



COMMISSION FOR THE ARTS STAFF REPORT

ITEM NO. 5.3

DATE: October 27, 2026

TO: Chairperson and Members of the Commission for the Arts

FROM: Allen McFarland, Management Analyst II

SUBJECT: Discussion and direction regarding the Project and Program Grant Review Ad Hoc Committee's funding recommendations to the Commission for the Arts and to City Council.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Staff recommends the Commission for the Arts receive an oral report from the ad hoc committee and review and discuss the ad hoc committee's funding recommendations, and vote to approve recommendation of the following Project & Program grant applications to the City Council:

1. Livermore-Amador Symphony - Youth Outreach Program - \$3,275 (out of \$5,000 requested)
2. Livermore Art Association - 2027 Spring Art Program - \$5,502 (out of \$8,400 requested)
3. Livermore Heritage Guild - Midway School Relocation and Restoration Project - \$6,550 (out of \$10,000 requested)
4. Las Positas College Foundation - 2027 Literary Arts Festival - \$4,913 (out of \$10,000 requested)
5. Pacific Chamber Orchestra - "Discover Music Now" - \$5,076 (out of \$10,000 requested)
6. Shruti Abhishek Dance - South Indian Cultural Programming - \$3,275 (out of \$10,000 requested)

SUMMARY

The Project and Program Grants program, administered by the Commission for the Arts, supports local cultural arts initiatives through bi-annual funding cycles. For the September 2026 cycle, eight applications were received and reviewed by the ad hoc committee. The ad hoc committee recommends full funding for three projects, partial funding for three additional projects, and no funding for two projects with a total funding amount of \$43,650. Sufficient funding is not available to award this total amount; therefore, staff recommends a reduction of 34.5% to each recommended funding amount to bring the total funding amount to \$28,591 - this a level that more appropriately aligns with available funding. Grant awards will be allocated from the FY 2026-27 Public Art Fund budget.

DISCUSSION

In 2008, the City Council established the Project and Program Grants program as an authorized use of

the Public Art Fund to help promote cultural enrichment within the City. The program is administered by the Commission for the Arts, which conducts two application cycles per year in March and September. After a thorough review and evaluation process, the Commission submits funding recommendations to the City Council for consideration and final approval. The program provides financial assistance to eligible artists and organizations that deliver cultural arts programming in Livermore. Current guidelines adopted in 2016 allow for applicants to request funding of up to \$10,000 per application.

To support the review process, the Commission for the Arts appoints an ad hoc committee to evaluate applications that have been screened for eligibility and completeness. Using the program's established standardized evaluation criteria, the Committee reviews each application and prepares preliminary funding recommendations for the full Commission to consider. Final recommendations are then submitted to the City Council for final approval.

For the September 1, 2026, grant cycle, eight Project & Program Grant applications were received requesting a total of \$66,400 in funding. For fiscal year 2026-27, \$80,000 was budgeted for Project & Program grants; \$10,000 has been expended for Project & Program grant funding, and an additional \$50,000 has been encumbered. There is potential for the City to receive up to \$3,000 back from a previously awarded grant to Las Positas College that did not utilize all of its funding. The appointed ad hoc committee was notified that there was an anticipated total of \$23,000 available for Project & Program Grant funding, and that approximately \$10,000 could potentially be re-allocated from other budget lines for additional funding, for a total of \$33,000. This funding would need to cover any of the approved applications for the current cycle and the approved applications from the March 1, 2027, cycle that had activities that would be completed in fiscal year 2026-27.

The ad hoc committee considered this information and recommended a total of \$43,650 in grant funding across six applications for the current cycle. Given the available budgeted funds and potential reallocated funds, staff is recommending a reduction of 34.5% across all amounts recommended by the ad hoc committee to bring the total to \$28,650. This would leave approximately \$4,500-\$5,000 available for applications received at the March 1, 2027, cycle that include activities that will be completed in fiscal year 2026-27.

The funding recommendations are summarized in the table below.

Applicant	Project Title	Ad Hoc Committee Recommended Award	Staff Recommended Award with 34.5% Reduction
Livermore-Amador Symphony	Youth Outreach Program	\$5,000	\$3,275
Livermore Art Association	2027 Spring Art Program	\$8,400	\$5,502
Livermore Heritage Guild	Midway School Relocation and Restoration Project	\$10,000	\$6,550
Las Positas College Foundation	2027 Literary Arts Festival	\$7,500	\$4,913
Pacific Chamber Orchestra	"Discover Music Now"	\$7,750	\$5,076
Shruti Abhishek Dance	South Indian Cultural Programming	\$5,000	\$3,275

Elaine Druxman	"Meet Lizzo and Drizzo"	\$0	\$0
Sunshine Cheer & Dance	Livermore Dance Around Town	\$0	\$0

The total amount available for grant awards will be drawn from the Contract Services section of the Public Arts Fund Budget. Events or programs scheduled to be completed by June 30, 2027, funds will be allocated from the fiscal year 2026-27 budget.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Livermore-Amador Symphony - Redacted Application
2. Livermore Art Association - Redacted Application
3. Livermore Heritage Guild - Redacted Application
4. Las Positas College Foundation - Redacted Application
5. Pacific Chamber Orchestra - Redacted Application
6. Shruti Abhishek Dance - Redacted Application
7. Elaine Druxman - Redacted Application
8. Sunshine Dance & Cheer Studio - Redacted Application

Prepared by: Allen McFarland
Management Analyst II