



Legislation Text

File #: 2015-0288, **Version:** 3

A MOTION approving a partnership between King County and 4Culture to create a bond financed arts, cultural, heritage and preservation capital program to build, maintain, expand, preserve and improve new and existing cultural facilities.

WHEREAS, rapid population growth in King County will necessitate building new schools, affordable and market rate housing, and improved public transportation options, and

WHEREAS, equally important is the building of new gathering places, sites where our diverse histories can be interpreted and shared, and public cultural spaces, and the preservation of historic structures that create community identity, encourage strong social connections and further opportunity for entertainment, education and interactions, and

WHEREAS, civic institutions, such as history and art museums, public galleries, community cultural organizations, performing art centers and arts councils, play a central role in our economy, and benefit local businesses, residents and tourists, and

WHEREAS, arts, culture and heritage make this region an attractive place for new businesses that bring with them new jobs, as arts and heritage businesses add almost two billion dollars in business activity, seven hundred ninety-eight million dollars in labor income and over twenty-nine thousand five hundred jobs to the central Puget Sound region, and

WHEREAS, opportunities for cultural expression are an important element of equity and a tool for communities seeking to address the needs of new demographics, and artists and historians can devise and carry out creative community-building neighborhood programs, and

WHEREAS, the last significant construction of arts, cultural and heritage infrastructure was in the

1990s, at the height of the dot.com bubble, and facilities built in that era are now in need of major system upgrades or replacement, and

WHEREAS, many arts, cultural and heritage capital and building campaigns were suspended during the recession and are now beginning again with the improved economy, and the current significant increase in development activity around the region makes preservation of historic structures an immediate imperative, and

WHEREAS, suburban communities are now recognizing the role arts, cultural and heritage facilities and historic preservation play in creating a sense of place and enhancing social connections that are vital to our increasingly diverse population, and

WHEREAS, the cost of construction of arts, cultural and heritage facilities is less now than it will be in the future and an investment by King County in partnership with 4Culture today will accelerate the construction of these facilities to meet the needs of King County's growing and increasingly diverse population, and

WHEREAS, 4Culture is receiving adequate revenue from 2015 lodging taxes to pay bond debt service for five years from 2016 through 2020, and beginning in 2021 King County will begin receiving twenty-five percent of the lodging taxes generated every year in King County for use in supporting tourism-related facilities, enabling the County to pay debt service on the bonds beginning in 2021;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

A. 4Culture and King County will work together as partners on an arts, cultural, heritage and preservation capital program that will invite arts, heritage and preservation non-profit organizations, local public agencies and owners of designated historic structures within King County to participate in a competitive application process for capital project support, as described in Attachment A to this motion, to be provided by the sale of bonds.

B. The facilities funding program will involve two months of outreach and technical support for applicants during summer 2015, with a deadline in September, and will result in proposals for capital projects of every budget size, location and discipline.

C.1. To ensure review pools of similar-sized capital proposals for arts, cultural and heritage projects, applicants will compete for funding in three categories based on aggregate project budget size:

- a. projects with budget over ten million dollars;
- b. projects with budgets between one and ten million dollars; and
- c. projects with budgets less than one million dollars.

2. In addition, preservation projects will be reviewed as a fourth category, including the establishment of a preservation action fund to be able to quickly address threatened historic structures.

D.1. Because it is anticipated that funds requested will exceed funds available, 4Culture will convene citizen peer panels to review the applications and make recommendations to the King County executive and the King County council about which projects to support and at what levels.

2. Projects will be evaluated based on the overarching criteria of excellence, feasibility and community impact. A guiding principle of the selection process will be diversity in geography, discipline, budget size and ethnicity. Preference will be given to projects that are able to leverage funds from other financial partners and that generate economic opportunities, including tourism.

3. 4Culture will convene three separate citizen peer review panels in October. Every written proposal will be evaluated, and every applicant will have an opportunity to discuss their project with a panel. Recommendations and award amounts will be reviewed by 4Culture community advisory committees and bond counsel, and approved by the 4Culture Board, and then will be forwarded to the King County Executive and Council for final approval by ordinance before the end of 2015.