



CITY OF OAKLAND

**Cultural Affairs Commission
Regular Meeting Agenda
Monday, March 27, 2023
5:30 – 8:30 PM**

Please note that all meetings of the Cultural Affairs Commission will be conducted in person at:

**Oakland City Hall
1 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, Hearing Room 4 (Second Floor),
Oakland, CA 94612**

There are two opportunities to make a comment during meetings– Public Comment and Open Forum. Zoom participation is strictly for viewing only. Comments will no longer be accepted via Zoom or telephone.

How to Make a Comment:

There are two opportunities for the public to address the Cultural Affairs Commission and City staff. The first opportunity is during the "Public Comment" period. The second opportunity is during the "Open Forum" period. Dialogue during the meeting with Commissioners, City staff, or its guest speakers is not permitted outside of the two comment periods.

RE: ZOOM PARTICIPATION + COMMENT PERIODS

All Commission meetings will be conducted in-person. The Cultural Affairs Commission is no longer accepting public comments via Zoom or telephone. Therefore, live comments must be made in-person. An alternative option is to submit a written comment by 5:00 PM BEFORE the meeting starts to NBalram@oaklandca.gov. Any comments received via email during the duration or after the meeting may not be entered into public record but will be shared with the Commission and City staff at a later time.

Please click the link below to view the webinar. **Zoom participation is strictly for viewing only. Comments will no longer be accepted via Zoom or telephone.**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84817493321>

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Webinar ID: 848 1749 3321



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**Cultural Affairs Commission
Regular Meeting Agenda
Monday, March 27, 2023
5:30 – 8:30 PM**

AGENDA

Roll Call/Call to Order

1. Welcome
2. Land Acknowledgement + Official City of Oakland Motto/Love Acknowledgement
3. Action Item 1: Approval of Minutes from January 23, 2023
4. Artist Spotlight: Cava Menzies
5. Update: Special Event Permitting (Greg Minor, Deputy Director, EWDD)
6. Action Item 2: Approval of CAC Member Participation on Special Event Permit Request for Reconsideration Committee
7. Update: Report on the State of the Arts: CA Outlook 2023-2024 (Jean Johnstone, Lecturer in Arts and Cultural Policy, UC Berkeley)
8. Update: Oakland Film Office (Jim MacIlvaine, Special Events Coordinator, EWDD)
9. Public Comment
10. Cultural Affairs Division Manager's Update
11. Cultural Affairs Commission Chair's Update
12. Announcements & Acknowledgements
13. Closing

**Next regular meeting: May 22, 2023, at 5:30 – 8:30 PM at
Oakland City Hall
1 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, Hearing Room 4 (Second Floor),
Oakland, CA 94612**

Welcome New Commissioners: Ilana Lipsett and Jim Santi Owen!

ILANA LIPSETT

Ilana Lipsett is a community design strategist and Senior Program Manager at the Institute for the Future where she focuses on creating equitable, inclusive, and resilient futures. Her work uses participatory design methods to help communities, cities, and companies reimagine their relationship to place, to each other, and to the future. She has



facilitated civic imagination processes and activated spaces to catalyze community development through art, culture, dialog, public input, and economic opportunity.

She has worked with organizations including: the San Francisco Mayor's Office of Economic and Workforce Development, real estate development and industry groups, the Urban Land Institute, tech companies, non-profits, artists, refugee camps, and international foundations to infuse community engagement and participatory design into strategy, programming, planning, and execution. She has extensive policy experience, having worked as the political director of a labor union, running successful advocacy campaigns, and supporting the Governor Newsom's Future of Work Commission.

She was recognized by the Obama White House as a "Champion of Change in Civic Innovation" for her work co-founding freespace, an international initiative to temporarily transform vacant spaces into community, cultural, and arts hubs. She sits on the board of [Farming Hope](#) and [ReAllocate](#).

She is a singer and main songwriter for [The Seastars](#), a climate-focused band that is powering the movement for a future that works for 100% of life on earth through music and song.

Ilana holds an MBA in Sustainable Management from the [Presidio Graduate School](#), and is dedicated to weaving climate, creativity, culture, and community into all of her work.

Ilana will co-facilitate a session for the US Conference of Mayors at the 2023 South by Southwest® (SXSW®). She will be running a 2-part workshop for Mayors to engage them in a conversation and hands-on activities that help cultivate civic imagination and foresight. This is part of an ongoing engagement we've had with US Conference of Mayors over the past few years helping them think differently about the future, and this year will be exploring different ways to think about infrastructure needs and ideas, with a future-focused lens.

JIM SANTI OWEN

Jim Santi Owen (www.jimsantiowen.com) is an American percussionist, educator, and producer specializing in the classical percussion traditions of India. He holds a Master's degree in World Music from the California Institute of the Arts, is a Fellow of the American Institute of Indian Studies, and served for five years as Music Director for the San Francisco World Music Festival. Owen is on the faculty of Dominican University, the California Jazz Conservatory, and the Ali Akbar College of Music, and has taught at the California Institute of the Arts, Oakland School of the Arts, Edna Brewer Middle School, and Park Day School. Owen served six years as Chair of the Funding Advisory Committee for the City of Oakland's Cultural Affairs Division, three years as a panelist for Zellerbach Family Foundation's Community Arts Program, and has served on panels for the San Francisco Arts Commission and Oakland Unified School District's Visual and Performing Arts program. He is a member of the Recording Academy and a founding board member of the Swapan Chaudhuri Digital Tabla Library. Owen is a featured composer/producer for Facebook's Sound Collection which has released over 150 of his original and traditional world music tracks. His music has been used on Facebook and Instagram on over 16 million reels and other user-generated content.





CITY OF OAKLAND

**Cultural Affairs Commission
DRAFT Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, January 23, 2023
5:30 – 8:09 PM**

Members in Attendance: Diane Sanchez (Chair), Kev Choice (Vice Chair), Jennifer Easton, Michelle Mush Lee, Vanessa Whang, Theo Aytchan Williams

Members Absent: J. K. Fowler, Shannon Price

Staff in Attendance: Roberto Bedoya, Neha Balram, Kristen Zarembo, Regina Acebo

Guest Speakers: Poinciana Hung-Haas, Sorell Raino-Tsui

Roll Call/Call to Order

1. Welcome

The meeting was called to order by Chair Sanchez at 5:30 PM.

2. Land Acknowledgement

Chair Sanchez called for a moment of silence for the recent lives lost in the AAPI community and

She then led a land acknowledgement noted that the City of Oakland’s rematriation of land to the Sogorea Te’ Land Trust is a step towards progress and reminded the commission of their commitment to hold up Oakland’s Indigenous community.

3. Action Item 1: Adopt Resolution 23-01-09 Determining that Conducting In-Person Meetings of the Cultural Affairs Commission and its Committees would Present Imminent Risks to Attendees’ Health, and Electing to Continue Conducting Meetings Using Teleconferencing in Accordance with California Government Code Section 54953, a Provision of AB-361

This item was voted on later in the meeting when quorum was achieved.

Motion to adopt Resolution 23-01-09 made by Commissioner Sanchez; seconded by Commissioner Choice.

Choice	AYE
Easton	AYE
Lee	Abstain
Sanchez	AYE
Whang	AYE
Williams	Abstain

The motion passed.

4. Action Item 2: Approval of Minutes from November 28, 2022

This item was voted on later in the meeting when quorum was achieved.

Motion to approve the meeting minutes from November 28, 2022, made by Commissioner Easton; seconded by Commissioner Whang.

Choice	AYE
Easton	AYE
Lee	AYE
Sanchez	AYE
Whang	AYE
Williams	AYE

The motion passed.

5. Artist Spotlight: Poinciana Hung-Haas

Vice Chairs Choice introduced Poinciana Hung-Haas, the youth artist spotlight for the meeting.

Poinciana Hung-Haas is a youth artist and fashion designer from Oakland, CA. She is inspired to share stories of growing up in a town engulfed by a rich culture; one that is filled with a diversity of people, music, food, and street art. For the past seven years, Poinciana has developed her fine art and fashion design skills through her education at Oakland School for the Arts. Her pieces have been exhibited at the Exploratorium in San Francisco and throughout Downtown Oakland, and she has worked as the lead designer for Oakland equestrian celebrity Brianna Noble. Poinciana also drew a design representing Oakland Chinatown, which is sold by Oaklandish to raise funds to rebuild Chinatown’s recreation center. Most recently, she created an exhibit shining light on Asian American history and youth artists through quilted portraits, a painting, and poetry, which has been displayed at 811 Broadway, the Oakland Asian Cultural Center, and at Alameda County Supervisor Lena Tam’s swearing in ceremony. She strives to continue drawing attention to causes and amplifying the voices of others by captivating the audience through her arts.

Find the Drago Power Merchandise on Oaklandish:

<https://www.oaklandish.com/collections/hometown>

6. Cultural Affairs Division Manager’s Update

Staffing

Roberto Bedoya noted that interviews for the Cultural Funding Program Coordinator position will begin this week.

Meetings with Newly Elected Officials

He said that he has requested an introductory appointment with Mayor Sheng Thao.

FY23-24 Budget Update

He noted that preliminary internal discussions about the FY23-24 budget have indicated that the City will face a budget deficit of \$178M in the first year and \$171M in the second year of the upcoming budget cycle. He said that this deficit is larger than the last recession. A possible

scenario is 20 percent reductions across City departments. The Cultural Affairs Division should anticipate cuts to its General Fund and Transient Occupancy Tax budget.

Cultural Funding Program

Bedoya noted that The Creative Economies of Belonging Jobs, Network and Catalysts Grant Opportunity for Oakland Cultural Organizations."

7. Public Comment

No comment was made by the public.

8. Cultural Affairs Commission Chair's Update

Chair Sanchez noted that she, staff, and Commissioners Whang and Easton have been working on a briefing book with Division (administrative, programmatic, and budget) and CAC information. The briefing book will be shared with the Mayor and elected officials during one-on-one meetings.

The Alameda County Arts Commission awarded a total of \$1M in its second round of Arts Relief Grants. Of the total 339 grants awarded in round one and two, 40% of the grants went to Oakland artists. The East Bay Cultural Alliance continues to work on arts advocacy for Alameda County. Chair Sanchez encouraged commissioners to participate in advocacy activities at the county and state level during Arts, Culture, and Creativity month.

She reminded commissioners to engage with the Oakland arts community through event and community meeting attendance.

9. Update: Cultural Strategists-in-Government (CSIG) Public Art Program – Sorell Raino-Tsui

Commissioner Whang facilitated a presentation and Q&A period with the Public Art Program's Cultural Strategist, Sorell Raino-Tsui, and Public Art Coordinator Kristen Zaremba.

[Sorell Raino-Tsui](#) has been curating, showcasing, and producing public art in Oakland for the past decade. With the lived experience of creating permanent public art installations, Raino-Tsui hopes to build bridges between city government and the artist communities that feel disenfranchised from the public art world. The [Public Art Program](#) will work with Raino-Tsui to find creative ways to reach, recruit, and orient emerging and established Oakland BIPOC artists to the specialized knowledge and the lengthy and complex processes that public art projects can entail in order to bring more diverse voices into the civic realm.

10. Discussion Item: CAC Work Planning for FY22-23 and FY23-24

Chair Sanchez asked the commissioners to reflect on past ad hoc committee work and have an open discussion on new priority areas. See end of minutes for complete notes on the conversation.

11. Open Forum

No comment was made by the public.

12. Announcements & Acknowledgements

The Commission took a moment to remember Anita Pointer, member of the Oakland's The Pointer Sisters who passed away in December 2022.

13. Closing

A motion to end the meeting was made by Commissioner Choice, seconded by Commissioner Lee.

The meeting adjourned at 8:09 PM.

DRAFT

Notes on Agenda Item #10: CAC Work Planning FY 2022-23 and 2023-2024

Group discussion: What should be the next priority areas of ad hoc team work for the Commission for the remainder of FY22-23 and FY23-24?

Commissioner	Recommendations	Additional Notes
Williams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of an artist directory. Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A cultural map - An online platform to search - Updateable by the individual or arts org 	√ Easton: Agree on Williams’s idea and would like to see a sample of how this has been done and how they made it useful √ Choice
Easton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State of CA putting substantial dollars into cultural districts - how can we leverage this for Oakland? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Note: Current cultural district discussions at the state level imply property ownership, but it’s just not tenable in a place like Oakland. This is a missing piece of the CA Arts Council (CAC) because we can no longer just take property and convert it – this is a misdirected idea - Call for more education on cultural districts, hubs (Sanchez) 	<p>Cultural Districts The budget provides a one-time \$30 million General Fund augmentation for the council’s cultural district program. These funds will support the existing 14 cultural districts and expand the program to support traditionally underserved communities.</p>
Whang	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting to know new elected officials and maintain existing relationships; develop shared talking points on areas of interest (i.e. budget cuts, etc.) 	
Lee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisit workplans, especially the work during the last budget cycle and the formation of the Artist in Action coalition • FAC – how can we reconsider fewer grants at larger sizes if staffing is down and budget it cut? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What would be talking points for this (Sanchez) • RE: workplan: Formation of a Development/Fundraising advisory group to raise resources for culture 	
Choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What’s the power of the Commission? • How do we advocate for CAD and for the 	

	Manager? We should be leaving every meeting with an action item <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Would like to hear about cultural projects of other Commissioners	
Sanchez	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• City of Oakland has no cultural facilities policy• Creating a plan for when Commissioners term out; member recruitment	

Additional questions/comments

(Williams)

- What’s the Commission’s authority to co-sponsor activities?
 - Roberto: We’ll need to speak with our lawyer
- As a Commissioner, are our respective organizations taken out of any grant opportunities?
 - Yes, for grants coming out of the Cultural Affairs Division that could appear as a conflict of interest.

(Lee)

- What’s the possibility of FAC or Commission serving as fund panelists?
 - Roberto: By law, all public funds go through a deliberation process. Also, serving on the advisory bodies like the Commission make folks ineligible for honorariums.

DRAFT

Artist Spotlight: Cava Menzies

[Cava](#) is a multidisciplinary musician, visual artist, and educator who resides in Oakland, Ca. She is a Bay Area native and hails from a long line of creators; her grandmother a pioneer in the New York Jazz scene as a dancer at the Cotton Club, her father, Eddie Henderson, an accomplished jazz trumpeter and early member of the Herbie Hancock sextet, and her mother a classically trained flautist and music enthusiast. Cava holds a BA from the Berklee College of Music in Boston where she studied jazz piano and music education. She received her MM from the University of Miami where she studied composition and music production and recording.

Cava is a founding music faculty member at the Oakland School for the Arts and served as the Artistic Director of the school from 2015 - 2018. Her musical directing and arranging work have been featured in performances with Chris Martin, Coldplay, Daveed Diggs, Rafa Casal, Dave Grohl, Kehlani, and Adrian Marcel. Through her cumulative work at OSA, Cava has led four concert tours to Italy, Puerto Rico, and New Orleans and has taught over 2000 young musicians from Oakland.



Cava is a 2014 National Artist Teaching Fellow. She has been a guest faculty member for Berklee College of Music's weeklong music intensives in LA and Puerto Rico. She serves on the board of the SF Chapter of the Recording Academy and was a quarterfinalist for the 2018 Grammy Music Educator Awards.

Cava is the founder of the brand [COLORQUEEN](#), a multidisciplinary platform that highlights her integrated visual art, music, and travel work.



MEMORANDUM

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR &
CITY COUNCIL

FROM: Sofia Navarro
Interim Director, Economic
& Workforce Development
Department

SUBJECT: Launch of Updated Special Events
Permitting Process

DATE: January 27, 2023

City Administrator Approval

Date: January 27, 2023

INFORMATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In July 2022, the City Council adopted Ordinances [No. 13704](#) and [13700 C.M.S.](#), which transferred special event permitting from the Oakland Police Department (OPD) to civilian staff in the Economic and Workforce Development Department (EWDD) and modified special event permitting fees. These amendments center around a new one-stop shop approach to special event permitting that aims to lower barriers of entry for applicants while ensuring that events take place safely.

In February the public can apply for special event permits through this updated process and review related information at: <https://www.oaklandca.gov/services/apply-for-a-special-events-permit>. This informational memorandum provides additional background and an overview of the updated special event permitting process now in place.

BACKGROUND

Oakland Special Events Ordinance

Oakland Municipal Code (OMC) Chapter 9.52 requires anyone holding an event with fifty or more people that is open to the public and includes entertainment, to obtain a permit pursuant to the requirements of OMC 9.52. Special events encompass a wide range of activities, including block parties, parades, marches, park gatherings, shows on private property, marathons, and sporting events at the Oakland Coliseum. As a result, special events involve coordinating with a multitude of City of Oakland (City) departments¹ as well as external agencies, including AC Transit, the Port of Oakland, Alcohol Beverage Control, the Department of Cannabis Control, and Alameda County Environmental Health Department.

¹ Special events can require the involvement of the Economic and Workforce Development Department, the Oakland Fire Department, Oakland Public Works, the Oakland Parks and Recreation and Youth Development Department, the Oakland Police Department, and the Department of Transportation.

Early Efforts to Improve Special Event Permitting and Resolution No. 88236 C.M.S.

For many years stakeholders questioned and analyzed Oakland's approach to entertainment. For example, in 2009, then Mayor Ron Dellums formed a Mayoral Entertainment Subcommittee that issued a report with recommendations including forging a citywide vision for Oakland's entertainment industry, establishing an Entertainment Commission, and transitioning special event permitting from OPD.² In 2012, the City held a Civic Design Lab workshop with external and internal special event stakeholders that identified an online one-stop shop permit platform as a tool to improve transparency and internal coordination. In 2017 Mayor Schaaf established via Executive Order a Special Event Permit Redesign Task Force in,³ which similarly identified opportunities for streamlining interdepartmental permitting processes and lowering barriers to entry for event holders. Moreover, media reports and academic studies found the City's approach to entertainment was inequitable, unclear, and indicative of a view of entertainment as a problem rather than as something to support.⁴

Consequently, in the summer of 2020, the City Council adopted [Resolution No. 88236 C.M.S.](#), which requested that the City Administration return to the City Council with amendments to the City of Oakland's Special Events and Street Closure Ordinances and to move the permitting of events from OPD to civilian staff. Following the passage of [Resolution No. 88236 C.M.S.](#), an interdepartmental team of City staff reviewed past critiques and efforts to improve the City's special events permitting process and conferred with the City's Cultural Affairs Commission as well as special event regulators across the country. Subsequently, staff authored proposed amendments to the City's Special Events and Street Closure Ordinances for the City Council's consideration in the summer of 2022.

OVERVIEW OF UPDATED SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT PROCESS

In the summer of 2022, the City Council adopted Ordinances [No. 13704](#) and [13700 C.M.S.](#), which advance the Citywide priorities of **responsive, trustworthy government**, as well as **housing, economic, and cultural security** by changing systems and removing ambiguity from special event policies and processes to facilitate a fairer permitting process. More specifically, the ordinances transfer the permitting of special event and short-term encroachments to civilian staff, offer transparency, streamline the processing of special events, as well as reduce fees for community and repeat events.

² Mayor Ronald V. Dellums Community Task Force on Sports and Entertainment, Entertainment Subcommittee Report and Recommendations, June 2009.

<http://www2.oaklandnet.com/oakca1/groups/ceda/documents/agenda/dowd008436.pdf>

³ Lefebvre, Sam, Barriers Remain to Reforming Oakland's Nightlife Regulations.

<https://www.eastbayexpress.com/oakland/barriers-remain-to-reforming-oaklands-nightlife-regulations/Content?oid=9073988>

⁴ Werth, Alexander L., Racial Reverberations: Music, Dance, and Disturbance in Oakland after Black Power, Spring 2019. https://digitalassets.lib.berkeley.edu/etd/ucb/text/Werth_berkeley_0028E_18876.pdf
See Also, Williams, Domingo, Reimagining the City of Oakland's Special Events Permitting and Entertainment, 2021.

I. Increased Transparency

[Ordinance No. 13704 C.M.S.](#) makes the special event permitting process more transparent by explicitly outlining security requirements, deleting existing ambiguous statutory language, and establishing accountability mechanisms.

A. Explicit Security Standards and Updated Process

Understanding what type and amount of security the City will require at an event is critical for event organizers given the cost of security, particularly in the form of law enforcement. Accordingly, [Ordinance No. 13704 C.M.S.](#) explicitly outlines under OMC 9.52.080 what factors will determine the level of security required at an event. Additionally, OMC 9.52.080 establishes that for the City to require law enforcement as a form of security at an event, the City Administrator must make a written finding that law enforcement is required for the event to take place safely. These changes add transparency to the process, build in an extra layer of review, and eliminate the potential for or appearance of a conflict of interest in law enforcement requiring fellow law enforcement to staff events.

B. Ambiguity Removed

In addition to clarifying security requirements, [Ordinance No. 13704 C.M.S.](#) deletes previous ambiguous language in the Special Events Ordinance to avoid disparate impacts resulting from unequal implementation of special event requirements. For example, [Ordinance No. 13704 C.M.S.](#) removes from the definition of a special event the current requirement that licensed entertainment venues obtain a special events permit if an event “will foreseeably result in impacts on public safety, health, welfare, and police resources” (OMC 5.92.040(D)). This eliminates the confusion over when an event at an already licensed facility must obtain a special event permit. Similarly, [Ordinance No. 13704 C.M.S.](#) deletes previous sections that allowed the Chief of Police to exempt an event from paying permit fees or obtaining a special event permit altogether based on the subjective determination that “there is evidence [the event] will not impact police services and will not affect public health, safety and welfare” (OMC 9.52.040(F)). Removing these sections eliminates misunderstandings for both staff and the public as to what the requirements are for events.

C. Embedded Accountability

[Ordinance No. 13704 C.M.S.](#) also introduces a Review Committee to hear appeals of special event permit denials. The Review Committee consists of three members: a member of the Cultural Affairs Commission, the Chief of Police or their designee, and the Director of the Economic and Workforce Development Department or their designee. This three-person committee offers multiple perspectives, increases transparency, and ensures the decision-making body that is nimble enough to hear requests for reconsideration on short notice and in advance of any proposed event.

Additionally, [Ordinance No. 13704 C.M.S.](#) features an automated approval if a special event applicant does not receive a response within fifteen days of submitting their application in OMC 9.52.070. Staff received feedback from special event stakeholders regarding the importance of receiving a response from the City to provide a measure of certainty in advance of their event. [Ordinance No. 13704 C.M.S.](#) provides an event applicant with the certainty that they will receive either an approval, conditional approval, or denial within fifteen days of submittal.

II. New Special Event Tiers and Streamlining of Repeat Events

Given the wide range of events, [Ordinance No. 13704 C.M.S.](#) introduces different special event tiers with different application timelines based on the complexity of the event. This will allow staff and applicants more time to prepare for the most involved events and expedite the processing of less complex events, as outlined below in **Figure One** and in OMC 9.52.040.

Figure One: Special Event Tiers and Proposed Application Deadlines

Special Event Tier	Definition	Number of Days in Advance of Event Application Due
One	A special event consisting of the following: less than three-hundred (300) people, either no street closure or only the closure of a local street, no fencing, less than four hundred (400) square feet of tents, no open flames, no pyrotechnics, and no sales of food, beverages, goods, cannabis, or alcohol.	21
Two	A special event that includes any of the following: three hundred (300) or more people, the closure of a non-local street, four-hundred (400) or more square feet of tents, open flames, or pyrotechnics, or includes sales of goods, beverages, cannabis or alcohol.	45
Three	A special event with two-thousand five hundred (2,500) or more people or a parade.	90
Four	A special event consisting of a marathon, half-marathon, triathlon or similar events with active attendee participation and with multiple closures of non-local streets.	120

Understanding that not everyone will be aware of the City's application deadlines and late submittals are a reality, [Ordinance No. 13704 C.M.S.](#) also allows for staff to attempt to process applications submitted outside of the required timelines, with the provision that staff cannot guarantee late submissions will be processed in time. This makes transparent the City's policy of working with all applicants, while still encouraging applicants, particularly for complex events, to submit application well in advance of an event so various stakeholders can plan and prepare for a safe event.

III. One-Stop Shop Model and Reduced Fees for Community and Repeat Events

Beyond transferring oversight of special event permitting from OPD, Ordinances [No. 13704](#) and [13700 C.M.S.](#) incorporate a one-stop shop approach to special event permitting to improve efficiency and the experience of event applicants and staff alike. Previously, special event applicants had to apply for multiple permits from different City departments and pay separate fees for different components of special events, such as a special event permit with OPD, a sound permit with EWDD, and a public assembly permit with the Oakland Fire Prevention Bureau. Now, EWDD will receive special event applications and coordinate interdepartmental

review of the application on behalf of the applicant. This will reduce the amount of work for applicants and enhance interdepartmental coordination.

A. Updated Special Event Application Fees

Figure Two outlines the updated special event application fees adopted under [Ordinance No. 13700 C.M.S.](#) These updated fees reflect full cost recovery for Tiers Three and Four, the two largest special event categories, and fifty (50) percent of full cost recovery for Tiers One and Two, the two smallest special event categories. This updated approach thus reduces barriers for smaller event organizers while also reducing reliance on the General Fund for the special event program by requiring larger event holders to cover all of the City’s costs involved in reviewing a special event application.

Figure Two: Baseline Updated Special Event Application Fee

BASELINE UPDATED SPECIAL EVENT APPLICATION FEES	
TIER 1 (less than 300 people)	\$77.16
TIER 2 (300 or more people)	\$395.85
TIER 3 (2,500 or more people/parade)	\$1,620
TIER 4 (marathons)	\$4,563.90

B. Reduced Fees for Community and Repeat Events

In addition to updating special event application fees, [Ordinance No. 13700 C.M.S.](#) introduces reduced application and fire inspection fees for “community events” to reduce barriers for both events taking place in under-resourced neighborhoods and events composed of Oakland residents from under-resourced neighborhoods.

[Ordinance No. 13704 C.M.S.](#) defines a “community event” as an event that is:

1. Free for attendees; and
2. Is organized by either: a 501(c)3 organization under the Internal Revenue Code; OR an organization with an annual budget of no more than \$500,000; and
3. Either is located in areas that fall within the lowest quartile of the [California Healthy Places index](#) OR have a majority of vendors that reside in areas that fall within the lowest quartile of the [California Healthy Places](#).

However, for a one-year period the City Council authorized events to qualify as a “community event” as long as they meet the first two criteria: being a free event and being organized by a non-profit or small organization; thereafter, [Ordinance No. 13704 C.M.S.](#) requires events to satisfy all three criteria in order to qualify as a “community event.” This one-year period gives local organizations an opportunity to start tracking the composition of their vendors to ensure that their event supports under-resourced Oakland communities and if needed conduct outreach to entrepreneurs in those communities.

In terms of the fee discounts for “community events,” [Ordinance No. 13700 C.M.S.](#) authorizes a fifty percent application fee discount for “community events” as outlined in **Figure Three** plus a reduced \$100 hourly rate for fire inspections.

Figure Three: Discounted Special Event Application Fee for Community Events

DISCOUNTED APPLICATION FEE FOR COMMUNITY EVENTS	
TIER 1 (less than 300 people)	\$38.58
TIER 2 (300 or more people)	\$197.93
TIER 3 (2,500 or more people/parade)	\$810
TIER 4 (marathons)	\$2,281.95

Finally, [Ordinance No. 13700 C.M.S.](#) also includes an application fee discount for repeat events. Specifically, staff recommends a 25 percent reduction for each repeat event, up to a maximum of 75 percent off after three repeat events. This reduction reflects the reduced amount of staff time required for repeat events.

CURRENT STATUS

To apply for a special event permit or learn more about the updated special event permit process please visit: <https://www.oaklandca.gov/services/apply-for-a-special-events-permit>

For questions regarding this report, please contact Greg Minor, Deputy Director, Economic and Workforce Development Department, at (510) 238-6370.

Respectfully submitted,



SOFIA NAVARRO
Interim Director, Economic &
Workforce Development Department

Prepared By:
Greg Minor, Deputy Director, Economic &
Workforce Development Department

Guest Speaker Bio: Jean Johnstone, Lecturer in Arts and Cultural Policy, UC Berkeley

Jean Johnstone specializes in Arts & Cultural Policy, education and workforce development issues, international comparative cultural policy. She teaches the Arts and Cultural Policy class at the Goldman School of Public Policy at UC Berkeley. She consults on projects related to this work, including with the California Arts Advocates, and for the California 100 project, which develops forward thinking policies for the State of CA for the next generation. She recently presented in Spain at the International Arts in Society Conference on teaching arts policy.

Prior to this work, Jean spent 7 years as the Executive Director of Teaching Artists Guild, a national organization dedicated to supporting and advocating for artists working in participatory settings. She worked in partnership with County Offices of Education, the Dept. of Education, philanthropies, and statewide on policy councils for arts, education, and labor issues.

Jean originally trained as an actor, director, and teaching artist. She has lived, worked, and trained in Hong Kong, Moscow, and the San Francisco Bay Area. She holds a Masters in Public Affairs from the Goldman School of Public Policy at UC Berkeley, and both her B.A. and Post-Graduate certificate in Theater Arts from University of California, Santa Cruz. Her current interests include international comparative studies on museum engagement policies, and raising her two kids.

Report on the State of the Arts: California Outlook 2023-24

Prepared for the Oakland Cultural Affairs Commission
March 27, 2023

By Jean Johnstone, MPA, of J. Johnstone Consulting;
Lecturer, Arts and Cultural Policy, UC Berkeley



Cultural Districts

\$20M clawback
3 new bills proposed

What to know:

- Cultural Districts: \$30M in funding had been allocated to support the 14 existing California Cultural Districts, and to expand the Cultural Districts program
- Governor trying to claw back \$20M
- 3 new bills proposed attempt to strengthen and build Cultural Districts.

Creative Workforce

The Creative Corps, and SB 628



Other noteworthy bills



Museums

Proposal to cut \$29M of \$50M
museum grant fund

Arts Education

Prop 28; block grants; 15,000
new arts teachers?



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9am rally, then meet with legislators



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Your
thoughts
and
questions

Then the artist's decision problem is

$$\max u = u(wv_c, (1-w)v_e) \quad 0 \leq w \leq 1$$

where

$$v_c = v_c(L_{ax}, L_{ay})$$

$$v_e = v_e(L_{ax}, L_{ay}, L_n)$$

with

$$\partial v_c / \partial L_{ax} < \partial v_c / \partial L_{ay}$$

$$\partial v_e / \partial L_n > \partial v_e / \partial L_{ax} > \partial v_e / \partial L_{ay}$$

The constraint set is

$$L_{ax} + L_{ay} + L_n = H$$

and

$$Y \geq Y^*$$

where

$$Y = Y_u + Y_z(v_e)$$

with

$$\partial Y_z / \partial v_e > 0$$

The equilibrium conditions for the polar cases (concerned only with the production of cultural value) and (concerned only with the production of economic value) would be allocated so as to equate the marginal utility from (6.2) and (6.3), respectively. Given the relationships (6.4) and (6.5), it follows that

ARTS & COMMUNITY

Movie directors want to film here, but is Oakland up for it?

Filmmakers say there are some things that Oakland needs to change before it can become a filming destination.



by **Azucena Rasilla**
February 27, 2023



The 'Freaky Tales' production crew filming at the former Loard's Ice Cream in the Dimond District. Credit: Azucena Rasilla

If you happened to see film crews in Oakland's Uptown district or elsewhere around town between November and January, there's a fair chance it was for an upcoming feature film, [*Freaky Tales*](#). The movie, directed by Ryan Fleck and Anna Boden, takes its name from a track on Too \$hort's classic 1987 album, *Born to Mack*. The story takes place in Oakland in the 1980s and loosely draws inspiration from Fleck's Bay Area upbringing.

For Jelani Johnson, one of the film's producers, having it be authentic to the Bay Area and to Oakland meant filming locally.

"It's a story that takes place in Oakland. These characters all come from the Bay Area," he told The Oaklandside. "So we couldn't shoot this movie in Atlanta or New Orleans or someplace like that, even though it probably would have been financially easier and more advantageous for us."

Freaky Tales is just one of a growing number of film, television, and streaming productions in recent years to choose Oakland as a storytelling backdrop—and, by extension, bringing increased attention to Oakland and the community of filmmakers who live and work here. Between 2012 and 2021, there were 265 film days by productions working on feature films that obtained permits to film on location in Oakland, according to the [Oakland Film Office](#). In 2017, two major feature films were shot on location in Oakland, including Boots Riley's *Sorry to Bother You* and *Blindspotting*, accounting for 54 total feature film dates. In 2016, by comparison, there were eight.

Johnson said part of the appeal of filming *Freaky Tales* in Oakland was the city's cultural and political history at a time when audiences and society at large are looking for subject matter that tackles themes like racism and social justice authentically.

"The cultural richness and history of activism that one might associate with Oakland was affirmed throughout the process," said Johnson. "I might be talking to one of our transportation drivers, and he's breaking down the history of unionization in the area. Or I might be talking to somebody in the costumes department, and we're talking about the Black Panther Party. Or pieces of civic and social history in the region and making sure that's reflected in the costumes."

But as Oakland's film production scene heats up, local filmmakers and others involved in the industry question whether the city is doing enough to support the trend long-term. Barriers like high production costs, few financial incentives, and concerns over safety, they say, all contribute to making Oakland a difficult place to make movies.

Directors face hurdles filming on location in Oakland

When *Freaky Tales* began production in Oakland this past November, it caused a commotion on social media. Twitter began [buzzing](#) with news of the project and its cast (including [Pedro Pascal](#), most recently seen in HBO's *The Last of Us*.) People shared celebrity sightings of actors, including of [Tom](#)

Hanks, who makes a cameo in the film. One **local news outlet mistakenly identified** Poppy Hanks, one of the film’s producers, as Tom Hanks’ daughter (the two are not related). The same article quoted local business owners in Uptown, where the movie was being filmed, who said the production was keeping customers away and that the city could have done more to alert local businesses.

Jim MacIlvaine, the lone staff person at the Oakland Film Office—the city department that coordinates with film producers and issues film permits—said that when films come to town, especially if a celebrity is involved, it’s common for filmmakers to limit who gets information about the production and filming locations for the safety of the cast and crew.

“It’s a pretty finite world when a major production comes to town,” he said. “Who gets to be informed and how it affects their street, the business, and the residents.”

Residents are typically only notified if parking in their neighborhood is impacted, he said, and businesses get notified when they’re directly impacted by street closures or blocked street parking. It’s the job of the film’s location manager, not the city, he noted, to reach out to residents and business owners to work through the film’s day-to-day impact in their neighborhood.

For example, when the TV show **Blindspotting** came to town in 2021, the location manager, Heather MacLean, **held Zoom “meet and greets”** with West Oakland residents so they would know more about the project and how the filming would impact parking and traffic. MacLean also served as location manager for Boots Riley’s *Sorry to Bother You* and, most recently, ***I’m a Virgo***, and *Freaky Tales*.

MacIlvaine also said it’s standard practice in the film industry for production companies, not local governments, to negotiate a “business disruption fee” with business owners if they experience a loss of revenue during filming. All of the businesses disrupted during the filming of *Freaky Tales* were offered a disruption fee, according to multiple people involved in the production.

While *Freaky Tales* is not a major Hollywood production in the vein of *Matrix Resurrections* (partly filmed in San Francisco), the well-known cast probably served to misidentify it as such, said MacIlvaine, and may have played a hand in **some local business owners complaining about the disruptions and the amount of money they were offered.**

“That’s where the perception [becomes different from] the reality... when people found out Tom Hanks was around, and Marvel directors were involved in it,” said MacIlvaine.



A street in the Dimond District where parking was blocked off when *Freaky Tales* filmed in the neighborhood. Credit: Azucena Rasilla

The Oakland Film Office has a [production planner checklist](#) to help anyone interested in filming for commercial and non-commercial purposes navigate the steps to obtain a [film permit](#), reserve parking spaces, and notify businesses and residents.

Johnson said filming on location in cities or areas like Oakland that aren't as familiar with the industry brings challenges—from keeping staff and equipment secure during shoots to dealing with local business owners to incurring unanticipated expenses that can eat into production budgets.

“When you're shooting in some place that's not a traditional cinema or television [destination] but it's important for you to highlight and honor the location where the material takes place, it can inherently just come with its own set of hurdles,” said Johnson.

Laura Wagner, the co-founder of [Bay Bridge Productions](#) and the [Oakland Film Center](#), said one of the biggest barriers to filming in Oakland—especially for productions with smaller budgets—is the

sheer cost of doing business compared to other burgeoning film destinations like Louisiana or New Mexico.

“It’s so darn expensive to film in the Bay Area. You look at every line in a line item on your budget, and food is more expensive, gas here is more expensive, vehicle rentals, location rentals, housing, talent in hotels,” Wagner told The Oaklandside during our [Culture Makers event in December](#). “And we have to have security because there are robberies that happen on sets here. There are just so many things.”

Despite the challenges, *Freaky Tales* was among the few recent features to be completely filmed on location. “I’m proud to say that we shot the entire film in Oakland,” Johnson said. “No Los Angeles days, no stages in Burbank.”

Could Oakland be doing more to create incentives for filmmakers?

The city of Oakland currently offers no financial incentives for filmmakers to make movies here, while across the bay, San Francisco runs a program that allows filmmakers to apply for up to \$600,000 in rebates for fees paid to its film department, [Film SF](#), along with “fees paid to other city departments for the use or rental of City property, buildings, equipment, or employees,” according to the [city’s website](#).

Vincent Cortez, an independent Oakland filmmaker who, along with his wife Sofia Cortez, runs [Mitchell Street Productions](#), said Oakland would be well served to follow in San Francisco’s footsteps—not only to woo more largescale Hollywood productions to Oakland but to boost the local filmmaking community here as well.

“Oakland could offer something that is comparable or competitive with San Francisco, but what Oakland could do differently is offer a tier of incentives for independent filmmakers,” he suggested. “Those rebates may not be as big, but they would be of the mindset that we want to support the small indie filmmaker, those up-and-coming companies or entities or individuals.”

While the city of Oakland doesn’t offer incentives for filming, local filmmakers are offered a tax credit through the [California Film Commission](#). California is one of 35 states currently with a Film Tax Incentive program, offering a 20% to 25% credit on production expenses to qualifying film projects.



A boom lift equipped with lights and a diffuser is prepped for a night shoot at the former Loard's Ice Cream location in the Dimond District. Credit: Azucena Rasilla

By comparison, Louisiana, which was the first state to adopt a tax incentive program for film and television productions in 1992 and has seen its local film industry grow in recent years, gives filmmakers “up to a 40% tax credit on total qualified in-state production expenditures, including resident and non-resident labor,” according to the [state's film website](#).

Wagner, who advocates for strengthening local filmmaking through her work with Oakland Film Center, said the shape of state tax incentives and local rebate programs largely determines where most productions take place.

“The people that fund our films want us to shoot in places that have really strong tax rebates and rebates that are really easy to get,” she said at The Oaklandside's [Culture Makers event](#) about local filmmaking last December. “That's one of the hurdles, and I have been talking about to some politicians about how to improve that.”

Oakland's film industry suffered setbacks in recent years

While the city of Oakland has guidelines for obtaining film permits, the Oakland Film Office doesn't have the capacity to handle the number of permit requests that cities with more robust film offices can, said MacIlvaine. But it wasn't always that way.

In 2011, then-Oakland Mayor Jean Quan was looking for ways to [erase a \\$58 million budget shortfall](#) and eliminated the Oakland Film Office's two full-time positions. One position had served as a liaison between the city and filmmakers and production companies, while the other handled permits and insurance, and worked with location managers on notifying neighborhoods and local businesses. Their duties were delegated to existing staff in other city departments, a move that saved the city \$210,000 per year. When MacIlvaine was hired, he assumed the duties of both previously-held roles as well as an events coordinator role.

The following year, the Oakland Film Center—which at the time was an incubator for an array of film-related businesses supplying lighting, props, and other production services that had been [housed at the former Oakland Army Base since 2004](#)—was [shuttered](#) to make way for a redevelopment of the [regional shoreline](#).

MacIlvaine believes that for Oakland to become entrenched as a filmmaking destination, it will need to undo the weakening of its local film community by re-staffing the Oakland Film Office to its previous level and recoup what was lost with the closing of the old Oakland Film Center by converting commercial warehouse space into film production studios.

“There are plenty of warehouses that could be converted in a safe manner to be a film center, production studio offices, and even [store] equipment. But there has to be an overarching business plan,” said McIlvaine. “Invest, hire, ferment, and maybe take a little bit of a loss for a year or two as things bubble up.”

New Mexico offers a case study of what can happen when large local investments are made in the film industry. In 2007, ABQ studios opened in Albuquerque. Netflix [acquired the facility the following year](#), and in 2020 [committed \\$1 billion](#) to expand the studios and make it one of the “largest high-tech and sustainable film production facilities in North America,” according to a report in Deadline. Last year alone, productions filmed in New Mexico [brought in \\$855 million in state revenue](#), roughly \$200 million more than the year prior.

Wagner and others are now working to reimagine the [Oakland Film Center](#), and have been hosting meetings and get-togethers to garner support from others interested in growing the local filmmaking community. Their aims include finding a new physical space for the center.

“We were early in the pandemic when we had this perception that real estate was getting really cheap, especially commercial real estate. We got a committee together. We got brokers, and we started hunting around Oakland to find this space,” she said. “And then we realized it was still going to cost millions of dollars, lots of zoning and architects and all kinds of work.” Wagner said finding a new home for the Oakland Film Center “is still a long-term goal.”

In the meantime, Oakland and the Bay Area are already home to a community of local filmmakers, production assistants, camera operators, and others who work behind the scenes. For *Freaky Tales*, Johnson said the goal from the start was to staff the production crew with local talent.

“Our location manager is from Oakland, and our props and costume teams were primarily from Oakland,” she said. “A lot of our key crew members and even several of the actors, our music supervisor, and our composer. If you look up and down our crew, the majority of people are from the Town.”

For MacIlvaine, any conversation about Oakland becoming a thriving filmmaking hub should begin with how the city would stand to reap the economic benefits of everything from [transient occupancy taxes](#) when out-of-town production crews stay at hotels and AirBnB, to union jobs, to increased revenue for local business owners who work directly with the productions, to city revenue from permits and parking fees.

“Filmmakers like Boots Riley, Ryan Coogler, Daveed Diggs, Rafael Casal, and now Ryan Fleck and Anna Boden continue to prove that there are folks up here that can do the work,” MacIlvaine said. “If we’re going to grow the industry, then someone from the city side has to be part of that.”

Correction: the numbers provided by the Oakland Film office reflect filming days, not the number of projects.