

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

CALIFORNIA



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DANIEL TARICA
GENERAL MANAGER

April 21, 2026

Honorable Members of the Budget and Finance Committee
Office of the City Clerk
200 North Spring Street
City Hall, Room 395
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Honorable Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026-27 Proposed Budget for the Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA). DCA would like to thank the Mayor, the City Administrative Officer, and their respective staff for consideration of DCA's budget requests.

I would also like to thank the hardworking staff of the Department whose passion for our City's communities drove creative solutions to address complex challenges in FY 2025-26. This year, DCA: administered grant programs for artists and cultural/community organizations to provide economic opportunity and free and low-cost arts and cultural services to residents and visitors; provided free and low-cost arts classes in a range of artistic disciplines, arts exhibitions, and tour programs for City historic sites; managed and administered revenue-generating public art programs, the City Art Collection and the Murals program; provided affordable rental spaces to artists and cultural/community organizations at DCA theaters and delivered cultural festivals and performing arts programming; directed development and fundraising efforts and promoted arts projects, programs, and services; and provided administrative support services. In addition, DCA continues work on the 2028 Cultural Program for the Olympic and Paralympic Games (Cultural Program). After years of research, cultural exchange, and planning efforts, DCA prepares to implement the Citywide 2028 Cultural Program Framework, which serves as the blueprint for the Host City's 2028 arts and cultural initiatives/events, thanks to the support and approval by the Mayor and Council.

The Department appreciates that the FY 2026-27 Proposed Budget includes the reallocation of two classifications to realign Department operations and the addition of one Arts Associate to administer a new initiative to support the Mayor's Mural Legacy. The realignments and the additional position will assist DCA tremendously, along with the allocated funding for capital improvements at some of DCA's facilities.

While the Proposed Budget appears to have increased slightly and includes an addition and realignments, there are two proposed reductions which would greatly impact DCA's services to

the community: 1) \$800,000 reduction in the Salaries As-Needed account; and 2) \$350,000 reduction in Special Appropriations III, both of which support arts and cultural programming and services. These reductions are in addition to ongoing challenges from the current FY that resulted in reductions in arts classes and arts exhibitions, as well as performing arts programming. Additionally, DCA also highlights two positions which were not included in the Proposed Budget and are critical in delivering the \$18 million - \$20 million public art project for the Los Angeles Convention Center Expansion project. Below is a summary of the most significant departmental level changes, operational gaps, and associated impacts.

- **Salaries As-Needed Reduction.** The Salaries As-Needed account is used to fund part-time staff, on an as-needed basis. These valued and essential arts professionals serve many roles such as: arts educators teaching arts classes in DCA Arts Centers; Gallery Attendants ensuring the safety of valuable artwork and monitoring DCA's gallery spaces; theater technicians who operate technical theatrical audio, visual, and lighting equipment in DCA theaters and outdoor festivals; and staff who provide analytical and administrative support across the department, particularly at facilities open more than 40 hours per week. In the FY 2025-26 Adopted Budget, the Salaries As-Needed account was increased by \$800,000 to address historic underfunding based on prior year expenditures. While this supported DCA operations, the increase was less than both the requested allocation and the expenditure level from the previous year. Additionally, during the budget deliberation process, DCA identified \$4+ million in proposed solutions as a result of proposed budgetary reductions and layoffs. These solutions were approved, and while they avoided layoffs and program eliminations, they also necessitated some service reductions in classes and arts programming in DCA's Arts Centers and Theaters, as those budgetary savings were no longer available to offset expenditure levels for part-time staff. An \$800,000 reduction in this account would require more significant program cuts, compounding the impacts of this year's reductions, such as elimination of the number of arts classes, workshops and public programs, and significant reductions in performing arts programming in theaters and certain festivals.

- **Special Appropriations III Programming Reduction.** The Proposed Budget includes reductions to the Special Appropriations III account in the amount of \$350,000. This includes the elimination of all performing arts programming monies for the Lankershim Arts Center in North Hollywood in the amount of \$300,000, and a \$50,000 reduction to the Central Avenue Jazz Festival from \$77,000 to \$27,000. The impacts to the Lankershim Arts Center would be significant. No programming funds would remain to offer performing arts programming to the community of North Hollywood and the East San Fernando Valley - including the planned 15+ programs and events for FY27, such as the NoHo Pride Film Festival, large- and medium-sized festivals such as the Lunar New Year Block Party and the K*Popalooza, and other cultural programming would be eliminated. The theater would remain open for rental opportunities only, effectively eliminating DCA's charge at this theater to provide publicly available programming to the surrounding community. The impacts to the Central Avenue Jazz Festival are unknown at this time. While time restrictions did not allow for an assessment of the impact prior to the issuance of this letter, the Department has reached out to Council District 9, and will assess the impact in the near future.

- **Los Angeles Convention Center Expansion - Percent for Art Projects.** The Percent for Art program is legally-mandated and requires one percent of certain construction and development projects be set aside for public art projects. **A small portion of this one percent fee fully funds the direct and indirect staff and administrative costs to support project management and administration of the program.** The Los Angeles Convention Center Expansion Project is a significant investment, resulting in an estimated \$18 million to \$20 million public art component for the Convention Center. Currently, this project is managed by the Public

Art Division Director and one Arts Manager II, who are both allocating a small portion of their time to perform initial planning and project management for this large-scale public art project. DCA requested resolution authority for one Arts Associate and one Arts Manager I for dedicated project management, including management of the project budget and reimbursements, invoice processing, artist selection, contract preparation, community engagement, construction coordination, and artwork production management. Given the project's complexity and accelerated timeline, adding these duties to already limited staff would create significant operational challenges, increase the risk of major delays, and impact the quality and efficiency of project delivery.

TRANSIENT OCCUPANCY TAX

The L.A. Administrative Code requires that an amount equal to one percent of the expected revenue to be derived from the Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) be used to fund DCA. The Department continues to rely on TOT as its primary source of revenue. According to the Controller's revenue forecast report, the anticipated modest growth assumptions align with the view that the LA visitor economy will benefit from the ramp-up of major global events, such as the 2026 FIFA World Cup and the 2027 Super Bowl. DCA also understands that international travel is influenced by geopolitical events. The Department requests that any upward projections in previous revenue assumptions for TOT also be reflected in DCA's budget to offset the Proposed Budget reductions.

Additionally, the ballot measure to increase the assessed TOT rate from 14 percent to 16 percent presents opportunities for additional funding for arts and culture. Additional TOT investments, and other investments, will be key as DCA focuses on its implementation of the Host City's 2028 Cultural Program for the Games, which officially launches in the summer of 2027, with lead up programming occurring as soon as this summer. While Council action on the Mayor's Proposed Budget will occur before voters consider the ballot measure in June of 2026, DCA requests that if the measure is approved, the Council and Mayor consider a portion of the incremental revenue increase (estimated at \$22 million - \$44 million annually) be allocated to DCA throughout the year, or that an instruction be provided included in this year's Adopted Budget to report on the feasibility of earmarking a portion of these funds for arts and culture.

RECOMMENDATIONS

DCA respectfully requests the City Council's consideration of the following addition and restorations to the Department's Proposed Budget. In past budget years, recognizing the shared responsibility of collaboratively identifying solutions, DCA provided a number of offsets to restore proposed budget reductions. In FY 2026-27 alone, the Department utilized, with the approval of the Mayor and Council, more than \$4 million in offsets to avoid layoffs and program reductions. For FY 2026-27, after reviewing the Department's cash balance and assessing other Trust Fund accounts, it has been determined that no additional solutions remain to offset the reductions included in the Proposed Budget, without the elimination of a full DCA program.

- A. **RESTORE \$800,000 in Salaries As-Needed funding.** This funding would be used to fund part-time staff that are critical to maintaining service levels at the FY 2025-26 level.

- B. **RESTORE \$300,000 in the Special Appropriations III account, to continue performing arts programming at the Lankershim Arts Center in North Hollywood.**

C. ADD \$134,980 in funding (9 months) and resolution authority for one Arts Associate and one Arts Manager I for project management and administrative support of the public art component of the Los Angeles Convention Center Expansion Project (Fiscal Impact - \$0). The LA Administrative Code allows for full reimbursement of administrative costs of the positions assigned to the administration of the program.

With the restoration and addition of the aforementioned funding, the City's strategic investments will ensure that DCA continues to: provide and market accessible, well-managed, and well-stewarded facilities; arts and cultural projects, events, and programming; and educational initiatives for as many as possible, reinforcing the City's commitment to supporting the arts economy and services to the community. These investments are key to the Department's work leading up to the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games. We sincerely appreciate the City's ongoing efforts to continue providing arts and cultural services to the City's highest-need communities.

Sincerely,



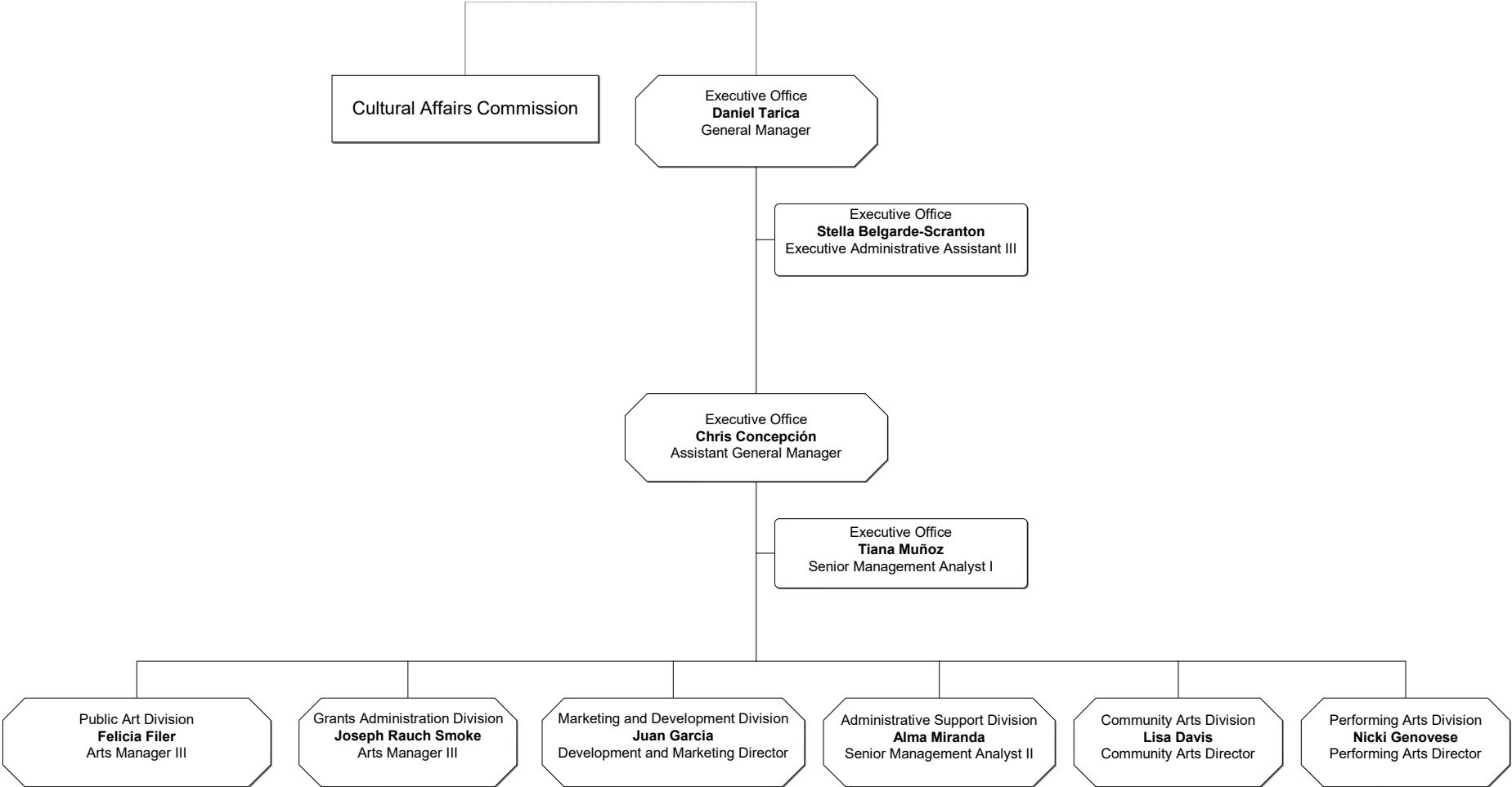
Daniel Tarica
General Manager,
Department of Cultural Affairs

ATTACHMENT: DCA Organizational Chart & Program Descriptions

cc: Honorable Councilmembers
Matt Hale, Deputy Mayor for Finance, Operations, and Innovation
Jacqueline Hamilton, Deputy Mayor for Neighborhood Services
Elyse Matson, Mayor's Office Budget Chief
Sharon Tso, Chief Legislative Analyst
Erin Bromaghim, Chief of Staff, Council District 5
Matthew Szabo, City Administrative Officer
Maria Gutierrez, Office of the City Administrative Officer
Allison Lamas, Office of the City Administrative

Department of Cultural Affairs

Adopted Organization Chart Fiscal Year 2025-2026



Department of Cultural Affairs
Adopted Organization Chart Fiscal Year 2025-2026
Executive Office

Executive Office
Daniel Tarica
General Manager

Executive Office
Stella Belgarde-Scranton
Executive Administrative Assistant III

The Executive Office is responsible for the day-to-day management of the department. The Office directs the activities of the department's 6 divisions, oversees the department's operational budget and expenditures, and supports the work of the Cultural Affairs Commission. The members of the Executive Office represent the Department before the City's elected officials, the Cultural Affairs Commission, citizen advisory boards, and other arts-sector related meetings and convenings. The Senior Management Analyst I oversees personnel matters including: part-time hiring, onboarding and new employee orientation, City-mandated and other training, assists with exam bulletin preparation, personnel-related reporting, and serves as the Department's Immigrant Affairs Liaison.

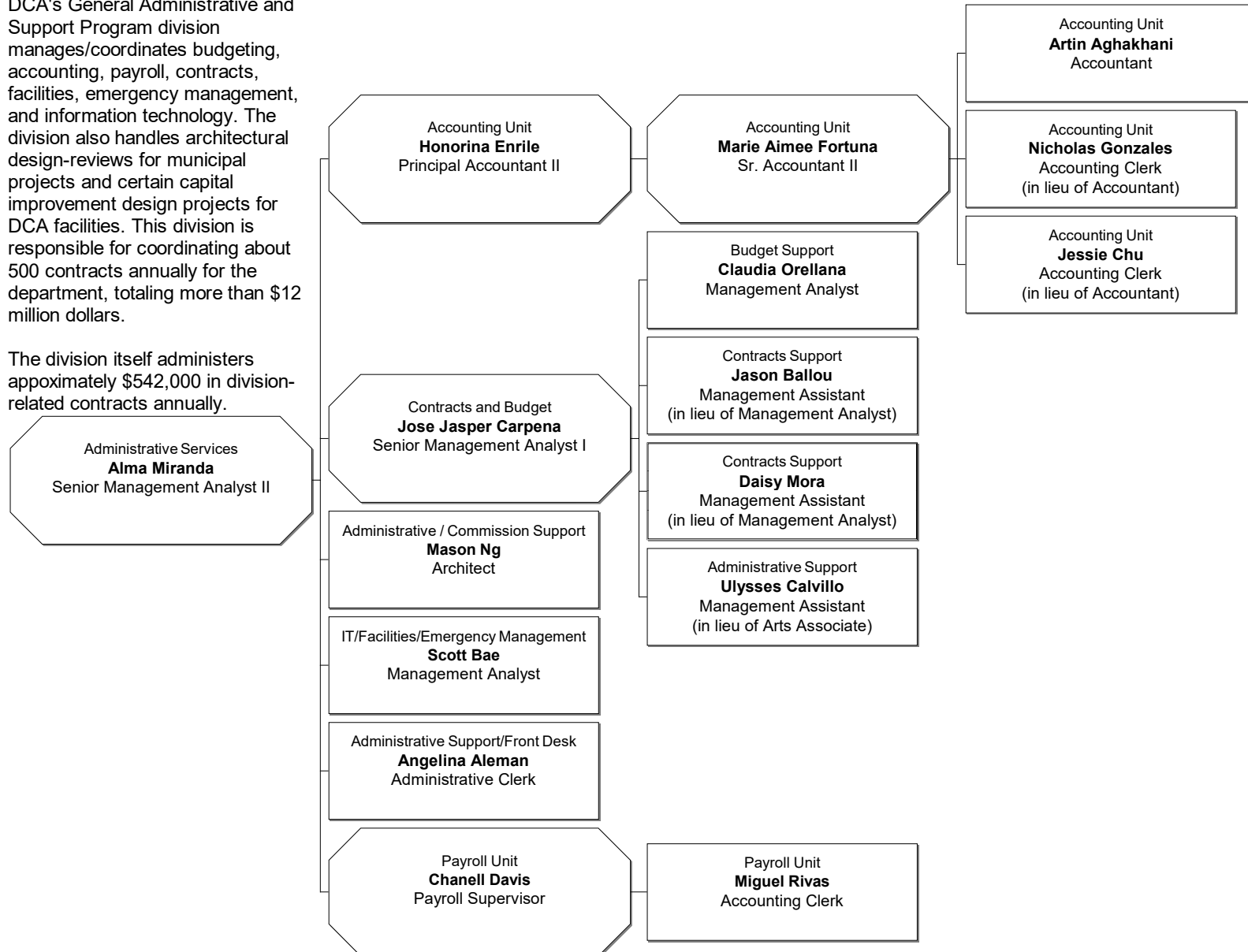
Executive Office
Chris Concepción
Assistant General Manager

Executive Office
Tiana Muñoz
Senior Mangement Analyst I

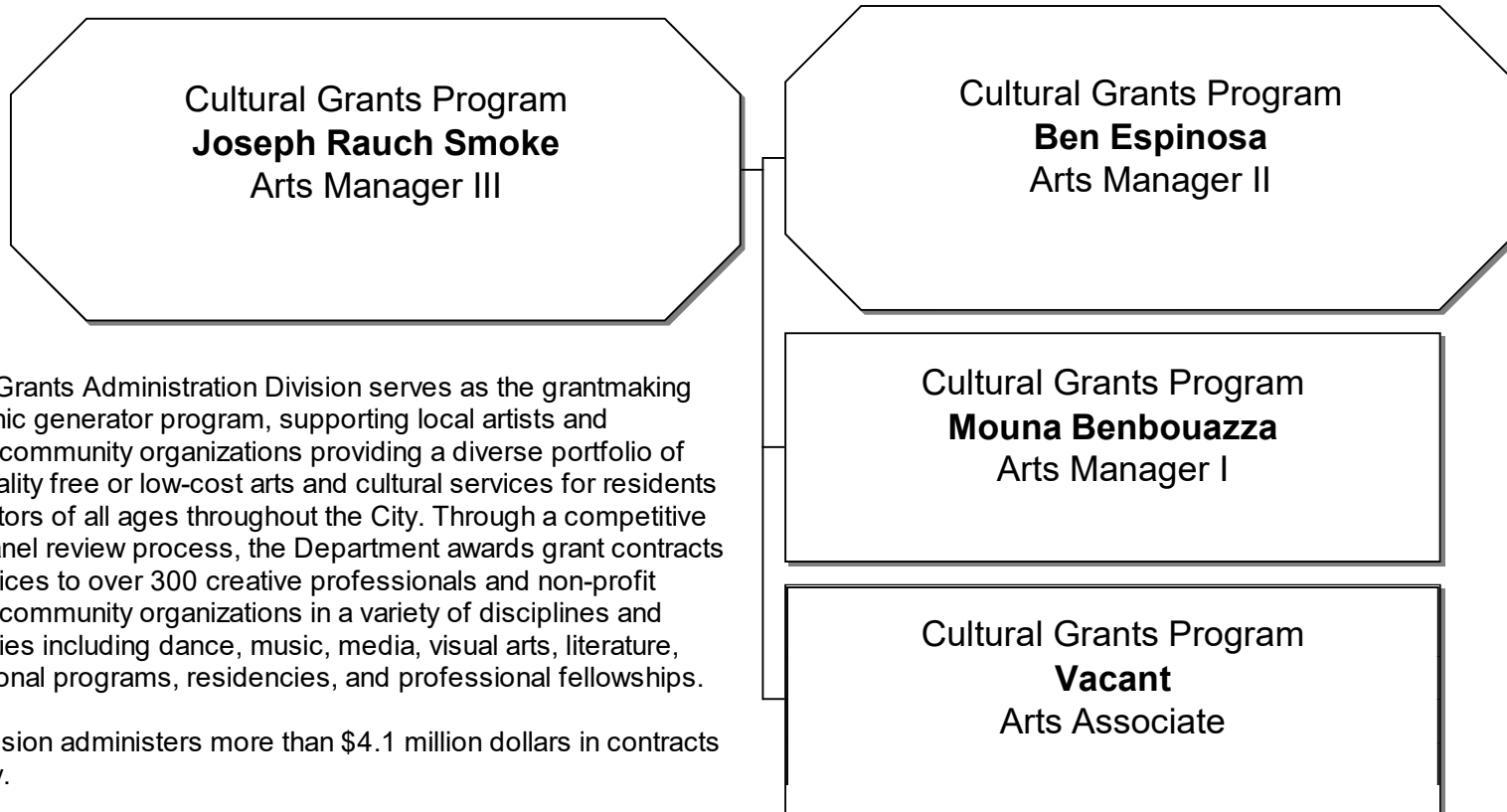
Department of Cultural Affairs Adopted Organization Chart Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Administrative Services Division

DCA's General Administrative and Support Program division manages/coordinates budgeting, accounting, payroll, contracts, facilities, emergency management, and information technology. The division also handles architectural design-reviews for municipal projects and certain capital improvement design projects for DCA facilities. This division is responsible for coordinating about 500 contracts annually for the department, totaling more than \$12 million dollars.

The division itself administers approximately \$542,000 in division-related contracts annually.



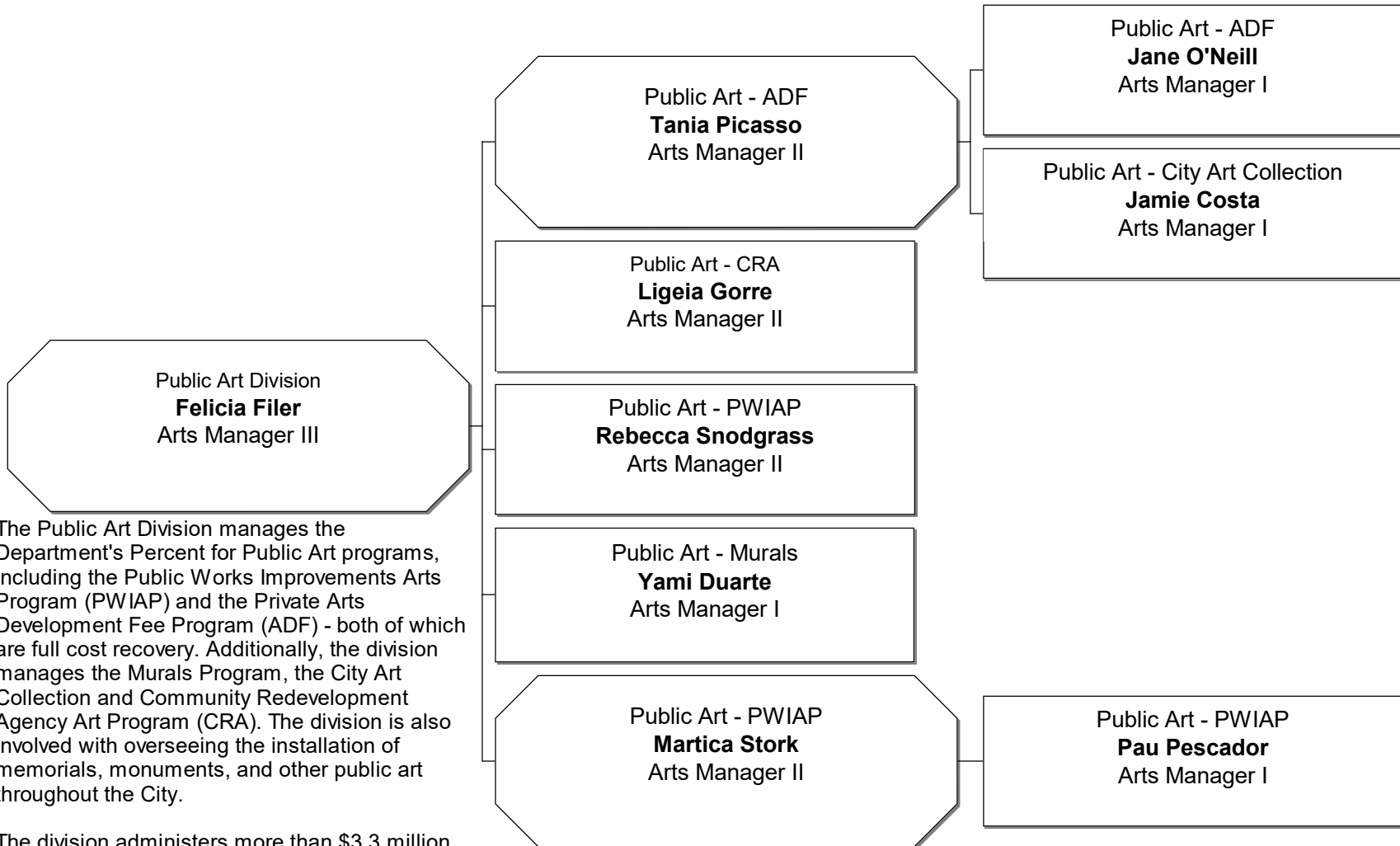
**Department of Cultural Affairs
Adopted Organization Chart Fiscal Year 2025-2026
Grants Administration Division**



DCA's Grants Administration Division serves as the grantmaking economic generator program, supporting local artists and cultural/community organizations providing a diverse portfolio of high-quality free or low-cost arts and cultural services for residents and visitors of all ages throughout the City. Through a competitive peer-panel review process, the Department awards grant contracts for services to over 300 creative professionals and non-profit cultural/community organizations in a variety of disciplines and categories including dance, music, media, visual arts, literature, educational programs, residencies, and professional fellowships.

The division administers more than \$4.1 million dollars in contracts annually.

**Department of Cultural Affairs
Adopted Organization Chart Fiscal Year 2025-2026
Public Art Division**

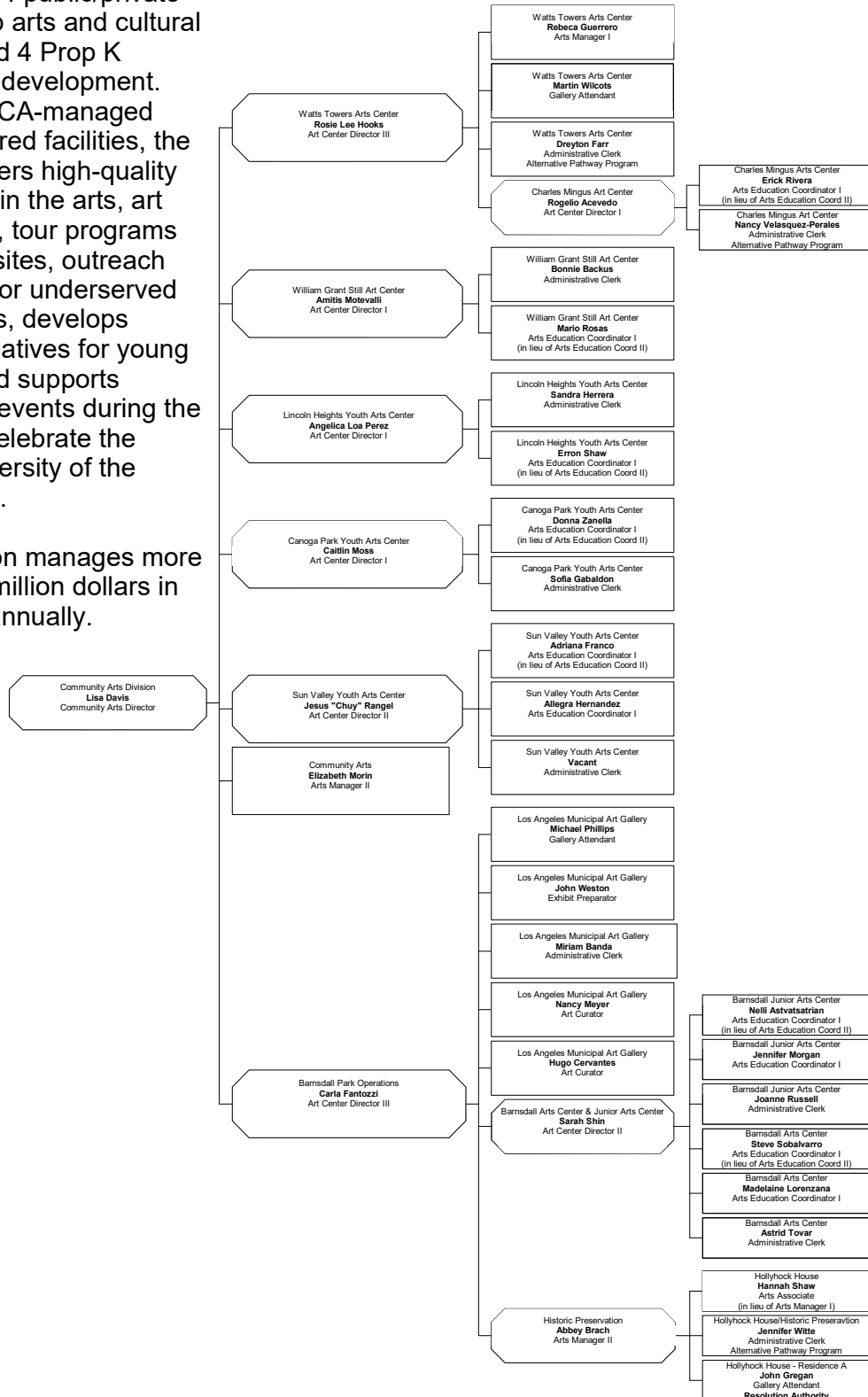


The Public Art Division manages the Department's Percent for Public Art programs, including the Public Works Improvements Arts Program (PWIAP) and the Private Arts Development Fee Program (ADF) - both of which are full cost recovery. Additionally, the division manages the Murals Program, the City Art Collection and Community Redevelopment Agency Art Program (CRA). The division is also involved with overseeing the installation of memorials, monuments, and other public art throughout the City.

The division administers more than \$3.3 million dollars in contracts annually.

The Community Arts Division manages and oversees 9 neighborhood arts and cultural centers, 7 galleries, 2 historic sites, in addition to 4 public/private partnership arts and cultural centers and 4 Prop K facilities in development. Through DCA-managed and partnered facilities, the division offers high-quality instruction in the arts, art exhibitions, tour programs of historic sites, outreach programs for underserved populations, develops special initiatives for young people; and supports numerous events during the year that celebrate the cultural diversity of the community.

This division manages more than \$2.8 million dollars in contracts annually.

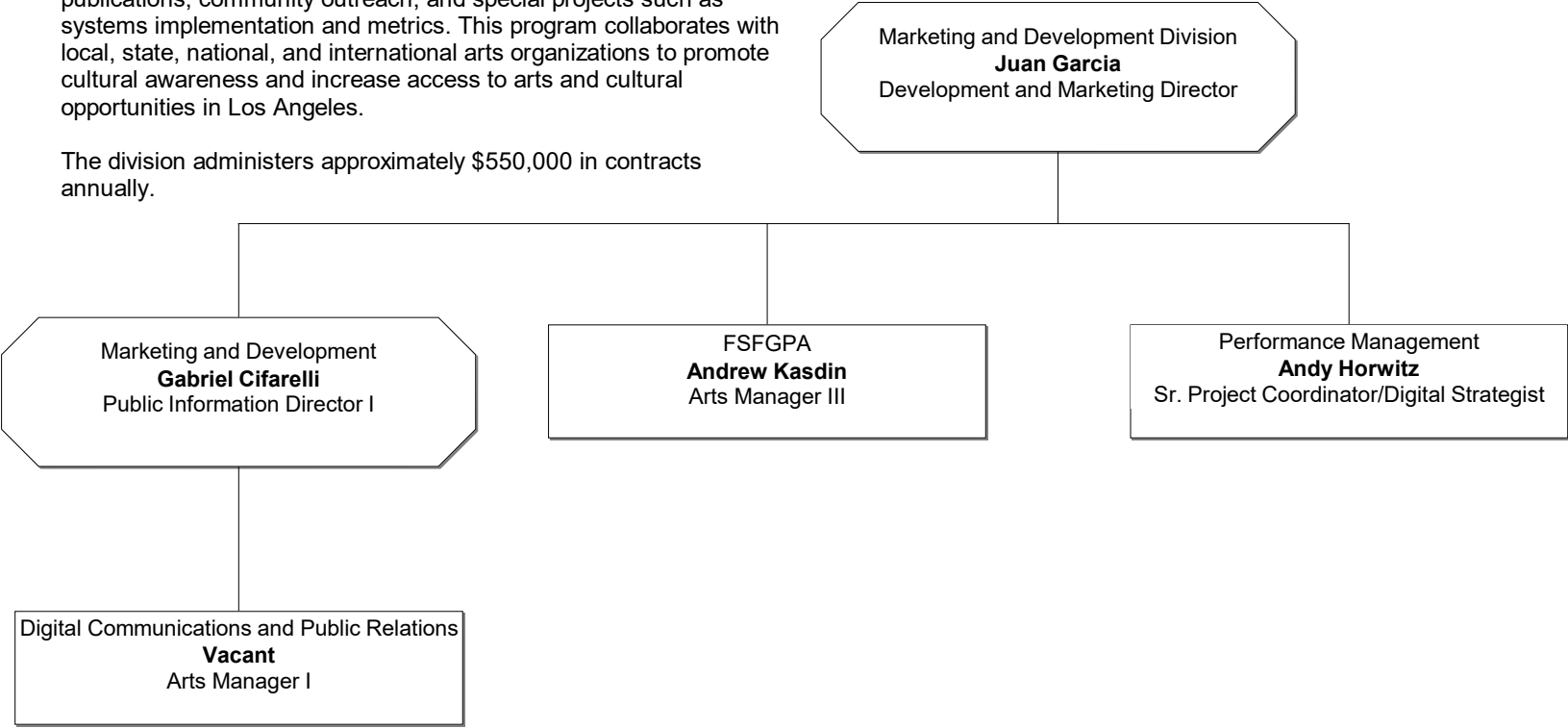


**Department of Cultural Affairs
Adopted Organization Chart Fiscal Year 2025-2026**

**Marketing and Development Division and
Federal, State & Foundation Grants and
Program Administration (FSFGPA)**

The Marketing and Development Division is responsible for the Department's development and fundraising, communications, and promotion of facilities and activities, media/public relations, publications, community outreach, and special projects such as systems implementation and metrics. This program collaborates with local, state, national, and international arts organizations to promote cultural awareness and increase access to arts and cultural opportunities in Los Angeles.

The division administers approximately \$550,000 in contracts annually.



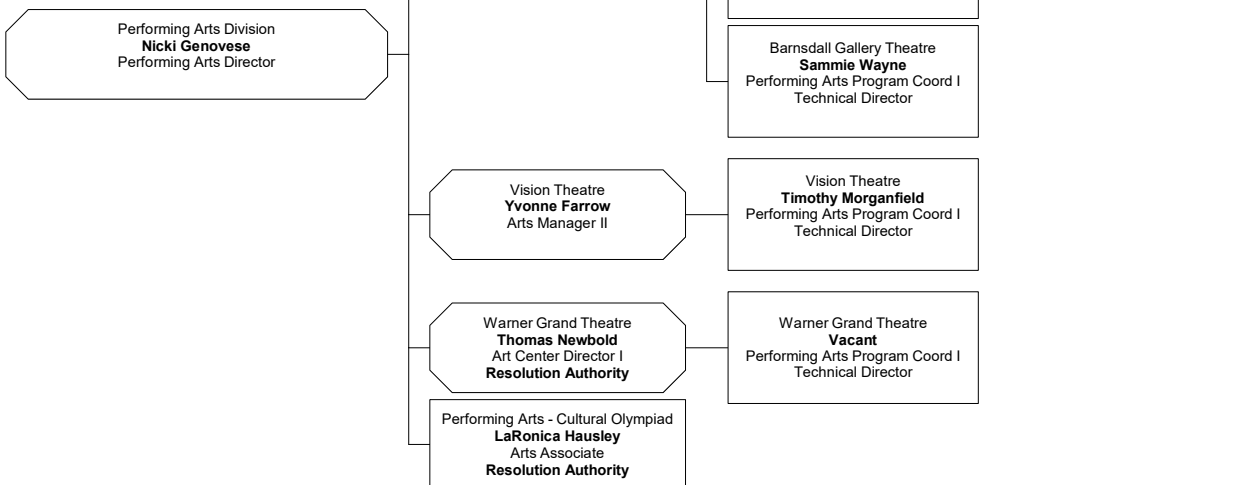
Department of Cultural Affairs

Adopted Organization Chart Fiscal Year 2025-2026

Performing Arts

The Performing Arts Division manages, maintains and oversees 6 theaters and coordinates with 2 public/private partnership theaters. The division provides affordable rental space to artists, and arts/cultural/community organizations, and implements initiatives to create festivals and platforms to select artists to create and/or present site-specific performing arts projects and/or programming.

The division administers approximately \$583,000 in contracts annually.



Department of Cultural Affairs
Adopted Organization Chart Fiscal Year 2025-2026
2028 Cultural Program for the Olympic and Paralympic Games

The 2028 Cultural Program for the Olympic and Paralympic Games (Cultural Program) serves as the Host City's arts and cultural program for the Games. The Cultural Program is a complementary effort to LA28's Cultural Olympiad, a contractual requirement of the official Games. DCA's planning efforts are guided by the Mayor/Council approved Cultural Program Framework, which serves as a blueprint for arts and culture programs leading up to, during, between, and after, the Games. Cultural Program staff lead the Host City's coordination efforts across City departments, with LA28, and LA County, as DCA seeks to activate all 15 City Council Districts with a wide array of artistic programming which spans a number of disciplines including visual, performing, and literary arts, fashion, culinary arts, and more.

