



County of Santa Cruz

DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, OPEN SPACE & CULTURAL SERVICES

979 17TH AVENUE, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95062

(831) 454-7901 FAX: (831) 454-7940 TDD: (831) 454-7978

JEFF GAFFNEY
DIRECTOR

ARTS COMMISSION – AGENDA

Monday, November 17, 2025
Room

3:00 p.m.

Regular Meeting – Annual Planning Meeting

Simpkins Family Swim Center Community

979 17th Avenue
Santa Cruz, CA 95062

- I. **CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL**
- II. **AGENDA MODIFICATIONS OR APPROVAL**
- III. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:** Any person may address the Commission during its Oral Communication period. Speakers must not exceed two (2) minutes in length, or the time limit established by the Chair, and individuals may speak only once during Oral Communications. All Oral Communication must be directed to an item listed on today's Consent Agenda, yet to be heard on Regular Agenda, or a topic not on the agenda that is within the jurisdiction of the Commission. Commission members will not take actions or respond immediately to any Oral communication presented regarding topics not on the agenda but may choose to follow up later, either individually or on a subsequent Commission Agenda. Oral communications will normally be received by the Commission for a period not to exceed thirty (30) minutes. If, at the end of this period, additional persons wish to address the Commission, the Oral Communication period may be continued to the last item on the agenda.
- IV. **CONSENT AGENDA**
 - a. Approve meeting minutes from October 6, 2024..... Pages 2-3
- V. **STAFF REPORTS**
- VI. **REGULAR AGENDA**
 - A. **Information/Discussion Items**
 1. Arts Commission Attendance – 2024 and 2025..... Pages 4-5
 2. Percent for Arts in Private Development – subcommittee report
 - B. **Action Items**
 1. 2026 Public Art Plan Page 6
 2. 2026 Arts Commission meeting schedule..... Page 7
 3. Legacy Award – finalize criteria and application Pages 8-10
 4. Spotlight Award – update nomination process and rating form..... Pages 11-13
 5. Artist of the Year – update scoring criteria Pages 14-17
- VII. **AGENDA / MEETING FOR: March 2, 2026 – 4:30 PM**
- VIII. **ADJOURNMENT**



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JEFF GAFFNEY
DIRECTOR OF PARKS

ARTS COMMISSION MINUTES October 6, 2025, 4:30 p.m. – 979 17th Ave., Santa Cruz

DRAFT

- I. Called to order at 4:35 p.m. Present: Niven, Phillips, Singer, Kroslowitz, Rogers, McGowen,
Miranda, Leclerc

Absent / Excused: Stabile Vacant seats: 1

Staff: Sarah Shea, Kathy DeWild

- II. Approved Agenda - Motion/Second: Rogers/McGowen

AYES: 7

NOES: 0

ABSTAIN: 0

ABSENT: 2

- III. Oral Communications – None

- VI. Approved Consent Agenda - Motion/Second: Kroslowitz/Phillips

AYES: 7

NOES: 0

ABSTAIN: 0

ABSENT: 2

- V. Staff reports

La Neta's proposal and agreement for the Juvenile Hall public art project was approved by the Board of Supervisors at their Sept. 30 meeting. The artists will soon begin workshops with the resident youth. The Spotlight Awards exhibition is up through Oct. 14 on the 5th floor of the County Gov. Ctr. Bruce Harman installed a mural on the sobering center building; the mural features a calm stream, redwoods, and monarch butterflies. The Gail Rich photos donation, recommended by the AAP and approved by the Arts Commission, received final approval for inclusion in the County Art Collection by the Board at their Sept. 30 meeting.

- VI. Regular Agenda

A. Information and Discussion Items

1. Commissioner LeClerc reported that the Santa Cruz Co. Chamber of Commerce officially established a Cultural Impact Award, with nominations due Oct. 8. Commissioners LeClerc and Rogers will continue in an advisory capacity to the Chamber regarding the award.

B. Action Items

1. Approved the selection panel's recommendation of public artist (Bruce Harman) for the Behavioral Health Bridge Housing Public Art Project

Motion/Second: Kroslowitz/Rogers

AYES: 8

NOES: 0

ABSTAIN: 0

ABSENT: 1

VII. Next meeting date: November 17, 2025 – 3:00 PM.

VIII. Adjournment – 5:03 PM

Motion/Second: Phillips/McGowen

AYES: 8

NOES: 0

ABSTAIN: 0

ABSENT: 1

ARTS COMMISSION - Attendance 2024

P = Present E = Excused Absence U = Unexcused Absence V = Vacant R = Resigned C=Canceled/No Quorum P*=Late Arrival to Meeting T= Term ended

Meets selected Mondays at 4:30PM, 979 17 th Ave.	Jan. 22	Feb.	Mar. 4	Apr.	May 6	June	July 1	Aug.	Sept. 9	Oct.	Nov.	Dec. 9
DISTRICT 1 – SUPERVISOR KOENIG												
Karen Kroslowitz	P		P		P		P		P			P
Sonia Leclerc	P		P		U		P		E			P
DISTRICT 2 – SUPERVISOR FRIEND												
Brenda Rogers			P		P		P		P			E
Charlie Singer	P		P		P		P		P			P*
DISTRICT 3 – SUPERVISOR CUMMINGS												
Taj Leahy	P		E		R	VACANT						
Valeria Miranda	P		P		E		P		P			P
DISTRICT 4 – SUPERVISOR HERNANDEZ												
Paul DeWorken	VACANT				P		P		E			R
Judy Stabile	P		P		P		E		P			P
DISTRICT 5 – SUPERVISOR McPHERSON												
Lynda Phillips	P		E		P		U		P			P
Margaret Niven	P		P		E		P		P			P

ARTS COMMISSION - Attendance 2025

P = Present E = Excused Absence U = Unexcused Absence V = Vacant R = Resigned C=Canceled/No Quorum P*=Late Arrival to Meeting T= Term ended

Meets selected Mondays at 4:30PM, 979 17 th Ave.	Jan. 27	Feb.	Mar. 3	Apr.	May 5	June	July 21	Aug.	Sept. 8	Oct. 6	Nov. 17	Dec.
DISTRICT 1 – SUPERVISOR KOENIG												
Karen Kroslowitz	E		P		P		P		P	P	P	
Sonia Leclerc	P		P		P		P		E	P	P	
DISTRICT 2 – KIMBERLY DE SERPA												
Brenda Rogers	P		P*		E		E		P	P	E	
Charlie Singer	P		P		P		P		P	P	P	
DISTRICT 3 – SUPERVISOR CUMMINGS												
Sean McGowen	Appt. 1/28/25		P		P		E		P	P	P	
Valeria Miranda	P		P		P		P		E	P*	P	
DISTRICT 4 – SUPERVISOR HERNANDEZ												
	VACANT											
Judy Stabile	P		P		E		P		P	E	P	
DISTRICT 5 – MONICA MARTINEZ												
Lynda Phillips	P		P		P		P		P	P	P	
Margaret Niven	P		P		P		P		P	P	P*	

Santa Cruz County Arts Commission Public Art Plan – 2026 - DRAFT

Project %	Construction Budget	Estimated \$ Available for Public Art	Original Source of Funding	Public Art Process Start Date	Construction Start Date	Public Art Completion Date	Selection Process
The Farm Park	\$6,000,000 (1)	\$120,000	RDA	Started	TBD	TBD	Open Competition
Juvenile Hall	\$15,000,000	\$150,000	SB-81 State Funds and County Capital Funds	Winter 2025	Fall/Winter 2025	2026	Open Competition
% Ben Lomond Transfer Station	\$5,725,000	\$114,500	Bond Funded	Started	Spring 2026	Winter 2026/ Spring 2027	Open Competition
Swim Center Waterslide	\$1,400,000	\$28,000	Parks Capital Funds	TBD	Fall 2026	Spring 2027	Open Competition
Pace Trails	\$272,474	\$5,449	Grant Funded	Fall 2025	Fall 2025	Fall 2026	Open Competition
BHBH Navigation Center	\$ 1,465,741	\$ 29,315	Grant Funded	August 2025	August 18, 2025	Winter/Spring 2026	Open Competition
Brommer Street Park Restroom	\$260,260	\$5,205	Parks Capital Funds	TBD	TBD	TBD	Open Competition
% Aptos Park Clubhouse Renovation	\$368,424	\$7,368	Parks Capital Funds	TBD	TBD	TBD	Open Competition
Rail Trail Segments 10 & 11	TBD	\$500,000	RTC & ATP Grants	Summer 2026	Winter 2027	2030	Open Competition
Rockview	\$502,600	\$10,052	Parks Capital Funds	TBD	TBD	TBD	Open Competition

Note: %=Percent for Arts projects: The dollar figures included for the adopted and proposed budgets include 1-2% of total construction cost from eligible capital projects, which is allocated for artists design services and the acquisition or commissioning of Public Artwork.

- (1) There is no longer any RDA funding for the construction of these parks; the figure shown in “Original Budget” for these projects is only provided as a reference to show how the amount available for Percent for Arts was determined. Funds for public art have been encumbered in the Public Art account, and artwork planned for the garden has been fabricated and installed by the artist.



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DRAFT

ARTS COMMISSION MEETING SCHEDULE

The meetings are held generally on the first Monday, every other month. The commission may meet at an alternate location or time specified in the public notice. Additionally, the commission may call for special public meetings in order to timely conduct commission business.

Meetings are held in person in the Simpkins Swim Center Community Room, or Live Oak Library Annex Activity Room - 979 17th Ave., Santa Cruz.
For questions, please email kathy.dewild@santacruzcountyca.gov

2026 Schedule

MONDAY	March 2, 2026	4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
MONDAY	May 4, 2026	4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
MONDAY	July 6, 2026	4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
MONDAY	September 14, 2026	4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
MONDAY	November 16, 2026	3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

County of Santa Cruz Arts Commission Living Legacy Award

Purpose

The Living Legacy Award recognizes and honors individuals or collaborative groups who have made a significant, lasting impact on the arts in Santa Cruz County through a lifelong commitment to artistic practice, teaching, or leadership in the performing, literary, or visual arts. This award celebrates those whose work has enriched the cultural fabric of the community and continues to inspire future generations.

Eligibility Criteria

Nominees must meet the following criteria:

- Be a current or long-term resident of Santa Cruz County.
- Demonstrate a history of significant contribution to the performing, literary, or visual arts.
- Show evidence of community engagement through artistic teaching, mentorship, or leadership.
- Have a body of work or practice that reflects sustained artistic excellence and influence.
- Be actively engaged in their artistic field or retired with an enduring legacy.

Nomination Process

- Nominations may be submitted by arts organizations, arts commissions, or community members.
- Each nomination must include:
 - A completed nomination form. [To include nominator and nominee contact info.](#)
 - A letter of support outlining the nominee's contributions and impact. [And criteria?](#)
 - A résumé or biography of the nominee.
 - Up to three examples of the nominee's work (e.g., images, writing samples, videos). [Information about file format and size will be added to form.](#)

Selection Process

- The Santa Cruz County Arts Commission will review nominations annually.
- Santa Cruz County Arts Commissioners will evaluate nominees based on their artistic achievement, community impact, and alignment with the purpose of the award.
- One recipient will be selected annually, unless the Commission determines no nominee meets the criteria.

Award Presentation

- The Living Legacy Award will be presented publicly at an event determined by the Arts Commission.

- The recipient will receive a formal recognition from the County Board of Supervisors and may be invited to share their work with the community through an exhibition, performance, reading, or talk.

Review and Amendments

This procedure will be reviewed periodically by the Arts Commission to ensure its relevance and effectiveness. Amendments may be proposed and adopted by a majority vote of the Commission.

Living Legacy Award Nominee Rating Form

Nominee Name: _____

Date: _____

Rating Criteria

Each criterion should be rated on a scale of **1-5**, with 1 being "Needs Improvement" and 5 being "Exceptional." The total score will be out of 25 points.

Criteria	Rating Scale (1-5)	Comments/Observations
Artistic Excellence (1-5) <i>Evaluate the nominee's body of work and its quality.</i>		
Community Impact (1-5) <i>Assess the nominee's influence within the local community and beyond.</i>		
Commitment to Mentorship and Teaching (1-5) <i>Evaluate the nominee's contribution to teaching, mentorship, or sharing artistic knowledge.</i>		
Sustained Artistic Practice (1-5) <i>Consider the longevity and consistency of the nominee's artistic output and dedication to their craft.</i>		
Leadership and Advocacy for the Arts (1-5) <i>Evaluate the nominee's involvement in arts advocacy, leadership roles, or organizing arts-related events or programs.</i>		

Total Score (out of 25): _____

Rating Explanation:

- **1 – Needs Improvement:** The nominee shows minimal contribution or achievement in this area.
 - **2 – Fair:** The nominee has some contribution, but there is room for growth in this area.
 - **3 – Good:** The nominee meets expectations, with solid contributions in this area.
 - **4 – Very Good:** The nominee excels in this area and shows strong, consistent impact.
 - **5 – Exceptional:** The nominee demonstrates outstanding achievement, leadership, or impact in this area.
-

Final Comments and Recommendation:

Rating Summary:

- **Total Score:** _____
 - **Average Rating per Category:** _____
-

This form would allow evaluators to give detailed feedback on each nominee while maintaining an objective, transparent rating system.



Call for Nominations for the 2025 *Spotlight Award*

**Presented by the Santa Cruz County Arts Commission
Honoring Local Emerging Artists**

Deadline for nomination letters: March 3, 2025

About the Award - Through the Spotlight Award, the County Arts Commission publicly recognizes individuals who have achieved a high level of excellence and creativity in their work, but who have not received widespread acknowledgment of their talent. This annual award recognizes younger artists as well as those who are discovering their artistic voice later in life. The award will be given to one artist or artist group in each of the following mediums: visual art, performing arts, and literary arts. The work of awardees will be featured at an exhibition on the 5th floor of the County Government Center. Dates for 2025 are August 1-October 10.

Eligibility Criteria

- Artist must be a current resident of Santa Cruz County.
- Artist must have completed works that show a high degree of excellence, individuality, innovation, and/or creativity.
- Artist must show significant artistic promise, as demonstrated in a significant achievement for at least one completed piece of artwork, performance, exhibit, or written work, recognized by critics, educators or professionals.
- Artists working in any medium are eligible, including literary, visual, and performing arts.

Nomination Information

Only residents of Santa Cruz County are eligible to make nominations. Artists may nominate themselves. Your nomination letter of no more than two pages must include:

- The name of the artist and their contact information, including: e-mail, website (if available), phone and local address
- A brief description of your relationship to the artist, why you are nominating them for the award, and how they meet the criteria (how they stand out as an emerging artist).

Santa Cruz County Parks staff will notify the nominees and provide them with the application information. Nominees must return their materials by the required date to be considered (April 4, 2025). While a new process will open each year, the previous year's nominations will be carried over for one year. Artists previously considered may be nominated again in subsequent years.

Send your nomination letter to: kathy.dewild@santacruzcountyca.gov – Subject Line: Spotlight Award Nomination

Selection Process - The selection panel, composed of members of the Santa Cruz County Arts Commission, will review eligible applications. Awardees will be selected based on the nomination letter and the application materials provided by the artist using the following criteria:

- Excellence in the body of work presented.
- Effective use of media and tools to communicate personal style
- Innovation/creativity
- Prior recognition through exhibit, performances, publication, or critique



Artist Application Information for the Spotlight Award Presented by the Santa Cruz County Arts Commission

About the Award - Through the Spotlight Award, the County Arts Commission publicly recognizes individuals who have achieved a high level of excellence and creativity in their work, but who have not received widespread acknowledgment of their talent. This award recognizes younger artists as well as those who are discovering their artistic voice later in life. The award will be given to one artist or artist group in each of the following mediums: visual art, performing arts, and literary arts. The work of awardees will be featured at an exhibition on the 5th floor of the County Government Center. Tentative dates for 2025 are July 30-Oct. 10.

Due Date: April 4, 2025

Please provide the following information via email to kathy.dewild@santacruzcountyca.gov. The subject line should read: **Spotlight Award Application – *your name***.

All written materials should be submitted as PDFs

- On a single page, please briefly describe your current body of work, and how this work will affect your education/work/career in the future.
- Include your resume listing exhibitions, performances, publications, etc.

Support materials

- *Visual Artists*: Email Up to 10 digital images no larger than 2 MB each that best represent your body of work, with a corresponding PDF list that identifies the piece with title, media, date created, and dimensions (if appropriate). Please do not submit original artwork.
- *Performing Artists*: Submit a video (MP4, WMV, or YouTube link) or Audio file (.MP3) - that best represents your work, no longer than 3 minutes.
- *Literary Artists*: A PDF that includes up to 3 samples of your work, **not to exceed 10 pages.**

Artists under the age of 18 must include a completed and signed Parent/Guardian Permission Form.

Selection Process - The selection panel is composed of members of the Santa Cruz County Arts Commission, which is made up of up to ten commissioners appointed by their district Board of Supervisor. The panel will review eligible applications, and the artists will be selected based on materials provided which documents:

- Excellence in the body of work presented
- Effective use of media and tools to communicate personal style
- Innovation/creativity
- Information provided in the nomination letter
- Prior history of exhibitions, performances, publication, or critique

Awardees will be notified in early May 2025 of the Panel's decisions.

Please email any questions you might have to kathy.dewild@santacruzcountyca.gov

Spotlight Award 2025

	Categories				
Possible points	0-20 points	0-5 points	0-5 points	0-10 points	
Artist Names	<i>Excellence, innovation, and creativity shown in the body of work presented</i>	<i>Effective use of media and tools to communicate personal style</i>	<i>Achievements and merit noted in the nomination letter</i>	<i>Prior history of exhibitions, performances, publication, or critique</i>	Total points (0-40)

Commissioner Name _____

ARTIST OF THE YEAR NOMINATIONS

Nominate an Artist for the Award

Background - Over the last 40 years, the County of Santa Cruz has selected outstanding artists nominated by the public, and has honored them through the Artist of the Year Award. This award recognizes artists for outstanding achievement in the disciplines of performing, visual, or literary arts.

Previous Artists of the Year include: Tandy Beal, Lou Harrison, James Houston, George Barati, Charles Hilger, William Everson, Doug McClellan, Jack Zajac, Linda Burman-Hall, Adrienne Rich, Frans Lanting, Paul Whitworth, Lynda Watson, Morton Marcus, Carol Summers, Jessica Williams, Karen Thuesen Massaro, Monica Parker, Laurie King, Richard Deutsch, Manuel Santana, Robert Kelley, Phil Collins, Susana Arias, John Babcock, Geoffrey Dunn, Shmuel Thaler, Shelley Phillips, Cheryl Anderson, Ellen Bass, Yermo Aranda, Annie Morhauser, Stephen Kessler, Tammi Brown, and Janet Johns.

Nominees must meet the criteria established by the Commission:

- ◆ Must be nominated by a resident of Santa Cruz County
- ◆ Artist must reside in Santa Cruz County.
- ◆ Artist must have a national or international reputation/standing.
- ◆ Artist must have contributed to the cultural enrichment of the local community.
- ◆ Artist must have created or presented work in Santa Cruz County.

Nomination Process

Only residents of Santa Cruz County are eligible to make nominations. Santa Cruz County Parks will notify the nominees, and provide them with the submission information. Nominees must return their submission materials by the required date to be considered. A new process will open each year. Materials will be held over for up to three years for consideration.

Nomination letters must be received by June 6, 2025. **In your dated nomination letter, please include:**

- ◆ Your name and address
- ◆ The name of the artist and their contact information, including: e-mail, website, phone and local address
- ◆ A brief description of why you are nominating them for the award, and how they meet the criteria listed above

Send your nomination letter to:

Attn: Kathy DeWild - Artist of the Year Nominations
Santa Cruz County Parks, Open Space & Cultural Services, 979 17th Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA 95062
or email to: kathy.dewild@santacruzcountycalifornia.gov

Selection Process

The selection panel is composed of the Santa Cruz County Arts Commission, which is made up of up to ten commissioners appointed by the Board of Supervisors. The panel will review all eligible applications, and the artist will be selected based on materials provided by the nominated artist which document:

- ◆ Excellence in the body of work presented
- ◆ Contribution to the cultural enrichment of the local community.
- ◆ Reputation of artist nationally and/or internationally

Santa Cruz County Artist of the Year Submission Requirements for Nominees

In order to be considered for the award, nominees must submit the required materials by June 25, 2025. Please provide the following information:

- o **A cover page** which lists your name, address, phone, and e-mail.
- o **Resume of professional artistic activities and achievements** listed in chronological order (maximum 2 pages). Include significant awards, exhibitions, performances, presentations, and publications.
- o **A one-page description of your contributions to the cultural enrichment of Santa Cruz County.** Please consider in your description that the panel may not be aware of your work within the community; include service on boards and commissions, volunteer work, donations to local causes, etc.
- o **A summary page** that speaks to your work and acknowledgment of it nationally and/or internationally.
- o The cover page, resume, contributions, and summary pages should be combined into one multi-page PDF file.
- o **For performing artists,** please include up to five examples of your work, each no more than three minutes in length. Files must attached to and sent in separate emails.
- o **Visual and Literary artists,** please include no more than 10 samples of your work combined into one PDF, and e-mailed as a separate document from the other written application materials. Visual artists should also include with each image a description of the piece, including title, media, dimensions, and date. Literary artists should include the date the work was created or published.

Your materials will be reviewed and scored using a point system, with a total possibility of 30 points awarded. A maximum of ten points will be awarded in each of the following categories: artistic excellence, community contribution, and national/international standing. Artists will be notified of the panel's decision via email.

Send nomination materials to kathy.dewild@santacruzcountyca.gov
Subject Line: Arts Commission - Artist of the Year Nominations

Questions? Please email kathy.dewild@santacruzcountyca.gov

Santa Cruz County Arts Commission ARTIST OF THE YEAR 2026 NOMINEES

The Artist of the Year Award is presented by the Santa Cruz County Arts Commission for outstanding achievement in the discipline of performing, visual or literary arts. Nominees must:

- be a resident of Santa Cruz County
- have a national and/or international reputation
- have contributed to the cultural enrichment of the local community through their work in the arts (e.g. service on Cultural Council Board)
- have created and/or presented work in Santa Cruz County.

Artists' materials are to be reviewed and rated utilizing a point system, with a maximum of ten (10) points awarded in each of the categories listed below. Criteria for the points awarded are listed on the attached page. 30 points is the maximum.

Artist	Media	Excellence in body of work presented.	Contribution to the cultural enrichment of the community.	Reputation of the artist nationally and/or internationally.
Performing Artists				
Visual Artists				
Literary Artists				
Other				

Artist of the Year Rating Criteria

- ♦ Excellence in the body of work presented – 10 Points

8-10 Points: The body of work presented is cohesive; shows an extraordinary understanding and use of chosen media; and is creative/unique within their chosen medium.

5-7 Points: Work presented is consistent and shows high-quality workmanship.

1-6 Points: Work is more production based or formulaic and does not demonstrate unique qualities within their chosen medium.

- ♦ Contribution to the cultural enrichment of the local community

8-10 Points: Artist has consistently and significantly shared their artistic experience and expertise through volunteer work and may have donated original artwork.

5-7 Points: Artist has consistently shared their artistic expertise and experience through teaching and/or mentoring; however, volunteer work has been sporadic, yet significant, and/or artist has donated original artwork.

1-6 Points: Artists has made monetary contributions or donated original artwork, in lieu of volunteer work and/or teaching.

- ♦ Reputation of artist nationally and/or internationally

8-10 Points: Artist has exhibited/performed/been published internationally. Artist is well known both inside and outside of the United States.

6-7 Points: Artist has exhibited/performed/been published a few times but has a strong and consistent national record. Artist is known outside of California.

4-5 Points: Artist has exhibited/performed/been published only few times nationally but is widely known in California.

1-3 Points: Artist is beloved in Santa Cruz County but is not widely known outside of California.