



March 3, 2026

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

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

Megan Kiskaddon
Co-Chair
On the Boards

Avery Barnes
Avery Barnes Gallery

Linda Chavez-Lowry
Seattle Means Business
Magazine

Dhyana Garcia
Artist, DAIPANbutoh
Collective

Ricky Graboski
The Vera Project

Ed King
Pottery Northwest

Jo Mikesell
Shunpike

Kate Nagle-Caraluzzo
Town Hall Seattle

Jack Nash
YMCA Get-Engaged
Member

Yolanda Spencer
Northwest Justice Project

Vanessa Villalobos
Artist, Balorico Dance

Dear Mayor Wilson,

Please accept our congratulations on your administration. The Seattle Arts Commission serves as an advisory body providing recommendations to the Mayor and City Council on arts and culture policy and serving as a bridge between City leadership and Seattle's creative community. Commissioners include arts and cultural administrators, artists, small business owners, and community advocates.

Your Arts Transition Team as well as Rachel Schulkin who will now oversee arts, were proactive in connecting with the Seattle Arts Commission and we look forward to working in partnership. We support continued momentum and transparency on several aligned areas currently in progress, including (1) maintaining and growing the Admissions Tax, a critical source of funding for the Office of Arts and Culture, (2) as your Transition Team said "Public investment should reflect culture's civic value" and (3) the integration of arts and culture strategy into the shared city goals of affordability, community well-being, and economic development.

As your administration shapes its priorities, we welcome regular touchpoints and early engagement on major arts and cultural initiatives and look forward to serving as a proactive partner and direct resource to your team.

We recognize that new administrations bring leadership and structural changes across City departments, and we express our deep gratitude for the service of former Director Gülgün Kayim, appointed in 2023. Director Kayim's tenure marked a period of meaningful stabilization for the Office of Arts and Culture. We want to thank Deputy Director Kelly Davidson for stepping up as Interim as well as her nearly 27 years of service to the City of Seattle. The Seattle Arts Commission is working closely with Acting Director Amy Nguyen and is confident in her success in the role.

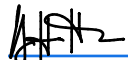

In the spirit of uplifting community voice, we acknowledge that the leadership transition occurred without a public process, which has raised concerns about transparency and community trust. Recognizing your administration's stated commitment to open and



inclusive engagement, we see an opportunity to strengthen coordination between the Arts Commission, the Mayor's Office, and the Office of Arts and Culture.

We look forward to working in partnership with your administration and with Acting Director Nguyen to support a strong and stable future for Seattle's arts and culture ecosystem.

With respect and partnership,

 
Yoon Kang-O'Higgins (03/10/2026 16:55:46 PDT) Megan Kiskaddon (03/10/2026 17:02:33 PDT)

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