

# Vision, Mission, and Purpose of the Cultural Arts Division

**Vision:** To be an internationally recognized arts destination where creative ideas take off.

**Mission:** The mission of the Cultural Arts Division is to engage community, civic, business, and artistic partners in providing captivating experiences, programs, and public art that elevate the City of El Segundo.

**Purpose:** The purpose of the Cultural Arts Division is to create the framework for structuring, prioritizing, and delivering Arts & Culture experiences for the community of El Segundo.

## City of El Segundo Cultural Arts Master Plan

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### Executive Summary

The City of El Segundo’s Cultural Arts Master Plan (hereafter referred to as “the Plan”) addresses four key areas for the future of the Cultural Development Program.

The Plan outlines multi-year goals, priorities, and actionable strategies that align with the City's broader vision for economic development and community engagement, along with its mission to provide a great place to live, work, and visit.

Arts & Culture are essential drivers of a strong local economy, vibrant neighborhoods, and personal well-being. This is evident in their economic impact—contributing \$507.4 billion to California’s \$3.4 trillion economy and generating nearly \$980 billion in spending in 2021.<sup>1</sup>

With the leadership and oversight of the City's Cultural Arts Division and the Arts & Culture Advisory Committee (ACC), the Plan brings greater structure to the creation, sustainability, and accountability of public art and programs.

### Four Key Areas

#### 1. Building a Sustainable Future for Arts & Culture

- The Plan outlines public art installations and programs over the next five years and seeks to establish a reserve fund to ensure sustainability.

#### 2. Creating Awareness and Accountability

- Creating greater awareness for the program ensures its long-term viability. This primarily includes collaborating with City staff on marketing efforts such as enhancing the website, expanding social media reach, and boosting event promotion while proving the program’s value by tracking content, attendance, audience engagement, and impact.

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<sup>1</sup> Otis College Report on the Creative Economy 2023, p. 38.

### **3. Boosting Visibility for Cultural Development Fund Partners**

- Strengthen the City-Business partnership to foster a shared purpose and sense of pride by recognizing the accomplishments of the art installations and programs made possible through corporate participation.

### **4. Hiring Staff to Ensure Program Stability**

- An experienced and knowledgeable staff member to oversee the program in collaboration with the City's Cultural Arts Division and the ACC is imperative to the success of the program. From identifying high-caliber artists to partnering with local business leaders, the position requires a skilled professional who can negotiate, identify talent, and execute outstanding programs and art installations. Further strategies for ensuring the sustainability of the position and the program are addressed in the Plan.

El Segundo's innovative spirit positions it as a global cultural leader, where creativity and entrepreneurship intersect. By leveraging our proximity to LAX as a cultural gateway to Los Angeles County, the City can attract international recognition.

A world-class public art collection, dynamic public programs, and cross-cultural exchanges will further strengthen El Segundo's identity as both a thriving community and a premier destination for creative tourism.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> The arts are the fourth largest driver of tourism and influence decisions made when planning travel. Experiences can include brick-and-mortar establishments (e.g., museums and theaters) along with transitory events (e.g., festivals and community projects). They appeal not only to domestic audiences but also to foreign ones, with a significant number traveling specifically to experience new cultures. [www2.Americansforthearts.org](http://www2.Americansforthearts.org).

# Cultural Arts Master Plan

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# 1. Introduction

The City of El Segundo is a vibrant and dynamic community that values creativity, innovation, and cultural expression. As we continue to grow and evolve, the arts are becoming a vital force in shaping our identity, enriching our lives, and fostering a sense of place.

Recognizing the power of Arts & Culture to transform communities, making them more attractive to residents, businesses, employees, and visitors alike, the ACC has developed this five-year Cultural Arts Master Plan to serve as a roadmap for cultivating a thriving and sustainable cultural environment.

The Plan affirms the City's commitment to integrating Arts & Culture into civic life, providing a strategic framework with clear strategies and performance indicators aligned with the City's goal of enhancing community engagement (Goal 3, Strategy A). By expanding cultural access, supporting artists, enriching public spaces with art, and fostering partnerships with businesses and organizations that champion a creative and inclusive community, the Plan advances the City's vision of becoming a global innovation leader

## Why Now?

In 2019, the City of El Segundo adopted the 1% for Arts Ordinance (Ordinance 1594), establishing a Cultural Development Program aimed at creating public art and cultural initiatives to benefit the community of El Segundo. The ordinance requires that 1% of eligible development project costs be allocated to Arts & Culture, providing a dedicated funding source to enhance the City's cultural identity.

Over the past six years, the Cultural Development Program has supported numerous public art installations and cultural events, including the Festival of Holidays, the Poet Laureate program, Visual Artists in Community initiatives, and collaborations with El Segundo schools, all of which have brought new energy to the City.

The Plan comes at a pivotal time for the City. It builds upon the successes of the past six years while addressing challenges and optimizing future opportunities. By showcasing the impact of the 1% for Arts Ordinance and leveraging its potential to foster business connections and community engagement—as outlined in the City's Strategic Plan (Goal 5, Strategy C) to attract, retain, and grow businesses—El Segundo is poised to strengthen its role as a regional leader in Arts & Culture.

The Plan sets forth a strategic vision to expand cultural programming, foster creative partnerships, and elevate the role of the arts in enhancing community identity and economic vitality.

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## 2. Economic Impact of Arts & Culture

Arts & Culture are a proven economic engine, driving investment, increasing property values, attracting businesses, and generating revenue through tourism and local spending. Strategic

investments in cultural programming and public art have demonstrated their ability to transform communities into vibrant economic hubs.

### **Arts & Culture: Driving Economic Growth & Business Attraction**

Research has shown that cities that integrate public art and cultural initiatives experience measurable economic benefits<sup>3</sup>, including:

- **Increased foot traffic** in commercial districts, benefiting local businesses and restaurants.
- **Higher property values** and greater desirability for new developments.
- **Enhanced tourism revenue** driven by cultural attractions and events.
- **Expanded tax revenue**, as spending in arts-related districts leads to growth in sales and property taxes.
- **Strengthened local business ecosystem**, as arts-related industries stimulate creative entrepreneurship and small business growth.

Beyond direct economic contributions, a robust Arts & Culture scene is a critical factor in attracting and retaining businesses. Studies have shown that corporations prioritize cities with a strong cultural identity and cultural amenities when choosing office locations, as these areas are more desirable to employees.<sup>4</sup>

The Plan aims to harness these benefits, creating a vibrant and economically dynamic cultural landscape consistent with the City's Strategic Plan for ensuring that City-owned infrastructure is well maintained, including streets, entryways, and facilities (Goal 1, Strategy A).

### **Arts & Culture as Economic Catalyst: Lessons from Leading Cities**

- **Santa Monica's Bergamot Station**
  - o Transformed a former industrial site into a thriving arts district.
  - o Attracts over 100,000 visitors annually, significantly increasing foot traffic for surrounding businesses.
  - o Has become a model for integrating cultural spaces into economic development.
- **Culver City's Arts District Revitalization**
  - o Helped attract major employers such as Amazon Studios and HBO.
  - o Boosted real estate development and increased property values in the surrounding area.
  - o Demonstrates how a strong arts identity can make a city more attractive to creative and technology industries.
- **Manhattan Beach Studios**
  - o Manhattan Beach Studios has established itself as a rising film and media production hub, drawing major productions such as *The Mandalorian* and *Avatar: The Way of Water*.

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<sup>3</sup> Salvesen, David, and Henry Renski. *The Importance of Quality of Life in the Location Decisions of New Economy Firms*. ResearchGate, 2003. [Available here](#).

<sup>4</sup> Wardner, Peter. *Understanding the Role of 'Sense of Place' in Office Location Decisions*. Pacific Rim Real Estate Society (PRRES), 2012. [Available here](#).

- The presence of high-profile productions has increased local business revenue through accommodations, dining, and retail spending from production crews and visitors.
- **City of El Segundo Partnership with Snap, Inc**
  - In August 2023, the City of El Segundo, in partnership with the El Segundo Art Walk and Snap Inc., launched the El Segundo AR initiative, integrating augmented reality (AR) to enhance public art.
  - Featuring eleven interactive pieces accessible via Snapchat, the project showcases El Segundo’s commitment to innovation while positioning the City as a hub for creative technology, attracting businesses and fostering economic growth.

Successes such as these reflect broader regional trends, where investment in creative industries has positioned our area as a leader in both entertainment and digital media.

To remain competitive and fully capture the economic benefits of Arts & Culture, the City of El Segundo must continue investing in creative initiatives or risk being left behind as other cities seize these opportunities.

### 3. Focusing on Art & Culture in El Segundo

#### Access to Arts and Culture

Access to Arts & Culture is a cornerstone of a thriving community.<sup>5</sup> In El Segundo, ensuring residents of all ages and backgrounds can participate in and benefit from cultural activities is a top priority.

Over the past few years, El Segundo has experienced an exodus of cultural institutions that have been pillars in the City’s cultural landscape. ESMoA, a critically-acclaimed contemporary art space that focused on community engagement, left El Segundo to operate in satellite spaces outside of the City. The American Youth Symphony and the Zimmerman Automobile Driving Museum have both closed their doors permanently. Since El Segundo already had a limited offering of cultural spaces, these losses are especially devastating to the community.

#### Investment in Community

Investing in the community through the arts strengthens social bonds and enhances quality of life. By prioritizing creative investment and community-led initiatives, the City can build a cultural legacy while fostering a sense of ownership and pride among residents.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> 72% of Americans believe “the arts unify our communities regardless of age, race, and ethnicity” and 73% agree that the arts “helps me understand other cultures better”—a perspective observed across all demographic and economic categories. Arts Action Fund.org. 2023.

<sup>6</sup> “City leaders across the nation are seeking to revitalize and grow their cities into vibrant communities — and the Arts are part of a larger set of tools to accomplish that goal. For example, many citizens — especially from younger generations — often place a premium on the ability to live and work in the same (walkable) area. “National League of Cities. June 9, 2017. nlc.org

### Capacity of the Arts Sector

A robust arts sector requires strong infrastructure and leadership. Strengthening resources and staffing for the Cultural Arts Division will enhance the City of El Segundo's capacity to appropriately interface business partners and attract arts organizations, practitioners, and creative-minded companies and organizations.

Following the growing success of the El Segundo Art Walk, the Cultural Arts Division can establish additional partnerships that will draw audiences and increase tourism benefiting local restaurants, merchants, and entrepreneurs.

### Commitment to Sustainability of the Arts

Sustainability is critical to the success of El Segundo's cultural initiatives. Currently, the Cultural Arts Division's only source of revenue is the 1% for Art fees collected through the Cultural Development Program. Because this funding is tied to private development—and businesses have the option to produce public art on site instead of contributing the full amount to the Cultural Development Fund—it does not provide a consistently stable revenue source for the Division's long-term operations.

To ensure sustainability, the City must prioritize diverse income sources and long-term partnerships. Embedding strategies for continuous improvement in arts planning and execution will fortify the program's longevity and resilience.

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## 4. Goals of the Cultural Arts Master Plan

### Goal 1: Establish a Lasting Cultural Legacy for El Segundo and Position the City as a Premier Arts Destination

*Key Indicator of Success: El Segundo receives regular press highlighting the City's Cultural Development Program along with data demonstrating its capacity for enhancing tourism.*

- **Objective A:** Cultivate a best-practice public art collection that features local and international artists while positioning El Segundo as a premier cultural destination.
- **Objective B:** Invest in impactful programming that promotes Arts & Culture and engages the community.
- **Objective C:** Ensure Cultural Arts initiatives are culturally relevant to El Segundo, promote diversity and inclusion, and offer equitable opportunities for artists reflecting Goal 3, Strategy B of the City's Strategic Plan.

### Goal 2: Arts & Culture Spark Investment in El Segundo

*Key Indicator of Success: Data demonstrates Cultural Development Program as a motivator for operating in or partnering with the City of El Segundo.*

- **Objective A:** Leverage the City’s Arts & Culture initiatives to attract businesses and organizations to operate in El Segundo.
- **Objective B:** Build partnerships with other arts organizations locally and nationally to support new and diverse programming for El Segundo.

### **Goal 3: Arts & Culture is Stable, Fiscally Sustainable, and Well-Resourced**

*Key Indicator of Success: Cultural Arts has the resources to operate without interruption and consistently deliver impactful initiatives every year.*

- **Objective A:** Establish a collective understanding among the City Council and City Executive Team related to the purpose of the Cultural Development Fund and the Administrative Guidelines that govern its use and stewardship.
- **Objective B:** Secure City Council approval for general funds to support the operating costs of Cultural Arts.
- **Objective C:** Establish a Cultural Arts Reserve Fund to support the division during economic downturns and unforeseen circumstances.
- **Objective D:** Create a process for ensuring the retention of the Cultural Arts Coordinator in accordance with the City’s Strategic Plan Goal 4, Strategy A for the recruitment and retention of top-quality staff. In addition, explore possibilities for funding the Cultural Arts Coordinator through the General Fund. Retaining an experienced and well-qualified Cultural Arts Coordinator also addresses Goal 3, Strategy A of the City’s Strategic Plan: to “deliver unparalleled City Services.”

### **Goal 4: Develop a Standardized Approach to Identify and Fund Arts & Culture Initiatives**

*Key Indicator of Success: El Segundo becomes recognized for the breadth and quality of its programs and public art.*

- **Objective A:** Amend Ordinance 1594 to clarify roles, definitions, and processes, minimizing varying interpretations that impact enforcement and execution.
- **Objective B:** Establish a clear process for the City to collaborate with the ACC on the use of Cultural Development Funds for City-led initiatives, modeled after the process for developers.
- **Objective C:** Better integrate Cultural Arts programming into the City's communications and PR strategies to highlight programs, artworks, and the contributions of businesses that support or create site-specific art, aligned with Goal 3, Strategy A of the City's Strategic Plan to educate and inform the Public about City programs.

## 5. Optimizing the 1% for the Arts Fund

El Segundo's 1% for Arts Ordinance (Ordinance 1594) serves as a cornerstone for fostering collaboration between the City and private developers. By leveraging private investments, the ordinance ensures Arts & Culture are integrated into the City's growth and development, enhancing El Segundo's image as a pro-business City that provides a quality of life attractive to businesses, employees, and visitors.

Since its adoption in 2019, Ordinance 1594 has provided a funding stream to support a wide array of cultural initiatives, from public art installations to community events to various capital improvement projects. Developers have embraced the opportunity to leave a lasting cultural legacy in El Segundo, working alongside the Cultural Arts Division to create projects that reflect the City's unique character and values.

The ordinance has not only enhanced the visual landscape of El Segundo but has also strengthened the partnership between the public and private sectors, fostering a shared commitment to cultural enrichment.<sup>7</sup>

Under the Plan, the Cultural Development Fund is not merely a tax but a strategic investment that benefits both developers and the City. It serves as a flexible tool that empowers developers to contribute to El Segundo's cultural and economic vitality while supporting their business objectives.

To maximize the impact of Ordinance 1594, the City needs to create a strategy that incentivizes developers to contribute to the Cultural Development Fund rather than installing on-site public art. The City has made progress towards this goal by recently amending the Ordinance 1594 to allow developers to divide their contribution between art on site and by paying into the fund. The ordinance could be further amended allowing for individuals, small businesses, corporations, and other organizations to have the ability to voluntarily contribute to the fund.

By directing funds into a centralized pool, the City can allocate resources more strategically, ensuring projects align with broader cultural goals and community needs. Additionally, this approach can add greater stability to program staffing, which serves Goal 4, Strategy A of the City's Strategic Plan of retaining the best staff.

### Objectives and Key Indicators of this Incentive Strategy:

- **Streamlined Approval Process:** Offering developers a more efficient and expedited approval process when they opt to pay the 1% fee in-lieu to the Cultural Development

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<sup>7</sup> The Arts & Culture sector can have a larger impact on your city's economy (in terms of GDP) than other industries like tourism and transportation — but city leaders often don't recognize the economic value and impact of the arts in their community." National League of Cities, June 9, 2017, nic.org.

Fund and implement a payment process that will allow for less up-front costs to developers. This reduces the complexity and time required for planning and executing on-site art projects while providing more flexibility in financing for the company.

- **Recognition and Branding Opportunities:** Providing public recognition for developers who contribute to the Cultural Development Fund, including naming opportunities for major projects or events, press releases, ribbon cutting ceremonies, recognition at City Council meetings, and features in City communications. Acknowledgement of the developers who contribute to the Cultural Development Fund will be featured on the Cultural Arts webpage.
- **Reporting and Accountability:** Creating a yearly Cultural Development Fund revenue, expenditure, and impact report. The report will include payments into the fund, expenditures for public art and programs, and the benefits to businesses, residents, and visitors by capturing attendance, website views, social media impressions, and survey feedback.
- **Collaborative Vision:** Engaging developers in the broader vision for cultural development through regular forums, planning sessions, and partnerships that align their investments with the City's cultural objectives. Develop campaigns for social media that profile partnering developers, highlighting their commitment to Arts & Culture in El Segundo.

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## 6. Partnerships & Community Support

Strong partnerships and community support form the backbone of a thriving cultural landscape. Collaboration among the City, local organizations, businesses, and residents has driven the success of past initiatives. By optimizing these partnerships, El Segundo can amplify its cultural impact and ensure Arts & Culture remain an integral aspect of civic life. This section outlines strategies to cultivate and strengthen these vital connections.

### Current and Future Partnership Initiatives

#### El Segundo Art Walk

A hallmark event, the El Segundo Art Walk (ESAW) continues to grow in attendance and impact.

- **Objective A:** While the Cultural Development Fund currently provides most of the funding, transitioning to a more balanced partnership model will ensure sustainability and alignment with divisional objectives.
- **Objective B:** Enhance the quality of the art component of the ESAW event and use it to highlight business-funded art installations.

- **Objective C:** Partner with local businesses to identify ways in which the ESAW can further benefit them and their customers.
- **Objective D:** Provide key indicators of success in terms of attendance, revenue, and social impact and disseminate this information to stakeholders and residents.

### Create an El Segundo Film Festival and Music Festival

With its numerous venues suitable for film screenings and concerts, the City of El Segundo is well-positioned to host these types of annual festivals.

- **Objective A:** Partner with experienced organizations to curate and manage these events.
- **Objective B:** Use the festival as a platform to drive awareness, attendance, and financial support for local institutions like the Old Town Music Hall, helping to ensure their long-term sustainability.
- **Objective C:** Position the festivals as economic drivers that attract tourism, benefit local businesses, and provide measurable impact indicators.

### Small Community Grants

Strategically allocate Cultural Development Funds to support nonprofit and community organizations to deliver a diverse range of cultural experiences for residents, employees, and visitors.

- **Objective A:** The ACC will provide a limited number of grants ranging from \$500 to \$6,000 to support Arts & Culture-related activities in El Segundo.
- **Objective B:** Ensure programming benefits the community with minimal impact on City resources.
- **Objective C:** Document outcomes including expenditures, attendance, audience demographics, and social impact.

## 7. Recommendations

The Cultural Arts Plan establishes a foundation for sustainable, impactful community engagement while reinforcing El Segundo’s identity as a business-friendly city.

The Plan recognizes the untapped economic and social potential of Arts & Culture initiatives to benefit businesses, employees, residents, and visitors alike. By strategically integrating arts-driven programs into the City’s long-term vision, El Segundo can enhance quality of life, stimulate economic growth, and position itself as a premier destination for creativity and innovation.

## **Policy & Program Recommendations**

With a clear strategy in place, the following recommendations outline the key actions needed to ensure the successful implementation and long-term sustainability of this vision:

1. Update and revise the Cultural Arts Administrative Guidelines to streamline processes for City-led public art commissions and artist selection.
2. Further refine Ordinance 1594 to strengthen the Cultural Development Fund as a sustainable resource. While recent amendments provide developers with more flexibility, additional measures can help increase overall contributions and maximize impact.
3. Direct Cultural Arts Coordinator to seek grant funding for public art and programming.
4. Direct Cultural Arts Coordinator to develop a plan for fundraising opportunities to generate additional revenue sources.
5. Expand and enhance communication through website, social media, and City communications to better inform residents, employees, and visitors.
6. Develop key performance indicators for measuring program outcomes, including impact on property values, retail spending, and ability to attract top-tier companies.
7. Document, and disseminate program findings and successes, demonstrating El Segundo's leadership in City-business cultural partnerships.

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## **8. Addendum: Public Art and Programming Road Map**

### **Five-Year Plan: Public Art**

Public art has the unique ability to transform spaces, provoke thought, and foster community pride. It enhances the visual landscape of a city while telling stories that reflect the history, values, and aspirations of its people.

Public art has demonstrated the ability to improve the infrastructure of cities as noted in a report by the National League of Cities that states, “areas that are well-lit and have public art or murals attract pedestrians, bicyclists... which leads to safer and more vibrant communities.”<sup>8</sup>

In El Segundo, public art plays a crucial role in creating a sense of place and identity, enriching the daily lives of residents and attracting visitors from near and far. The following public art

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<sup>8</sup> National League of Cities, June 9, 2017, nic.org.

installations outline a five-year strategic approach to integrating functional public art into El Segundo's urban fabric.

### **City-Council Approved Projects:**

#### ***The Plunge Mosaic Installation***

The Urho Saari Swim Stadium, aka “The Plunge,” is a cherished historical recreation facility in El Segundo that is currently undergoing a transformative interior renovation. The public art project for The Plunge will be a prominent component of the facility’s renovation, located in a highly visible and central location. The public art will complement the restored aesthetic and architectural elements of The Plunge while reflecting the facility’s history and significance to the community.

- **Budget:** \$127,500 – City Council-approved budget
- **Estimated Completion:** Q4 2025
- **Public Art Type:** Mosaic Tile Mural

#### ***Teen Center Mural***

The Teen Center is a dedicated space for youth, featuring activity and gathering space inside and a basketball court and skatepark outside. A painted mural will be dedicated to the exterior wall of the Teen Center.

- **Budget:** \$20,000 – City Council-approved budget
- **Estimated Completion:** Q3 2026
- **Public Art Type:** Mural

### **Possible Future Projects:**

#### ***Municipal Plaza Light Installation***

El Segundo’s City Hall is centered downtown on Main Street, with a large community plaza that connects City Hall and El Segundo Police Department. The plaza is an active gathering space for the public, particularly during the El Segundo Farmers’ Market and special events such as the Festival of Holidays. This location offers another highly visible and central space for public artwork. By commissioning a light-based artwork, the plaza can be activated and enjoyed during evening hours, adding to the charm and vibrancy of Main Street.

- **Budget:** \$TBD
- **Estimated Completion:** Q4 2027
- **Public Art Type:** Light Sculpture/Installation

#### ***Clutters Park Observatory***

Clutters Park is a popular gathering space located off Imperial Highway. It is frequented by aviation enthusiasts as it offers a direct view of LAX to watch planes take off and land. To enhance the aesthetics of the space, increase safety, and offer more functionality, an artwork that serves as an aviation observatory that integrates landscape design, architecture, and nature would be ideal to enhance the user experience of the park.

- **Budget:** \$TBD
- **Estimated Completion:** Q1 2028
- **Public Art Type:** Functional Art/Environmental Art

### *West Basin Painted Canisters*

In partnership with West Basin Municipal Water District, an opportunity to enhance public utility infrastructure exists by commissioning artists to paint the West Basin utility canisters located throughout El Segundo. Focusing on themes of water, marine life, and the environment, the painted canister program offers enhanced beautification.

- **Budget:** \$10,000 (Sponsored by West Basin)
- **Estimated Completion:** Q4 2026
- **Public Art Type:** Painted Mural

### *Library Park Sculpture Garden*

Library Park is a large greenspace frequently used by the community. The public gathers here for leisure, and it is frequently programmed with community events such as concerts in the park. Library Park provides a central and popular location to feature a sculpture garden, a collection of small to mid-scale temporary or permanent artworks to enhance the user experience of the park.

- **Budget:** \$TBD
- **Estimated Completion:** Q4 2027, ongoing
- **Public Art Type:** Sculpture

### *Santa Fe Railroad Overcrossing Beautification*

The Santa Fe Railroad overcrossing, running parallel to Aviation Boulevard along El Segundo Boulevard, serves as a key eastern gateway into the city. However, its current state detracts from the area's visual appeal, making a poor first impression for residents, visitors, and travelers. While the adjacent overcrossing connecting the LAAFB and the Aerospace Corporation reflects professional excellence, this bridge's appearance has long been overlooked.

This proposal seeks to transform the bridge into a welcoming landmark by incorporating historical imagery and the words "Welcome to El Segundo" on the east side and "Thank You for Visiting" on the west. The project will require collaboration with the Arts & Cultural and History Committee to ensure historical and artistic integrity, as well as engagement with the El Segundo Economic Development Commission to align the project with broader City initiatives. This enhancement will elevate the pedestrian and vehicular experience, reinforcing El Segundo's identity and pride.

- **Budget:** \$TBD
- **Estimated Completion:** TBD
- **Public Art Type:** Architectural Enhancement / Integrated Public Art

### **Five-Year Plan: Programming**

Programming is an essential component of a vibrant and sustainable Arts & Culture ecosystem. It fosters public engagement with fresh and thought-provoking ideas, unites the community through shared experiences, and ensures El Segundo remains an activated and dynamic city.

A 2018 study showed that “arts activities increase residents’ interest in getting involved in local issues and projects. Eighty-six percent of participants who took part in community-based art, the study said, want to be involved in future projects, and people living where these art projects occurred were more than twice as likely to be civically engaged as those whose neighborhoods did not have projects.”<sup>9</sup>

This framework outlines the cornerstone programs offered by the Cultural Arts Division, designed to establish consistent and impactful initiatives that align with the overarching vision of the Plan while suggesting possible growth for public programming over the next five years.

#### ***Poet Laureate Program***

Launched in 2022, the Poet Laureate Program welcomed Hope Anita Smith as the inaugural Poet Laureate. Her tenure was highly successful, sparking widespread enthusiasm for poetry within the community. Building on this success, the program continues with Kweku John as the Poet Laureate for 2025-2026. This initiative promotes literary arts while engaging residents and students through the transformative power of poetry.

- **Annual Budget:** \$13,000

#### ***Visual Artists in Community***

Piloted in 2022, this program invited four artists to immerse themselves within the community and produce new bodies of work inspired by their experiences and interactions with community members. It provided residents with a meaningful connection to Arts & Culture and fostered unique, locally resonant creations.

Expansion opportunities include: 1) Partnering with El Segundo schools to establish an artist-in-residence program that directly engages students and youth, 2) Capturing program highlights and outcomes through reports and storytelling to help demonstrate its impact, 3) Developing online experiences to extend the program’s reach, making it more accessible to a wider audience.

- **Annual Budget:** \$20,000 (2 artists per year)

#### ***Art Exhibitions***

The El Segundo Public Library has periodically hosted art exhibitions, affirming its role as a cultural hub. Establishing a regular exhibition schedule, including art-commissioned exhibitions or installations featuring community participation, would further solidify this identity. Through publicity and online promotion, the program has the potential to reach a broad spectrum of

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<sup>9</sup> 25 AFTA fact\_Arts+Community Dev\_v2.pdf

residents. In addition, collaborations with other organizations would create the possibility to expand the impact of the program County-wide.

- **Annual Budget:** \$TBD

### *Festival of Holidays*

This annual event highlights cultural diversity through celebrations of various winter holidays, including Christmas, Kwanzaa, Hanukkah, Diwali, Nochebuena, and Omisoka. The festival features artist performances, children’s activities, a holiday market, and Christmas Tree Lighting. Expanding the festival into a month-long series of satellite programs would deepen residents’ understanding of these holidays while enhancing community engagement.

- **Annual Budget:** \$30,000

### *Concerts and Performances*

Programs that build on the successful Cultural Arts Division concert programs offered at the El Segundo High School and the El Segundo Public Library in recent years, such as the Inner City Youth Orchestra of Los Angeles and Song Writers in the Round, will be planned, along with performances and a possible music festival.

- **Annual Budget:** \$TBD

### *Public Art Tours*

In 2024, the Cultural Arts Division organized its first public art tour during the El Segundo Art Walk. This curated excursion introduced attendees to the City’s public art installations, providing context and fostering appreciation. Regularly scheduled tours would ensure broader engagement with El Segundo’s growing public art collection. Not only does this program serve residents, but it also has the potential to highlight the artwork commissioned by developers, thereby strengthening the relationship between residents and the business community.

- **Annual Budget:** \$TBD