



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

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City of Riverside's Arts and Culture District Named a California Cultural District

Decision follows unanimous vote of the California Arts Council

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The City of Riverside's Arts and Culture District, known locally as The ACD, has been designated one of 10 new California Cultural Districts by the California Arts Council.

The designation, made in a unanimous vote, is good from 2026 to 2030 and includes \$10,000 in funding during a two-year period, as well as access to technical assistance and joint marketing resources, including a library of online resources from the Global Cultural Districts Network.

"This designation is a testament to the hard work that Riverside has put into creating The ACD and ensuring California residents know what our city has to offer," Mayor Patricia Lock Dawson said. "We are eager to share our downtown and its many arts offerings with the rest of the state."

The California Arts Council called The ACD "a testament to the durable partnerships, cultural assets, and cross sector collaboration" in Riverside. It also said the City's application outshone dozens of other by fostering authentic community partnerships and "clearly demonstrating a cohesive vision for preserving your unique cultural identity."

The California Cultural Districts program was established through Assembly Bill 189 to identify and promote areas of concentrated cultural activity. Investing in these vibrant hubs preserves California's heritage, attracts tourism, and builds sustainable local economies.

"Riverside has a long and storied history with promoting arts and culture in the Inland area," said Councilmember Philip Falcone, who represents downtown and fostered the development of the district. "It's an honor to be recognized for our community's contribution to the arts in one of the fastest growing regions in the state."

Other newly designated cultural districts around the state include:

- American Indian Cultural District, Yelamu (San Francisco) – San Francisco County
- Black Arts Movement Business District, Oakland – Alameda County

- Dos Rios Arts and Culture District, Modesto – Stanislaus County
- Downtown Merced Cultural District, Merced – Merced County
- Downtown Oxnard Cultural District, Oxnard – Ventura County
- Historic South Los Angeles Black Cultural District, Los Angeles – Los Angeles County
- Arts District Liberty Station, San Diego – San Diego County
- San Jose Japantown, San Jose – Santa Clara County
- Watsonville Cultural District, Watsonville – Santa Cruz County

“Arts, culture, and creative businesses employ people and strengthen social connection, which are the conditions for vibrant communities,” said California Arts Council Executive Director Danielle Brazell. “Cultural Districts are an integral part of our economic, civic, and cultural ecosystem that fuels innovation, reflects California’s diversity, and shapes the stories we tell and export across the globe.”