community’s artistic work, and cultural identities”. In addition to its mission, the Arts and Culture Advisory Commission also places priority on projects that provide outreach and add events for the City, seeking funding for the arts, seeking capital improvement opportunities and to plan for the future.

Foundation for the Future: With the future in mind, the Arts and Culture Advisory Commission spent the first year developing a Public Arts Inventory, cataloging over 40 public art pieces. This inventory includes the history of the pieces, location via GIS, pictures of the pieces and available maintenance information. In addition to this work, a Community Calendar was also developed to allow for the coordination of events to take place on one central site.

<https://merced.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapTour/index.html?appid=f1e810aa32f34524bf97dff87c91e81d#>;
<https://mercedcommunitycalendar.org/>)

Necessity: As a result of the arts inventory, four artistic themes emerged for district identities: South Merced Mural District, Downtown District, Central Merced Nature District and North Merced Education District. The Arts and Culture Advisory Commission has taken the initial steps to develop these districts in partnership with local artists and public agencies.

Design & Construction:

Staff estimates each district will cost approx. \$20,000. A total grant amount of \$40,000 will be requested, with the 100% match from the City to make the proposed budget whole for the following items:

- Develop a Community Committee to outline district boundaries
- Design a website specifically for the district
- Develop a marking plan and materials
- Host a Community launch event

Beneficiaries:

- Merced residents and businesses
- Local artists
- UC Merced
- Merced College
- Merced County Arts Council



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