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City Manager's
Office

To:

The City of Shoreline Council
17500 Midvale Ave N,
Shoreline Wa 98133

RE: Proposal to Create a Public Arts Commission

Dear Councilmembers,

ShoreLake Arts (formerly the Shoreline Lake Forest Park Art Council) has been asked by the Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services/Tree Board (PRCS/Tree Board) to support its recommendation that the City Council create a Public Arts Commission for the City of Shoreline. Specifically, the PRCS/Tree Board has asked that the City Council appoint a steering committee to develop a proposed plan and structure for such a Commission.

We support the creation of a Public Arts Commission. A Public Arts Commission would reflect the City's strong commitment to the Arts and add an additional voice in the community advocating for the arts. To facilitate creation of such a Commission, ShoreLake Arts requests that one or more of our professional arts staff and/or board be included on any steering committee appointed by the City.

We believe that the community would benefit most from a Public Arts Commission that works to complement the programs that ShoreLake Arts already delivers to Shoreline residents. For example, a Public Arts Commission could provide a platform to access additional resources for the creation of public artworks and projects such as sculptural installations and murals. These types of major public works projects are best suited for public ownership, administration, and long-term management. Similarly, a Public Arts Commission could facilitate expanded arts exhibition opportunities in public spaces and work with the City's Economic Development Office to support and attract working artists and their business to our community.

For the last 30 years, ShoreLake Arts has been the voice for the Arts in Shoreline and Lake Forest Park. We have successfully maintained membership and engaged participation with county, state, and federal arts organizations such as 4Culture, Artist Trust, and the Washington State Arts Commission, all of which have provided funding to ShoreLake Arts for use in our community, year after year. We act as the designated Local Arts Agency representative for Shoreline and Lake Forest Park and provide leadership, advocacy, support, and planning on behalf of Shoreline and Lake Forest Park, growing arts programs and events in our two cities. We also serve as an arts clearinghouse for local arts events, advertising arts and culture opportunities on our web calendar and through our social media pages. www.facebook.com/ShoreLakeArts www.ShoreLakeArts.org

Additionally, our organization has been a major driver of growth for the local Creative Economy. Events like the Shoreline Arts Festival, Concerts in the Park, 6X6NW, and the Shoreline Short Short Film Festival reach over 30,000 people annually and provide income to over 300 artists and local business owners. Our events also benefit the local economy: people who attend our events often patronize local businesses, stopping for coffee, a meal, or making purchases in connection with their



trip. According to Americans for the Arts, every person who attends an art event spends an additional \$22.39 in the community if they are a resident or \$44.02 if they're not.

ShoreLake Arts also serves the community by mentoring and supporting new and emerging arts and cultural nonprofits, including those with diverse cultural backgrounds. For example, through our Community Grants program we offer financial support to local groups like JHP Cultural and Diversity Legacy and Dabuli, among others. We also provide advice, support, and community for artists and arts and culture organizations. The ShoreLake Arts Executive Director initiated a regular Zoom gathering of local Arts and Culture nonprofit leaders to share experiences during the pandemic. Our twice-yearly "the business of art" workshop trains young artists how to market their work and otherwise prepare for a career in the arts.

A Public Arts Commission that could partner with ShoreLake Arts to advance support for arts in our community, including support for ShoreLake Arts' vision for creating a new arts facility, would be most welcome. We believe that the more voices raised in support of the arts in our community, the more we all benefit. That is especially the case if such a Commission focused on areas where ShoreLake Arts does not already have programs. This would include providing a leadership role for public artworks, such as creating access and opportunities for sculptural installation, murals, and other city beautification projects that celebrate our diverse community.

We look forward to further discussing this matter. In addition to participating on any steering committee appointed by the City to facilitate the creation of an Arts Commission, ShoreLake Arts would be pleased to help identify local artists and nonprofit arts leaders who could provide diverse voices to the steering committee.

Thank you.

Tracy Thorleifson

Tracy Thorleifson
Board President
Date: 2/20/2021

Endorsement unanimously approved by the Board of Directors on 2/16/2020