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## COUNTY OF SONOMA

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Economic Development Board Focuses on Advancing the Cultural Arts and Creative Economy in Sonoma County**

*Nationally recognized consulting group selected to develop a comprehensive action plan*

**SANTA ROSA, Calif. -For Immediate Release -** The Sonoma County Economic Development Board (EDB) has selected the Cultural Planning Group (CPG), to work with the EDB in developing the County's first comprehensive action plan to advance the cultural arts and creative economy in Sonoma County. CPG, known for guiding successful cultural organization projects throughout the United States, brings expertise in developing cultural arts plans, arts agency organizational structures, and funding strategies to support those efforts.

The County provides annual funding for local arts organizations, and the Board of Supervisors requested the creation of the action plan to help support the local arts and economy to help guide that funding. Chairman of the Board David Rabbitt commented, "Local artists contribute significantly to the vibrancy of Sonoma County. The Board looks forward seeing the results of this collaboration, and to implementing a plan that will provide further support to our local creative economy."

The action plan will provide a structure for growing the creative and cultural arts by establishing sustainable funding and fostering cultural tourism in Sonoma County. "The cultural arts are a diverse and significant part of the local economy," EDB Chairwoman Pam Chanter said, "the creative economy employs about 5% of the workforce in Sonoma County, and we recognize that a thriving cultural life generates income, jobs, and tax revenue, as well as creating community visibility. As Sonoma County enjoys economic recovery, proximity to the greater Bay Area, and a surge in tourism-related activity, it is well-positioned to leverage growth opportunities." The final report is expected to be presented to the Board of Supervisors by June of this year.

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The County of Sonoma is comprised of 26 departments and agencies that provide a full range of services to the community. It encompasses over 1600 square miles and is home to almost 500,000 residents. Sonoma County government has a history of providing excellent and responsive public service while operating under sound fiscal principles.

Located less than one hour north of San Francisco, Sonoma County combines in one location the beautiful Pacific coastline, award-winning wineries, majestic redwoods, historic towns, fine dining, and a wide variety of entertainment and cultural activities.