

Summary and Fiscal Note

1. Legislation Summary

Department: Office of Arts and Culture

Title: A resolution creating and Arts and Cultural District in the Columbia Hillman City neighborhood of Seattle.

Background: The Arts and Cultural District designation program is intended to highlight the importance of the creative sector within neighborhoods and to empower communities to preserve and grow their cultural assets. The program was originally developed in 2014 at the recommendation of the Seattle Arts Commission in response to displacement pressures affecting arts organizations, cultural workers, and residents in Seattle's urban core.

Each designated district is led by an **independent nonprofit organization** responsible for:

- Neighborhood programming and events
- Advocacy efforts
- Placemaking initiatives
- Serving as a resource hub for the local creative community

This legislation designates Columbia Hillman City as the City's fourth Arts and Cultural District. Between 2014 and 2018, districts were formally established, creating a citywide network of place-based cultural districts that support arts-led community development.

Arts and Cultural District designation provides structured support, visibility, and coordination for neighborhoods with established creative ecosystems. Currently, the Office of Arts and Culture allocated \$110,000 annually to support the Arts and Cultural Districts, with each district receiving \$25,000 to advance local activation, capacity building, and collaboration. As the network grows, the Office of Arts and Culture will evaluate what additional funds are needed as part of the 2027-2028 budget process.

These districts meet in person every other month, rotating among neighborhoods, to collaborate on shared resources, coordinate cultural activation, and exchange knowledge and best practices.

This structure strengthens connections between districts while allowing each to retain its unique identity and priorities.

At its core, Arts and Cultural District designation is designed to empower residents, artists, and organizations within the district by providing tools, recognition, and a direct connection to the City. The designation supports community-driven cultural development and serves as an important conduit for informing citywide policy, planning, and investment decisions that impact arts, cultural, and neighborhood vitality.

The mission of the stakeholders who make up the Columbia Hillman City Arts and Cultural District is to celebrate and enhance the authentic and culturally diverse soul of the Columbia City and Hillman City neighborhoods through identification with and the advancement of arts and culture.

In furtherance of this mission, the Columbia Hillman Art and Cultural District stakeholders are committed to:

- Activation of the Southeast Seattle creative economy;
- Retention and preservation of existing cultural spaces;
- Inclusion of new arts and cultural spaces in future development;
- Ensuring the availability of affordable commercial space for arts/cultural businesses and affordable live/work space for artists;
- Arts programs and projects with racial and social equity as a primary driver;
- Sustain and protect the cultural landscape that makes our neighborhoods unique;
- Development of increased youth engagement in the arts

Stakeholders in Columbia and Hillman Cities, including artists, arts organization leaders, and community activists have been meeting for more that 18 months in an effort to organize an application for designation as an Arts and Cultural District.

Summary Attachments:

Summary Attachment A – Columbia Cultural District Application

2. Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

Does this legislation create, fund, or amend a CIP Project?

Yes

No

3. Summary of Financial Implications

Does this legislation have financial impacts to the City?

Yes

No

4. Other Impacts

a. Does this legislation require a public hearing?

Yes

No

b. Does this legislation require a notice to be published in The Daily Journal of Commerce and/or The Seattle Times?

Yes

No

c. Does this legislation affect a piece of property?

Yes

No

d. Race and Social Justice Initiative impacts:

1. How does this legislation affect vulnerable or historically disadvantaged communities? How did you come to this conclusion? Please consider both impacts within City government (like employees and internal programs) and in the broader community.

The program was originally developed at the recommendation of the Seattle Arts Commission in response to displacement pressures affecting arts organizations, cultural workers, and residents in Seattle's urban core.

2. Please attach any Racial Equity Toolkits or other racial equity analyses used to develop or assess this legislation.

N/A

3. What is the Language Access Plan for communicating with the public about this legislation?

OAC is working with its public information leads to evaluate the language access needs of this program.

e. Climate change impacts:

1. Emissions: Will this legislation significantly increase or decrease carbon emissions? Attach any studies or materials that inform your answer.

N/A

2. Resiliency: Will this legislation make Seattle more or less able to adapt to climate change? If it reduces resiliency, explain what can be done to lessen the impact.

N/A

f. If this legislation creates a new program or expands an existing one, what are the long-term, measurable goals? How will this legislation help achieve those goals? What methods will be used to track progress?

N/A

g. Does this legislation create a non-utility CIP that involves shared funding with a non-City partner or organization?

No