

OBJECTIVE 3.3: ESTABLISH A CITY ARTS COMMISSION AND RETAIN THE CITY'S CULTURAL ARTS COMMITTEE IN A NEW ROLE.

Costa Mesa has an 11-member Cultural Arts Committee that functions with a dual purpose: primarily, hands-on volunteer coordination in support of city sponsored events and, secondarily, if only periodically, consideration of arts related policies and practices. Few Committee members have professional arts experience or public policy expertise.

In California, Committees typically meet as needed and are advisory bodies, whereas Commissions meet more often and make decisions that are final, absent successful appeals to Council. City Commissions, because effectively they are delegated legislative authority, are broadly viewed as more prestigious, i.e., as compared with City Committees.

Effectively engaging the public ensures broad participation in both City sponsored programs and development of public policy. Bifurcating the twin functions of the Cultural Arts Committee would serve to better advance both functions. Each warrants a singular focus by the citizens best suited to the respective dynamics and challenges at hand.

Establishing an independent Commission would reflect the Council's desire for an ongoing policy focus, along with vigilant oversight of City investments in the arts. A new Commission would serve to attract those residents best qualified by virtue of knowledge and experience, which in turn would redound to the benefit of Council and the public at large.

11 cities in Orange County have Arts Commissions—none with a motto of “City of the Arts.” This would be a statement to the world that Costa Mesa holds in highest regard the vital role of the arts in its community.

We recommend:

- **Action 3.3.1:** Establish an Arts Commission comprised of seven members appointed by Council who have some combination of deep knowledge of and/or professional experience in the cultural arts.
- **Action 3.3.2:** Retain a Committee with a new mission of building public awareness and providing volunteer coordination for City arts events.

“SIMPLY PUT, IT DEMONSTRATES A HIGHER COMMITMENT TO THE ARTS.”

—Key stakeholder comment