

## **CULTURAL ACCESS POLICY & EQUITY STANDARDS**

*Pasadena is a community that is enriched by a cultural infrastructure that encourages access and diversity in the arts. Sharing culture is essential to full participation in a community. To promote inclusiveness in the arts access is interpreted as a key point in each of the following policy elements initiated through Cultural Nexus. Each policy statement is defined by standards that recognize cultural diversity and access as an integral feature of all actions to broaden participation in the arts. The Cultural Affairs division and the Arts and Culture Commission will work collaboratively with appropriate City staff, departments and commissions to facilitate the implementation of these policies and standards.*

*Cultural resources are accessible when individuals and organizations are able to enjoy arts and culture. Opportunities to improve access to arts and culture in Pasadena are continuously evolving, and are supported by the goals of the general plan, artists, cultural leaders, non-profit art institutions and private industry. The creation of an online arts and culture resource directory by the Division of Cultural Affairs for artists and the general public exemplifies an effort to promote “access” to the arts for all members of the community.*

*The importance of access as a key principle in sustaining Pasadena’s position of cultural vitality is referenced in **The Pasadena Policy on Children, Youth and Families**. This policy states “**The social and emotional well being of Pasadena residents requires easy access to social, cultural and recreational opportunities**”.*

### **DEFINITION AND APPLICATIONS**

#### **ACCESS: 1. PUBLIC POLICIES**

*The City of Pasadena will provide guidance for enhancing access to and participation in the arts through the following actions:*

- 1. Herein adopts a policy supporting equal access to cultural institutions, art venues and cultural events for all members of the Pasadena community regardless of their ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, age, sexual orientation and disability.*
- 2. Examine and revise public policies to encourage equal access to opportunities for artists and arts organizations to present, promote and fund their work.*

## **ACCESS: 2. ACCESS AND UNIVERSAL DESIGN**

*Universal design considers the needs of all users. The proposal for a universal playground in Brookside Park illustrates the application of an integrative approach that incorporates access and universal design features. This project involves the development of an open space area for a recreational use that can be accessed by all children. The design of the physical environment, play equipment and program content provide an arena that is functional and enjoyable for all children regardless of their physical capabilities and cognitive skills.*

*Similarly, a universal design approach for a new arts and culture center would include building a fully accessible workspace and living environment for artists with and without disabilities. In both examples the emphasis is on creating an environment usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible without the need for specialized adaptive measures. Universal design standards include consideration of the community's accessibility needs and cultural perceptions. The following standards provide direction for the adoption of universal design concepts:*

- 1. Consider the cultural values of residents with regard to both the natural and built environments in master plans and guidelines.*
- 2. Encourage consideration of universal design standards by artists and arts and cultural organizations as may be appropriate for arts exhibitions, programs, projects and events.*
- 3. Encourage cultural leaders, planners and artists to design multi-sensory interpretive exhibits and information kiosks in cultural and tourist related venues.*

## **ACCESS: 3. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY**

*Conditions such as disability, household income, language barriers or personal choice may result in a separation between those with new media access and those without the financial or physical means or desire to access these services. Such conditions might limit a person's ability to access artist registries, participate in cultural events and obtain information about job opportunities. Increasingly cultural providers are marketing their venues through the Internet. Therefore, planning an inclusive information network for the arts must address the access needs of Pasadena's disabled and senior population. Adaptive techniques such as Braille, audio tape, large print and other alternative formats are instrumental in facilitating access to written information by people with visual and physical impairments. The following recommendations will facilitate accessible communication:*

- 1. Create a guide that describes the accessibility of Pasadena's art exhibitions, cultural events and art resources.*
- 2. Encourage equal access to art and culture programs for non-English speaking persons.*
- 3. Facilitate training for art educators, community leaders and artists regarding the significance and impact of language, context and format in a culturally diverse environment.*
- 4. Distribute arts and cultural resource materials in alternative formats in publicly accessible locations.*
- 5. Develop arts and cultural resources that expand access to presentations and materials for persons with auditory impairments or comprehension difficulties.*

#### **ACCESS: 4. ARTS EDUCATION**

*Research studies have shown that arts education is essential to a complete education for all children and plays a fundamental role in creating a healthy community for people of all ages. Individuals exposed to the arts at an early age are typically the most active participants in art and culture. Visual and Performing Arts Standards-based learning is essential at all stages in the continuum of life long education. Beginning with school curricula, the standards identify what all individuals should know about the visual and performing arts. The following standards and implementation strategies are recommended to ensure that a high quality arts education is accessible to everyone in the Pasadena community:*

- 1. Work within state mandated guidelines for Visual and Performing Arts Standards-based arts education in schools and support community based arts partners that ensure culturally inclusive visual and performing arts programs are accessible to all children in Pasadena, Pre-K through Grade 12.*
- 2. Support PUSD outreach objectives to inform and engage the school community, the local arts community, and the community at large in Standards-based arts education.*
- 3. Support programming in arts education at all levels and various forms that is inclusive of the diverse cultural beliefs and traditions practiced in Pasadena.*
- 4. Encourage the community-wide implementation of Standards-based arts education for non-school audiences.*

5. *Annually evaluate art education initiatives implemented through Cultural Nexus to ensure that culturally diverse, inclusive and excellent standards in arts education are maintained and successfully promote accessibility for all Pasadena residents.*

**ACCESS: 5. ENGAGING CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

*The City of Pasadena is committed to policies that support the well being of children and families. City initiatives such as MAP that particularly focus on children at risk are a vital resource to families in Pasadena. The equity guidelines suggest a platform for capturing the popular forms of cultural expressions practiced by youth and the community. Participation in the arts equips young people with a healthy sense of personal identity and character. The arts create meaningful opportunities for young people to contribute and participate in the community. Art and Culture standards should focus on supporting individual and collective actions that utilize the creative process to validate and empower youth.*

1. *Consider encouraging arts and cultural organizations to develop and provide arts programming for at-risk youth.*
2. *Develop incentives for businesses to provide arts-related training, internships or job opportunities for youth.*
3. *Encourage local performing arts groups to collaborate with youth in the creation of works that express and reflect their lives, hopes and dreams.*
4. *Consider developing initiatives or partnerships that provide mobile arts and arts education programming for neighborhoods. An example could be an “arts on wheels” after-school arts education program. Transportation is frequently difficult to negotiate for families. A mobile classroom unit may facilitate broader access to arts education within neighborhoods.*
5. *Encourage initiatives and policies that engage and encourage youth to express and communicate their thoughts and visions in a positive manner through participation in arts programs. Local artists could serve as instructors and mentors.*
6. *Challenge youth to explore the interplay of cultural diversity, their social environment and community identity through neighborhood-based public art projects.*

## **ACCESS: 6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION**

*Standards that facilitate community participation should be incorporated in public policies that provide directives for accessing cultural resources and neighborhood services. To encourage community participation the public must be invited as early as possible to participate in the decision making process.*

*Cultural Nexus identifies numerous stakeholders that are critical to planning, decision-making and implementation of the Nexus plan. The Arts and Culture Commission and Cultural Affairs will plan and participate in community workshops and neighborhood meetings that inform residents of Nexus activities, and upcoming cultural events and that also identify opportunities for involvement. These guidelines will assist all parties involved in the management of art and cultural programs in planning for culturally diverse venues. The following key arts and cultural initiatives will facilitate efforts to involve the community:*

- 1. Establish a community dialogue series for the purpose of distributing information and obtaining public input into art and culture initiatives.*
- 2. Consider the development of a city initiative that would support and promote the preservation of individual cultural traditions, values and language throughout the Pasadena community.*
- 3. Encourage the identification of new and existing community resources that strengthen partnerships between neighborhood art advocates, artists and arts organizations.*
- 4. Identify cultural tourism opportunities that are imaginative, integrative and reflective of Pasadena's culturally diverse population.*

## **ACCESS: 7. CULTURAL HERITAGE**

*Cultural heritage is an important aspect of cultural access. Shared cultural beliefs, values, memories, expectations, and exposure to different ways of thinking promote understanding and acceptance among people. Cultural heritage enables residents to make valuable connections to history, place and environment. The community has voiced the concern that arts and culture should reflect the whole of the artistic and cultural expressions practiced in their own communities and cultural traditions. Examples of cultural heritage include local historians, storytellers, artisans, craftspeople, musicians and dancers. Cultural Access initiatives should target the following areas:*

- 1. Encourage the preservation and enhancement of cultural heritage as a valuable cultural attribute and resource in Pasadena.*

2. *Support activities that help Pasadena residents explore the range of cultural expression in their communities.*
3. *Partner with community and cultural leadership to develop appropriate goals for the preservation of folk life and cultural heritage.*
4. *Promote cultural expressions that reflect the cultural diversity of Pasadena and that are included in artist selection, program venue and site access.*
5. *Collaborate with cultural decision makers to identify and support grass root efforts that invigorate the artistic capacity of Pasadena's diverse population.*

**ACCESS: 8. PUBLIC ART**

*The goal of the Pasadena Public Art program is to create a publicly available collection of contemporary art that celebrates the human spirit and condition. Pasadena seeks to build a cohesive public art collection that encourages public dialogue, understanding and enjoyment of public art. Public art serves as a perfect medium for illustrating the diverse range of cultural expression practiced in the Pasadena community. In collaboration with the city's Public Art Program Guideline, these access standards include the following considerations:*

1. *Consider public art installations that maximize access and appreciation by Pasadena's residents and visitors to the fullest extent possible, as appropriate.*
2. *Require that Capital Improvement Program (CIP) public art projects are accessed through an equitable application and artist selection process.*
3. *Encourage artists, art consultants and developers to consider proposing multi-sensory art works or programming.*
4. *Ensure that public art panels and artist selection procedures are representative of Pasadena's diverse community.*
5. *Adopt public art initiatives that provide expanded exhibition and commission opportunities for artists.*
6. *Develop adaptive features for the Cultural Affairs website and expand information components of the public art program to facilitate accessibility for the public.*
7. *Develop a plan to expand public art into all Pasadena neighborhoods.*

**8. Integrate public art opportunities in various public settings and venues.**

**ACCESS: 9. PARTNERSHIPS**

*The City of Pasadena is a key partner in the implementation of the cultural access initiatives and standards brought forth in this policy statement. Public/private partnerships in Pasadena provide the financial and human resources to achieve high quality arts and culture programming to all residents of Pasadena. Within this context partnerships are most effectively realized through the following types of relationships:*

- 1. Strengthen the existing partnership with PUSD to ensure effective implementation of art education initiatives.**
- 2. Encourage and reward community institutions that build quality learning environments and offer culturally enriching programs.**
- 3. Support art programs in community-based arts organizations that are compatible with articulated community-wide plans or neighborhood goals.**
- 4. Collaborate with the non-profit community and cultural leadership in the implementation of programs that contribute to the cultural vitality and historic preservation of the community.**
- 5. Provide incentives that inspire the development and business community to support art and culture programs.**

**ACCESS: 10. ART AND CULTURE PROGRAMS**

*Full inclusion in Pasadena's cultural community means that cultural programs are fully accessible and inclusive of every individual, including citizens with disabilities and older adults. Access to cultural programs is a federal law and a legal requirement of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the American with Disabilities Act. Inclusive practices make provision for a wide range of people other than those with a disability. The provisions of the Act require that, in addition to physical access to programs, arts and cultural organizations must provide access to the content of their programs for all audiences including instructors, artists, participants, staff, docents, visitors, patrons and volunteers. Accessible programming includes exhibitions, lectures, films, videos, interactive displays, plays and concerts. Accessible formats are also needed for programs and catalogues, labeling, scripts, brochures, maps and publicity materials.*

*The following standards reference communication and program access for arts and culture:*

- 1. Work with appropriate staff and the Accessibility and Disability Commission to provide resources and training to cultural organizations and art institutions in alternative communication techniques such as audio and video description, assistive listening devices, captioning, sign language and interpreters.*
- 2. Facilitate communication between cultural groups and the Visitors Bureau regarding alternate formats such as Braille, large print, readers, tactile materials for printed information and multiple languages as is appropriate.*
- 3. Consider the support or production of an accessibility conference focused on audience development and universal design tools for arts organizations and institutions.*
- 4. Encourage artists and arts providers to include opportunities for multi-sensory experiences in art projects.*
- 5. Distribute information to museum educators for promoting accessibility of museum exhibits and programs through improved lighting, tactile components and alternate formats.*

### **Arts and Entertainment Venues**

*Legal accessibility standards exist for arts and entertainment venues and apply to operations including, but not limited to, ticketing policies, contracts, distribution and third party vendors.*

*Cultural institutions are encouraged to expand their outreach efforts to include consideration of accessible seating, discounted tickets for seniors and disabled patrons and guided tours.*