



COUNCIL AGENDA: 02-15-05

ITEM: 3.5

# Memorandum

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND  
CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Jerry Allen

**SUBJECT:** SEE BELOW

**DATE:** January 31, 2005

Approved

*Kay Winer*

Date

*1/31/05*

**COUNCIL DISTRICT:** City-Wide

**SUBJECT: SAN JOSE ARTS COMMISSION REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
REGARDING NEW CITY HALL PROGRAMMING AND EXHIBITS**

## RECOMMENDATION

Accept the San José Arts Commission Ad Hoc Task Force Report on the New City Hall programming and exhibits, and authorize the one time use of the FY 2004-05 Arts Venture Fund appropriation, in the amount of \$200,000, as seed money for activation of the New City Hall through an implementation plan to be developed by staff consistent with the Task Force Report.

## BACKGROUND

On August 28, 2004, the San José Arts Commission approved the appointment of an Ad Hoc Task Force to study and make recommendations regarding the development and implementation of community-oriented programming at the New City Hall that would realize the vision that, more than just a venue for the City to conduct its business, the New City Hall should serve as a place of community celebration, commemoration and expression.

A December 2002 report prepared for the City by Dial-Larkin Associates, entitled "*New Civic Center Public Space Program Plan Report*," examines in considerable detail the City's various options for use of the New City Hall's public spaces for a wide range of event activities and public exhibitions. This report served as the major frame of reference for the Task Force's charge - to develop a practical response to the Dial-Larkin report's recommendations.

The Task Force was comprised of six Arts Commissioners, with an additional 11 community representatives in the events and exhibitions fields providing input from three working groups. The Task Force worked in consultation with key New City Hall project management staff from the City Manager's Office and the Department of Public Works, and staff from the Office of Cultural Affairs (OCA), Police, Fire, General Services, and the Redevelopment Agency.

January 31, 2005

Subject: San José Arts Commission Report: New City Hall Programming/Exhibits

Page 2

The Task Force convened on September 28, 2004, to begin an aggressive schedule to carry out its assignment: five meetings of the full Task Force, including a site tour, and thirteen topic-specific working group- meetings. Additional meetings included a presentation to the City's New City Hall Steering Committee and a public hearing of the draft Task Force Report at the January 5, 2005, meeting of the Arts Commission's Executive Committee.

On January 12, 2005, the Arts Commission approved the Ad Hoc Task Force Report (attached), which forms the basis of its recommendations for activating a pilot program of New City Hall events and exhibits. The "pilot period" referenced throughout this memorandum is from approximately June 2005 through December 2006.

## ANALYSIS

The Task Force Report offers a comprehensive overview of the opportunities for an active program of community events and exhibitions at New City Hall. The Report also identifies a number of challenges to the successful implementation of such a program, several of which are quite substantial. These challenges include: 1) the characteristics and infrastructure of New City Hall, 2) the measures that have been proposed to ensure the safety of City employees and visitors, and 3) staffing and financial resource requirements, especially with regard to the current budget challenges. The Report proposes a number of key strategies that could give community programming at New City Hall its best opportunity for success, even in such troubled financial times.

### **Seed Funding**

The Report identifies the need for seed funding to initially activate the New City Hall public spaces with events and exhibitions, and recommends that the 2004-05 Arts Venture Fund appropriation be utilized for that purpose, in the amount of \$200,000.

The Arts Venture Fund was established in 1999-2000 (in the amount of \$250,000) to support an annual Arts Venture Grants program, a competitive grant program open to arts and cultural organizations seeking support for unique artistic opportunities or capacity development, above and beyond the core City arts and festival grant programs. The Arts Venture Grant program was conducted for three years. Subsequently, in response to the economic recession, Council directed that the 2002-03 Arts Venture Fund be used solely for challenge grants (fundraising assistance which required a 3:1 match in non-City contributions). In 2003-04, Council approved use of the Arts Venture Fund to supplement core grants programs, rather than conducting a special grant program. Over the last several years, the annual appropriation has been reduced to meet budget reduction targets.

In order to launch the proposed pilot programs for activation of New City Hall public spaces during the pilot period, staff is proposing that the 2004-05 Arts Venture Fund be distributed as follows:

- \$60,000 to commission exhibitions for the opening year of the facility;
- \$65,000 to commission a series of public events, primarily in the facility's plaza, during the 18 months after the opening celebration, to develop audiences and users for the site;
- \$75,000 to fund an incentive grant program to partially offset event-related costs associated with use of New City Hall public spaces, to encourage use by a wide range of community-based organizations.

### **Implementation**

Consistent with the intent and recommendations of the Task Force Report, OCA staff is proposing the development of an implementation plan in collaboration with affected City departments and agencies, for three pilot programs to realize the vision for New City Hall:

1. The *Exhibition Pilot Program* (\$60,000 seed funding) would establish display standards to ensure high quality exhibitions during the first year that New City Hall is open. An ad-hoc exhibition committee, comprised of City staff and community members, would assist staff to develop themes and criteria for the initial exhibitions. Working with the committee, OCA staff would: 1) oversee selection of organizations and/or individuals to curate, develop and install exhibitions in highly visible spaces (the Rotunda, City Council Corridor); and 2) organize and install exhibitions in other spaces (e.g., Mayor and City Manager Office lobbies, Council Chambers).

It is anticipated that the initial exhibitions in the Rotunda and City Council Corridor would be installed for the entire pilot period, while other exhibitions would rotate twice a year. The seed funding is intended to cover *Exhibition Pilot Program* participants' costs for curating, installing and removing exhibitions (City staff costs excluded).

2. The *Events Pilot Program* (\$65,000 seed funding) is envisioned as a contract for services between the City and one or more entities to develop and manage a series of activities, primarily on the New City Hall plaza, during the pilot period. A Request for Proposal (RFP) would be distributed to a diverse range of event producers and community organizations experienced in event production. Based upon criteria established in the RFP, staff would review and select the proposal(s) that fulfill the objectives of the pilot program and build upon the momentum created by the opening events.
3. The *Events Incentive Grant Program* (\$75,000 seed funding) would be a new grant program providing small (less than \$10,000) cash grants to partially offset costs incurred by event producers, primarily on New City Hall plaza. Eligible costs would include those directly related to production of the event, including City services and permit fees.

### **Staff Resources / Evaluation**

To date, no additional 2004-05 resources beyond the recommended seed funding have been identified. In view of the projected General Fund shortfall, no budget proposals to support New City Hall programming and exhibitions have been submitted for 2005-06. Therefore, for the

bulk of the pilot period, current City staff (primarily OCA) would be required to assume additional workload, including but not limited to: support the advisory committees recommended in the Task Force Report, develop policy for use of New City Hall public spaces, manage development of the implementation plan, develop Requests for Proposals and administer all contracts arising from the pilot programs, conduct community outreach to encourage participation, develop guidelines and administer the incentive grant program, coordinate the exhibitions and the events pilot programs, provide coordination and permitting for an unknown number of additional outdoor events resulting from a new event venue, and manage the physical and security impacts of the pilot programs.

Prior to the completion of the pilot period, City staff would evaluate the initial activation pilot programs, including an assessment by key stakeholders, and would prepare recommendations for New City Hall public space use policy revisions, the scope and necessity for continued programs regarding events and exhibitions, and the resources required.

### **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

Community representatives on the Task Force's three working groups included the San Jose Museum of Art, San Jose Jazz Society, History San José, San Jose Downtown Association, San Jose State University (Department of Art and Design), Giant Creative Services, sjDANCEco, MACLA, and two community members.

Between September and December 2004, the Task Force conducted five public meetings, including a site tour. Its three working groups - Events, Exhibitions and Policy/Oversight - conducted a total of thirteen public meetings in October and November. All meetings of the Task Force and its three working groups; the January 5, 2005, Executive Committee meeting; and the January 12, 2005, Arts Commission meeting were held in accordance with Brown Act requirements. Agendas were publicly posted and meetings were convened in locations accessible to the general public. Notice of the Executive Committee public hearing of the draft Task Force Report was distributed to close to 200 community stakeholders, including arts and cultural organizations, event producers and individuals.

### **COORDINATION**

Development of the Task Force Report was coordinated with the City Manager's Office, City Attorney's Office, Public Works, Police, Fire, General Services, Department of Transportation, the Redevelopment Agency, and the Arts Commission. This memorandum was coordinated with the City Attorney's Office and the Budget Office.

**COST IMPLICATIONS**

The Arts Venture Fund seed funding, in the amount of \$200,000, is intended to fund contracts for service and provide participant assistance for the initial 18-month activation period. It does not include City staff costs or the cost of any infrastructure improvements. The pilot program evaluation will include recommendations regarding the need to continue an exhibitions and/or events participant support program, the estimated cost of such programs, as well as additional staff resources and infrastructure improvement costs required to facilitate use of New City Hall public spaces.

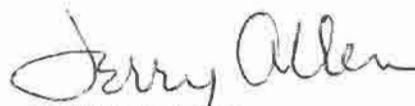
**BUDGET REFERENCE**

Fund #	Appn #	Appn Name	Total Appn*	Adopted Budget Page	Last Budget Action
001	2602	Arts Venture Fund	\$205,814	2004-05 Operating Budget Page IX-10	June 22, 2004

\*Of this appropriation, \$200,000 is proposed to support the New City Hall Exhibition Pilot Program, Events Pilot Program and Events Incentive Grant Pilot Program

**CEQA**

Resolution No. 68905, File No. PP98-03-072

  
JERRY ALLEN  
Deputy Director  
Office of Cultural Affairs

Attachment

## Special Report on Activating the New City Hall Public Spaces

Submitted to the Mayor and City Council  
Of the City of San José by

The San José Arts Commission

January 2005

### I. Executive Summary

The opening of the New City Hall will be an historic event presenting opportunities and challenges for the City of San José. The new facility, designed by an internationally renowned architect, most certainly will become San José's architectural icon. But it should be more than a beautiful building where the government's business is conducted. It should be *the major gathering place* for the people of San José. Our citizens should come to the New City Hall not just to see the New City Hall, but to experience the history, creativity, ideas, and government that make up our community.

We believe that the City must be proactive in making the New City Hall the vibrant public space the building's design invites and the City Council intended when it approved the project in 1998. Internal spaces in the Tower and Council Wing should be filled with high quality exhibits and displays reflecting the best of our community. The Plaza and Rotunda should come alive with planned events and celebrations, as well as with spontaneous gatherings and rallies. We do not believe that this will happen on its own, however.

This Special Report contains several recommendations to activate the facility during the first year or so of its operation, building upon the opening events and facilitating its use by a wide variety of community and cultural groups. As the New City Hall develops its personality and the staffing and financial needs become clearer, recommendations of a more permanent nature should be developed by City staff, exhibitors and users.

Specifically, the Arts Commission recommends that:

1. The City implement pilot City Hall exhibitions and festivals and events programs ending in December 2006 (*see Sections III.A and IV.F below*);
2. These pilot programs be coordinated through two new committees—an Exhibitions Committee and a Festivals and Events Committee—comprised of City Hall users and community members with special expertise in exhibitions and festivals and events and staffed by the Office of Cultural Affairs (*see Sections III.C.2 and IV.F below*);

3. The Office of Cultural Affairs be designated to staff both the exhibitions and the festivals and events activities at the New City Hall (*see Section V.B below*);
4. Additional staff be made available to perform the following functions: long-range program planning and management, event coordination, exhibition preparation, development and marketing, and on-site logistical support (*see Section V.B below*);
5. The Arts Venture Fund be used to partially fund the initial exhibitions and events programming (*see Section V.A below*);
6. As funds become available, the City implement building modifications and purchase certain capital equipment to enhance the ability of exhibitors and cultural and community groups to use the space (*see Sections III.D and IV.D below*);
7. The City adopt policies and procedures that make New City Hall public spaces easy to use and affordable, including a possible fee discount or grant subsidy to encourage maximum use (*see Section IV.D below*); and
8. Until the Exhibitions Committee is formed, the Arts Commission through its Public Art Committee solicit and approve exhibitions to be in place at the time the City Hall opens (*see Section III.D below*).

## **II. Introduction**

The City Council's decision to build a new City Hall downtown not only addressed the space needs of City government, it evidenced a desire to provide a community gathering place that "instills a sense of place and illuminates the City's individual character."<sup>1</sup> The building is nearing completion, and it will be beautiful. What remains to be done is ensure that the facility is full of activities providing leisure, pleasure, and excitement reflecting the richness of our community and its people. Simply stated, the public spaces within the New City Hall will reflect the vibrancy of San José, for better or for worse.

At its annual retreat in September 2004, the Arts Commission established an ad hoc committee to make recommendations to the Mayor and City Council on activating the public spaces in the new City Hall. The action came at the request of senior staff who suggested that an earlier Program Plan Report prepared for the Office of Cultural Affairs and the Department of Public Works possibly needed a sharpened focus before being transmitted to the Mayor and Council. That report, prepared by consultants David Dial and Amy Larkin in December 2002 (the "Dial-Larkin Report"), resulted after many hours of interviews with City Hall users and City staff, community representatives, exhibitors and events producers, consultation with the architect, and an extensive study of the public spaces within the new facility and how best to use them. The Dial-Larkin Report served as the starting point for the committee, and it is attached as an exhibit to this Special Report. Included within the Dial-Larkin Report is an Exhibition

---

<sup>1</sup> See "A Vision for Use," Section IV.A below.

Program Model prepared by Museum Management Consultants, Inc. We believe that the Dial-Larkin Report will be an important resource for the two committees recommended below and to City staff involved with the new facility.

Key staff and community members, including some of San José's most experienced exhibitors and events presenters, augmented the Arts Commission's ad hoc committee. The entire group (see Schedule 1 to this Special Report) generally referred to itself as the New City Hall Task Force. The Task Force divided into three working groups—exhibitions, festivals and events, and policy oversight. All meetings of the full Task Force and of each working group were noticed and open to the public. Thirteen working group meetings and four meetings of the full Task Force took place. In addition, the Task Force received a guided perimeter tour of the new civic center property. On January 5, 2005, the Arts Commission's Executive Committee conducted a public hearing on this Special Report during which further input was received from interested persons. The Arts Commission approved this Special Report at its January 12, 2005, meeting.

### ***III. Exhibits in the New City Hall***

#### ***A. Background***

San José's New City Hall is a place where residents and visitors can come together and where the City should foster an environment that nurtures a greater sense of community. *To that end, we recommend that the City adopt a pilot City Hall exhibitions program ending in December 2006* that will extend and deepen the relationship between the people who work in the New City Hall and the people who comprise the community they serve by utilizing all potential exhibition sites to:

- Ensure that the center of civic governance also serves as a center of community-building;
- Share the cultural richness of San José's diverse communities and their relationship to the world;
- Demonstrate the creativity of the people who live and work in San José;
- Express the aspirations and activities of an active and engaged citizenry; and
- Document the continuing evolution of the democratic experience in a great American city.

As part of the pilot project for exhibitions within the New City Hall, non-commercial exhibition opportunities should be made available to showcase the life of the City through the following three key themes:

*Our History*, including exhibitions that emphasize the history of San José, the region, and the world. Themes might include historic events, people, places, milestones, industry, creativity, enterprise, change in the community and “then and now” comparisons.

*Our Community*, including exhibitions that emphasize who we are today, who we aspire to be, and our relationship to the global community. Themes might include events, organizations, people, neighborhoods, public endeavors, and any exhibition that puts a visible face, place and perspective on the community today.

*Our Creativity*, including exhibitions that emphasize the visual and performing arts as well as creative enterprise in other disciplines. Themes might include professional and amateur art, student art, juried competitions, non-art discipline invention and innovation, discovery and experimentation, concepts and ideas.

## **B. Available Exhibition Areas**

The New City Hall includes three principal types of exhibition spaces, each of which has varied dimensions, specifications, conditions and restrictions:

*Type 1 Exhibition Areas* are highly public, high-traffic areas with a high degree of movement in and through them. These areas are typically major lobby entrances, corridors and connectors, and spaces specifically designed for exhibitions. Type 1 Exhibition Areas relate very strongly to the design and look and feel of the space. These spaces have high impact on first impressions of the facility.

*Type 2 Exhibition Areas* are typically lobbies, reception or waiting rooms or similar holding areas and foyers adjacent to conference rooms. Exhibitions provide important visual “presence” to these spaces and, with less through-traffic than the Type 1 spaces, offer opportunities for more viewing time.

*Type 3 Exhibition Areas* are City departmental display areas such as reception areas, conference rooms, and waiting areas designated for departmental displays and use. These areas are generally not available or well-suited for public exhibition, but provide important opportunities for City employee exhibits and presentations.

## **C. General Outline of Proposed Pilot Program**

We recommend that the pilot exhibitions program include the following elements:

### **1. Exhibit Eligibility**

The program should encourage proposals from non-profit and community-based organizations. The work of individual artists and exhibitors should not be accepted unless a City department or a non-profit or community-based organization with an emphasis on the people, places and life in San José sponsors the proposal.

## 2. Selection Process and Criteria

*We recommend that a newly formed City Hall Exhibitions Committee review and process exhibit applications.* Exhibition applications should be accepted on an ongoing basis. Proposals should focus on Type 1 and Type 2 exhibition areas and be reviewed and processed by the Exhibitions Committee quarterly. The Exhibitions Committee also should prepare formal exhibit policies and procedures in conjunction with staff and the City Attorney's office.

*We recommend that the City Hall Exhibitions Committee include a representative from the Mayor's Office, City Manager's Office, and General Services Department. The remainder of the nine-person committee should be appointed by the City Council upon the recommendation of the Arts Commission and should include one Arts Commissioner, one artist, one exhibitions specialist, and three additional persons with exhibitions expertise, none of whom should have a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict. Someone from the public art program of the Office of Cultural Affairs should staff the City Hall Exhibitions Committee.*

Exhibition selection criteria should include: relationship to the life of the city, quality of presentation, treatment of subject matter, craftsmanship and timeliness. In selecting exhibitions, consideration should be given to exhibition proposals that address the cultural diversity of San José. Priority should be given to exhibition proposals that address one of the three key themes discussed above: our history, our community, and our creativity. Exceptions to the foregoing should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The Exhibitions Committee should keep in mind that the potential exhibition spaces in the New City Hall are not only public exhibition spaces but working spaces for City employees and a place of business for City government. Exhibitions should not contain graphic depictions of violence, sexually explicit imagery and/or nudity.

## 3. Proposal Submissions

The exhibitions program's policies and procedures should include formal, published requirements for proposal submissions. We recommend that they include the following elements:

*Deadlines:* Proposals should be accepted on an ongoing basis year round and be reviewed quarterly.

*Application Procedures:* All exhibition proposals should be submitted on an Exhibitions Committee-approved proposal form available on-line, at the New City Hall's "One-Start" Center, or from the Office of Cultural Affairs.

*Exhibit Duration:* The lengths of particular exhibitions should be at the City Hall Exhibitions Committee's discretion but generally between one and six months based on the exhibition proposal and the availability of space.

*Conditions of Exhibition:* Unless otherwise specifically agreed by the City, all works should be displayed at the exhibitors' own risk, and the City should not assume responsibility for damage or loss of display materials. Successful applicants should sign an Exhibitions Loan Agreement with the City. Preparation, installation and deinstallation of exhibition material should be the responsibility of the exhibitor. No storage should be provided.

*Standards of Exhibition:* The Exhibitions Committee should establish high professional exhibition standards and ensure that they are maintained in all public exhibition areas. So that this requirement does not prejudice community-based groups without in-house exhibitions expertise, training and technical assistance should be provided through the Exhibitions Committee or OCA.

*Responsibilities of City and Exhibitor:*

The City should provide: (a) use of the exhibition space; (b) control of the installation and deinstallation process; (c) approval of final exhibit design and text; and (d) announcement of the exhibition via the City's website and signage in the New City Hall identifying the exhibition.

The exhibitor should provide: (a) display-ready material consistent with the approved display specifications; (b) transportation of the exhibition to and from the site; (c) installation and deinstallation oversight; and (d) exhibit design and text related to the work.

4. **Display Area Improvements.** The Task Force's exhibitions working group also identified improvements and building modifications that would enhance exhibition quality and conceivably save money and wear and tear on the facility. These include (a) installation of hanging systems in the exhibition areas, (b) structural reinforcement of walls with plywood for longer-term durability and improved weight-bearing, (c) upgrade of exhibition area lighting, (d) acquisition of exhibition and display fixtures including vitrines, pedestals and display cases, and (e) implementation of security systems or procedures. *We recommend that the Exhibitions Committee explore these and other improvements, prioritizing them for City implementation as funds become available.*

**D. Interim Recommendation**

The Task Force is very concerned that there is insufficient time to establish the City Hall Exhibitions Committee and the proposed pilot program in time for exhibits to be installed when the New City Hall opens in August 2005. *As an interim measure, we recommend that the Arts Commission through its Public Art Committee establish an ad hoc advisory committee generally mirroring the composition of the proposed Exhibitions Committee to solicit and review initial exhibition installations.* The final exhibition approval process during this interim time, which might include an RFP for installing the initial exhibits throughout the entire facility, should generally mirror the current procedure for public art projects. This interim procedure would last only until the Exhibitions Committee is formed and organized, which we estimate would occur at about the time the New City Hall opens.

## **E. Evaluation**

The pilot exhibitions program should end in December 2006. Before then, the Exhibitions Committee, Arts Commission and City staff should formally evaluate the pilot program and make recommendations for the future, ensuring a seamless transition to a permanent program.

## **IV. Festivals and Events at the New City Hall**

### **A. A Vision for Use**

We believe that the vision for making the New City Hall a vibrant, exciting public gathering space was well-stated in the Dial-Larkin Report:

“The vision of the San José New City Hall is to become a great public space that is used by the people of San José and the entire South Bay Area as a gathering center (or “21<sup>st</sup> Century town square”). A public gathering center should serve the public by providing space for leisure, pleasure, and excitement as well as for activities that are cultural, civic, celebratory, reflective, academic, athletic, gastronomic and political. A public gathering center instills a sense of place...and illuminates the City’s individual character. As San José is a mosaic of people, the new City Hall must reflect this richness.”

We believe that policies and procedures developed for the use of the New City Hall’s public spaces should aspire to realizing this vision.

### **B. Objectives**

We believe that the objectives for the use of the New City Hall public spaces should embrace an enhanced “Facilitated Use” approach as recommended by the Dial Larkin Report and should include:

1. Fulfilling the vision that inspired the City Council’s approval of the New City Hall as a hub of civic and cultural activity;
2. Maintaining the continued support, and the “hearts and souls,” of elected and appointed City officials for this vision;
3. Creating an event-friendly space that balances security and facility management needs with ease of use, affordability and accessibility;

4. Ensuring that the New City Hall complements, rather than competes, with other venues and spaces in downtown San José; and
5. Encouraging immediate use for event activities, capturing and adding to the excitement of the grand opening.

### C. Challenges of the Space

Although the New City Hall will be a beautiful building with plentiful public spaces, we believe that “ease of use” is critical to long-term success in attracting a wide range of users. We believe it is important for the City to facilitate ease of use from the opening of the facility. Several conditions could inhibit ease of use, including:

*Capacity Limitations.* The Fire Department has set the standing capacity of the Plaza at about 2,300 persons, which itself limits the type of events that may take place.

*Vehicle Access:* Proposed restrictions, which prohibit vehicular access to both the New City Hall perimeter and the Plaza, could create major obstacles to using the Rotunda and Plaza. They impact the ability to load in, load out, and set up in both the Plaza and the Rotunda and limit the types of events on the Plaza that require staging or booths or that feature vehicles as part of a temporary exhibition or attraction. These restrictions also could impact guest access, such as limousine and valet drop-off, for formal Rotunda events, as well as caterer access.

*Off-Hours Building Access-Restrooms:* Off-hour access to restrooms within the New City Hall (particularly those located in the Council Wing) may be restricted or cost-prohibitive for groups staging events on the Plaza. Placing adequate portable restrooms may be restricted by vehicle access restrictions. Although there are possible exceptions, in general we do not believe that portable restrooms are appropriate on the Plaza and could be problematic on neighboring residential streets.

*Parking:* Proposed access limitations to the underground facility after hours and on weekends may impact both the actual and the perceived ease of use of the Rotunda for evening use.

*Infrastructure and Equipment:* We recommend that the City purchase or otherwise make available an adequate supply of portable equipment, including chairs, sound equipment, projection screens, a semi-permanent, seasonal stage (at least 30-by-40 with a Marley floor for dance), and shade cover for the Plaza. The task force also was under the initial impression that to save costs, the Rotunda catering kitchen would not be completed and would be left in shell condition. The task force strongly believed that a fully functional catering condition was a high priority item, and it was informed in December that the kitchen would be completed as originally planned.

*Cost of Use:* The festivals and events working group was concerned that the charges for required City services, such as the requirement that City departments charge full cost

recovery, additional permits, equipment rental, and other items, will make the cost of using the New City Hall's public spaces too high for smaller cultural and community groups.

*Other:* The lack of shade on the Plaza is a major concern for summer events. Current San José-based event producers have noted that access to shaded areas is a significant consideration for existing downtown outdoor events.

#### **D. Recommended Tactics to Achieve Objectives, Meet Challenges**

We recommend that the following tactics be used to achieve the objectives numbered above in Section IV.B:

*Tactics for Objective 1:* The City should view its role as a “partner” in activating the New City Hall's public spaces. As a partner, City departments should adopt an “ease of use” approach to facilitate use of New City Hall public spaces by community groups.

*Tactics for Objective 2:* The City Council should (a) encourage policies that facilitate public use of the facility, (b) assist in securing adequate financial support, and (c) promote the use of the New City Hall by community groups within their districts and throughout the City.

*Tactics for Objective 3:* ***We recommend that the City adopt policies and procedures regarding the use of public spaces in the New City Hall that make the New City Hall easy to use and affordable.*** These policies should be developed by staff and the new Festival and Events Committee (described in Section IV.F below.) (We also should note that the Task Force's festivals and events working group met with representatives of the police and fire departments and were assured that events would be assessed on a case-by-case basis and that flexibility was possible provided that security, public safety, and traffic control requirements were not compromised.)

*Tactics for Objective 4:* Existing events should not simply be moved to the New City Hall. The facility should complement, not compete with, venues used for current festivals and events. Although some downtown events might expand naturally to the New City Hall, new events should be created that are unique to the facility.

*Tactics for Objective 5:* We believe that there should be a constant stream of programming for the first six months after the New City Hall opens, with a preference for events that encourage a diverse core audience. During the next six months, the City should continue to be proactive to ensure active public use of the facility for the first year of operation. In appropriate circumstances, ***we recommend that a fee discount or subsidy be considered for at least the first year after opening to encourage maximum use.*** Recommendations should come from staff and the new Festival and Events Committee.

During the first year of the facility's operation, staff resources should be used in the areas of marketing; facilities management and maintenance; event development, hosting, and

coordination; and master calendar maintenance.<sup>2</sup> Financial resources should be used for grants or other financial support for event development, hosting, and production; as seed money to encourage new events; as financial incentives to stimulate use; and for marketing. Although we believe that the need for City staff and financial support will continue after the first year of operation, specific recommendations should come from the new Festivals and Events Committee when the specific needs become clear.

As funds become available, certain capital expenditures should be made to enhance the attractiveness of the space for events promoters and community groups. *We recommend that the new Festivals and Events Committee establish a priority list of equipment purchases and that the City make the purchases as funds become available.*

### **E. Scan of Possible Events**

Following is a list of possible events that the Task Force's festivals and events working group suggested as appropriate for the facility:

#### **1. Plaza:**

Noontime concerts with a target audience including New City Hall workers, San José State University staff and students, workers in North Second Street facilities, and workers across downtown to the Adobe buildings

A summer evening movie series

Cultural events including dance, food, music, theater, other arts forms

Athletic-related events—celebrating the Sharks' notable achievements, San José State Homecoming activities, and so forth

Youth fairs, children's events, chalk painting festival

Market places—farmers, food, crafts (need to consider possible competition with existing events)

Small festivals

#### **2. Rotunda:**

Movies – may be good as an off-(outdoor) season venue

Private parties and celebrations, fundraisers

---

<sup>2</sup> As recommended elsewhere in this report, we believe that the Office of Cultural Affairs is the appropriate City office to provide these specific services; however, we believe that another City department more appropriate for such a function be responsible for general City Hall public calendaring (reserving conference rooms and the like).

Speaker series sponsored by groups like the Commonwealth Club or other civic organizations

Intimate acoustic concerts

“Private” events

#### F. Establishing an Implementation Committee

*We recommend that the City establish a City Hall Festivals and Events Committee to coordinate implementation of the above tactics through December 2006. Before that date, the Festivals and Events Committee, Arts Commission and City staff should formally evaluate the pilot program and make recommendations for the future, ensuring a seamless transition to a permanent program.*

*We recommend that the Festivals and Events Committee include a representative from the Mayor’s Office, City Manager’s Office, General Services Department, and Police Department. The remainder of the nine-person committee should be appointed by the City Council upon the recommendation of the Arts Commission and should include one Arts Commissioner, an events producer, a representative from a performing arts group, and two other members with festivals or events expertise, none of whom should have a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict. Someone from the special events program of the Office of Cultural Affairs should staff the committee.*

The Festivals and Events Committee’s initial charge should be to promote the use of the facility among area events promoters and community groups so that events are scheduled at least through the first six months after the facility is opened and proactively encouraged for six months thereafter. *This work should begin immediately to ensure active use of the facility from the beginning.* The Festivals and Events Committee also should prepare a prioritized list of capital expenditures that will make the facility more attractive to promoters of festivals and events and to community groups wanting to stage events at the facility. Finally, in conjunction with staff and the City Attorney’s office, the committee should prepare formal policies and procedures for festivals and events at the New City Hall.

#### V. Funding, Staffing

The Task Force is keenly aware of the financial difficulties currently faced by the City and the fact that they will persist, and perhaps even worsen, at least through 2006. Nevertheless, the Task Force believes that the opening of the New City Hall is a milestone in the City’s growth and history. So much has already been invested in the facility that finishing the job by ensuring that the public spaces are vibrant community gathering places should not be short-changed. The Task Force believes that funding and staffing the recommendations contained in this Special Report should be given a high priority within the City’s budget process and City administration.

#### A. Use of the Arts Venture Fund

*We recommend that the Arts Venture Fund be used to partially fund the initial exhibitions and festivals and events programming at the New City Hall.* The fund, which includes approximately \$200,000 for FY 2004-2005, is within the current budget of the Office of Cultural Affairs, but the Arts Commission has delayed recommending a specific use for the money. We believe that spending the funds as seed money to activate the New City Hall is an appropriate and wise use. Recommendations for ongoing funding should be developed by staff and the new Exhibitions and Festivals and Events Committee as specific needs become known.

The Arts Venture Fund was established as a line item within the City's budget beginning in 2000 upon the recommendation of the Mayor in order to encourage exceptional activities by the City's arts groups. Over the years it has served its purpose well, funding the creation of several new works, purchasing needed capital equipment, and establishing matching grant programs through a competitive grants program administered by OCA. Recently, however, the Arts Commission has decided that using the fund to augment the City's grants program filled a greater need, given the decline of Transient Occupancy Tax revenue and the need of all our arts groups for operating funds.

We believe that using the currently existing fund (and hopefully an allocation of at least the same amount in 2005-06) would fulfill the initial purposes of the Arts Venture Fund by encouraging new artistic, cultural, and community endeavors in our most visible public venue. The Arts Commission should recommend which portion of the fund should be earmarked for exhibitions and which for festivals and events.

Although specific exhibitions and festivals and events budgets will be developed by staff and the two pilot project committees, the Task Force believes that additional City funds beyond the Arts Venture Fund seed money probably will be needed to implement the pilot programs recommended in this Special Report.

#### B. Staffing

*We recommend that the Office of Cultural Affairs be designated to staff both the exhibitions and the festivals and events activities in the New City Hall.* The Task Force considered whether these functions might belong elsewhere within the City's administrative structure, but concluded that the Office of Cultural Affairs is the most appropriate location because of the expertise and experience of its staff with similar programs. Members of the Task Force's working groups have a long association with OCA staff through the public art and special events programs administered by OCA, and they strongly supported this recommendation. In addition, the relationship between OCA and the Arts Commission will help ensure community representation and that a direct line of communication through the Commission to the Mayor and City Council will be kept open on matters pertaining to New City Hall public use. We note, however, that OCA has suffered a more than 30 percent reduction in its staff over the past three years. We believe that it will be difficult, if not impossible, for OCA to absorb additional obligations with its current personnel.

The foregoing obviously will mean that the need to provide sufficient staff resources must be addressed. Further, as New City Hall's opening rapidly approaches, the Task Force is concerned that the groundwork for developing both exhibition and event capacity begin immediately.

*We recommend that as soon as possible the City determine how to fill the following staff functions in both the exhibitions and the festivals and events areas: (a) long-range planning and management, (b) event coordination, (c) exhibition preparation, (d) development and marketing, and (e) on-site logistical support.*

## VI. Conclusion

As the Dial-Larkin Report notes, "Great public spaces are not built overnight. A great public space must be inviting, have basic amenities, welcome surprises, and most of all, must bear the flavor of the people who frequent it."

Although the character of our New City Hall will develop and change over time, this Special Report recommends immediate measures to activate the space as a vibrant public gathering place reflecting the richness of our community. We are excited about the prospects.

Respectfully submitted,

San José Arts Commission

Ben Miyaji, Chair  
Jill Arnone, Vice Chair  
Maxwell Crumley  
Francis Paul Czyz  
David Eisbach  
Lisa Gonzales  
Sharon S. Gustafson

Natalie A. Hala  
Dennis Martin  
Stephen S. McCray  
Jess Moreles  
Eugene H. Sakai  
Ruth Tunstall-Grant

**SCHEDULE 1 TO  
SPECIAL REPORT ON ACTIVATING THE NEW CITY HALL PUBLIC SPACES**

**TASK FORCE ROSTER**

**Arts Commissioners**

Maxwell Crumley<sup>3</sup>  
Francis Paul Czyz  
David Eisbach  
Dennis Martin  
Stephen S. McCray<sup>4</sup>  
Jess Moreles

**Staff**

Jerry Allen, *Office of Cultural Affairs*  
Monte Duran, *Office of Cultural Affairs*  
Bill Ekern, *Redevelopment Agency*  
Mignon Gibson, *City Manager's Office*  
Barbara Goldstein, *Office of Cultural Affairs*  
Elaine Leung, *City Manager's Office and  
NCH Mission Project Manager*  
Matt Morley, *Public Works & Facilities  
Management*  
Mike O'Connor, *Police Department*  
Lynn Rogers, *Office of Cultural Affairs*<sup>5</sup>  
Kay Winer, *City Manager's Office*

**Exhibitions Working Group**

Dan Keegan (chair), *San José Museum of Art*  
Richard Ajluni, *events and promotions consultant, former arts commissioner*  
Tamara Alvarado, *MACLA*  
Alida Bray, *History San José*  
David Crosson, *History San José*  
Robert Milnes, *San José State University*

**Festivals and Events Working Group**

Steve Saperstein (chair), *San José Jazz Society*  
Sunil Baliga, *marketing professional, former arts commissioner*  
Chris Esparza, *Giant Creative Services*  
Melanie Kopek, *sjDANCEco*  
Blage Zelalich, *San José Downtown Association*

---

<sup>3</sup> Policy oversight working group chair

<sup>4</sup> Task force chair

<sup>5</sup> Principal staff liaison, recorder