



505 S. Garey Ave
Pomona, CA 91766

City of Pomona

Cultural Arts Commission

Draft Action Minutes

Chairperson Christian Ornelas
Vice-Chairperson Lisa P. Soseith
Commissioner Jovani Esparza
Commissioner Venita Rodman
Commissioner Dianna Batts
Commissioner Nancy A. Tessier
Commissioner Joshua Swodeck

September 22, 2025

5:30 PM

Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chairperson Lisa P. Soiseth called the Cultural Arts Commission meeting to order at 5:30p.m. in the Council Chambers.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice Chairperson Lisa P. Soiseth led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Present: Chairperson Christian Ornelas (late arrival)
Vice-Chairperson Lisa P. Soseith
Commissioner Jovani Esparza
Commissioner Dianna Batts
Commissioner Nancy A. Tessier
Commissioner Joshua Swodeck

Absent: None

Staff Present: Ata Khan, Office & Economic of Business Affairs Deputy Director
Jocelyn Ayala, Art in Public Places Program Manager

*Commissioner Venita Rodman resigned on September 22, 2025.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Frank Guzman, Pomona Valley Pride Center

Guzman shared regarding the Artwork unveiling of an AIPP funded stained-glass art project by Juan Martin del Campo Jr. from the 2022 Call for Art. The unveiling will take place on Saturday, September 27, 2025, from 5PM – 6:30PM at the location of the artwork and Pride Center, 235 W. Mission Blvd, Pomona, CA 91723.

Guzman also shared invitations with Commission regarding their annual Gayla fundraising event.

STAFF COMMUNICATION

Staff requested to modify today's order of business to have "Staff Communication" moved to after "Public Comment".

A motion by Commissioner Swodeck, seconded by Commissioner Esparza, carried by a unanimous vote of the members present (5-0-0-0)

Chairperson Christian Ornelas – absent; Vice-Chairperson Lisa P. Soiseth – yes; Commissioner Venita Rodman – resigned; Commissioner Dianna Batts – yes; Commissioner Nancy A. Tessier – yes; Commissioner Joshua Swodeck – yes.

*Chairperson Ornelas arrived late and was not present during this discussion.

IN OPPOSITION: None

IN SUPPORT: None

City Clerk Rosalia Butler presented updates on reminders for Commissioners to complete their Ethics Training and Form 700.

Commissioner Swodeck requested bringing back in-person Brown Act Training, as well as general training for commissioners be brought back and in-person. He also requested establishing cross-commission reviews for specific projects that would bring commissioners together.

Program Manager Ayala presented updates on the following items:

1. 2022 Call for Art

There is now only one remaining project from this Call. There will be update regarding this final project by Artist Gary V. Lett at the next Commission meeting.

Another reminder of the unveiling of the "Peoples Pride" stained-glass mosaic public art piece by Artist Juan Martin del Campo Jr. located at 235 W. Mission Blvd., Pomona, CA 91766, where the Pomona Valley Pride Center is currently located.

2. 2024 Call for Art

There are two projects remaining from this Call. Artists Dave Young Kim and Carly Lake are expected to start their projects Fall 2025.

3. Hamilton Park Call for Art

Artist Angel Barrientos has officially completed all art pieces approved for this Call.

4. Garey Underpass Call for Art (Area 1)

Artist Raoul Ghymel has since completed this project, however previous scheduling for a mural unveil has paused as Staff anticipates the public works project this mural was supporting completes in Spring 2026.

5. Preservation (Open Cases)

Staff listed the following murals as needing preservation due to tagging/graffiti—
Mi Mucho Gusto (in progress), Kee-Wanis (in progress), Read! (in progress), Sun is Shining (in progress), Dawn of Pomona (TBD), Faces of Pomona (in progress), and The Fruits of Community (in progress).

6. 2025 Chalk Art Festival

Staff shared about advertising the Chalk Art Festival at September's Art Walk and shared a list of dates of where in-person advertising will occur—
PUSD Family Art Night (10/3, 10/10, 10/17), Art Walk (10/11), and City Halloween Events (Palomares – 10/24 & 10/25, Library 10/22)

COMMISSIONER COMMUNICATION

Commissioner Tessier expressed her enjoyment for being on the Commission.

Chairperson Ornelas thanked staff for attending the Safety Action Plan meeting at Washington Park and sharing about the SIEMENS project.

Commissioner Batts advertised the Claremont Venture Walk that they will be participating in as an artist.

Commissioner Swodeck thanked staff for their dedication to the City in reference to the work accounted for over the past few years and to the Metro A-Line event.

Deputy Director Khan shared a recap of the Metro A-Line event that took place September 19, 2025.

CONSENT CALENDAR

1. Approval of Action Minutes from the Cultural Arts Commission meeting of July 28, 2025.

A motion by Commissioner Swodeck, seconded by Chairperson Ornelas, carried by a unanimous vote of the members present (6-0-0-0) to approve the Action Minutes from the Cultural Arts Commission meeting of July 28, 2025.

Chairperson Christian Ornelas – yes; Vice-Chairperson Lisa P. Soiseth – yes; Commissioner Jovani Esparza – yes; Commissioner Venita Rodman – resigned; Commissioner Dianna Batts – yes; Commissioner Nancy Tessier – yes; Commissioner Joshua Swodeck – yes.

IN OPPOSITION: None

IN SUPPORT: None

PUBLIC HEARING

None

DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Commission Absences per Bylaws

Program Manager Ayala presented the current attendance for all Commissioners and cited attendance by-laws for all commissions regarding action required for the absences of Commissioner Venita Rodman and Commissioner Nancy Tessier. Staff noted that Commissioner Rodman resigned from her position before the meeting and will not longer be on the Commission.

Commissioner Swodeck expressed that meetings that get rescheduled should not be counted as an absence.

A motion by Commissioner Swodeck, seconded by Commissioner Batts, carried by a unanimous vote of the members present (6-0-0-0) to approve allowing Commissioner Tessier to remain on the Commission.

Chairperson Christian Ornelas – yes; Vice-Chairperson Lisa P. Soiseth – yes; Commissioner Jovani Esparza – yes; Commissioner Venita Rodman – resigned; Commissioner Dianna Batts – yes; Commissioner Nancy Tessier – yes; Commissioner Joshua Swodeck – yes.

IN OPPOSITION: None

IN SUPPORT: None

2. Cultural Arts Commission's Ad-Hoc Advisory Committee 2025 - 2026

Program Manager Ayala presented the current acceptances to sit on the committee with only three of the approved five accepting the position per Commission's previous meeting.

A motion by Chairperson Ornelas, seconded by Commissioner Swodeck, carried by a unanimous vote of the members present (6-0-0-0) to retain only the three committee members who accepted their position as the committee for 2025-2026.

Chairperson Christian Ornelas – yes; Vice-Chairperson Lisa P. Soiseth – yes; Commissioner

Jovani Esparza – yes; Commissioner Venita Rodman – resigned; Commissioner Dianna Batts – yes; Commissioner Nancy Tessier – yes; Commissioner Joshua Swodeck – yes.

IN OPPOSITION: None

IN SUPPORT: None

3. Action Plan – Discussion of next steps as we close out the current Action Plan 2020-2025 (Continued).

Program Manager Ayala presented on the internal meetings that staff has conducted with other Departments that are impacted by Art and spoke about scheduling external meetings with the community. The collected input from the two internal meetings with Public Works and Community Services was shared via a word cloud that would launch the discussion.

Commissioner Swodeck recommended organizing the action plan in terms of a color code (red, yellow, green, orange) to signify levels ease.

Chairperson Ornelas added kinetic sculptures to be mentioned as possible future art projects.

Commissioner Swodeck mentioned theater as an art form to support in the City and referenced the Ganesha Bandshell lights as a way the City has supported the possibility of more performance based art. As well as, building a policy for conservation plans of public artwork. This can include ensuring that older murals are being restored with new protection coatings of anti-graffiti.

Chairperson Ornelas brought up the possibility of roundabout sculptures and building a program with students to learn about sculpture fabrication.

Commissioner Tessier noted wanting more sculptures and functional art throughout the parks and roundabouts due to having too many murals.

Vice-Chair Soiseth noted shade structures as a possibility and referenced Claremont bus stops.

Commissioner Swodeck talked about over the years there have been issues and desired goals to establish art at the bus stops.

Deputy Director Khan mentioned Foothill transit being more reliant on the City to do things at the bus stops and elaborated on the shade structures at bus stops in Claremont running the risk of not being as functional as believed due to shade analysis.

Vice-Chair Soiseth added how eye catching the shade structures are.

Deputy Director Khan mentioned utility box wraps.

Vice-Chair Soiseth added that there should be an opportunity for neighborhoods to shine

their own identity/qualities in the large parts of the City.

Deputy Director Khan brought up the roundabouts, specifically the one on Park and Ninth Street, that could host a sculpture that was designed with input from the surrounding community.

Commissioner Esparza brought up establishing an art compound, similar to the Leimert Park Cultural Hub or the Hollywood Arts Collective, that support artists. Also, adding in programming that teaches artists how to be their own business.

Chairperson Ornelas mentioned the Venice Beach diversion wall for graffiti/tagging.

Deputy Director Khan mentioned the possibility of doing micro-galleries.

Vice-Chair Soiseth mentioned doing a micro-gallery outside the library.

Commissioner Swodeck mentioned hidden micro-galleries in alleys and shops, possibly adding larger spaces like storage containers, and referenced Third St. Gallery as a point of context.

Commissioner Esparza brought up gallery rentals as well.

Deputy Director Khan mentioned San Diego's Barrio Logan as a reference to initiatives that a City has funded to establish.

Commissioner Swodeck brought up how Cultural Arts Commission used to be for all Arts in the City but has since switched to focus primarily on the Art in Public Places program.

Chairperson Ornelas brought up activating community centers through working with community partners to establish an Art in the Parks program.

Commissioner Swodeck mentioned that art can create a safer space/environment.

Commissioner Esparza mentioned the missing panels in VPD lots by Merendero.

Deputy Director Khan ended the items discussion.

Discussion only, no action taken.

IN OPPOSITION: None

IN SUPPORT: None

ADJOURNMENT

The Cultural Arts Commission meeting was adjourned by Chairperson Ornelas at 6:45 p.m. to the next regular meeting of November 24, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ata Khan
Deputy Director

Prepared by,

Jocelyn Ayala
Program Manager