



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 23-0468, **Version:** 1

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Recommendation to receive and file a presentation on the City of Long Beach Proposed Cambodian American Cultural Center Vision and Feasibility Plan (Plan); and, provide direction to City Manager on the Proposed Plan and/or adopt the Proposed Plan. (Citywide)

In September 2021, the City Council directed City staff to work with community stakeholders to create a visioning and feasibility plan (Plan) for a Cambodian American Cultural Center (CACC). The City Council allocated funds from the Long Beach Recovery Act Creative Economy Grants, and the Sixth District Council Office allocated Divide-by-Nine funds to support the feasibility phase, during which community outreach was conducted and a proposed Plan was prepared to determine options for future development of the CACC. The proposed Plan will be used as a basis to develop the facilities, management, and programming of the CACC.

In May 2022, the City of Long Beach (City) initiated the community visioning process for a CACC that will serve as a future hub for Cambodian/Khmer American arts, culture, and history. This visioning process was informed through facilitated input collected by the consultant team of City Fabrick, United Cambodian Community, and Lord Cultural Resources. City Fabrick was responsible for leading the consultant team, designing and supporting engagement activities, analyzing feedback, and applying visioning and feasibility analysis to physically locate and conceptualize the CACC. United Cambodian Community led community outreach, including facilitating community engagement, organizing community organizations and partners, and contextualizing the community voice. Lord Cultural Services provided education about the requirements for operating a cultural center and developed a feasibility plan based on feedback received as part of the engagement process.

### **Community Engagement Process Overview**

The visioning process for the Plan was primarily informed through public input and facilitation using contextualized strategies of community engagement. From June 2022 through March 2023, engagement strategies included four steering committee meetings, a public survey, a youth survey, community roundtables, and community events.

As a result of this outreach, a visioning and feasibility study and recommendations were developed that provide guidance for future phases of development, operation, and programming.

Over 638 individuals participated in the community engagement process. A summary of the diverse perspectives of community members is presented below:

Event	Goals	Time Frame
Steering Committee Meeting #1	Kick-off, identify stakeholders, create shared values, review process, draft survey content and outreach plan	June 2022
Cambodian American Cultural Center Informational and Launch Event	Learn more about the CACC visioning process and provide feedback through the CACC public survey	August 2022
Public Survey	Provide general input and feedback about the CACC visioning process	August 2022-October 2022
Steering Committee Meeting #2	Debrief survey results, develop workshop activities, review context and existing conditions	September 2022
Steering Committee Meeting #3	Debrief workshop results, map cultural assets, review case studies and best practices	November 2022
Community Small Groups	Discuss the gaps in information found as a result of the public survey. In addition to including CACC committee members, the community small groups centered on five stakeholder groups: high school and college-aged youth, parents with young children, older adults, faith-based leaders, and diversity, equity, and inclusion leaders	December 2022
Public Community Forum	Provide updates about the CACC visioning process and join in on small group discussions similar to those of the targeted small groups.	December 2022
Youth Survey	Gather youth input and feedback about the CACC visioning process	December 2022
Steering Committee Meeting #4	Debrief engagement findings, review feasibility study, prepare draft report	March 2023

All Steering Committee documents can be found at <https://longbeach.gov/iteam/priorities/cambodian-american-cultural-center/>.

## Feasibility Study Overview

Lord Cultural Resources provided a Feasibility Study for operating expenses and revenue during the first five years of operations after the opening of the CACC. Projections were based on realistic and conservative assumptions; benchmarks and comparable information that can be applied to the present case; community consultations; and analysis of the local

market, demographic statistics, and future projections.

Based on the community feedback, Lord Cultural Resources developed a feasibility study that projects that by Year 5 (anticipated full implementation), the Cambodian American Cultural Center (CACC) will:

- Encompass 27,500 gross square feet (19,600 net square feet)
- Be visited by approximately 30,000 people per year
- Have an annual operating budget of approximately \$1,000,000
- Operate with 6 FTEs (Full-Time Equivalent Staff), supplemented by 4 contractors (ex: janitorial and security)
- Be able to cover 25 percent of its operating costs through earned revenue sources
- Require approximately \$750,000 yearly to break even on operations, which is anticipated to need to come from a variety of sources, including: government contributions, corporate contributions, donations, sponsorships, and grants.

### **Recommendations Summary**

- Create the CACC nonprofit.
- Advise coordination and support from the City, including several City Departments, to help develop and establish the CACC.
- Form different committees or working groups, composed of both existing and new Steering Committee members based on their respective expertise and capacities, to lead the development of the CACC.
- Consistently host culturally relevant events and programs to continue the momentum of the CACC until and after development occurs.
- Implement memberships, fundraising events, and venue rentals, in addition to other funding mechanisms identified as part of the feasibility study, in order to help cover operation costs and programming.
- The CACC should ideally be located in the Cambodia Town neighborhood, ideally within proximity to other cultural institutions such as MacArthur Park, Mark Twain Library, and the Killing Fields Memorial along Anaheim Street. A secondary potential location could be outside of Cambodia Town depending on financial feasibility and development opportunities.
- Given the limited availability and high cost of land, the CACC should consider a joint-use development opportunity with other culturally significant community-based organizations, civic uses, or mixed-use housing development.
- The CACC shall be designed to accommodate various modes of transportation and incorporate ADA accessibility.

- The interior and exterior spaces of the CACC should be flexible to allow for a variety of programs that the community has expressed interest in.
- The exterior design of the CACC shall serve as a physical landmark for the community, having architectural cultural significance with design elements that are contextually and culturally appropriate to the surrounding built environment.
- Create a gift and souvenir shop that sells authentic Khmer items and locally-sold wares created by Cambodian and Cambodian American artists and craftsmen.
- Foster cultural preservation and learning through rotating and permanent exhibits and programs.
- Develop and strengthen partnerships with local and relevant entities and organizations to lead or co-host programming.
- Celebrate the achievements and adversities of Cambodian history, fostering pride in Khmer heritage, by focusing on and raising awareness of: [1] Khmer American refugee experience and transitioning to life in America; [2] Narratives outside of solely the Khmer Rouge and the Golden Age; [3] The strengths of the Cambodian American community
- Highlight the various religious beliefs, traditions, etiquette, ethics, and healing practices of Cambodian culture, reflecting traditional Khmer/Buddhist values such as respect and family-centeredness by working closely with temples that often host Khmer celebrations.
- Create a space for community economic development so as to improve the City's local economy.
- Use inclusive and relevant languages and messaging when creating educational or informational materials and signage with the public.

This matter was reviewed by Deputy City Attorney Sudhir N. Lay on April 17, 2023, and by Revenue Management Officer on April 21, 2023.

City Council action on this item is not time critical.

If City Council adopts the Proposed Cambodian American Cultural Center Vision and Feasibility Plan and directs the City Manager to implement the recommendation and implementation measures within, it is anticipated to require a substantial investment of City resources, including a significant staffing impact beyond the normal budgeted scope of duties. The departments responsible for elements within the Plan would return to the City Council for approval and request appropriation for items which are currently not budgeted as resources become available over the next several years. Offsets for implementing the Plan have not been identified and may require the use of one-time sources and structural funding in future years. The recommendation to receive and file the Proposed Cambodian American Cultural Center Vision and Feasibility Plan has no fiscal or local job impact. This

recommendation has no staffing impact beyond the normal budgeted scope of duties and is consistent with City Council priorities.

Approve recommendation.

THOMAS B. MODICA  
CITY MANAGER