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Staff Report for Next Steps Following Arts and Culture Town Hall Meeting

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Receive summary/ debriefing regarding Arts & Culture Town Hall meeting and provide policy direction to staff regarding next steps

BACKGROUND

At the request of the Mayor and City Council, staff organized a series of meetings with local artists, musicians, and other community members with an interest in expanding or enhancing the cultural life that is available in San Leandro. These meetings culminated in the San Leandro Arts & Culture Town Hall meeting, which took place on Saturday, November 16th with members of the public participating in an interactive meeting in the Karp Room of the San Leandro Main Library.

The meeting began with an informative presentation from staff highlighting many of the cultural amenities that already exist in San Leandro, as well as an overview regarding ongoing efforts to expand these amenities throughout the community. Examples include the pilot program currently being planned to install public art on utility boxes as well as the East Bay Bus Rapid Transit Artistic Enhancement Project. A copy of that presentation has been attached to this report.

Interactive group discussions then were facilitated by City staff using a S.W.O.T. analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) framework in order to develop and prioritize ideas for advancing artistic and cultural life in San Leandro.

Analysis

The following conceptual ideas for advancing art and cultural life in San Leandro were identified by the SWOT analysis, in order of prioritization:

High Level of Interest:

- Develop an art clearinghouse, or committee/commission to promote local events
- Promote a local art or film festival
- Expand food trucks to include music, dance, or the performing arts, etc.
- Provide a dedicated revenue stream for public art

Moderate Level of Interest:

- Harness open studio spaces in the industrial areas
- Promote East 14th Street as an art corridor or “gourmet alley”
- Authorize changes to development code and fee structures to promote art
- Convert vacant retail spaces into art or music studios

Lower Levels of Interest:

- “Activating” the bay front
- Provide community members with a reason to “stay home”
- Work with other public agencies to promote art
- Utilize social media and traditional media to promote art and culture
- Harness Arts sections of local media
- Recognition of Youth-involved activities
- Infuse art into public infrastructure such as park benches, bike racks, bus benches
- Expand the beautification and aesthetic appeal of bike lanes
- Promote temporary art displays such as chalk art

Next Steps

Based upon the above public input, staff requests that Council provide staff with policy direction regarding any next steps in advancing art and cultural life in San Leandro.

ATTACHMENTS

- Presentation given at Arts & Cultural Town Hall meeting on November 16, 2013

PREPARED BY: Eric Engelbart, Assistant to the City Manager, City Manager’s Office