

BEFORE THE METRO COUNCIL

FOR THE PURPOSE OF AFFIRMING METRO’S)	RESOLUTION NO. 26-5574
COMMITMENT TO A VIBRANT AND)	
THRIVING REGIONAL ARTS COMMUNITY)	Introduced by Councilor Lewis and Acting
AND EMBEDDING CREATIVE ARTISTIC)	Council President Hwang
PRACTICES AS PLANNING AND)	
ENGAGEMENT TOOLS THROUGHOUT)	
METRO’S WORK)	

WHEREAS, the greater Portland region is home to a vibrant, inclusive and diverse social and economic ecosystem supported by our arts infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, arts and cultural practices are an important and enduring way people connect with each other and form the cultural bonds that hold communities together – constructing meaning and sharing knowledge, values, and identity; and

WHEREAS, arts and cultural activities are significant components of the social and economic health of the greater Portland region, enriching the lives of residents, fostering creativity, and strengthening community identity; and

WHEREAS, cultural activities and institutions cultivate social cohesion, intergenerational connection and a sense of belonging, which are essential to community stability and resilience; and

WHEREAS, creativity is integral to effective governance, resilience, and long-term sustainability; and

WHEREAS, investment into arts and culture positively impacts the economic performance of other industries by anchoring a sense of place, ameliorating social isolation, helping build stronger connections between communities, and inspiring greater engagement in public spaces; and

WHEREAS, Metro recognizes that historic and systemic inequities have limited access to cultural resources and opportunities for many communities, particularly communities of color, Indigenous peoples, immigrants and refugees, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ+ individuals; and

WHEREAS, artists and culture bearers are recognized and respected leaders within their communities as vital stewards of tradition, language, and heritage, especially in communities that have been historically underserved by government, and their lived experience, cultural knowledge, and creative practice are essential to shaping inclusive and responsive public programs; and

WHEREAS, since the Oregon Legislature adopted Oregon’s Percent for Art in 1975, the state has invested in nearly 3,000 public artworks; and

WHEREAS, Metro has been the operator of the Portland’s Center for the Arts since 1989, welcoming more than 800,000 attendees annually to the venues, and creating more than \$90 million in economic impact for the region each year; and

WHEREAS, Metro has been the facilitator of the GLEAN program since 2010, supporting 80 artists who turn garbage found at Metro Central Transfer Station into masterpieces, prompting people to

think about their consumption habits, initiating larger conversations about the waste we generate, and inspiring creative reuse for the region; and

WHEREAS, Metro's Community Placemaking grant program, now in its tenth cycle, is an effective and meaningful way Metro supports communities by implementing small-scale, innovative, community-driven arts and culture-based solutions; and

WHEREAS, the regional planning agencies across the United States have recognized the importance and demonstrable impact of integrating artists, arts, and culture into their core work, some with dedicated departments such as Atlanta Regional Commission and Boston's Metropolitan Area Planning Council; and

WHEREAS, Metro was one of only a small group of regional agencies accepted to Smart Growth America's Culture and Community Network - a national cohort of Metropolitan Planning Organizations and regional planning entities designed to help agencies integrate arts and culture into planning, community engagement, and regional decision-making - underscoring Metro's leadership, readiness, and commitment to advancing culturally rooted and community-centered planning practices; and

WHEREAS, Metro staff are initiating efforts to integrate artists and arts and culture strategies into planning projects and programs across the agency, including the update to our 50-year Future Vision project, to ensure that creative perspectives inform regional growth, infrastructure, and community development; and

WHEREAS, inviting artists into planning processes as respected thought partners can enrich every stage of planning, can challenge conventional and dominant narratives, expand our understanding of complex issues, and ensure a human-centered approach; and

WHEREAS, further incorporating arts and culture into Metro's work will demonstrate Metro's recognition of cultural expression as a vital ingredient to maintaining our region's sense of place; and

WHEREAS, embedding creative practices into planning enhances public participation, improves policy outcomes, and facilitates decisions that reflect the lived experiences of community, which is essential to building a more inclusive, innovative, resilient metropolitan region; now therefore;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Metro Council affirms a commitment to a vibrant and thriving regional arts community and directs the Chief Operating Officer to strive to embed creative artistic practices throughout Metro's work, and directs Metro staff to:

1. Use Metro public meetings as a platform to elevate creative work and practices; and
2. Explore opportunities to integrate artists, arts culture, and creative practices as planning and engagement tools in regional planning, economic development, and community well-being initiatives; and
3. Pursue initiatives to embed arts and culture into planning and programming, and encourage the inclusion of artists and cultural strategies and other efforts to shape the region's future; and
4. Strive to incorporate arts and culture into Metro projects that have a scoping phase; and

5. Report back to Metro Council on the progress of this initiative and future recommendations to advance the goals of this legislation in future budgets.

ADOPTED by the Metro Council this ____ day of _____ 2026.

Duncan Hwang, Acting Council President

Approved as to Form:

Carrie MacLaren, Metro Attorney