



City of Palo Alto

City Council Staff Report

(ID # 5242)

Report Type: Consent Calendar

Meeting Date: 11/10/2014

Summary Title: Our Town Grant Application

Title: Approval of the Submission of a National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Grant Application

From: City Manager

Lead Department: Community Services

Recommendation

Staff recommends that Council authorize:

- 1) Staff to submit of an application for an "Our Town" grant (Attachment A) through the National Endowment for the Arts for livability that focuses on the Cubberley campus;
- 2) The Mayor to write a letter in support of the grant application (Attachment B); and
- 3) The City Manager or his designee from the Community Services Department to manage the grant, including submission of the grant, reports and requests for reimbursement.

Executive Summary

The "Our Town" grant from the National Endowment for the Arts (Attachment A) will support creative placemaking arts engagement projects at the Cubberley Community Center. "Creative placemaking" is defined as the integration of artists and arts organizations in the development of physical places that are publicly accessible in collaboration with the community. The intended purpose of the grant is to foster meaningful engagement between the public and the existing Cubberley stakeholders, thereby animating the environment and thus, transforming it into a dynamic cultural destination. By finding the synergy in this existing community asset, the grant will provide an important opportunity to transform Cubberley into a thriving arts and cultural destination that is cheerfully more than the sum of its parts. Using the feedback given by the NEA regarding the "Our Town" application submitted last year, staff feels that this application and concept will have a greater chance of being funded. The project will not displace any of the existing Cubberley users, but is intended to engage them in creative endeavors, should they choose to participate.

Background

Cubberley Community Center is on the campus of the former Cubberley High School, which closed in 1979. Cubberley High School was the setting of Ron Jones' teaching experiment, The Third Wave, and was one of three public high schools in Palo Alto in the 1960s and 1970s. Today, Cubberley Community Center is home to several community organizations and amenities, such as a Chinese reading room, dance classes, artist studios, gyms and ball fields, as well as a theater. Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD) owns the land and leases it to the City of Palo Alto.

Discussion

The existing use of the Cubberley site includes a broad range of stakeholders. The Arts and Science Division feels that creative placemaking and public art would be excellent ways to bring these stakeholders together in collaborative projects and to create a truly vibrant venue for community engagement. The activities proposed here will in no way displace the current Cubberley stakeholders or the various users of the site and amenities.

Staff proposes to make Cubberley a cultural destination by adding the element of synergy so that Cubberley becomes more than the sum of its parts. We would achieve this by creating dynamic, interdisciplinary programming committed to innovation, creativity and social-inclusion. In partnership with local and regional non-profit cultural groups (institutions like Djerassi, PAUSD, Stanford Arts and others) we will: create a rich schedule of regular visual, performing and educational arts events; provide exhibition space for local artists and community groups; produce temporary art installations; and develop arts education programs for youth. The "Our Town" grant from the National Endowment for the Arts will allow us to make Cubberley a truly dynamic, welcoming and animated place for community engagement, innovation and creativity. The Cubberley model could be a cultural trend-setter contributing to vitality of the Bay Area and reinforcing a sense of pride and shared values among local communities.

Cubberley already has a vibrant visual artist studio program, a panopoly of cultural and performing arts groups and nonprofit arts and service organizations. Arts & Science staff has been in discussion with our Community Services partners, the Cubberley Artist Studio Program artists, and the neighborhood stakeholders regarding the many possibilities to engage the community and transform Cubberley into a creative cultural destination where arts are integral in the creative discussions and activities that take place. In addition, the "Our Town" grant would engage the artists involved in the recently re-launched and re-energized Cubberley Artist Studios program, including the addition of: a) a larger diversity of types of artists; b) transformation of some studios into incubator-like shared-use spaces for digital media artists, printmakers, jewelers or creative entrepreneurs; and c) artists who are committed to engaging with the

community resulting in more and regular cultural activities like performances, poetry readings, lectures, etc. The possibilities for these and other creative placemaking projects at the existing Cubberley site are tremendous.

The Council has been discussing possible ways to gather input from the community about core values, this type of artist led project could be an excellent way to gather some of that important insight while reanimating the Cubberley campus.

Resource Impact and Timeline

The National Endowment for the Arts' "Our Town" Grant funds for creative placemaking ranges between \$25,000 and \$200,000, with the average being \$75,000. Staff is currently determining the request amount. The applications are due December 15, 2014 and awards will be announced early summer 2015. The City of Palo Alto would then have up to two years for the implementation of the creative placemaking activities. The City's grant match requirement is 100% of the awarded grant amount. Staff plans to fulfill the matching requirement with in-kind donations and volunteer hours from its partners. The grant match requirements will be fulfilled within the department's existing budget subject to annual appropriations.

The Mayor is required to write a letter of support for the project, indicating and confirming that this is the one and only "Our Town" proposal that the City of Palo Alto supports.

Policy Implications

Staff will fully comply with the rules and policies for grant submission as outlined in City Policy 1-12: Grant and Funding request Applications.

Submission of a grant application for the enhancement of Cubberley Community Center is consistent with Policy C-19 of the Community Services Element of the City's Comprehensive Plan: "Develop improvement plans for the maintenance, restoration and enhancement of community facilities, and keep these facilities viable community assets by investing the necessary resources."

Environmental Review

Submission of a grant proposal is not considered a project under the California Environmental Quality Act.

Attachments:

- Our Town Grant Description (PDF)
- Draft letter from the Mayor (DOCX)
- Grant Application Authorization (PDF)


[HOME](#)
[ABOUT](#)
[GRANTS](#)
[NEWS](#)
[LIFETIME HONORS](#)
[Home](#) » [Grants](#) » [Apply for a Grant](#) » [Grants for Organizations](#) » [Our Town](#)
[PUBLICATIONS](#)
GRANTS
[ARTISTIC FIELDS](#)
[CONTACT](#)

OUR TOWN: Arts Engagement, Cultural Planning, and Design Projects - Grant Program Description

Arts engagement, cultural planning, and design projects should represent the distinct character and quality of their communities, and be carried out by a local government entity in partnership with a nonprofit organization.

Projects

The Arts Endowment plans to support a variety of projects across the country in urban and rural communities of all sizes. Please review the **list of grants** on our website to see the types of projects that have been funded recently through Our Town. You might also want to look at examples of projects in the online storybook of Our Town projects called '**Exploring Our Town.**' While these grants are illustrative, they represent only a sample of the types of projects that Our Town supports.

Projects should represent the distinct character and quality of their communities, and must reflect the following:

- A vision for enhancing the livability of the community.
- A systemic approach to equitable civic development.
- Support for artists, design professionals, and arts organizations by integrating the arts and design into the fabric of civic life.

Projects may include arts engagement, cultural planning, and design projects such as:

Arts Engagement

Arts engagement projects support artistically excellent artistic production or practice as the focus of creative placemaking work.

- Innovative programming that fosters interaction among community members, arts organizations, and artists, or activates existing cultural and community assets.
- Festivals and performances that activate spaces not normally used for such purposes.
- Public art that improves public spaces and strategically reflects or shapes the physical and social character of a community.

Cultural Planning

Cultural planning projects support the development of artistically excellent local support systems necessary for creative placemaking to succeed.

- ▣ Creative asset mapping.
- ▣ Cultural district planning.
- ▣ The development of master plans or community-wide strategies for public art.
- ▣ Support for creative entrepreneurship.
- ▣ Creative industry cluster/hub development.

Design

Design projects that demonstrate artistic excellence while supporting the development of places where creative activities occur, or where the identity of place is created or reinforced.

- ▣ Design of public spaces, e.g., parks, plazas, landscapes, neighborhoods, districts, infrastructure, bridges, and artist-produced elements of streetscapes.
- ▣ Community engagement activities including design charrettes, design competitions, and community design workshops.
- ▣ Design of rehearsal, studio, or live/work spaces for artists.
- ▣ Design of cultural spaces – new or adaptive reuse.

We understand that creative placemaking projects are often multi-year, large-scale initiatives. Please specify in your application which phase or phases of your project are included in your request for NEA funding. All phases of a project -- except for those for facilities noted below -- are eligible for support. The NEA reserves the right to limit its support of a project to a particular phase(s) or cost(s). All costs included in your Project Budget must be expended during your period of support.

Where appropriate, Our Town applications should demonstrate how the project will align with other place-based federal grant programs and policies, including, but not limited to, those from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Department of Transportation (DOT), the Department of Commerce, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), such as Consolidated Plans, Analysis of impediments to Fair Housing Choice, Long Range Transportation Plans, and Asset Management Plans.

If relevant to your project, you will be required to provide information in accordance with the **National Environmental Policy Act** and/or the **National Historic Preservation Act**.

Partnerships

A key to the success of creative placemaking is involving the arts in partnership with committed governmental and private sector leadership. All applications must demonstrate a partnership that will provide leadership for the project. These partnerships must involve two primary partners: 1) nonprofit organization, and 2) local government entity, as defined by these guidelines. One of these two primary partners must be a cultural (arts or design) organization. The highest ranking official of the local government is required to submit a formal statement of support designating the project as the only one being submitted for the local government. See "**How to Prepare and Submit an Application**" for more information.

Additional partners are encouraged and may include an appropriate variety of entities such as state level government agencies, foundations, arts organizations and artists, nonprofit organizations, design professionals and design centers, educational institutions, real estate developers, business leaders, community organizations, council of governments, rural planning organizations, transportation agencies, special districts, educational organizations, as

well as public and governmental entities.

You may find it helpful to contact your local arts agency as you begin the process within your community.

We Do Not Fund

Funding is **not** available for:

- ❑ Construction, purchase, or renovation of facilities. (Design fees, community planning, and installation of public art are eligible; however, no Arts Endowment or matching funds may be directed to the costs of physical construction or renovation or toward the purchase costs of facilities or land.)
- ❑ Costs (and their match) to bring a project into compliance with federal grant requirements. This includes environmental or historical assessments or reviews and the hiring of individuals to write assessments or reviews or to otherwise comply with the National Environmental Policy Act and/or the National Historic Preservation Act.
- ❑ Projects for which the selection of artists or art works is based upon criteria other than artistic excellence and merit. Examples include festivals, exhibitions, or publications for which no jury/editorial judgment has been applied.
- ❑ Subgranting or regranting, except for local arts agencies that are designated to operate on behalf of their local governments or are operating units of city or county government. (See more information on subgranting.) Subgranting activity by designated local arts agencies must be directly relevant to the Our Town project activities.
- ❑ Financial awards to winners of competitions.
- ❑ Fund raising or financing activities.
- ❑ General operating support.
- ❑ Seasonal support.
- ❑ Costs for the creation of new organizations.
- ❑ Direct grants to individuals. (The Arts Endowment encourages applicant organizations to involve individual artists in all possible ways.)
- ❑ Individual elementary or secondary schools -- charter, private, or public -- directly. Schools may participate as additional partners in projects for which another eligible organization applies. Local education agencies (school districts) and community colleges can apply on behalf of a local government. If a single school also is the local education agency, as is the case with some charter schools, the school may apply with documentation that supports its status as the local education agency applying on behalf of the local government.
- ❑ State and regional education agencies and institutions.
- ❑ Commercial (for-profit) enterprises or activities.
- ❑ Cash reserves and endowments.
- ❑ Awards to individuals or organizations to honor or recognize achievement.
- ❑ Generally, professional training in degree-granting institutions.
- ❑ Work toward academic degrees and the pursuit of academic careers.
- ❑ Projects that replace arts instruction provided by a classroom teacher or an arts specialist.
- ❑ Literary publishing that does not focus on contemporary literature and/or writers.
- ❑ Generally, publication of books or exhibition of works by the applicant organization's staff, board members, faculty, or trustees.

- Exhibitions of, and other projects that primarily involve, single, individually-owned, private collections.
- Expenditures that are related to compensation to foreign nationals and artists traveling to or from foreign countries when those expenditures are not in compliance with regulations issued by the U.S. Treasury Department Office of Foreign Asset Control. For further information, see <http://www.treas.gov/offices/enforcement/ofac/> or contact the Arts Endowment's Grants & Contracts Office at grants@arts.gov.
- Project costs that are supported by any other federal funds or their match.

Intended Outcome: Livability

Through Our Town projects, the Arts Endowment intends to achieve the following outcome from our strategic plan:
Livability: American communities are strengthened through the arts.

The anticipated long-term results for Livability projects are measurable community benefits, such as growth in overall levels of social and civic engagement; new avenues for expression and creativity; design-focused changes in policies, laws, and/or regulations; job and/or revenue growth; or positive changes in migration patterns. You will be asked to address the anticipated results in your application. If you receive a grant, you will be asked to provide evidence of those results at the end of your project. Given the nature of Livability projects, benefits are likely to emerge over time and may not be fully measureable during the period of a grant. You will need to provide evidence of progress toward achieving improved livability as appropriate to the project. Before applying, please review the **reporting requirements for Livability**. We recognize that some projects involve risk, and we want to hear about both your successes and failures. Failures can provide valuable learning experiences, and reporting them will have no effect on your ability to receive NEA funds in the future.

Beyond the reporting requirements for all grantees, selected Our Town grantees may be asked to assist in the collection of additional information that can help the NEA determine the degree to which agency objectives were achieved. For example, Our Town grantees may be asked to participate in surveys or interviews, and/or may be asked to assist in publicizing and promoting these data collection efforts. You may be contacted to provide evidence of project accomplishments including, but not limited to, work samples, community action plans, cultural asset studies, programs, reviews, relevant news clippings, and playbills. Please remember that you are required to maintain project documentation for three years following submission of your final report.

We may publish grantees' reports and products on our website. Please note that all federal grantmaking agencies retain a royalty-free right to use all or a portion of grantees' reports and products for federal purposes.

Deadline Date

You are required to submit Step 1 of your application electronically through Grants.gov, the federal government's online application system. The Grants.gov system must receive your validated and accepted application no later than 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time, on December 15, 2014. We strongly recommend that you submit at least 10 days in advance of the deadline to give yourself ample time to resolve any problems that you might encounter. We will not accept late applications.

The Grants.gov Contact Center is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Step 2 of the application will then be due by January 15, 2015, through the NEA GrantsOnline™ System (NEA-GO) (see the "**How to Prepare and Submit an Application**" section for more detail).

DRAFT

November XX, 2014

To: National Endowment for the Art/Our Town Panelists:

In the City of Palo Alto, California, the Mayor is the highest ranking government official. Therefore, on behalf of the City of Palo Alto, I am pleased to support this Our Town grant application, submitted to the National Endowment for the Arts by the City of Palo Alto's Division of Arts & Science. The application also has the support of the City Council. This is the only application to Our Town that is being submitted this year for our community.

The project planned for Cubberley Community Center will bring a much needed synergy and connection between the many stakeholders who use the existing facility, the Palo Alto Unified School District, and the broader community through creative placemaking initiatives. The proposed Our Town project will transform Cubberley to become a much-needed cultural destination within the City. The broad community engagement, improved livability, and creative collaborative environment are all in line with existing priorities and initiatives of the City.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposal.

Sincerely,

Nancy Shepherd
Mayor
250 Hamilton Avenue
Palo alto, CA 94301
650.380.8003
Nancy.Shepherd@CityofPlaoAlto.org

POLICY AND PROCEDURES 1-12/MGR

Revised: October 2004

CITY OF PALO ALTO
GRANT APPLICATION AUTHORIZATION CHECKLIST

The City of Palo Alto strongly encourages staff to identify and apply for grants to assist in the funding of City projects and programs. The acceptance of grant funding, depending on the source, may place a wide range of legal, financial and administrative requirements on the City. In some cases, the mere act of applying for a grant will place the City in a situation that can create negative impacts if the City is unable to accept the grant. These circumstances can limit the City's ability to apply for similar grant funds from the source agency in the future.

Use of non-local funds on CIP projects, such as grant funds, requires adherence to prevailing wage requirements. Coordination with purchasing will be necessary to ensure compliance.

In order to minimize any negative impacts to the City, the following checklist must be completed prior to applying for grant funds.

Project/Program Name: Our Town Date: _____

Grant Source: National Endowment for the Arts

Department Contact: Rhyena Halpern

Requested Grant Amount: \$ not to exceed \$150,000

1. Is there a matching fund requirement? Yes No

(If yes, ASD review)

If so, what is the amount? \$ _____ Percentage split (e.g. 60/40) 50 / 50

Are the matching funds available? If so, describe funding source: staff and partner agency staff time and in kind donations count for the matching requirement

2. Does the project/program create a new service? Yes No

(If yes, ASD/City Manager review)

3. Are there special contractual obligations/requirements (e.g. prevailing wage, disadvantaged business enterprise, etc.)? Yes No

(If yes, Attorney review) Describe: You must compensate all professional performers and related or supporting professional personnel on arts endowment-supported projects at no less than the prevailing minimum compensation.

POLICY AND PROCEDURES 1-12/MGR

Revised: October 2004

4. Are there long-term/ongoing maintenance costs? Yes ___ No x
If yes, has a funding source been identified? Yes ___ No ___

Describe maintenance responsibilities: _____

5. Will the receipt of grant funds or the program/project itself impact other departments?

Yes x No ___

If yes, list the department(s) and describe the impacts: Planning and Public Works Departments. Both departments will need to be involved in the development of a cultural corridor plan.

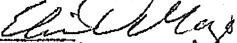
(Department Heads from departments listed above must review grant application prior to submittal)

6. Will the receipt of grant funds require Council resolution/approval?

Yes x No ___

7. Briefly describe the reporting and auditing requirements as stated in grant application:

Only one progress report will be required during the grant period. It is submitted the first time the cumulative amount request EXCEEDS two thirds of the grant award amount. Final reports are due no later than 90 days after the grant period end date.

Prepared by: Elise DeMarzo  Date: 10/30/14

Reviewed by: Rhyena Halpern  Date: _____

Department Head Approval: Greg Betts  Date: 10/30/14

ASD Director Approval:  Date: 11/3/14

cc: City Auditor