



Staff Liaison
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AGENDA

REGULAR MEETING OF THE ARTS AND CULTURE COMMISSION

Thursday, May 29, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

El Cerrito City Council Chambers
10890 San Pablo Avenue
El Cerrito, CA 94530

(6:00 p.m) CONVENE REGULAR MEETING

1. **ROLL CALL** – Chair Renée LeVesque; Vice Chair: Ruth Cazden;
Members: Courtney Helion, Kim Settles, and Juno Rabinovici (Youth Member)
2. **COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS, COUNCIL LIAISON AND STAFF LIAISON REPORTS**
3. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**
Remarks are typically limited to three minutes per person, and may be on anything within the subject matter jurisdiction of the body. Remarks on non-agenda items will be heard first. Remarks on agenda items will be heard at the time the item is discussed.
4. **EL CERRITO FREE FOLK FESTIVAL MINI GRANT REQUEST**
For discussion and possible action, consider request for support from applicant Bob Helliesen to provide mini-grant funding in an amount of \$1,200 to support the 2025 El Cerrito Free Folk Festival, to take place October 19, 2025.
(Attachment)
5. **ACC/PUBLIC ART FUND BUDGET UPDATE**
Hear a presentation from City Staff, providing an update on the Public Art Fund and the ACC's anticipated expenses in Fiscal Year 2024-2025. (Attachment)
6. **ACC WORKPLAN**
Review the Arts & Culture Commission Draft Work Plan and accomplishments. Consider next steps, revisions needed, and adoption of the updated Workplan.
(Attachment)

7. UTILITY BOX PUBLIC ART PROGRAM DISCUSSION

Hear an update on the Utility Box Public Art Program and discuss potential options for the locations to include as well as the timing for the next round of installations. (Attachment)

8. ACC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Hear updates, participate in discussion, and consider possible action items regarding planning, logistics, and expenditures for the ACC calendar of events, including:

- 4th of July / ACC Tabling
- October Arts Month

9. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Consider approval of the minutes of the March 24, 2025, meeting. (Attachment)

10. UPCOMING ACC-AFFILIATED EVENTS

Review and discuss upcoming events and programs supported by the Arts & Culture Commission, including:

- Summer Kick-Off Event and Makers Faire – June 7, 11-3, City Hall
- City Hall Gallery Shows
 - Ruby Ramirez – June 2 - August 14, 2025
 - Gallery Reception July 25, 5 p.m.
 - Susan Harris – August - September 2025
 - Mindy Berardini – October - December 2025
 - Keana Dollar-Dickerson – March - April 2026
 - Gail Morrison – May - June 2026
 - Fairmont School 3rd Grade Students - TBD
- 4th of July Performances at worldOne Festival – July 4, 2025
- October Arts Month

11. UPCOMING ITEMS

- October Arts Month Planning (August/September)
- Poet Laureate Presentation (September) + CFA (Fall 2025)
- Public Art Fund Database
- Community Center Mural CFA
- El Cerrito Creative ReUse Artist Residency CFA (Winter 2025)

12. ADJOURNMENT

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Staff Liaison Will Provost at (510) 215-4318. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title I).

Any writings or documents provided to a majority of the members regarding any item on this agenda will be made available for public inspection at www.el-cerrito.org/acc.

From: noreply@civicplus.com
To: [Will H. Provost](#); [Lina Huang](#)
Subject: Online Form Submittal: Arts & Culture Commission Support Application Form
Date: Tuesday, May 6, 2025 2:50:57 PM

This sender is trusted.

Arts & Culture Commission Support Application Form

Contact/Applicant Name: Robert Helliesen

Organization Name (if applicable): El Cerrito Free Folk Festival

Contact Phone:

Contact Email:

Contact Address:

City/Zip: Berkeley 94708

Location of proposed event/project: El Cerrito Community Center

Anticipated number of attendees?: 330

Date(s) & Time(s) of the event: Sunday, October 19, 2025

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Include project description here: The San Francisco Folk Music Club in partnership with the City of El Cerrito will present a one day music festival on October 19, 2025 from noon to 8:00 PM. The festival will include two stages for musical acts, a space for class instruction, areas for jamming and an open mike. Most of the program will be indoors. The performers and instructions are highly capable - either professionals or well qualified amateurs.

The festival was first held in 2009. The festival was presented in 2022, 2023 and 2024 in the El Cerrito Community Center. This has worked very well - staff has been very helpful and the space has worked..

This is totally a volunteer effort.

Have you done a Yes

similar event or project before?

The Arts & Culture Commission cares about diverse audiences and environmental sustainability. Can you tell us how you will address those concerns?

We make a special effort to invite performers and instructors with various backgrounds to appeal to diverse audiences. Our volunteers care about environmental sustainability, and our festivals have had low environmental impacts - little littering and a high level of respect for the city's property.

REQUEST

Type of Support Requested:

Publicity, Financial Support, City-owned discounted venue/space

Enter \$ Amount

\$1,200

If discounted venue/space, have you already contacted the Recreation Department at recreation@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us to inquire about availability and discounted cost? If not, please do so before submitting this application. Review [application guidelines here](#).

What is your basic budget, and how will it be spent?

Room rental (after discount) \$1,300
Printing, advertising 300
Signage, etc. 240
1,840

ACC 1,200
Donations 640
1,840

Please upload your line-item budget (if requesting financial support)

Field not completed.

Have you received funding from the ACC in the past?

Yes

If yes, provide the history of the past project/event, and how much you were

2017 \$750
2018 \$1,000
2019 \$1,750
2020 no in-person festival due to Covid

awarded. If you are requesting more than what you were awarded in the past for the same project/event, please provide justification for the increase.

2021 no in-person festival due to Covid
2022 \$1,250
2023 \$1,000
2024 \$1,100

Upon implementation of project/event, you will be required to return to the ACC in person to provide a short verbal presentation on how the proposal was implemented. Please confirm that you agree to complete this requirement.

Yes

STAFF/PERSONNEL

paid staff

0

volunteers

40

If applicable, load additional documents here:

Field not completed.

Email not displaying correctly? [View it in your browser.](#)

ACC Budget Update

May 29, 2025

Starting Balance 6/30/24

- Public Art Fund (213) - \$142,329

Anticipated Revenue in FY25

- Interest Income - \$5,000

Current Annual Planned/Budgeted Expenses - \$38,995

- ECCRU - \$3,000
- Poet Laureate - \$2,000
- Mini-Grants - \$6,200
- Pavement Art - \$1,000
- 4th of July Support - \$12,000
- Utility Box Art - \$2,500
- October Arts Month - \$300
- Gallery Space - \$1,500
- Wind Sculpture Repair - \$10,495

Estimated Ending Fund Balance 6/30/25: \$108,334



Public Art Fund

The Art in Public Places ordinance established the Art in Public Places Program. (ECMC Section 13.50)

Known as “1% for Public Art”

- private and municipal developments with development costs of two hundred fifty thousand dollars or more shall devote an amount not less than one percent of such costs for acquisition and installation of public art on the development site, up to one hundred fifty thousand dollars. In lieu of acquisition and installation of public art on the development site, an owner or developer, at its discretion, may make an equal in-lieu contribution to the City’s Public Art Fund.

The program applies to:

- commercial, industrial and municipal projects, and residential projects that create five or more residential units
- An existing building that is remodeled with a construction value equal to or more than fifty percent of the replacement cost of the building





DRAFT BIENNIAL WORK PLAN
FISCAL YEAR 2025/2026 – 2026/2027

ARTS & CULTURE COMMISSION

Staff Liaison

Will Provost | (510) 215-4318
wprovost@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us
City Manager's Office

Chair Renée LeVesque;
Vice-Chair Ruth Cazden;
Members Courtney Helion, Kim Settles, and
Juno Rabinovici (Youth Member)

MISSION STATEMENT: It is the mission of the Arts & Culture Commission to advise the City Council of the needs of the artistic and cultural community; encourage and promote arts programs and events that engage community members and local businesses to build a flourishing and vibrant arts and cultural environment; provide advice to artists and arts/cultural organizations by sponsoring forums, programs, and events; carry out the Arts in Public Places program, and upon request, advise the City with respect to possible sources of funding.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: The Arts and Culture Commission (ACC) consists of up to seven members who demonstrate a commitment to various arts disciplines, including but not limited to fine arts, visual arts, performing arts, literary arts, art history, and arts education. The ACC is charged with oversight of the Arts in Public Places Program, which requires certain development projects to contribute 1% of construction costs to public art, and is responsible for acquisition, funding, and placement of public art in the City on public property. The ACC also juries the City Hall Gallery Space, located on the second floor of City Hall at 10890 San Pablo Avenue.

History as described in 2017-18 Workplan: In 2002, a group of citizens petitioned the El Cerrito City Council to establish an arts and culture commission. Their proposal included the idea of advising the Council on arts and culture within the City and collaboration with existing organizations within the community: “By establishing an art and culture commission the City of El Cerrito would be providing support and encouragement for the growth of all arts. We would be joining the greater Bay Area in dedicating our time and involvement to the promotion of arts, artists and varied arts programs that would enrich our community and enhance our city.” In 2003, the City Council created the Arts and Culture Commission. In 2013, the Commission adopted an Arts and Culture Master Plan to shape a vision for arts and culture in the City of El Cerrito.

FISCAL YEAR (2025/2026)

Goal or Objective	Proposed Activities	Funding and other Resources requested	Estimated Staff time needed	Timeline For Completion
No additional projects identified for Fiscal Year 2025/2026. Please see table for Ongoing Projects listed below.				

FISCAL YEAR (2026/2027)

Goal or Objective	Proposed Activities	Funding and other Resources requested	Estimated Staff time needed	Timeline For Completion
No additional projects identified for Fiscal Year 2026/2027. Please see table for Ongoing Projects listed below.				

ONGOING PROJECTS

Project	Activities	Funding and other Resources requested	Estimated Staff time needed
Maintain Arts & Culture Signature Programs	Poet Laureate, ECCRU Artist in Residency, 4 th of July/worldOne Festival, Utility Box Public Art Program, Develop Public Art Fund Database for Increased Transparency	Funding, excluding Staff time, provided by the Arts in Public Places Program, Public Art Fund (213)	60 hours
Increase Access/Inclusivity to Public Art in the Community	City Hall Gallery Space Call for Artists/Program. El Cerrito Art Organizations and Venues Database. Focus on promoting Mini-Grant Program.	Funding, excluding Staff time, provided by the Arts in Public Places Program, Public Art Fund (213)	50 hours
Leverage Partnerships with Other Organizations	Partnering with schools, library, community organizations and non-profits on community events/projects such as Messy Art Day, Free Folk Festival, EC Art Association Art Show, Makers Faires, etc.	Funding, excluding Staff time, provided by the Arts in Public Places Program, Public Art Fund (213)	15 hours
Supporting the Local Artistic and Cultural Community	Events (Art/Music/Food/Culture), Gallery Space, Database, Sponsorship of 4 th of July/worldOne Festival, October Arts Month, etc.	Funding, excluding Staff time, provided by the Arts in Public Places Program, Public Art Fund (213)	15 hours
Beautify El Cerrito	Utility Box Public Art Program, Pilot Pavement Art Program, Community Center Mural Project	Funding, excluding Staff time, provided by the Arts in Public Places Program, Public Art Fund (213)	40 hours

PRIOR FISCAL YEAR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Goal/Objective	Activities Supporting Goal	Status
Maintain Arts & Culture Signature Programs	Poet Laureate, ECCRU Artist in Residency, 4 th of July/worldOne Festival, Utility Box Public Art Program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed Utility Box Public Art Project on Ashbury Ave. at Fairmount Ave. • Supported Tess Taylor as 2024-2025 Poet Laureate • Supported Zona Sage and Lisa Zimmer-Chu as 2024-2025 ECCRU Artists in Residence • Provided financial support for the City of El Cerrito/worldOne 4th of July Festival, worldOne Stage Performances
Increase Access/Inclusivity to Public Art in the Community	City Hall Gallery Space Call for Artists/Program. El Cerrito Art Organizations and Venues Database. Focus on promoting Mini-Grant Program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed Gallery Space Call for Artists and Selected 6 additional artists to show their work • Developed and published an El Cerrito Arts Organization Database • Promoted and utilized mini-grant program to leverage efforts already underway in the community
Leverage Partnerships with Other Organizations	Partnering with schools, library, community organizations and non-profits on community events/projects such as Messy Art Day, Free Folk Festival, EC Art Association Art Show, Makers Faires, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mini Grant applications approved for Messy Art Day, the EC Art Association Annual Art Show, the El Cerrito Free Folk Festival, and the Summer Kick-off / Makers Faire Event
Supporting the Local Artistic and Cultural Community	Events (Art/Music/Food/Culture), Gallery Space, Database, Sponsorship of 4 th of July/worldOne Festival, October Arts Month, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relaunched October Arts Month with poster and outreach efforts in 2024 • Hosted 4 Gallery Shows for local artists in FY 2024-25 • Hosted booth at 4th of July/worldOne Festival
Beautify El Cerrito	Utility Box Public Art Program, Pilot Pavement Art Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repaired 5 broken wind sculptures along San Pablo Avenue • Completed Call for Artists and successfully painted an additional Utility Box Location in FY 2024-25 • Completed CFA and selected artwork for City's first pilot Pavement Art project

Workplan adopted on Month DD, YYYY by the following vote:

Moved/Second: Member (Last/Last)

Ayes: Members (Last, Last, Last)

Noes: Members (Last, Last, Last) (if applicable)

Absent: Members (Last, Last, Last) (if applicable)

Utility Box Public Art Program

Program Update

May 29, 2025



City-Owned Boxes in El Cerrito

Box #	Location	Year Painted
1	Carlson Blvd./Central Ave.	2022
2	Richmond St./Potrero Ave.	n/a
3	Richmond St./Moeser Ln.	n/a
4	Ashbury Ave./Fairmount Ave.	2024
5	Liberty St./Fairmount Ave.	2023
6	Richmond St./Stockton Ave.	n/a
7	San Pablo Ave./Conlon Ave.	2021
8	Elm St./Key Blvd./Hill St.	2023
9	Colusa Ave./Fairmount Ave.	2022
10	Knott Ave./San Pablo Ave.	2021
11	Moeser Ln./Navalier St.	2022
12	San Pablo Avenue/Ohlone Greenway (northern City limit)	2021

- Three city-owned boxes left to paint, all located along Richmond St.

Other Options Previously Discussed

- Community Center



- City Hall



Discussion



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DRAFT MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE ARTS AND CULTURE COMMISSION

Monday, March 24, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

El Cerrito City Council Chambers
10890 San Pablo Avenue
El Cerrito, CA 94530

(6:00 p.m) CONVENE REGULAR MEETING Vice Chair Renée LeVesque called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

- 1. ROLL CALL – Present:** Vice Chair Renée LeVesque Members: Ruth Cazden, Courtney Helion, Kim Settles, and Juno Rabinovici (Youth Member)
Absent: None.
- 2. COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS, COUNCIL LIAISON AND STAFF LIAISON REPORTS**
Staff Liaison Provost welcomed the two new Commissioners and reminded the body of the upcoming deadline to file the Annual Statement of Economic Interests (Form 700) by April 1.
- 3. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC**
Resident Buddy Akacić spoke in support of fixing the entryway signage at the Community Center, further improving the landscaping, and painting a utility box to beautify the location. Jenny Hammer provided public comment verbally and in writing (attached) to encourage the development of a mural on "Centennial Wall" along the Ohlone Greenway.
- 4. FOURTH OF JULY/WORLD-ONE FESTIVAL REQUEST FOR SUPPORT**
Recreation Director Chris Jones and Corey Mason of worldOneradio presented the request for support from the Public Arts Fund to fund the 4th of July Festival's worldOne Stage performances.

Moved/Seconded: Member Helion/Member Cazden **Action:** Motion to approve request for support for the City of El Cerrito/worldOne 4th of July Festival, worldOne Stage Performances, totaling \$12,000. **Ayes:** Vice Chair LeVesque; Members Cazden, Helion, Settles. **Noes:** None. Motion approved. Youth Member Rabinovici expressed support for the action.

5. MINI GRANT REQUEST – EL CERRITO SUMMER “KICK-OFF”

Rachel Melby of The Little Hill presented a proposal requesting support for an El Cerrito Summer “Kick-Off” event to include live music, food vendors, a maker’s hall, and arts and crafts.

Moved/Seconded: Member Cazden/Member Settles **Action:** Motion to approve request for support for the Summer “Kick-Off” event, totaling \$1,500. **Ayes:** Vice Chair LeVesque; Members Cazden, Helion, Settles. **Noes:** None. Motion approved. Youth Member Rabinovici expressed support for the action.

6. EL CERRITO CITY HALL GALLERY SPACE ARTIST SELECTION

Commissioners reviewed all responses to the 2025 City Hall Gallery Space Call for Artists ([linked here](#)), heard from a representative of the ACC Ad Hoc Subcommittee that reviewed applications received, and considered artists to show in the City Hall Gallery Space.

Moved/Seconded: Member Helion/Member Settles **Action:** Motion to approve the six artists listed below to show in the El Cerrito City Hall Gallery Space. **Ayes:** Vice Chair LeVesque; Members Cazden, Helion, Settles. **Noes:** None. Motion approved. Youth Member Rabinovici expressed support for the action.

- Mindy Berardini (Richmond)
- Keana Dollar-Dickerson (Antioch)
- Fairmont School 3rd Grade Students (El Cerrito)
- Susan Harris (Kensington)
- Gail Morrison (Richmond)
- Ruby Ramirez (Richmond)

Additionally, the ACC considered a motion to recommend the expenditure of an amount not-to-exceed \$1,500 from the Public Art Fund to pay for staffing costs related to hosting gallery receptions outside of normal business hours.

Moved/Seconded: Member Settles/Member Cazden **Action:** Motion to approve an amount not-to-exceed \$1,500 from the Public Art Fund to pay for staffing costs related to hosting gallery receptions outside of normal business hours **Ayes:** Vice Chair LeVesque; Members Cazden, Helion, Settles. **Noes:** None. Motion approved. Youth Member Rabinovici expressed support for the action.

7. ART IN PUBLIC PLACES PROGRAM TRANSPARENCY

Commissioners discussed developing a database of Art in Public Places public art projects and in-lieu payments that have occurred since the program’s inception in 2005 and the feasibility of posting the database on the City’s website for improved transparency.

Resident Jenny Hammer re-iterated her interest in seeing this developed and thanked the ACC for their interest in taking this up and improving transparency.

Staff Liaison Provost stated that he will begin working to develop such a database with the Community Development Department.

8. ACC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The ACC heard updates, participated in discussion, and considered possible

action items regarding planning, logistics, and expenditures for the ACC calendar of events, including:

- 4th of July
- October Arts Month

Staff Liaison Provost provided a brief update on the two primary upcoming events.

9. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Consider approval of the minutes of the February 24, 2025, meeting.

Moved/Seconded: Vice Chair LeVesque/Member Helion **Action:** Motion to approve the minutes of the February 24, 2025, meeting. **Ayes:** Vice Chair LeVesque; Members Cazden, Helion, Settles. **Noes:** None. Motion approved. Youth Member Rabinovici expressed support for the action.

10. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

The ACC received nominations and considered approval of a one-year term for Chair and Vice Chair of the Arts and Culture Commission.

Moved/Seconded: Member Settles/Member Helion **Action:** Motion to appoint Renée LeVesque to the position of Chair for a one-year term **Ayes:** Vice Chair LeVesque; Members Cazden, Helion, Settles. **Noes:** None. Motion approved. Youth Member Rabinovici expressed support for the action.

Moved/Seconded: Member Settles/Member Helion **Action:** Motion to appoint Ruth Cazden to the position of Vice Chair for a one-year term **Ayes:** Chair LeVesque; Members Cazden, Helion, Settles. **Noes:** None. Motion approved. Youth Member Rabinovici expressed support for the action.

11. UPCOMING ITEMS

- Utility Box Public Art CFA (May)
- Workplan and Accomplishments (May/June)
- Community Center Mural CFA (Fall)
- October Arts Month Planning (August/September)
- Poet Laureate CFA (Fall 2025)
- El Cerrito Creative ReUse Artist Residency CFA (Winter 2025)

Commissioners discussed their interest in seeing an item agendaized to provide an update on the Public Art Fund Budget and Expenditures and to post similar information on the ACC webpage. Commissioners also stated their interest in seeing an additional section added to the agenda to highlight all arts events that are upcoming for which the ACC is a formal partner.

12. ADJOURNMENT The meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Renée LeVesque, Chair

This is to certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Arts and Culture Commission meeting of March 24, 2025, as approved by the Arts and Culture Commission.

Will Provost, Staff Liaison

March 25, 2025

El Cerrito Arts and Culture Commissioners,

I recently noticed that the large concrete wall east of Centennial Park has been painted over with green paint. It has been an attractive canvas for taggers and graffiti-ists for years, and after each such incident of vandalism the City has had to paint over the defaced areas.

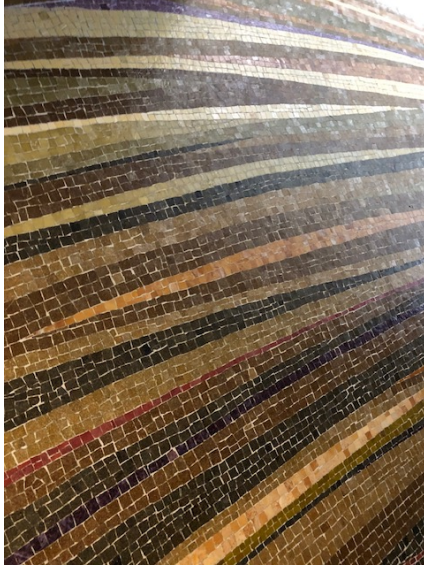
This wall was added to the ACC's workplan in 2022 as the Centennial Wall Project. At the time, I believe possibilities were stalled because of environmental concerns about the frog habitat. You can check with Jim McKissock (one of the environmental conservationists who was supporting and protecting the habitat there) for the exact history, but with the taggers and tag removal teams continually in the area, frog habitat may no longer be a viable impediment for an art project.

I suggest that now is the perfect time for the Commission reconsider plans for this wall. It's a perfect location for an iconic, ambitious, and durable art installation - possibly a mosaic mural. El Cerrito has a history with mosaics. See the Del Norte BART station or Plaza BART Station for examples.

Del Norte BART Station Mosaics



Plaza BART Station Mosaics



Ambitious and iconic mosaics have been created in other towns and cities. In the small town of North Creek in upstate New York, the community completely transformed an ugly concrete wall.

North Creek Mosaic Wall

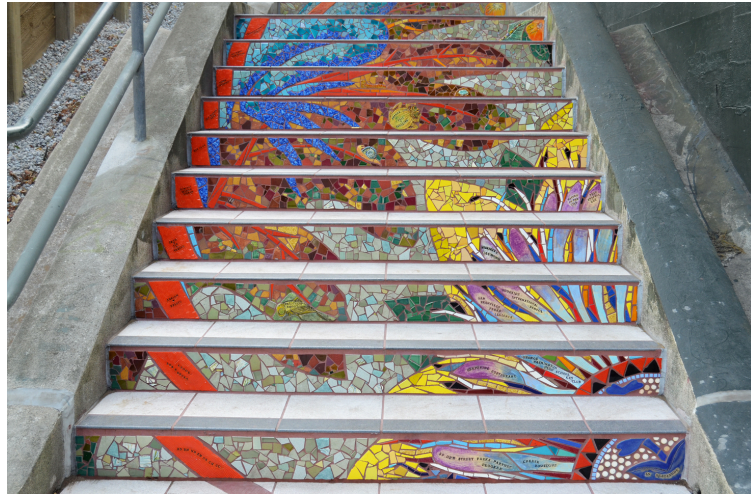
<https://www.adktaste.com/blog/north-creek-mosaic-project>
<https://www.newyorkalmanack.com/2024/07/north-creek-mosaic-project/>



And in San Francisco, a stairway was transformed through the use of mosaic art.

Moraga/16th Street Tiled Steps

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/16th_Avenue_Tiled_Steps



What's notable about these mosaic projects is the community participation they utilized. In addition, these works cited above have become visitor attractions viewed by people from far and wide.

In addition, these works cited above have become visitor attractions to be viewed by people from far and wide, who then often bolster local businesses and utilize other amenities nearby.

In your reconsideration and re-activation of the Centennial Wall Project, I hope you will think about the opportunities suggested here. El Cerrito deserves something special, and mosaics are both special and a good solution to the graffiti/repainting problem. Additionally, after the project is complete, a more permanent frog habitat can be created and Pacific chorus frogs reintroduced to an environment with a lower likelihood of stomping and aerosol paint spray contamination and repainting, repainting, repainting.

Thank you.

Jenny Hammer