



City of  
**OAKLAND**  
California

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Mayor Libby Schaaf Announces Major \$1.7M Philanthropic Investment to Help Create Safe & Affordable Space for Oakland's Arts Community**

*A group of public and private partners team up to create long-term, sustainable solutions to creating affordable, safe spaces for artists and arts organizations.*

Oakland, CA – Today, Mayor Libby Schaaf announced \$1.7 million in philanthropic funds to support sustainable, long-term solutions to creating affordable, safe spaces for Oakland's artists and arts organizations. Though this support has been in development for many months, these funds are especially important and prescient in light of the recent Oakland warehouse fire tragedy.

With funding from the Kenneth Rainin Foundation and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the Community Arts Stabilization Trust (CAST) -- a nonprofit real estate organization -- will launch a new financial and technical assistance program to help arts organizations facing displacement. This philanthropic support will seed a capital fund to allow CAST to initiate a real estate acquisition program in Oakland to create permanently affordable, safe spaces for artists and arts organizations. The Mayor also announced additional city staffing to support arts and culture in Oakland.

*These investments come at a critical time, as artists and arts organizations are at risk of displacement due to Oakland's escalating housing and commercial space costs. Today's announcements represent recommendations of a multi-disciplinary taskforce that Mayor Schaaf convened in 2015 to help stem the displacement of artists and arts organizations from Oakland.*

"The arts are at the center of vibrant and diverse communities, and are critical to neighborhood health and well-being, yet artists and cultural organizations are increasingly vulnerable to instability and displacement. This public-private collaboration and investments are aimed at preventing displacement, growing the capacity of the city's artists and cultural organizations, and enhancing municipal resources for the cultural sector over the long haul," said Mayor Schaaf.

***Oakland is home to hundreds of arts and cultural nonprofit organizations, and a significant population of working artists, with an estimated economic impact of \$53 million per year*** (2010 study by Americans for the Arts).

### **New Initiatives to Support Long-Term, Affordable Space for Oakland's Arts Community**

The Kenneth Rainin and William and Flora Hewlett Foundation funding will support the expansion of CAST into Oakland.

CAST will implement several initiatives that together will result in long-term, sustainable solutions for creating affordable and safe spaces for Oakland's arts community.

CAST's new two-year pilot initiative, *Keeping Space - Oakland*, launches December 7, 2016 and will provide technical and financial assistance to arts and cultural organizations that are seeking real estate expertise and funding for their space needs. Through *Keeping Space - Oakland*, CAST will offer grants up to \$75,000 to arts organizations that have been displaced, or are facing displacement, from Oakland. The grants are intended to help arts organizations execute real estate transactions that result in permanent affordable space.

In addition, as part of the *Keeping Space - Oakland* initiative, CAST is partnering with the Northern California Community Loan Fund (NCCLF), a local nonprofit, to offer technical assistance to arts organizations. Real estate consulting experts at NCCLF will assist Oakland's arts organizations in gaining the skills they need to navigate real estate projects, including negotiating protective lease terms and acquiring property.

Applications for *Keeping Space - Oakland* open on December 7, 2016, and are due February 10, 2017. For more information, go to [cast-sf.org](http://cast-sf.org).

Finally, support from the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation will help seed a capital fund to allow CAST to launch a real estate acquisition program in Oakland to create permanently affordable, safe art spaces. The fund will be used to purchase real estate and lease at below market rates to Oakland artists and arts organizations.

CAST Executive Director Moy Eng said, “*Keeping Space - Oakland* and our new real estate acquisition efforts are dedicated to ensuring that Oakland’s arts organizations and artists, who are facing immediate space challenges, remain a vital part of our communities through training, funding, and ultimately permanent real estate solutions. When our local artists and arts organizations are firmly rooted, the entire city benefits.”

Shelley Trott, Director of Arts Strategy and Ventures at the Kenneth Rainin Foundation added, “CAST is a proven model for the community to stem displacement in the arts. This innovative approach addresses financial equity issues by profoundly changing the dynamics. We look forward to seeing the impact it will have in Oakland.”

“NCCLF’s Consulting Department has a long history of stabilizing nonprofits through its real estate and financial management services,” said Joanne Lee, Director of Consulting Services. “We are pleased to join our partners at the City of Oakland, CAST, the Kenneth Rainin Foundation, and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation to preserve artistic resources in Oakland.”

### **Additional City Staff Resources to Support Oakland’s Arts Community**

The Mayor recently appointed Roberto Bedoya, a national thought leader on cultural equity and creative place-keeping, as Oakland’s Cultural Affairs Manager. Bedoya will coordinate city government resources to better support the arts community. He will oversee the City of Oakland’s Cultural Affairs Unit (housed in the Department of Economic and Workforce Development), which provides more than \$900,000 in grants to support the arts annually, administer the city’s Public Art Program, and manage a portfolio of special events, film production permitting, and a walking tours program. Bedoya will also provide leadership for new initiatives, such as completing a Cultural Plan for the City of Oakland.

In addition, Mayor Schaaf announced support from the Kenneth Rainin Foundation to fund a two-year mayoral staff position focused on new policies and initiatives to stem the displacement of artists and arts organizations from Oakland. Kelley Kahn, a city planner with experience in economic development, real estate, and the arts, who led the Mayor’s 2015 taskforce, has been appointed to the position. Kahn will work closely with Bedoya and the City of Oakland’s Cultural Affairs

Unit.

“Now is our time to solve immediate challenges facing artists and arts organizations, while also developing a work plan and model for how the arts can thrive in our city,” said Bedoya.

### **The Importance of Public-Private Partnerships**

“Tackling the issues of displacement and protecting Oakland’s diverse arts and culture cannot be solved by government alone. Public-private partnerships are essential in addressing these issues faced by so many growing and changing cities,” said Mayor Schaaf. “We are pleased to have the support of the Kenneth Rainin Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, CAST and NCCLF, as we all work to identify tangible solutions.”

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### **ABOUT KENNETH RAININ FOUNDATION**

The Kenneth Rainin Foundation collaborates with creative thinkers in the Arts, Education and Health. It supports visionary artists in the Bay Area, creates opportunities for Oakland’s youngest learners, and funds researchers on the forefront of scientific discoveries. More at [krfoundation.org](http://krfoundation.org).

### **ABOUT THE WILLIAM AND FLORA HEWLETT FOUNDATION**

The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation is a nonpartisan, private charitable foundation that advances ideas and supports institutions to promote a better world. For 50 years, the foundation has supported efforts to advance education for all, preserve the environment, improve lives and livelihoods in developing countries, promote the health and economic wellbeing of women, support vibrant performing arts, strengthen Bay Area communities and make the philanthropy sector more effective. More at [hewlett.org](http://hewlett.org).

### **ABOUT THE COMMUNITY ARTS STABILIZATION TRUST (CAST)**

CAST purchases and leases space for the exclusive use of arts organizations while also providing these groups with technical assistance to develop and expand their capacity to fundraise, manage their facilities effectively, and potentially own their building. CAST seeks additional support from foundations, individuals and investors for its real estate acquisition fund, capacity building efforts and expansion

beyond its pilot projects. For more information, go to [cast-sf.org](http://cast-sf.org).

**ABOUT THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY LOAN FUND**

The Northern California Community Loan Fund (NCCLF) is a nonprofit organization committed to California's low-income communities. For 30 years, NCCLF has partnered with socially conscious impact investors and mission-driven organizations to support low-income communities' need for housing, education, healthcare, food, jobs and economic opportunity. The organization provides loans and working capital, as well as consulting and technical assistance, so that mission-driven organizations can achieve their vision of financially secure and culturally vibrant communities. And by investing in NCCLF's loan fund, impact investors achieve their vision of realizing financial returns while funding social good. By bringing together investors, community organizations, and our expertise, we invest in opportunity, together. Learn more at [ncclf.org](http://ncclf.org).

