

Ensuring Access to Affordable Arts Experiences

Los Angeles County is home to exceptional arts and culture venues across its diverse communities. As the steward of the Hollywood Bowl, the County strives to make its programming accessible to all residents. Operated by the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation, in coordination with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the County and its partners maintain their commitment to expand opportunities for residents of all backgrounds, income levels, and geographic locations to attend performances.

Accessibility to the arts is often connected to affordability. According to California Housing Partnership’s Los Angeles County 2024 Affordable Housing Needs Report, “77% of extremely low-income households in Los Angeles County are paying more than half of their income on housing costs.” Additionally, the Council for Community and Economic Research’s Cost of Living index cites that housing in Los Angeles is 137% more expensive than the national average and necessities like food, clothing, and groceries are 16% more expensive than the rest of the country. The high cost of living can decrease residents’ disposable income and become a barrier for them to experience arts, culture, and leisure activities.

The creative economy is a significant driver of the success of Los Angeles County’s economic future. If the arts and culture sector is not flourishing, it has a direct impact on the economy overall. The 2023 Otis College Report on the Creative Economy cited that “nationwide, average ticket sales for performing arts organizations hover around 75% of what they were before the pandemic,” showing a significant decrease in attendance at live performances, due in part to residents’ limited ability to pay for tickets to events.

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August 6, 2024

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While the costs of many other experiences have continued to rise, the Hollywood Bowl has maintained its \$1 ticket program to ensure residents of any income level can afford a night of music under the stars. For every L.A. Philharmonic concert on a Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday during the summer, there are 1,052 \$1 seats available for the public to enjoy. Though prices for other seats have continued to rise with inflation over the years, because of the County's commitment to accessibility and affordability, seats in sections W, V, and X have never risen above \$1. Over the course of the 2024 season, there will be a total of 40,597 \$1 tickets available for residents to purchase. Even for tickets that are closer to the stage, there are affordable options available. This season, 40% of tickets to L.A. Philharmonic concerts at the Hollywood Bowl are \$37 or less.

The Hollywood Bowl team has also greatly expanded their park and ride and shuttle availability, with online tickets as low as \$7 per person. There are now 18 locations where concertgoers can park their car and hitch a ride to a show. During the 2023 season, nearly 343,000 people took a shuttle to a concert. More than one-fourth of concertgoers take the shuttle for each show, decreasing traffic and the headache of finding a parking spot. Additionally, those who opt to take Metro or Metrolink to get to a concert and who show their transportation ticket or tap card can ride the shuttles directly to the Hollywood Bowl for free. Those who take the shuttle will also receive a coupon for a discount at concessions stands inside the venue.

To limit costs when attending shows, the Hollywood Bowl is one of the few venues across the County that allows patrons to bring in their own food and drinks. Attendees who purchase a \$1 ticket, ride the shuttle to the venue, and bring their own food and drinks can enjoy a night at the Hollywood Bowl for just \$8 total.

To ensure residents of all income levels have the opportunity to enjoy arts and culture experiences, it's important that residents know these low-cost options at the Hollywood Bowl are available to them.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the Department of Parks and Recreation to work with the L.A. Philharmonic to create a media campaign and social media toolkit to share with relevant departments for the 2024 season and future seasons, including Public Social Services, Children and Family Services, Library, Arts and Culture, and others, to educate residents about affordable ticket and transportation options to the Hollywood Bowl.

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