Seatle City Council Select Budget Committee

Councilmember Budget Proposals| Wednesday, October 28, 2026

Office of Arts and Culture (ARTS)

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SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL

2027 STATEMENT OF LEGISLATIVE INTENT

V1

ARTS-001S-A

Request that ARTS assess funding sustainability, programming capacity, staffing needs, and artist-support opportunities

SPONSORS

Joy Hollingsworth, Debora Juarez, Dionne Foster

CENTRAL STAFF SUMMARY

This SLI requests that the Office of Arts and Culture (ARTS) conduct a comprehensive assessment of the City's arts funding landscape and identify opportunities to strengthen long-term, sustainable support for arts and culture in Seattle. The report should summarize ARTS' perspective on long-term funding options for arts and culture, the potential and limitations of the Admissions Tax, opportunities to strengthen programming, staffing capacity needs, and new artist focused program concepts informed by practices in other cities.

Requested report components:

1. Funding Opportunities: Identify potential new or underused arts funding sources and compare Seattle's arts funding model to other major cities. In addition, identify opportunities to support the employment, retention, and stability of cultural workers across the sector, including how existing programs, policies, or partnerships could expand access to cultural work.
2. Admissions Tax Analysis: Evaluate the viability, sustainability, and implications of the Admissions Tax as a long-term funding source, and identify alternatives if insufficient.
3. Programming Potential: Describe opportunities to improve or expand programming and the resources required.
4. Staffing Needs: Assess current staffing capacity and identify gaps relative to program needs.
5. Artist Support Concepts: Propose new program concepts for supporting artists, referencing models from other cities.

A written report summarizing findings and potential pathways for future policy or budget action should be submitted to the Housing, Arts, and Civil Rights Committee no later than June 1, 2027.

Responsible Council Committee(s): Housing, Arts & Civil Rights

DUE DATE: June 1, 2027

2027-2028 COUNCIL BUDGET ACTION

V1

ARTS-002-A

Increase ARTS by $3 million GF (2027) for arts programming and impose a proviso

SPONSORS

Joy Hollingsworth, Alexis Mercedes Rinck, Dionne Foster

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Fund	2027 Increase (Decrease)	2028 Increase (Decrease)
General Fund	$(3,000,000)	$0
Total Budget Balance Effect	$(3,000,000)	$0

CENTRAL STAFF SUMMARY

This CBA would increase proposed appropriations to the Office of Arts and Culture (ARTS) by $3 million GF in 2027 (one-time) for arts programming to support individuals or organizations seeking to activate spaces, produce events, or create media focused on arts, culture, history, or heritage related to disadvantaged communities.

This CBA would impose the following proviso:

"Of the appropriations in the Office of Arts and Culture's 2027 budget for the Arts and Cultural Programs Budget Summary Level (ARTS - BO-AR-VA160), $3 million is appropriated solely for funding to support individuals or organizations seeking to activate spaces, provide programming, or create media focused on arts, culture, history, or heritage related to disadvantaged communities, and may be used for no other purpose."

ATTACHMENT: No

TRANSACTIONS - ONE-TIME

Dept	BSL	BCL	Year	Revenue	Expenditure
ARTS	Arts and Cultural Programs	00100-BO-AR-VA160	2027		$3,000,000

2027-2028 COUNCIL BUDGET ACTION

V1

ARTS-003-A

Increase ARTS by $75,000 GF (2027) and $75,000 GF (2028) for a public event celebrating the African American community and impose a proviso

SPONSORS

Joy Hollingsworth, Rob Saka, Maritza Rivera

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Fund	2027 Increase (Decrease)	2028 Increase (Decrease)
General Fund	$(75,000)	$(75,000)
Total Budget Balance Effect	$(75,000)	$(75,000)

CENTRAL STAFF SUMMARY

This Council Budget Action (CBA) would increase the Office of Arts and Culture (ARTS) budget by $75,000 GF in 2027 and $75,000 GF in 2028 (one-time) and impose a proviso for a public event celebrating and unifying the African American community and African Diaspora culture, such as Umoja Fest.

ARTS administers competitive grants programs through the Creative Placemaking division, such as the Hope Corps program that since 2021 provides funding to individual artists, cultural producers, arts administrators, creative workers, community groups, and arts and cultural organizations of all sizes to propose projects activating public spaces.

This CBA would impose the following proviso:

"Of the appropriations in the Office of Arts and Culture's 2027 budget for the Creative Placemaking Budget Summary Level (ARTS - BO-AR-VA170), $75,000 is appropriated solely for a public event highlighting the history and contributions of the African American community and African Diaspora culture and may be spent for no other purpose."

ATTACHMENT: No

TRANSACTIONS - ONGOING

Dept	BSL	BCL	Year	Revenue	Expenditure
ARTS	Creative Placemaking	00100-BO-AR-VA170	2027		$75,000
ARTS	Creative Placemaking	00100-BO-AR-VA170	2028		$75,000

2027-2028 COUNCIL BUDGET ACTION

2027-2028 COUNCIL BUDGET ACTION

V1

ARTS-004-A

Increase ARTS by $200,000 GF (2027) for a creative marketplace with free public arts programming and weekly summer markets

SPONSORS

Joy Hollingsworth, Rob Saka, Debora Juarez

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Fund	2027 Increase (Decrease)	2028 Increase (Decrease)
General Fund	$(200,000)	$0
Total Budget Balance Effect	$(200,000)	$0

CENTRAL STAFF SUMMARY

This Council Budget Action (CBA) would increase the Office of Arts and Culture (ARTS) budget by $200,000 GF in 2027 (one-time) for a creative marketplace supporting the broader creative ecosystem through free public arts programming and weekly summer markets for local makers and sellers such as On The Block.

ARTS administers several grant programs, such as Hope Corps. The Hope Corps program supports Seattle's creative workforce by funding job opportunities that also contribute to the well-being and revitalization of Seattle's diverse communities. The Hope Corps program is funded through the Arts and Culture Fund at $350,000 per year ongoing; due to World Cup-related work, Hope Corps appropriations for 2026 have largely not been spent. Hope Corps has no permanent staffing to administer funds and is utilizing a contract-in position, which is the last temporary staffing option available to the department. On The Block is not a current Hope Corps grantee.

ATTACHMENT: No

TRANSACTIONS - ONE-TIME

Dept	BSL	BCL	Year	Revenue	Expenditure
ARTS	Creative Placemaking	00100-BO-AR-VA170	2027		$200,000

2027-2028 COUNCIL BUDGET ACTION

V1

ARTS-005-A

Decrease $1.7 million Admissions Tax supported appropriations to CEN and SPR (2027 and 2028) and increase $1.7 million GF to CEN and SPR (2027 and 2028) to free up $1.7 million Admissions Tax for ARTS for the Centering Art and Racial Equity grant program

SPONSORS

Dionne Foster, Robert Kettle, Alexis Mercedes Rinck

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Fund	2027 Increase (Decrease)	2028 Increase (Decrease)
General Fund	$(1,681,877)	$(1,681,877)
Other Funds	$0	$0
Total Budget Balance Effect	$(1,681,877)	$(1,681,877)

CENTRAL STAFF SUMMARY

This Council Budget Action would decrease $1.7 million in Admission Tax–supported appropriations in the Seattle Center (CEN) and Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) in 2027 and 2028 and increase an equivalent amount of GF support to those departments, freeing up $1.7 million in Admission Tax supported resources in the Office of Arts and Culture (ARTS) to support the Centering Art and Racial Equity (CARE) grant program.

The SPR ongoing GF appropriation of $599,000 would continue funding for the Teen Summer Musical ($210,000), Arts in Parks ($165,000), and the Downtown Buskers Program ($224,000).

The CEN ongoing GF appropriation of $1.1 million would maintain support for Folklife ($401,000), Winterfest ($222,000), and Festal ($460,000). By transferring these programs to the GF, this action preserves Admission Tax revenues within ARTS and increases investment in the CARE grant program without reducing cultural programming in CEN or SPR.

Background:

In the 2025 Adopted Budget, Council reaffirmed ARTS' sole authority to administer Admissions Tax resources, consistent with SMC 5.40.120, which requires Admissions Tax revenues to be appropriated to ARTS for arts-related programming. Prior to 2025, CEN received $460,000 in ongoing Arts and Culture Fund support for Festal. In the 2025 Adopted and 2026 Endorsed Budgets, an additional $1.2 million in Arts and Culture Fund resources was appropriated to ARTS for distribution to SPR and CEN for the above arts programs; Council later revised this transfer to one-time in 2026.

The 2027–2028 Proposed Budget shifts $1.2 million in proposed spending from the GF to Admission Tax resources and includes $460,000 in baseline Admission Tax funding for Festal. Because the GF is constrained, the Proposed Budget uses the Arts and Culture Fund to continue arts and culture

2027-2028 COUNCIL BUDGET ACTION

programming in CEN and SPR that would otherwise require GF support.

ATTACHMENT: No

TRANSACTIONS - ONGOING

Dept	BSL	BCL	Year	Revenue	Expenditure
CEN	Campus	00100-BO-SC-60000	2027		$1,082,919
CEN	Campus	11410-BO-SC-60000	2027	$(1,082,919)	$(1,082,919)
SPR	Departmentwide Programs	00100-BO-PR-30000	2027		$224,000
SPR	Recreation Facility Programs	00100-BO-PR-50000	2027		$374,958
SPR	Departmentwide Programs	10200-BO-PR-30000	2027	$(224,000)	$(224,000)
SPR	Recreation Facility Programs	10200-BO-PR-50000	2027	$(374,958)	$(374,958)
CEN	Campus	00100-BO-SC-60000	2028		$1,082,919
CEN	Campus	11410-BO-SC-60000	2028	$(1,082,919)	$(1,082,919)
SPR	Departmentwide Programs	00100-BO-PR-30000	2028		$224,000
SPR	Recreation Facility Programs	00100-BO-PR-50000	2028		$374,958
SPR	Departmentwide Programs	10200-BO-PR-30000	2028	$(224,000)	$(224,000)
SPR	Recreation Facility Programs	10200-BO-PR-50000	2028	$(374,958)	$(374,958)

2027-2028 COUNCIL BUDGET ACTION

V1

ARTS-006-A

Increase ARTS by $150,000 GF (2027) and $85,000 GF (2028) for a Delridge art wall pilot and impose a proviso

SPONSORS

Rob Saka, Eddie Lin, Joy Hollingsworth

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Fund	2027 Increase (Decrease)	2028 Increase (Decrease)
General Fund	$(150,000)	$(85,000)
Total Budget Balance Effect	$(150,000)	$(85,000)

CENTRAL STAFF SUMMARY

This CBA would increase proposed appropriations to the Office of Arts and Culture (ARTS) by $150,000 GF in 2027 and $85,000 GF in 2028 (one-time) for a project working with a community organization to install and manage a free art wall in Delridge, including youth workshops and local artist stewardship. Intended as a pilot, to be managed for a set duration of time, the free art wall project is intended to support creative expression while reducing unauthorized graffiti. ARTS would use this funding to work with an outside consultant or community organization, such as Delridge Neighborhoods Development Association, in collaboration with a recognized local artist to establish limited permissions, time, and space for artists to freely create graffiti/mural artworks on a structure (to be determined) in the Delridge Way SW neighborhood corridor, in collaboration with a local community workshop such as West Seattle Tool Library.

This CBA would impose the following proviso:

"Of the appropriations in the Office of Arts and Culture's 2027 budget for the Creative Placemaking Budget Summary Level (ARTS - BO-AR-VA170), $150,000 is appropriated solely for a project installing and managing a free art wall in Delridge, including youth workshops and local artist stewardship, and may be spent for no other purpose."

ATTACHMENT: No

TRANSACTIONS - ONE-TIME

Dept	BSL	BCL	Year	Revenue	Expenditure
ARTS	Creative Placemaking	00100-BO-AR-VA170	2027		$150,000
ARTS	Creative Placemaking	00100-BO-AR-VA170	2028		$85,000

2027-2028 COUNCIL BUDGET ACTION

2027-2028 COUNCIL BUDGET ACTION

V1

ARTS-007-A

Increase ARTS by $20,000 GF (2027) and $20,000 GF (2028) for community-serving music programs

SPONSORS

Rob Saka, Eddie Lin, Joy Hollingsworth

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Fund	2027 Increase (Decrease)	2028 Increase (Decrease)
General Fund	$(20,000)	$(20,000)
Total Budget Balance Effect	$(20,000)	$(20,000)

CENTRAL STAFF SUMMARY

This Council Budget Action (CBA) would increase the Office of Arts and Culture (ARTS) budget by $20,000 GF in 2027 and $20,000 GF in 2028 (one-time) for community-serving music programs providing school-year and summer arts access such as Mode Music.

ARTS administers several grant programs, such as the Centering Art and Racial Equity (C.A.R.E.) grant program to support artists and cultural spaces in Seattle. In 2026, C.A.R.E.'s $2.2 million supported 315 Seattle arts and cultural organizations with general operating funds. Mode Music is not a current grantee.

ATTACHMENT: No

TRANSACTIONS - ONE-TIME

Dept	BSL	BCL	Year	Revenue	Expenditure
ARTS	Arts and Cultural Programs	00100-BO-AR-VA160	2027		$20,000
ARTS	Arts and Cultural Programs	00100-BO-AR-VA160	2028		$20,000

2027-2028 COUNCIL BUDGET ACTION

V1

ARTS-008-A

Increase ARTS by $100,000 GF (2027) and $100,000 GF (2028) for art instruction programs in West Seattle

SPONSORS

Rob Saka, Joy Hollingsworth, Robert Kettle

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Fund	2027 Increase (Decrease)	2028 Increase (Decrease)
General Fund	$(100,000)	$(100,000)
Total Budget Balance Effect	$(100,000)	$(100,000)

CENTRAL STAFF SUMMARY

This Council Budget Action (CBA) would increase the Office of Arts and Culture (ARTS) budget by $100,000 GF in 2027 and $100,000 GF in 2028 (one-time) for an organization providing art instruction programs to community centers, public and private schools, and transitional housing/youth shelters in underserved neighborhoods in West Seattle, such as Unified Outreach.

ARTS administers competitive grants programs through the Creative Placemaking division, such as the Hope Corps program that since 2021 provides funding to individual artists, cultural producers, arts administrators, creative workers, community groups, and arts and cultural organizations of all sizes to propose projects activating public spaces.

ATTACHMENT: No

TRANSACTIONS - ONE-TIME

Dept	BSL	BCL	Year	Revenue	Expenditure
ARTS	Arts and Cultural Programs	00100-BO-AR-VA160	2027		$100,000
ARTS	Arts and Cultural Programs	00100-BO-AR-VA160	2028		$100,000

2027-2028 COUNCIL BUDGET ACTION

V1

ARTS-009-A

Increase ARTS by $500,000 GF (2027) for Brewery District murals

SPONSORS

Dan Strauss, Joy Hollingsworth, Debora Juarez

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Fund	2027 Increase (Decrease)	2028 Increase (Decrease)
General Fund	$(500,000)	$0
Total Budget Balance Effect	$(500,000)	$0

CENTRAL STAFF SUMMARY

This Council Budget Action (CBA) would increase proposed appropriations to the Office of Arts and Culture (ARTS) by $500,000 GF in 2027 (one-time) for murals in the Ballard Brewery District as part of ARTS' Hope Corps program, including labor and non-labor.

The Hope Corps program supports Seattle's creative workforce by funding job opportunities that also contribute to the well-being and revitalization of Seattle's diverse communities. The Hope Corps program is funded through the Arts and Culture Fund at $350,000 per year ongoing; due to World Cup-related work, Hope Corps appropriations for 2026 have largely not been spent. Hope Corps has no permanent staffing to administer funds and is utilizing a contract-in position, which is the last temporary staffing option available to the department.

ATTACHMENT: No

TRANSACTIONS - ONE-TIME

Dept	BSL	BCL	Year	Revenue	Expenditure
ARTS	Creative Placemaking	00100-BO-AR-VA170	2027		$500,000

2027-2028 COUNCIL BUDGET ACTION

V1

ARTS-010-A

Increase ARTS by $50,000 GF (2027) for an artist support agency

SPONSORS

Joy Hollingsworth, Rob Saka, Debora Juarez

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Fund	2027 Increase (Decrease)	2028 Increase (Decrease)
General Fund	$(50,000)	$0
Total Budget Balance Effect	$(50,000)	$0

CENTRAL STAFF SUMMARY

This Council Budget Action (CBA) would increase the Office of Arts and Culture (ARTS) budget by $50,000 GF in 2027 (one-time) for an artist support agency helping independent artists build sustainable creative lives, such as How2Listen. The funds are intended to support three artist-led cultural nightlife gatherings, designed for adults ages 40+ from communities facing the biggest barriers to economic prosperity and self-sufficiency, and two youth artist development and training activations.

ARTS administers several grant programs, such as the Centering Art and Racial Equity (C.A.R.E.) grant program to support artists and cultural spaces in Seattle. In 2026, C.A.R.E.'s $2.2 million supported 315 Seattle arts and cultural organizations with general operating funds. How2Listen is not a current grantee.

ATTACHMENT: No

TRANSACTIONS - ONE-TIME

Dept	BSL	BCL	Year	Revenue	Expenditure
ARTS	Arts and Cultural Programs	00100-BO-AR-VA160	2027		$50,000

2027-2028 COUNCIL BUDGET ACTION

V1

ARTS-011-A

Increase ARTS by $150,000 GF (2027) for free events at a gallery space

SPONSORS

Joy Hollingsworth, Rob Saka, Debora Juarez

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Fund	2027 Increase (Decrease)	2028 Increase (Decrease)
General Fund	$(150,000)	$0
Total Budget Balance Effect	$(150,000)	$0

CENTRAL STAFF SUMMARY

This Council Budget Action (CBA) would increase the Office of Arts and Culture (ARTS) budget by $150,000 GF in 2027 (one-time) for free events at a gallery space featuring rotating exhibitions, local and emerging artists, and cultural storytelling through visual art, such as Colman Commons.

ARTS administers several grant programs, such as the Centering Art and Racial Equity (C.A.R.E.) grant program to support artists and cultural spaces in Seattle. In 2026, C.A.R.E.'s $2.2 million supported 315 Seattle arts and cultural organizations with general operating funds. Colman Commons is not a current grantee. ARTS' own gallery space, King Street Station, has an annual budget of $90,000, funded out of the Creative Placemaking BSL.

ATTACHMENT: No

TRANSACTIONS - ONE-TIME

Dept	BSL	BCL	Year	Revenue	Expenditure
ARTS	Arts and Cultural Programs	00100-BO-AR-VA160	2027		$150,000

2027-2028 COUNCIL BUDGET ACTION

V1

ARTS-012-A

Increase ARTS by $100,000 GF (2027) for a nonprofit hip-hop artist association

SPONSORS

Joy Hollingsworth, Rob Saka, Debora Juarez

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Fund	2027 Increase (Decrease)	2028 Increase (Decrease)
General Fund	$(100,000)	$0
Total Budget Balance Effect	$(100,000)	$0

CENTRAL STAFF SUMMARY

This Council Budget Action (CBA) would increase the Office of Arts and Culture (ARTS) budget by $100,000 GF in 2027 (one-time) for a nonprofit hip-hop artist association providing professional development, mentorship, and performance opportunities for emerging and underrepresented hip-hop artists, such as The Residency.

ARTS administers several grant programs, such as the Centering Art and Racial Equity (C.A.R.E.) grant program to support artists and cultural spaces in Seattle. In 2026, C.A.R.E.'s $2.2 million supported 315 Seattle arts and cultural organizations with general operating funds.

ATTACHMENT: No

TRANSACTIONS - ONE-TIME

Dept	BSL	BCL	Year	Revenue	Expenditure
ARTS	Arts and Cultural Programs	00100-BO-AR-VA160	2027		$100,000