

# Press Release

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## 14 CALIFORNIA CULTURAL DISTRICTS ANNOUNCED IN NEW CREATIVE STATEWIDE PROGRAM

*Newly launched program celebrates the state's diverse and abundant cultural treasures*

SACRAMENTO, CA – The California Arts Council has announced the 14 districts that will serve as California's premier state-designated Cultural Districts, highlighting thriving cultural diversity and unique artistic identities within local communities across California.

- [Balboa Park Cultural District, San Diego - San Diego Region](#)
- [Barrio Logan Cultural District, San Diego - San Diego Region](#)
- [The BLVD Cultural District, Lancaster – Los Angeles Region](#)
- [The Calle 24 Latino Cultural District, San Francisco – San Francisco Bay Area Region](#)
- [Downtown San Rafael Arts District, San Rafael - San Francisco Bay Area Region](#)
- [Eureka Cultural Arts District, Eureka - North Coast Region](#)
- [Grass Valley-Nevada City Cultural District, Grass Valley/Nevada City - Gold Country Region](#)
- [Little Tokyo, Los Angeles – Los Angeles Region](#)
- [Oceanside Cultural District, Oceanside – San Diego Region](#)
- [Redding Cultural District, Redding – Shasta Cascade Region](#)
- [Rotten City-Emeryville Cultural Arts District, Emeryville - San Francisco Bay Area Region](#)
- [San Pedro Waterfront Arts, Cultural & Entertainment District, San Pedro – Los Angeles Region](#)
- [SOMA Pilipinas – Filipino Cultural Heritage District, San Francisco – San Francisco Bay Area Region](#)
- [Truckee Cultural District, Truckee – High Sierra Region](#)

A Cultural District, as outlined by the program, is a well-defined geographic area with a high concentration of cultural resources and activities. Each of the 14 districts will receive the designation for a period of five years, per state legislation. Designation, under this pilot launch of the program, includes benefits such as technical assistance, peer-to-peer exchanges, and branding materials and promotional strategy. The Council has partnered with Visit California and Caltrans for strategic statewide marketing and resource support.

Originating with the adoption of Assembly Bill 189 in 2015, authored by Assemblyman Richard Bloom, the California Cultural Districts program aims to leverage the state’s artistic and cultural assets. Aligning with the mission and values of the California Arts Council, the districts will celebrate the diversity of California while unifying under an umbrella of shared values—helping to grow and sustain authentic grassroots arts and cultural opportunities, increasing the visibility of local artists and community participation in local arts and culture, and promoting socioeconomic and ethnic diversity. Districts will also play a conscious role in tackling issues of artist displacement.

Pilot cohort districts will offer feedback to the Council to ensure the subsequent launch of the full program in 2019 will be supportive, accessible and appropriate for all types of cultural centers.

The 14 districts that comprise the program’s first cohort were selected with variety in mind, intended to help tailor the program to meet the complex needs of a state kaleidoscopic in nature. Districts range developmentally from emerging to established; include an emphasis on cultural consumption, cultural production, and cultural heritage; and are located in urban, suburban and rural areas.

“State-level designation of Cultural Districts, with California’s diverse geography and regional variety, allowed for an entirely new and comprehensive look at our deeply valued cultural assets,” said Donn K. Harris, California Arts Council Chair. “Each community’s personal and generational commitment to these assets speaks of a state deeply invested in the places and people that celebrate local traditions and creativity. Our goal with the pilot launch of this new program was to support a group of districts that met high but broad standards of coherence, vision, and purpose – ones that could set an example for districts that will follow as the program develops and grows.”

“These Cultural Districts showcase California’s cultural diversity and vibrant experiences,” said Caroline Beteta, president and CEO of Visit California. “The districts are one more way to highlight the one-of-a-kind places throughout our state that inspire residents and visitors alike.”

Selection for the California Cultural Districts was conducted through a multistep process, including an open call for initial letters of intent, a peer panel review, site visits for semi-finalists, and an invited finalist application. The program was highly competitive and received interest and submissions from dozens of communities across the state.

Harris added, “We know there are many gems waiting to be polished, and the California Arts Council is committed to providing support and ongoing service so that all deserving districts have the opportunity to be recognized. We will continue to encourage local efforts that address the social and economic challenges and opportunities that may arise as these districts evolve.”

Additional new districts will be eligible to apply for state designation in 2019 through a finalized certification process.

**Learn more about the California Cultural Districts program at [www.caculturaldistricts.org](http://www.caculturaldistricts.org).**

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The mission of the California Arts Council, a state agency, is to advance California through the arts and creativity. The Council is committed to building public will and resources for the arts; fostering accessible arts initiatives that reflect contributions from all of California's diverse populations; serving as a thought leader and champion for the arts; and providing effective and relevant programs and services.

Members of the California Arts Council include: Chair Donn K. Harris, Vice Chair Nashormeh Lindo, Larry Baza, Phoebe Beasley, Christopher Coppola, Juan Devis, Kathleen Gallegos, Jaime Galli, Louise McGuinness, Steven Oliver, and Rosalind Wyman. Learn more at [www.arts.ca.gov](http://www.arts.ca.gov).