



News from: City of Oakland

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Roberto Bedoya Named Cultural Affairs Manager for the City of Oakland

Oakland, CA — City Administrator Sabrina Landreth today announced the appointment of Roberto Bedoya as the City of Oakland’s new Cultural Affairs Manager. “Roberto is a national thought leader around arts and civic engagement, cultural equity and creative placemaking, with deep ties to the Bay Area,” said Ms. Landreth. “We are thrilled to welcome Roberto and increase our ability to support and nurture the arts in Oakland.” Roberto will start work on September 12, 2016.

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Roberto will oversee the City’s Cultural Affairs Unit, housed in the City’s Department of Economic and Workforce Development. The unit includes the City’s public art program, which has more than \$1 million in funds currently dedicated for public art projects, and the City’s cultural funding program, which provides more than \$900,000 in grants to support the arts. The unit also includes staff working on special events, film production permitting, and a walking tours program. Roberto will provide leadership for new initiatives such as completing a Cultural Plan for the City, supporting cultural districts within the City of Oakland, and growing a technical assistance program to help artists and arts organizations build capacity.

Roberto served for nine years as the executive director of the Tucson Pima Arts Council (TPAC) where he oversaw arts grant making, facilitation of the region’s public art initiatives, professional development and training for artists and arts organization, fundraising, research and policy development work around the arts, and cultural advocacy, including celebrating and supporting Pima County’s diverse community identities. While at the Tucson Pima Arts Council, Roberto designed and implemented the nationally recognized P.L.A.C.E (People, Land, Arts, Culture and Engagement) Initiative that supports art-based civic engagement projects.

He also served as executive director of the National Association of Artists’ Organizations (NAAO) and worked at the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles on community partnerships and public programs. Earlier in his career, Mr. Bedoya served as the Managing Director and Literary Director at Intersection for the Arts in San Francisco.

Roberto has written and spoken extensively about “creative placemaking,” and is currently a Policy Fellow at the Herberger Institute at Arizona State University. He is also a poet. Roberto grew up in the Decoto community of Union City.

Late last year in tandem with the Housing Cabinet she established, Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf convened a task force to identify strategies to better support the stabilization of Oakland’s vital and diverse arts community and help stem displacement of artists and arts organizations. One of the key recommendations of the task force was to expedite the hiring of a new, senior-level cultural affairs manager to increase the City’s internal capacity to support the arts. Roberto’s selection is the first in a series of actions Mayor Schaaf and City Administrator Landreth will be implementing to ensure the arts community continues to thrive in Oakland.

“Roberto is an inspiring leader who is passionate about supporting – and advocating for – local arts communities,” said Mayor Schaaf. “He is a thought leader when it comes to ensuring equity and inclusion in the arts and civic engagement through the arts at a moment when these issues are critical to Oakland.”

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