



Legislation Text

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File #: Res 31635, Version: 1

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**CITY OF SEATTLE**  
**RESOLUTION \_\_\_\_\_**

A RESOLUTION creating an Arts & Cultural District in the Central Area of Seattle.

WHEREAS, City Council Resolution 31555 created a city-wide program of Arts & Cultural Districts, to be managed by the Office of Arts & Culture; and

WHEREAS, the Seattle Comprehensive Plan calls for the support of Arts & Cultural Districts as a means to “support arts and cultural uses and the economic benefits they provide,” and encourages the City to “allow regulations and incentives to be adopted specifically for designated cultural districts,” and to “allow adopted guidelines or regulations to modify, exempt, or supersede the standards of the underlying zone to encourage arts and cultural uses”; and

WHEREAS, the Arts & Economic Prosperity IV study reported that Seattle’s nonprofit arts and culture industry generated \$448,000,000 in annual economic activity, \$248,000,000 in household income, \$38,000,000 in local and state government revenues, and 10,807 full-time equivalent jobs; and

WHEREAS, arts- and entertainment-related businesses and organizations add cultural and economic diversity to a city, enhance the lives of the city’s residents and visitors, and positively impact the city’s economy by generating jobs and revenue; and

WHEREAS, the Central Area in Seattle is already home to art galleries, museums, studios, theaters, and art, music, and culturally-oriented community events; and the City wishes to recognize and protect its arts-rich areas from the displacement that new development often brings; and

WHEREAS, the Central Area is the city’s historically African-American neighborhood and has experienced both a history of low educational attainment in the schools and the institutionalized racism of redlining.

The Central Area is also home to some of the poorest outcomes in the school system, which has contributed to a systemic school-to-prison pipeline. The City recognizes the Central Area as a center of African American heritage and history, and as a catalyst to greater inclusion and equity city-wide. It is important that this nucleus of Black cultural heritage to be protected and strengthened; and

WHEREAS the Central Area has been home to some of the world's best-respected artists, including Jimi Hendrix, Quincy Jones, Sir Mix-a-Lot, Theaster Gates, Rose McGowan, James Washington, Xenobia Bailey, Vitamin D, DV-One, Ernestine Anderson, Ray Charles, Clarence Acox, Bumps Blackwell, Owuor Arunga, Dumisani Maraire, Tendai Maraire, Art Chantry, and numerous others; and

WHEREAS, Seattle's Central Area has been home to some of the region's best-respected arts and cultural organizations, including Nu Tribes Collective, On the Boards, Black Arts/West, Langston Hughes Performing Arts Institute, Pratt Fine Arts, The Black Arts Alliance, Coyote Central, the Northwest African American Museum, the CD Forum for Arts & Ideas, The Eritrean Community Center, The Umoja Peace Center, Centerstone (formerly Central Area Motivation Program), Ewajo Dance Center, 206 Zulu, Hidmo, and KYAC & KRIZ radio; and

WHEREAS, the very cultural vibrancy that has made the neighborhood so attractive to property developers has already suffered from displacement due to new market-rate development. The neighborhood believes, and the City concurs, that a program supporting equitable development can preserve a sense of place and lessen the displacement that new development often brings;

WHEREAS, the establishment of an arts and cultural district has been indicated as a key goal as part of the Central Area Economic Revitalization Plan as developed by Central Area Collaborative - a broadly representative group who shares interest in improving the economic health of the Central Area. This group includes, but is not limited to the Central Area Chamber of Commerce, AfricaTown/CD, 23rd Avenue Action Community Team ACT, Land Use Review Committee, Centerstone, Urban League, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and the Black Community Impact

Alliance; and

WHEREAS, a group of stakeholders has self-organized and requested formal recognition as an Arts & Cultural

District, organized around three foundational pillars:

- Preserving an African American legacy in the Central Area;
- Sustaining and strengthening the physical identity and sense of place for Black cultural relevancy; and
- Establishing a formalized forum for continued support of artistic creation, economic vibrancy, livability, affordability, desirability, and artistic vitality;

NOW THEREFORE,

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SEATTLE, THE MAYOR  
CONCURRING, THAT:**

Section 1. The City of Seattle establishes an Arts & Cultural District in the Central Area of Seattle, to be known as the Historic Central Area Arts and Cultural District.

Section 2. The City of Seattle directs appropriate members of the City’s departmental staff to actively support and work with staff in the Office of Arts & Culture to develop and maintain the District, and to support the health and vitality of the artists, creative businesses, and artists residing in the District.

Section 3. The City of Seattle encourages all residents of the Central Area, and especially those who own property or businesses within the District, to support, promote, and help maintain artists, arts organizations, and arts events in the Central Area.

Adopted by the City Council the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015, and signed by me in open session in authentication of its adoption this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015.

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President \_\_\_\_\_ of the City Council

The Mayor concurred the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015.

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Edward B. Murray, Mayor

Filed by me this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Monica Martinez Simmons, City Clerk

(Seal)