

CITY OF OCEANSIDE
NEWS RELEASE



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OCEANSIDE PUBLIC LIBRARY

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OCEANSIDE CULTURAL DISTRICT AMONG FIRST NAMED AS CALIFORNIA CULTURAL DISTRICT IN NEW CREATIVE STATEWIDE PROGRAM

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

Oceanside Cultural District has been selected as one of California's premier state-designated cultural districts, the California Arts Council announced today. Oceanside joins 13 other districts that will launch the innovative new program, highlighting thriving cultural diversity and unique artistic identities within California, home to the country's leading creative economy. A cultural district, as outlined by the program, is a well-defined geographic area with a high concentration of cultural resources and activities. 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.

The District partners are: the City of Oceanside--represented by its Oceanside Public Library and Oceanside Arts Commission (an advisory body to the City Council), the Oceanside Museum of Art, and MainStreet Oceanside. Together they bring a focus on inclusivity, creativity, talent, and economic development to the forefront in the District. The District is an extremely walkable area located in Oceanside's downtown center. The proposed boundaries span approximately 3/4 of a mile in each direction and includes The Star Theater at its northernmost point (Sportfisher Drive), the Oceanside Museum of Art to the east (Nevada Street), Hill Street Country Club Gallery at LinkSoul to the south (Minnesota Avenue), and the Oceanside Pier to the west.

The Oceanside Cultural District is home to an emerging art scene. As the cultural heart of Oceanside, the Oceanside Public Library—a department of the City—empowers the community by promoting literacy, information access, civic engagement, and cultural inclusiveness. The Oceanside Museum of Art is a cultural jewel located in downtown Oceanside, with a view of the Pacific Ocean and the historic Oceanside Pier. MainStreet Oceanside is a non-profit downtown business association that facilitates a Farmers Market, as well as a Sunset Market abundant with artists and musicians. Artists Alley serves as home to many striving artists, and the California Surf Museum connects with non-traditional arts audiences while honoring the local surf culture. The historic theaters promote opportunities for all ages and introduce theatrical expression to thousands of school children each year. Tattoo artists honor the area's military heritage with much of their work. The annual cultural events in the District are varied, colorful and celebratory as well as educational; featuring dance, music, and food. Restaurants and breweries in the District display local art and often feature local musicians. The Oceanside Transit Center is bustling, and makes Oceanside an easy, accessible locale to visit.

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"Oceanside is an original, active and eclectic area abundant with cultural resources. Local individuals and organizations work hard to create, promote and sustain cultural assets, quality of life, and economic development," says Principal Librarian CJ Di Mento.

"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. "Oceanside Cultural District'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."

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. Oceanside Cultural District 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 California Arts Council has partnered with Visit California and Caltrans for strategic statewide marketing and resource support.

Oceanside Cultural District and 13 other pilot districts will offer feedback to the California Arts Council to ensure the subsequent launch of the full program will be supportive, accessible and appropriate for all types of cultural centers. The pilot cohort program will run until 2019, after which additional new districts will be eligible to apply for a state designation through the finalized certification process. 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. Visit www.caculturaldistricts.org to learn more about the California Cultural Districts program.

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. Visit www.arts.ca.gov to learn more.

For more information about the Oceanside Cultural District, please contact CJ Di Mento, Principal Librarian, Oceanside Public Library, at cdimento@ci.oceanside.ca.us or 760-435-5614.