



Arapahoe County

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Board Summary Report

File #: 25-331

Agenda Date: 6/16/2025

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To: Board of County Commissioners

Through: Michelle Halstead, Director, Commissioners' Office

Prepared By:
Daniela Villarreal, Management Analyst, Commissioners' Office

Presenter: Daniela Villarreal, Management Analyst, Commissioners' Office

Subject:
2:00 PM *Arapahoe County Cultural Council 2025/2026 SCFD Tier III Award Recommendations

Purpose and Request:

The purpose of this study session is to present the Arapahoe County Cultural Council Tier III award recommendations for 2025/2026 for Board consideration.

Background and Discussion:

The Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD) is a seven-county tax district established under Colorado law, approved by the Colorado General Assembly, and repeatedly renewed by voters for more than 30 years. SCFD distributes funds generated by a 0.1% (1/10 of 1%) sales and use tax to qualified cultural organizations across the Denver metro area through a three-tier funding structure:

1. **Tier I** provides direct funding to the largest cultural organizations based on a formula defined in state statute.
2. **Tier II** supports regional organizations, such as the City of Aurora Cultural Services Division and Wings Over the Rockies, which qualify by meeting specific budget and attendance thresholds.
3. **Tier III** allocates funding to each participating county, which in turn distributes its share through local Cultural Councils, such as the Arapahoe County Cultural Council (ACCC).

The Arapahoe County Cultural Council (ACCC) is appointed by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) to review applications and make funding recommendations for the County's share of SCFD revenue, in accordance with SCFD's established grant process and timeline. Once the BOCC approves the ACCC's recommendations, they are submitted to the SCFD Board for final ratification.

For the 2025/2026 grant cycle, Arapahoe County's share of SCFD tax revenue is \$2,572,863.94, with \$8,804 uncommitted funds from the previous year. Tier III funds may be used for general operating support or for specific projects proposed by eligible non-profit and governmental entities.

SCFD issued a call for grant applications earlier this year, with deadlines of:

- March 5, 2025, for multi-county Tier III applications
- March 12, 2025, for single-county applications

The ACCC met weekly from April 3 through May 22, 2025, to review and evaluate 93 grant submissions, using the council's established evaluation criteria (see attached for details).

For this cycle, the Cultural Council recommends funding all submitted applications, which include:

- 31 General Operating Support (GOS) requests
- 62 Project requests

Please see the attached summary for a breakdown of the ACCC's recommendations.

Fiscal Impact: Arapahoe County's share of SCFD Tier III funding for the 2025/2026 grant cycle is \$2,678,644.40, which will be allocated toward grant awards.

Alternatives: The Board could choose to not approve the recommendations.

Alignment with Strategic Plan:

- ☐ Be fiscally sustainable
- ☐ Provide essential and mandated service
- ☒ Be community focused

Staff Recommendation: Approve recommendations as presented.

Concurrence: Arapahoe County Cultural Council.