



Yoon Kang-O'Higgins
Co-Chair
Friends of Waterfront Park

June 16, 2026

Megan Kiskaddon
Co-Chair
On the Boards

Mayor Katie B. Wilson
City of Seattle
600 Fourth Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Avery Barnes
Avery Barnes Gallery

Tera Beach
Arts Advocate

Dear Mayor Wilson,

Linda Chavez-Lowry
Seattle Means Business
Magazine

On behalf of the Seattle Arts Commission, thank you for your invigorating support of arts and culture in our city. Your commitment to the Office of Arts & Culture keeps Seattle a vibrant, creative, and welcoming place for residents and visitors alike. We deeply appreciate the work the Arts, Culture & Creative Economy Transition Team did to foster community and listen to a broad base of interested parties spanning artists, nonprofits, businesses, and community members. We believe the following requests align with community feedback uplifted by the Transition Team.

Dhyana Garcia
Artist, DAIPANbutoh
Collective

Ricky Graboski
The Vera Project

We write today to urge the City to sustain and strengthen its investment in Seattle's arts and cultural sector in the upcoming budget. Specifically, we ask you to:

Ed King
Pottery Northwest

Mariana Martinez
Centro Cultural Mexicano

1. Dedicate Full Admissions Tax allocation to the Office of Arts & Culture

The Admissions Tax is the primary driver of Seattle's arts funding, and the Office of Arts & Culture is the trusted steward for distributing that support equitably across the sector. At present, portions of Admissions Tax revenue also flow to Seattle Parks and Recreation and Seattle Center. While these departments provide essential public services, the Admissions Tax is not a sustainable funding mechanism for either department and should not be used to backfill broader operating needs. We respectfully advocate for allocating the full amount of Admissions Tax revenue to the Office of Arts & Culture. This would preserve the real value of arts grants by increasing grant funding by 3% annually with CPI inflation and convert the Creative Placemaking position into a permanent role.

Jo Mikesell
Shunpike

Kate Nagle-Caraluzzo
Town Hall Seattle

Jack Nash
YMCA Get-Engaged
Member

Anne Shukla
Allen Family Philanthropies

2. Allocate 10% of Seattle Shield to strengthen sustainable revenue source for arts and culture

We strongly advocate for 10% of Shield Seattle to be allocated to the arts. As the Transition Team put it: "Public investment should reflect culture's civic value. Seattle Shield was created to protect Seattle from federal funding instability, and arts and culture are explicitly included as an eligible use. With the Office of Arts & Culture identifying \$7 million in federal grant losses over the past year, the need for a dedicated local backstop is urgent. The allocation will ensure that public investment reflects

Yolanda Spencer
Northwest Justice Project

Vanessa Villalobos
Artist, Balorico Dance

Ray Yang
National Art Education
Association



culture's civic value and protects the organizations, workers, artists, and communities that make Seattle livable.

3. Expand Admissions Tax

We respectfully advocate for widening the Admissions Tax to apply consistently across all major arenas, stadiums, and ticketed venues in Seattle. We recognize this work will require a broader coalition with state lawmakers and regional partners, and we strongly encourage the Mayor's Office to support and participate in that advocacy. Expanding the tax base would strengthen an already successful revenue tool, ensure large-scale events contribute fairly to the public systems that support them, and create greater parity across sports, entertainment, and cultural venues.

The arts deliver on the Mayor's Priorities: the creative economy is a driver of affordability. Public investment in the arts is an investment in the people of Seattle. It supports artists, cultural workers, teaching artists, technicians, administrators, and the many others whose labor sustains this ecosystem. It ensures that Seattle residents can access experiences that enrich civic life and strengthen community connection. Seattle's arts sector drives economic growth, attracts talent and visitors, supports small businesses including non-profits, and activates neighborhoods.

We appreciate your leadership and partnership in supporting a thriving cultural sector and urge you to **allocate 100% of Admissions Tax to the Office of Arts & Culture, expand the Admissions Tax, and identify progressive funding** as part of a long-term commitment to Seattle's cultural future.

With appreciation,

Yoon Kang-O'Higgins

Yoon Kang-O'Higgins (06/16/2026 10:47:59 PDT)

Megan Kiskaddon

Megan Kiskaddon (06/17/2026 09:53:51 PDT)

Yoon Kang-O'Higgins and Megan Kiskaddon
Co-Chairs, on behalf of Seattle Arts Commission