



# County of Monterey

Item No.

## Board Report

Board of Supervisors  
Chambers  
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor  
Salinas, CA 93901

Legistar File Number: PAR 25-020

December 09, 2025

Introduced: 11/25/2025

Current Status: Agenda Ready

Version: 1

Matter Type: Preliminary Analysis  
Report

a. Receive a preliminary response by the Assistant County Administrative Officer or designee to Board Referral No. 2025.14 regarding the development of an Arts Master Plan for the County of Monterey, designed to establish a long-term vision for promoting, supporting, and expanding public art throughout the County's unincorporated areas.

### RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors:

- a. Receive a preliminary response to Board Referral No. 2025.14; and
- b. Direct staff to:
  - a. Proceed with completion of referral; or
  - b. Return to the Board with more comprehensive analysis of referral and anticipated effort for completion; or
  - c. Receive referral response as complete; and
- c. Provide further direction, as appropriate.

### SUMMARY:

Referral 2025.14 was submitted by Supervisor Alejo assigned to the County Administrative Office on 10/21/2025. The referral seeks to initiate the development of an Arts Master Plan for the County of Monterey. An Arts Master Plan will serve as a strategic framework to guide the County's approach to arts and cultural development.

### DISCUSSION:

Proposed project description: An Arts Master Plan will guide the thoughtful curation, placement, and preservation of public art that reflects both the deep historical roots and the forward-looking aspirations of Monterey County. Through transformative and inclusive artistic expression, the plan will foster unity, intergenerational connection, and cultural pride, uplifting communities with art that inspires, heals, and engages.

The County would develop the plan in partnership with the Arts Council for Monterey County, the plan will help cultivate unincorporated areas as thriving cultural destinations that enhance quality of life, support creative placemaking, and contribute to the economic vitality and identity of the region.

Beyond guiding artistic initiatives, the Arts Master Plan will also serve as a policy and planning tool to advise the Board of Supervisors on arts and culture strategies. It will promote collaboration across local jurisdictions, educational institutions, and community organizations; encourage cultural

preservation and diversity; and strengthen partnerships between public, private, and nonprofit sectors.

Ultimately, the Monterey County Arts Master Plan will ensure that art and culture are recognized as essential components of community well-being, local identity, and economic development, helping shape a more connected, creative, and resilient Monterey County.

**Estimated Project Cost:** After reviewing several examples of Arts Master Plans and connecting with Arts Orange County the costs vary from roughly \$120,000 to \$250,000 for the initial plan development. There are also additional on-going costs associated with implementing the Arts Master Plan ranging from \$250,000 to \$500,000 annually. Staff engaged with Arts Orange County as they are the leader in developing Arts Master plans across the state, they assisted with providing funding estimates.

**Staff time:** This would require a substantial amount of staff time from administrative work (contract scope, RFP, oversight, etc.) to providing direct oversight of the on-going contract management. Economic development staff is a team of two (2) individuals, and this would increase workload on the team, which may cause delays on other priority projects.

**Departmental Challenges:** There is currently no identifiable funding stream for the initial Arts Master Plan nor the on-going costs to implement the program annually. Staff has reviewed several funding streams that are currently in use for other county initiatives (TOT, DSA, and CDBG). The County transient occupancy tax (TOT) is an option to review more in depth, but for the FY 2025-26 these funds have been fully expended and allocated to County Departments and programs such as the County Road Fund and the Development Set-Aside. The Development Set-Aside is another avenue for funding but may not be able to absorb the full costs associated with the Arts Master Plan as this funding fluctuates depending on other County initiatives and TOT collections. Lastly, CDBG is a final possible funding source, but the current funds are fully allocated and there are restrictions placed upon these funds that may not allow for the flexibility needed. One such restriction is that funds cannot be utilized for projects as ongoing or indefinite funding.

**Additional Option:** The County currently has no Public Art Policy, which staff has discovered is typically a first step undertaken by a jurisdiction prior to developing an Arts Master Plan. Developing a public art policy would potentially require additional costs and staff time. A Public Arts Policy typically precedes an Art Master Plan and defines clear standards for artists selection, site approval, community engagement, and mandates funding sources, maintenance responsibility, and public ownership.

**Proposed response date:** Depending on Board direction, staff proposes a response back to the Board in the first quarter of 2026.

**OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/COMMITTEE ACTIONS:**

Staff has consulted with County Counsel.

**FINANCING:**

This could potentially impact several funding streams depending on Board direction.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS:

The opportunity for the County to develop an Arts Master Plan aligns with and supports Board approved strategic initiatives.

Mark a check to the related Board of Supervisors Strategic Plan Goals:

- ☒ Well-Being and Quality of Life
- ☐ Sustainable Infrastructure for the Present and Future
- ☐ Safe and Resilient Communities
- ☒ Diverse and Thriving Economy

Link to the Strategic Plan:

[<https://www.countyofmonterey.gov/home/showdocument?id=139569>](https://www.countyofmonterey.gov/home/showdocument?id=139569)

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Approved by: Deborah Paolinelli, Assistant County Administrative Officer, ext. 6756

Attachments:

Referral 2025.14 Presentation