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LOS ANGELES COUNTY ESTABLISHES FORMAL CIVIC ARTS POLICY

Arts Policy Set as Knabe Turns Board Chairmanship Over to Molina

LOS ANGELES, CA, December 7, 2004 - The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors today adopted the County's first formal Civic Art Policy. Starting with the 2005-06 fiscal year, one percent of design and construction costs on new County capital projects will be allocated to provide or finance the civic art components of these projects.

"The establishment of a County Civic Art Policy will integrate the skills of artists into capital improvement projects enhancing Los Angeles County for those who live here now and contributing to the creation of a legacy for generations to come," said Don Knabe, Fourth District Supervisor, who turned the Chairmanship gavel over to Molina today. "I have a passion for the arts and believe this new Civic Arts Policy will demonstrate to the world that Los Angeles County is truly becoming an international cultural and arts mecca."

Molina, who originated the County's public arts policy in 1998 said, "I am pleased we will now have a standard County-wide policy to follow that fosters innovative and responsible civic art projects throughout the region."

In addition to current East Los Angeles Civic Center project which incorporated Civic Arts throughout the campus and in the new Library, Molina has incorporated civic art in capital projects in her district throughout the years while including community and artist input throughout the planning process.

The Los Angeles County Arts Commission will have primary responsibility for oversight of the Civic Art Program in conjunction with the Chief Administrative Office (CAO) and Department of Public Works (DPW). The Arts Commission will develop an annual civic art plan along with the Board of Supervisors' offices encompassing ongoing civic art projects and recommendations for new projects. The Arts Commission will also establish a pre-qualified list of artists for County civic art projects.

The County's Civic Art Policy is flexible and forward-looking. It allows funds from smaller projects to be pooled for larger ones and is not limited to visual arts. Under the County policy, civic art can include sculpture, murals or portable paintings, earthworks, neon, glass, mosaics, photographs, prints, calligraphy, any combination of forms of media (including sound, film, holographic and video systems), hybrids of any media and new genres. It also covers

standardized fixtures such as grates, street lights, signage, and other design enhancements, as rendered by an artist for unique or limited editions; spaces for exhibits/performance; restoration or replication of original decorative ornament and civic art as part of the rehabilitation of historic, cultural and architectural landmarks; and artistic and cultural services including performing, literary and media arts, lectures and educational presentations/training, and special events such as parades, festivals and celebrations.

Many municipalities in the County, including the City of Los Angeles, Long Beach Redevelopment Agency, and the cities of Manhattan Beach, Pasadena, Santa Monica, and Culver City, have adopted public art policies. Unlike some of these municipalities, the County has not adopted a percent fee for art on private projects.

Projects such as streets, underground projects, flood control channels, and open space acquisitions, which, by their nature, do not provide visible or appropriate venues for civic art, and refurbishment projects that are less than \$500,000 or are limited to building system repairs and maintenance, are exempted from the civic art requirement. Projects whose funding sources preclude use of such funding for purposes of art are also exempted from the proposed program.

Two Arts Commission successful pilot projects helped shape the new civic art policy. The Chatsworth Courthouse of the Los Angeles Superior Court in the San Fernando Valley, opened in May 2002, includes two artworks by Los Angeles County-based artists: *We the People* by Michael Davis and *Tree of Life* by Michael Amescua. A second civic art demonstration project is underway for the Clara Shortridge Foltz Criminal Justice Center in downtown Los Angeles. Artist Susan Schwartzenberg is creating a piece of art commemorating the life and achievements of Foltz, the first woman to practice law in California and a founder of the modern public defender system.

The number of capital projects the County undertakes each year varies. In the 2003-04 fiscal year, the County authorized \$522 million for capital projects.

The Board of Supervisors, through the **Los Angeles County Arts Commission**, Laura Zucker, Executive Director, provides leadership in cultural services of all disciplines for the largest county in the United States, encompassing 88 municipalities. The Arts Commission provides leadership and staffing to support the regional blueprint for arts education, *Arts for All*; administers a grants program that funds more than 250 nonprofit arts organizations annually; funds the largest arts internship program in the country in conjunction with the Getty Trust, programs the John Anson Ford Theatres and supports the Los Angeles County Cultural Calendar on ExperienceLA.com. The Commission also produces free community programs, including the L.A. Holiday Celebration broadcast nationally, and a year-round music program that funds more than 60 free concerts each year in public sites. The 2004-2005 President of the Arts Commission is Carlos Barrón.

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