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From: Charlie Downs <charlieddowns@gmail.com>

Subject: Arts & Culture El Dorado - Critical Funding (Item 33 on BOS Agenda)

Date: November 19, 2019 at 5:23:13 AM PST

To: edccob@edcgov.us

November 19, 2019

Dear Members of the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors,

I am writing this letter in support of Arts & Culture El Dorado and their request for continued critical funding from the County. While I can certainly appreciate the challenges of balancing budgets with the resources available please consider that honoring such a request is an investment with great return as I hope to illustrate as follows.

I had served as a member at large on the EDC Community Economic Development Advisory Committee for many years. During my tenure I recognized one of the biggest challenges that faces our County is the aging demographic of our communities. El Dorado County has the oldest population of any county state wide as you are all well aware. The ability to retain our youth and to attract their cohort should be one of the filters the county uses in regard to making tough decisions with its financial resources. The leading experts on economic development and prosperity will report retention and attraction of that young demographic is the smartest thing any community can do; funding of Arts & Culture El Dorado passes the decision filter and supports that goal.

Arts & Culture El Dorado's excellent programs and resources are part of what makes a community great for the people who are here, retaining them and importantly it can also influence those considering relocation. Having owned and operated a professional services business located in Placerville for over 30 years recruitment and retention of young professionals was one of our biggest challenges. Beyond the recreational opportunities and natural environment we enjoy here in El Dorado County, civic amenities such as good schools, access to healthcare services and a vibrant arts and culture scene are all attractors that need support.

The County's funding of Arts & Culture El Dorado is fundamentally an investment in civic infrastructure which helps create "vibrant communities" as stated in the Boards Vision Statement at the top of todays agenda. Interestingly enough the Vision Statement goes on, "respecting our natural resources and historic heritage" is precisely what Arts & Culture El Dorado has been doing with their fine programs, exhibits and lectures. Their excellent program on the "Blue Lead" and accompanying lecture by Professor Emeritus George Wheeldon Geologist along with the programs and exhibits on the Wakamatsu Farm among others comes to mind.

Lastly your investment is being matched dollar per dollar by the California Arts Council. The County's contribution has been diminishing over the years given the pressures on resources. That said robust programs for arts and culture is a smart investment for our communities by helping grow the pie and leveraging what monies are available outside of our county.

Please continue to fund Arts & Culture El Dorado as an investment in community and a civic amenity that can have many times the economic return while supporting the quality of life we have here in El Dorado County. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Charles D. Downs AIA Emeritus