

Community Engagement Plan – Latino Arts Residency Program

About the project

Brief Description

The Latino Arts Residency Program (LARP) is a City of Austin Parks and Recreation program that began in 2013 at the Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center (ESB-MACC). LARP fosters the development of Austin-area Latino arts organizations and artists in all disciplines in an effort to build and enhance quality, sustainable community arts, and cultural programming. Parks and Recreation grants LARP participants the opportunity to use public facilities managed by the City of Austin at no charge in order to tangibly benefit participants to graduate from the residency with a greater ability to sustain artistic production.

In 2018, the citywide Artist Access Program (AAP) was created in order to create artist residencies at all of its cultural centers, including the ESB-MACC. The Artist Access Program would have replaced the LARP program. However, the ESB-MACC Advisory Board passed a resolutions on November 7, 2018 and December 5, 2018 essentially advising that the ESB-MACC not participate in the AAP but instead continue the existing LARP program. The Advisory Board passed this resolution due to concerns that the AAP would not allow Latino artists the same level of opportunities as LARP. As a result, PARD leadership chose to respect the Board's advice and continue LARP, on the condition that the program would go through a community engagement process in order to update the program's application, selection process, and other aspects of the program.

Purpose

The Latino Arts Residency Program is The LARP Community Engagement process will provide a program review by the Latino Arts community in Austin and the ESB-MACC staff. This program review will examine the overall mission and purpose of LARP, the current application, selection criteria and process, contracts, and guidelines and procedures. The overall goal of the review is to make adjustments to the current program that further define its purpose, strengthen its contract, and give clearer guidelines to all parties. It should be noted that when the LARP program was originally created, the city's current standards of community engagement were not in place at that time. Updates will give the program more longevity and will seek to refine and revise it to reflect the current needs of the ESB-MACC and the artists in residence.

Scope of the Project

The community engagement for this project will:

- create a LARP Review Community Engagement Panel ("Panel") that will compile and prepare recommendations for program revisions to PARD executive staff;
- identify key stakeholders for outreach and methods for connecting them to engagement opportunities;
- create engagement opportunities that educate potential stakeholders on the current LARP;
- elicit feedback from stakeholders on areas of the LARP mission, application, selection criteria and process, contracts for LARP artists, and procedures and expectations for program participants;

- receive consultative input from ESB-MACC staff members regarding feasibility of procedures as well as contract enforceability expectations; and
- adhere to an open process where all recommendations and decisions are inclusive of and reviewable by community members.

Community Engagement Objectives

Objectives include:

- **Outreach and engagement with stakeholders:** The outreach will focus primarily on Latino artists and other artists throughout Austin who are current participants, past participants, potential future participants, and artists who are supportive of the overall creative communities. In addition, engagement with the ESB-MACC staff who will manage the day-to-day operations of LARP will be essential.
- **Education:** Engagement activities should result in stakeholders being informed about LARP opportunities, mission, and ways to be involved.
- **Diverse stakeholder representation:** Diversity of thought should be achieved through engagement with community members across the City who come from different backgrounds and represent different artistic expressions with a concerted effort to reach out to local Latino artists.
- **Consultation:** Engagement activities should be designed in a way that gathers input from stakeholders to inform the plan. It should be clear how the input will help develop the plan.
- **Inclusion and engagement of Spanish-speaking community:** The Panel will collaborate with ESB-MACC and PARD CEU to provide Spanish translations of all written and digital material including media advisories, website content, meeting minutes, community meeting information, documents to review and provide feedback on, and any other significant written materials. In addition, interpretation should be provided upon request from community members. Finally, the Work Group will be key partners in outreach, connecting to communities to inform them of the process and engagement opportunities.
- **Documentation of public process:** Every meeting presentation and all meeting materials, sign-in sheets, and meeting minutes are provided to PARD CEU for posting on website within 48 hours. Meeting materials will be included in the final plan's appendix. Every piece of public feedback, including feedback from meetings, online surveys, emails and phone calls, will be documented in final plan's appendix.

Decision Makers and How Decisions Will Be Made

The Community Engagement Panel will include two members of the ESB-MACC Advisory Board, two members of the Hispanic Quality of Life Commission, and one member of the Arts Commission. These Panel members will be assisted by PARD staff members. The final deliverable by the Panel will be to provide a report of recommendations.

Final decisions will be made by PARD executive leadership based on the recommendations of the Panel.

Roles and Responsibilities

The following is meant as a general guideline for the LARP Review. Roles and responsibilities can shift through the process.

Community Engagement Panel Members

The Community Engagement Panel is established as a specialized review board for LARP. At the end of the engagement period, the Panel will present final recommendations to the PARD Executive Team.

Additional responsibilities include:

- Review all current LARP documents, including application, contracts, policies, and procedures.
- Review all AAP documents, including application, contracts, policies, and procedures.
- Actively reach out to key stakeholders in each Panel member's network in order to encourage involvement with the process.
- Attend all scheduled community engagement meetings.
- Review all feedback and input received and compile a final report of recommendations.

ESB-MACC Staff Members

Culture and Arts Education Manager – Herlinda Zamora

Responsibilities include:

- Facilitate community meeting and LARP past and current participants stakeholder meeting.
- Reach out to personally invite as many Latino artists as possible to participate.
- Provide additional support to the Panel as needed.

Culture and Arts Education Coordinator – Lorie Martinez

Responsibilities include:

- Scheduling and reserving meetings at ESB-MACC.
- Reach out to personally invite as many Latino artists as possible to participate.
- Create a history of past issues related to LARP to be addressed by LARP Review process.

Culture and Arts Education Coordinator – Olivia Tamzarian

Responsibilities include:

- Write and disseminate media releases, stakeholder emails, and social media posts for meetings.
- Creating flyers to be posted for engagement opportunities.
- Assist in the creation of a survey that reflects issues to be reviewed in the process.
- Assist Panel in collection of feedback and data.
- Collect and manage meeting notes and comments, sign-in sheets, online comments, and any survey results.
- Assist in the community engagement evaluation at the end of the review.

Other ESB-MACC Staff Members

The primary role of other ESB-MACC staff members will be to provide input as key stakeholders in the process. Staff members may be asked to assist with meeting preparations as well.

PARD Communications and Engagement Unit

Community Engagement Specialist – Justin Schneider

PARD CEU, specifically the Community Engagement Specialist, will assist the Panel throughout the community engagement process. The CE Specialist's responsibilities include:

- Review all current LARP documents.
- Review all AAP documents.
- Develop meeting designs and assist with meeting facilitation when available.
- Support writing and disseminating media releases, stakeholder emails, and social media posts for meetings.
- Facilitate stakeholder meeting with ESB-MACC staff.
- Assist Panel in collection of feedback and data.
- Assist Panel in preparing formal recommendation to PARD Executive Team.
- Evaluate community engagement at the end of the review.

Level of Public Participation

Public Participation Goal: Consultation – Community members will provide key information that influence the recommendations of the Panel.

Level of Engagement: Educate and solicit input – Community members will learn about LARP and provide input on how the program can be strengthened to achieve its purpose of developing sustainable Latino arts organizations or artists upon graduating from their residency. Past and present LARP participants and ESB-MACC staff will offer specialized input.

Stakeholders and Key Issues

Preliminary Identified Stakeholders

The LARP review process will utilize the connections the ESB-MACC has developed over the years as well as other creative and collaborative communities. Key stakeholders include:

- LARP past and current participants
- Current and past user groups of the ESB-MACC
- ESB-MACC Advisory Board members
- ESB-MACC staff members
- Arts Commission
- Hispanic Quality of Life Commission
- Latino artists in Austin: visual, performing, and music
- City of Austin Law Department
- Community members who visit the ESB-MACC
- MexicArte and other arts organizations emphasizing Latino cultural heritage

Key Issues in the Community

LARP has faced a number of issues over the past 6 years. Past issues include adherence to certain program guidelines by LARP groups, enforcement of guidelines by ESB-MACC staff, conflicts over scheduling and observation by staff, allegations of improper behavior by prior ESB-MACC staff members.

Potential issues that may arise through the engagement process include:

- Using past issues to negatively impact the legitimacy of the process and future recommendations. Past mistakes and errors on either side should serve to inform the program review to prevent similar mistakes from occurring again. However, they should not be abused

and stretched into a tool for discounting the agreed upon process of feedback, recommendation, and approval.

- As in most processes, the vocal minority of participants may overshadow a significant but quieter majority of community members. Engagement activities should counter this by allowing for shared time, opportunities, and methods of feedback.
- Key potential stakeholders may be unknown or difficult to reach out to. Efforts should be made for each member of the Panel, ESB-MACC staff, ESB-MACC Advisory Board, and other PARD staff to use partners at every level to reach out to key stakeholders.
- The “right to be consulted” may be interpreted as the “right to be heeded.” The decision-making process should be clear from the start. Consultation will be accepted, but the recommendations will be made by the Panel with the PARD Executive Team making the final decisions.
- Active participants in the process may be deemed to speak for the entire community. However, the process should remind all parties that they speak for themselves and strength of the LARP future comes by bringing more people to the conversation.

Inclusive Public Involvement and Equity Strategy

Outreach and Communication

This is a program review of the Latino Arts Residency Program. Targeted outreach will include smaller stakeholder groups and a broader community outreach. Meetings should be hosted at the ESB-MACC to provide a consistent, known meeting location.

The process will be open and accessible to all stakeholders including initial and ongoing outreach, communications, engagement activities, and feedback. Though some meetings may focus on smaller stakeholder groups, the meeting notes and accessibility to the meetings themselves will be posted for complete transparency.

- *Stakeholder Databases:*
 - Past and current LARP participants
 - MACC Master Plan Stakeholder List
 - MACC Newsletter List
 - AAP stakeholder list
 - Additional contacts through MACC Advisory Board and Community Engagement Panel
- *News Media:* Press releases for community meetings will be sent to the PARD Media, Community Media, and Hispanic/Latino Media lists compiled by the City of Austin.
- *Flyers/Posters:* Utilized in print and electronic form, flyers are a tool to inform community members about community meetings and other scheduled events. The flyers/posters will be disseminated electronically to stakeholder email databases or group listservs and will be available on the City’s website. This will include basic information in English and Spanish. Additional flyers/posters should be disseminated at other popular performance or gathering areas for Latino artists.
- *Social Media:* PARD and ESB-MACC will utilize their social media accounts and manage content.
- *Website:* A project website will provide stakeholders with a one-stop-shop for information on all of the project components, a schedule of the community engagement activities and updates, draft documents, frequently asked questions, public notices, and links to related websites. The

website will include presentations, surveys, and other exercises from the various meetings for those individuals who are unable to attend in person. A feedback form will be provided for community members to submit questions or comments and requests for additional information.

- *Community Engagement Panel Outreach and Engagement:* One of the significant roles of the Panel members will be to reach out to community members known to the Panel to encourage engagement with the process.

Anticipated Timeline and Events

Timeline

January 2019:

- Meet with ESB-MACC LARP Working Group
- Recruit members for the Community Engagement Panel
- Meet with Community Engagement Panel
- Set first engagement opportunities with LARP past and current participants and ESB-MACC staff

February 2019:

- Finalize Community Engagement Plan (after review by LARP Working Group and Community Engagement Panel)
- Stakeholder Meeting with past and current LARP participants
- Stakeholder Meeting with ESB-MACC staff
- Synthesize feedback

March 2019:

- Community Engagement Meeting for all stakeholders and interested people
- Synthesize feedback
- Community Engagement Panel creates report of recommendations to present to PARD Executive Team
- Final decisions by PARD Executive Team

Community Engagement Events

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| • Stakeholder Meeting with past and current LARP participants | Late February |
| • Stakeholder Meeting with ESB-MACC staff | Late February |
| • Community Survey | Mid-February to Early March |
| • Community Meeting | Early March |
| • Summary and presentation | Late March |

Evaluation

At the end of the LARP Review, PARD Community Engagement staff will evaluate the process to identify any stakeholders who felt uninformed or not reached out to. In addition, all people who participated in the review process will be reached out to with a short City of Austin Community Engagement survey. Results will be shared with ESB-MACC Advisory Board.