

Public Art Strategic Plan

FY 21-24 IMPACT REPORT

THE
PUBLIC
ART



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SANTA ROSA PUBLIC ART STRATEGIC PLAN

OVERVIEW

The Arts & Culture Strategic Plan Impact Report (2021–2024) summarizes an overview of the City of Santa Rosa's collective achievements over four years of creative investment, collaboration, and community engagement. Guided by the goals and action items of the Strategic Plan, this report celebrates the progress made in strengthening Santa Rosa's cultural identity, expanding equitable access to the arts, and fostering partnerships that drive creativity, economic vitality, and civic pride.

Through shared efforts, Santa Rosa's arts ecosystem has continued to grow in both visibility and impact. From public art installations, community engagement, and artist support initiatives, the outcomes documented here illustrate how arts and culture serve as catalysts for connection, innovation, and resilience.

This Impact Report not only summarizes what has been accomplished under the 2021–2024 Strategic Plan but also provides insights that will shape future planning. During the implementation period, the Arts & Culture Division experienced a transition in staffing and leadership FY 22-24, resulting in a temporary gap in implementation. Additionally, broader City budget constraints required prioritization of core services and strategic alignment of resources. Despite these challenges, foundational elements of the Strategic Plan continued to advance, positioning the program for renewed momentum.

With new management beginning in 2024, many initiatives continued, evolved, or re-emerged, helping shape the next phase of planning. These lessons learned, combined with demonstrated program growth, will directly guide the forthcoming Public Art Master Plan update.

Together, these achievements reaffirm Santa Rosa's commitment to a vibrant, inclusive, and creative city. One where public art reflects community identity, supports economic development, and enriches daily life.

VISION

An empowered, thriving, and inclusive Santa Rosa community connected through the power of art.

MISSION

Champion artistic expression and amplify community voices through a diverse array of public art experiences.



Talisman, Pamela Ambrosio

GOAL 1

Diverse voices are represented, included, and celebrated within the programming, process, outreach, and infrastructure of the Public Art Program.

The Public Art Program has expanded its definition of art to include performance, temporary installations, and community-driven projects, inviting broader participation and accessibility. New efforts emphasize storytelling, cultural expression, and diverse art forms, showcasing Santa Rosa's creative voices.

Key Accomplishments

Look Beyond Visual Art

JOURNEY TO THE FUTURE

Developed a youth-driven music video initiative capturing creative expression, community pride, and future-focused storytelling through original music and visual collaboration.



BILINGUAL COLORING BOOK

Produced and distributed a bilingual creative workbook that invited children to illustrate their hopes for Santa Rosa.

Circulation reached 800 young residents through key partners including Jack London YMCA, Schulz Museum, Luther Burbank Center for the Arts, and Roseland Boys & Girls Club.



FILM SANTA ROSA

New creative industry initiative welcoming filmmakers to the city, streamline permitting, and provide location support.

This initiative positions Santa Rosa as a film-friendly destination and expands the Arts & Culture portfolio beyond traditional visual arts.



Partner & Build Stronger Relationships

Strengthen collaboration with culturally diverse local and regional organizations.

- Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Workshops – four 1.5-hour professional-development sessions + 20 hours of coaching for APPC members.
- 2024 NorCal Public Art Administrators Network Tour – 25+ representatives toured Santa Rosa's collection.
- Partner Projects – Colgan Creek Mural/Tribal Collaboration, Temporary ArtWalk/Downtown, Railroad Square, Museum of Sonoma County, Big Belly Trash Cans/.Local Schools, non-profits, all ages, Bay Area Film Mixer

Increased Community Participation

The City of Santa Rosa's Public Art Program has made significant strides in increasing and sustaining community participation through inclusive and engaging outreach efforts. This included focused efforts of youth engagement alongside our City's General Plan update.

Key engagement efforts included:

- A district-based economic development survey gathering feedback on arts and cultural priorities
- A targeted Street Performer Survey to better understand the needs of local performers
- New online application forms to:
 - a. Exhibit at the Finley Center
 - b. Apply to serve on a selection panel
 - c. Submit public art proposals

[Click HERE](#) for full report

Arts Engagement Participants

Total Participants: 429 Total

Age

- 7-11 (103)
- 12-15 (37)
- 15-17 (93)
- 18 (29)
- 19-24 (32)
- 25+ (4)
- Incomplete (5)
- Other (2)

Partner Organizations (9)

- Jack London YMCA
- Charles Schulz Museum
- Luther Burbank Center for the Arts
- Juvenile Hall | County of Sonoma
- Santa Rosa Junior College| Black Student Union |Sawubona Center
- Amarosa Academy
- Latino Service Providers
- Roseland University Prep
- iDALE!
- Sonoma County Office of Education Environmental Justice Coalition
- Roseland Boys & Girls Club

Ethnoracial

- Hispanic/Latinx (122)
- Hispanic/Latinx/Native American (4)
- Hispanic/Latinx/White/Caucasian (3)
- Hispanic/Latinx/Native American/White/Caucasian (1)
- Native American/White/Caucasian (1)
- Native American (1)
- White/Caucasian (49)
- Black/ African American (17)
- Black/ African American/White/Caucasian (1)
- Black/ African American/Pacific Islander/White/Caucasian (1)
- Asian/ Asian American (19)
- Pacific Islander (1)
- Multiracial Identifying (28)
- Prefer To Self Identify/Mexican (3)
- Prefer To Self Identify/American/Bahamian (1)
- Prefer Not To Say (26)
- Incomplete (29)

(5,212 +) General Public Engaged

- Installation: Journey to the Future| Courthouse Square Pop Up Event (5/21/23) 125
- Installation: Journey to the Future| Latino Service Providers Pop Up Event (08/31/23) 25
- Music Video: Distribution/Engagement (Sep-Dec '23) 5,062+
- In Process: Journey to the Future City Council Chamber Installation (Dec '23)



SOFA Community Mural, CAB grant recipient

Survey Results

2025 Economic Development Survey

The survey collected community feedback about arts, culture, and public art interests across multiple neighborhoods, focusing on preferred art types, desired improvements, and general sentiment toward cultural programming.

Desired Types of Public Art

Respondents expressed interest in a wide range of art forms, including:

- Murals
- Sculptures
- Temporary or rotating exhibitions
- Light-based/digital installations
- Support for local arts organizations & cultural programming

Neighborhood Insights

While specific districts varied in wording, themes remained consistent:

- Residents want aesthetic improvements and more cultural identity markers
- Public art seen as a way to beautify streets, increase pride, and make safer-feeling spaces
- Comments referenced sidewalks, lighting, and placemaking - showing interest in art + infrastructure synergy



2025 Street Performer Survey

To better understand the needs, interests, and experiences of local buskers, the City of Santa Rosa distributed a Street Performer Survey this quarter, receiving responses from a diverse range of performers.

Highlights:

- Need for more reliable high-foot-traffic performance zones
- Flexible options for amplified sound

High interest in performing at markets + City events

- Expand zones, pilot activations, promotion & scheduling tools
- More designated spots, shade, visibility & communication

Arts & Culture Program Improvements

Responses reveal constructive feedback and areas for growth:

- Desire for better lighting and activation in public spaces
- Interest in bold, distinctive artwork and refreshed existing pieces
- Requests for increased support for performers & arts organizations

Overall tone trends toward constructive and solution-oriented, with emphasis on visibility, innovation, and community connection.

“ — Keep asking and educating the community! This is great and we appreciate all that you're doing to bring the arts and culture to the community. **”**

Prioritize diverse voices in Public Art program planning

The City has focused on amplifying underrepresented voices through thoughtful artist selection, inclusive site placement, and meaningful community involvement. By intentionally engaging diverse communities and creators, Santa Rosa is working to ensure its public art reflects the full spectrum of the city's cultural identities and lived experiences.



The City of Santa Rosa's "Big Belly Trash Can Art" in Roseland turns ordinary street infrastructure into a vibrant canvas, inviting artists of all ages, backgrounds, and experience levels to contribute.

Installed in spring 2025 as part of the broader Roseland E.P.I.C. Campaign (Empowering People, Inspiring Change), these artist-wrapped "Big Belly" bins along Sebastopol Road not only help reduce litter and protect local creeks - they also reflect the community's diversity and creativity.

National Arts Program

Santa Rosa continues to lead the North Bay as a proud and long-standing host of the National Arts Program®—now celebrating 23 consecutive years of bringing community art forward. As one of the program's most enduring partners in California, Santa Rosa offers free participation, awards, and exhibition opportunities for artists of all ages, skill levels, and backgrounds. This continued leadership demonstrates the City's commitment to creative accessibility, cultural development, and fostering a welcoming platform where emerging and established artists can share their work side by side.



GOAL 2

Neighborhoods are infused with art and community leaders across the City champion arts programming.

Goal 2 focuses on ensuring that art is not confined to central civic spaces, but instead woven into the daily life of Santa Rosa's neighborhoods. By intentionally distributing resources, programming, and partnerships throughout the city, we aim to create a cultural ecosystem where every community has access to creative expression, and where local leaders play a central role in championing arts initiatives



Key Accomplishments

Build an informal non governmental advisory board

In October 2025, the City launched the Arts Roundtable, fulfilling the strategic plan's directive to establish a non-governmental advisory framework that encourages open community dialogue around art and cultural development. The Roundtable plans to continue quarterly into 2026 in various districts.

“

The kickoff for the Arts Roundtable on October 24, 2025 at Santa Rosa Arts Center was very well attended with artists from SRAC and the SOFA Arts District. Issues discussed included the SOFA neighborhood, it's significant economic and regional influences, it's identity, strengths and needs.

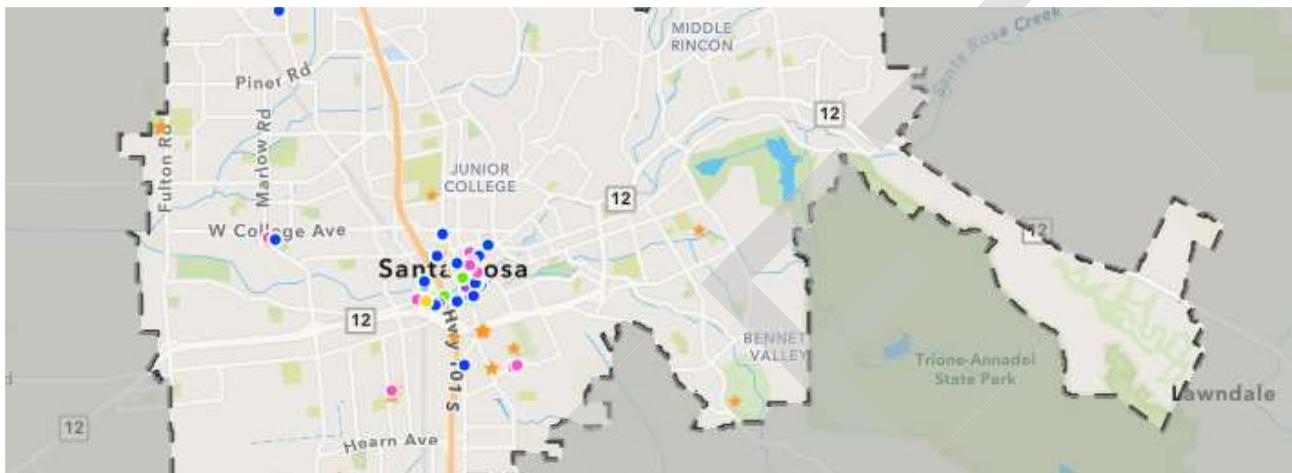
Simmon Factor, Santa Rosa Arts Center

”



Conduct an art audit

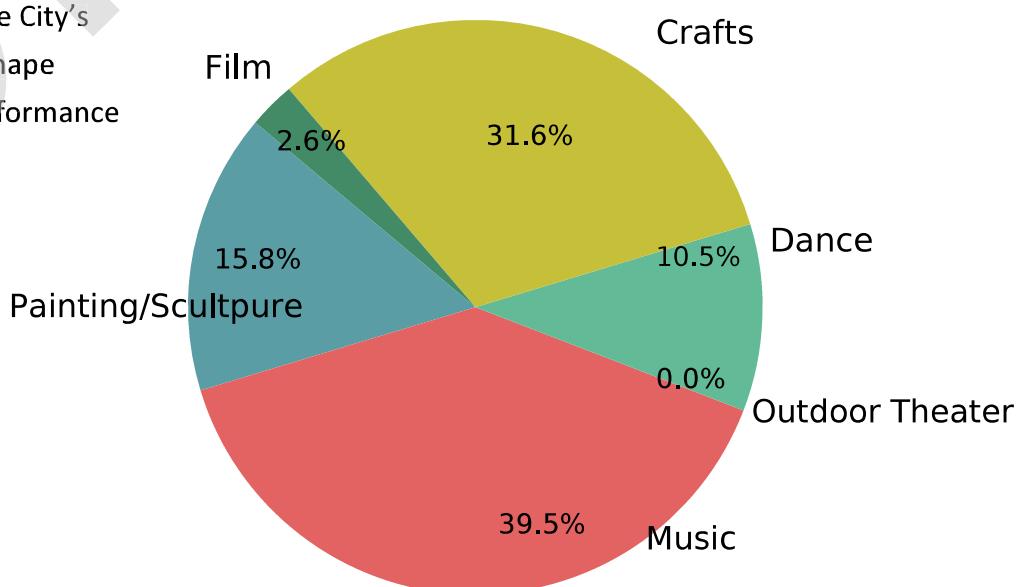
The City created a comprehensive map of its public art collection, providing a clear, visual tool to understand where art is present, and where it is not. By identifying “art deserts” across Santa Rosa, this effort offers valuable insight into underserved neighborhoods and guides more equitable, strategic placement of future public art and investments. The permanent collection map will be publicly available in 2026, with opportunities to expand the platform to include additional layers such as public art in private development, local murals, and other cultural assets.



2024 Arts & Cultural Events

Along with our permanent collection, in 2024 the City of Santa Rosa conducted an audit of arts and cultural events to better understand the distribution of programming across disciplines and neighborhoods. The audit revealed strong representation in music, crafts, and physical arts, while identifying clear gaps in film programming and outdoor theater offerings.

These findings have directly informed the team helping to advance the City's Film Santa Rosa initiative and shape future outdoor theater and performance programming.



Creating grant opportunities for art organizations targeting specific neighborhoods disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, the fires, and other current crises.

ArtSurround Partnership

Launched in 2022 by Creative Sonoma in partnership with the City of Santa Rosa and community stakeholders, the ArtSurround program embeds artists into civic, business, and community contexts to develop temporary, site-specific projects that reflect and respond to the unique character of Santa Rosa.

- Expanded the role of artists as community leaders and problem solvers.
- Provided new paid opportunities for emerging and established artists in Santa Rosa.
- Enhanced neighborhood identity and cultural vitality through temporary installations and events.



Wellspring Installation

The commissioned artwork Wellspring in Coffey Park is a direct example of how the City of Santa Rosa has met this goal. Coffey Park, one of the neighborhoods most devastated by the 2017 Tubbs Fire, was intentionally prioritized for arts investment to support healing, resilience, and renewal. By placing a major public artwork in this location, the City leveraged its Public Art Program to bring resources, creativity, and visibility to a community disproportionately impacted by crisis.

Facade Improvement Grants

In 2023 the City of Santa Rosa partnered with two local nonprofit arts organizations - The Mural Project and Artstart - to manage and implement placemaking public art projects. These initiatives supported small businesses located in key commercial corridors, including Roseland, Santa Rosa Avenue, Petaluma Hill Road, and Downtown Santa Rosa. The grants prioritized small businesses that were disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, using public art as a tool for recovery, visibility, and neighborhood revitalization.



GOAL 3

Public Art will be funded and maintained as a core component of placemaking and economic development.

Goal 3 emphasizes the sustainability and integration of public art as a driver for Santa Rosa's economic vitality and civic identity. The Public Art Program continues to align funding mechanisms, partnerships, and maintenance planning to ensure that artworks remain well cared for and that investment in the arts contributes to community development, tourism, and citywide pride.

Key Accomplishments

Prioritizing maintenance

The City of Santa Rosa continues to prioritize the long-term care and maintenance of public art as a critical component of its Arts & Culture program. To protect community investments and ensure artworks remain vibrant and welcoming, the City has applied anti-graffiti coating to all City-owned murals, enabling quicker and more effective response to vandalism while reducing long-term restoration costs.

Each artwork was evaluated for needs, common conditions identified across the collection included:

- Surface dirt and grime
- Graffiti and tagging
- Paint failure and fading
- Weathering, cracking, or material deterioration
- Deferred maintenance on older installations
- Establishing maintenance priorities based on condition, visibility, and community impact
- Applying anti-graffiti coatings to murals and vulnerable artworks to reduce long-term damage and maintenance costs
- Targeting high-incident locations, such as the Prince Memorial Greenway, for focused maintenance planning in 2026
- Integrating maintenance considerations into new public art projects, ensuring long-term sustainability is addressed at installation



Inquire Within, Joel Stockdill & Yustina Salnikova



Pomo Mural repair, 2024

Increased business involvement

The City of Santa Rosa has strengthened partnerships with the local business community by intentionally integrating business leaders into its arts initiatives. For the Temporary Art Walk, representatives from the Downtown Action Organization (DAO), the Railroad Square Association, and Simon participated on the selection panel, ensuring that artistic excellence was paired with economic vitality and district-level perspectives.

Complementing this effort, the following business resources are in the final stages of development:

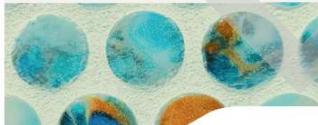
Arts Merchanting Guide: Designed to help businesses understand how to engage with the arts, highlighting practical pathways for participation and emphasizes the role of the creative economy as a driver of downtown activation, investment, and community identity.

Creating a Sustainable Studio: Guidelines that outline best practices for reducing environmental impacts while creating meaningful artworks.



City of Santa Rosa Arts and Culture

Creating a Sustainable Studio

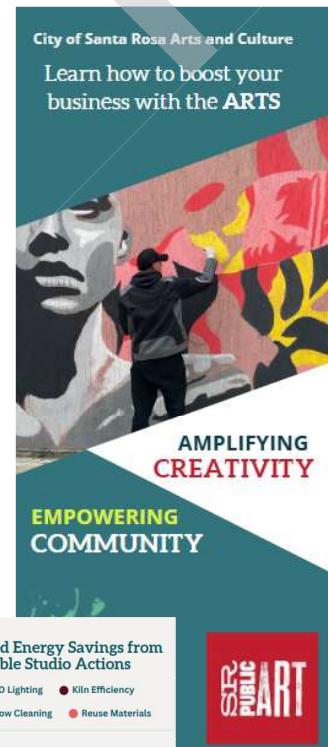


SRCity.org/ARTS

ARTS@SRCity.org

“Art has played a huge role in shaping the atmosphere and identity of our tasting rooms.

Cooperage Brewing



Estimated Energy Savings from Sustainable Studio Actions

● LED Lighting ● Kiln Efficiency

● Low Flow Cleaning ● Reuse Materials



Simple Ways Artists Can Reduce Water Use

- Use a two- or three-jar brush cleaning system.
- Capture & reuse water for tool washing.
- Install sink filters to trap pigment and clay.
- Reclaim clay to reduce water-intensive processes
- Avoid running water during cleanup



Did you know?

A sea freight shipment can have a carbon footprint 96% lower than an air freight shipment.

However, shopping local one of the most impactful ways artists can reduce their environmental footprint.

The City of Santa Rosa offers tools to monitor how and when your studio uses water, along with tailored recommendations to help you conserve and cut costs.

Where do I dispose of

[Used & Unused Solvents](http://zerowastesonoma.gov/hhw)

Turpentine, mineral spirits, thinners, alcohols

- Do not pour down drains or into trash.
- Store in a tightly sealed, labeled container.

Rinse Water

From cleaning brushes, trays, or tools

- If water contains paint, pigment, or solvent residue, do not pour down sink or outdoor drains.
- Collect in a sealed container and take to a household hazardous waste drop-off.

Paints & Pigments

paintcare.org/drop-off-sites

Acrylic, oil, latex, enamel, stains

- Water-based paint: Let dry completely. Dispose of empty, dried cans (lid off) in regular trash.
- Oil-based or liquid paint: Bring to a PaintCare drop-off site or household hazardous waste facility.

Learn More

SRCity.org/ARTS

SRCity.org/WATERSMART

GOAL 4

Public Art Program and the APPC are rightfully seen as positive and familiar assets in the community

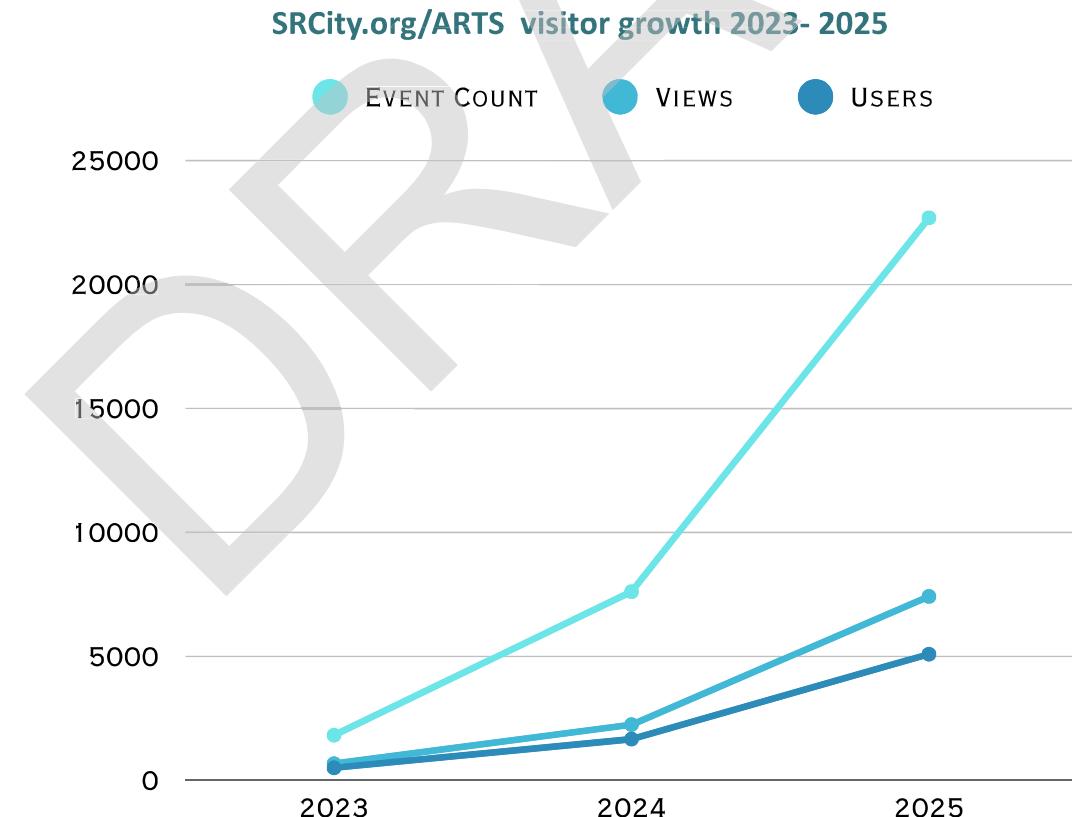
The Public Art Program and Art in Public Places Committee (APPC) have become widely regarded as key community assets, representing Santa Rosa's commitment to creativity, accessibility, and civic pride.

In alignment with the Strategic Plan, the Arts and Culture department invested in outreach initiatives to increase visibility and demystify program processes, ensuring residents and stakeholders better understand how public art enriches our shared spaces.

Key Accomplishments

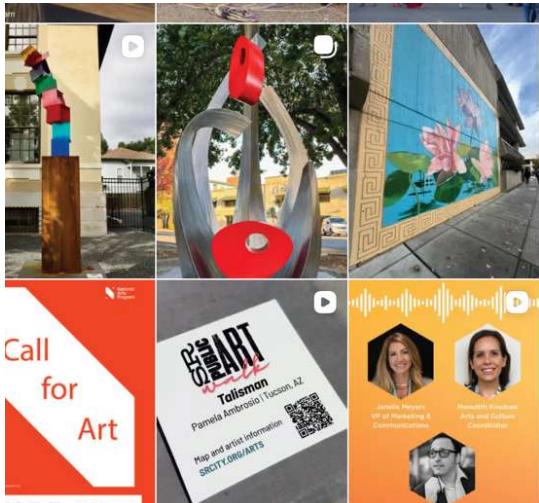
Website and Online Engagement

The Arts & Culture website experienced a 904% increase in users and 1100% increase in event interactions from 2023-2025 reflecting significant growth in community reach.



- **Users:** The number of unique visitors who accessed the Arts & Culture homepage.

- **Event Count:** The total number of tracked interactions such as link clicks, downloads, or embedded media plays which indicate user engagement with content.



Online Presence Redefined

In mid-2024, the City of Santa Rosa transitioned from the “Out There Santa Rosa” marketing identity to Santa Rosa Arts & Culture to streamline branding, improve clarity, and create a direct connection between the City and its creative programs. This shift strengthens recognition, makes resources easier to find, and reflects a more unified approach to public art, cultural programming, and community engagement.

The City of Santa Rosa has continued to strengthen its digital outreach for Arts & Culture through consistent growth in social media engagement and the strategic use of GovDelivery as a centralized communications tool. By aligning messaging across platforms and highlighting public art, events, artist opportunities, and community stories, the City has increased visibility and participation in Arts & Culture programs.

2025 numbers



13,512
followers

529.5k

views

91% from non followers

3k

interactions

+ 93% from 2024



8,601
followers

77.1k

views

25.5k

reach

+ 25% from 2024



this is a wonderful program!!!!



What a lovely town! Thanks for including me!



Looking forward to seeing them all! ❤️😊😎



More art coming soon!

🌟 The Santa Rosa...

Fri Sep 19, 8:01am

⌚ 11.4K ❤️ 313
💬 12 ⚡ 5



The 30th annual Live at Juilliard concert seri...

Sun Jul 13, 8:00am

⌚ 14.0K ❤️ 139
💬 2 ⚡ 76

GOAL 5

The Public Art Program is more nimble, better resourced, and better equipped to deliver on its mission and fulfill its vision for Santa Rosa.

Goal 5 focuses on strengthening the internal capacity, processes, and resources needed for the Public Art Program to operate effectively within a municipal environment while remaining responsive to artists and the community. Over the course of the Strategic Plan, the City of Santa Rosa has taken meaningful steps to streamline workflows, reduce barriers for temporary projects, and improve cross-departmental coordination.

Audit of Current Process for approving projects

The Public Art Proposal Form was implemented following a comprehensive audit that identified inconsistencies in how public art projects were reviewed across the City. Establishing a single, standardized form improves transparency, accessibility, and clarity for artists, staff, and reviewers.

As part of this update, the standalone Mural Guidelines form was removed and fully integrated into the Public Art Proposal Form, streamlining the application and review process. This consolidation allows for clearer communication and coordination across City departments and ensures a more consistent evaluation framework.

All temporary and permanent public art proposals are now reviewed through the Art in Public Places Committee (APPC), creating a unified and equitable review process for public art projects citywide.

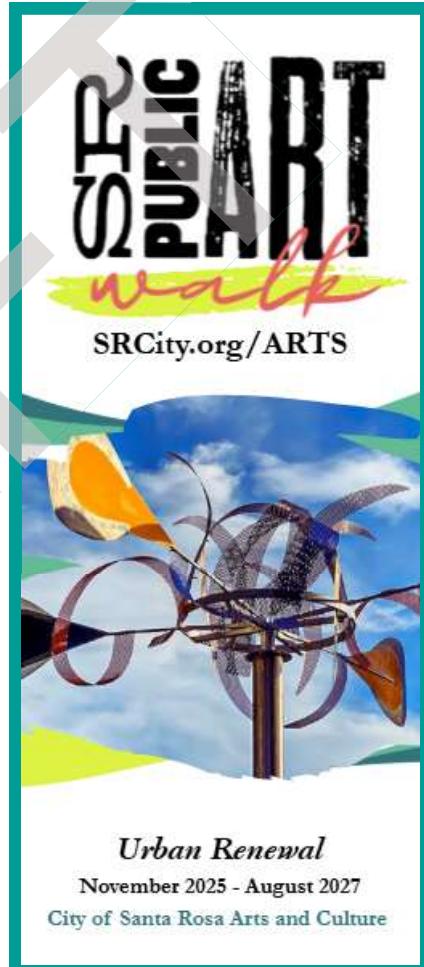
Increased Support

The City increased support for arts and cultural projects beyond direct funding by expanding social media, promotional efforts, and hosting Arts Roundtables. By actively highlighting local arts programs and community-led projects through our social channels, the City helped amplify visibility, strengthen audience engagement, and support the broader creative ecosystem.



Expand budget for Temporary Art

The City of Santa Rosa significantly expanded its temporary art program by launching a two-year Temporary Art Walk. With an approved budget of \$75,000 through the Art in Public Places Committee (APPC), the program activated the Downtown to Railroad Square corridor with nine temporary sculptures, including lighted, kinetic, and interactive works. This initiative strengthens downtown activation while establishing a scalable model that invites artists from across the U.S. to temporarily exhibit their work in Santa Rosa.



Building Capacity to Deliver Public Art

In support of Goal 5, the City of Santa Rosa strengthened the Public Art Program's internal capacity by launching its first-ever intern program, which started in October. This milestone expanded administrative and project support while creating a new pathway for emerging arts professionals. In addition, the City hired a full-time Arts and Events Specialist, with the position beginning in January 2026. Together, these investments make the Public Art Program more nimble, better resourced, and better equipped to deliver high-quality projects, manage growing workloads, and fulfill its long-term vision for Santa Rosa.



Santa Rosa Unveils New Public Art Walk Showcasing National and Local Talent

Leveraging Resources

The City of Santa Rosa has leveraged internal resources by working closely with the City's Communications team to elevate Arts & Culture initiatives. Through coordinated messaging, shared branding, and strategic use of Citywide communication channels, including GovDelivery, the Arts & Culture program has benefited from expanded reach and greater visibility without requiring additional program funding.

SANTA ROSA PUBLIC ART STRATEGIC PLAN

MOVING FORWARD

As Santa Rosa looks beyond the FY 2021–2024 Strategic Plan period, the Public Art Program is well positioned to build on the momentum established through these foundational years. With staffing stabilized and renewed investment in program infrastructure, the City will advance a Public Art Master Plan update to guide the next phase of growth, sustainability, and equity.

Moving forward, the City will:

- Expand temporary and rotating public art opportunities to activate neighborhoods and commercial districts
- Continue prioritizing maintenance and long-term stewardship of the public art collection
- Strengthen partnerships with artists, community organizations, and local businesses
- Deepen neighborhood-based engagement through Arts Roundtables and targeted outreach
- Advance cross-disciplinary initiatives such as film, performance, and interactive public art

These efforts will ensure the Public Art Program remains nimble, responsive, and aligned with community needs, supporting Santa Rosa's identity as a creative, welcoming, and culturally vibrant city for years to come.

STAY CONNECTED



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ARTS@SRCity.org



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