



# STAFF REPORT – CITY COUNCIL MEETING

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**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

**FROM:** Merritt Perry, City Manager

**PREPARER:** Beth Redfern, Executive Assistant/Deputy City Clerk

**DATE:** March 18, 2026

**TITLE:** **Approve Sponsorship in an Amount Equivalent to the Plaza Event Fees of \$2,575 for the Playhouse Arts and Fairy Festival’s 2026 Arcata Fairy Festival to be Held on the Arcata Plaza on June 28, 2026.**

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the Council approve a sponsorship in an amount equivalent to the Plaza event fees and traffic fees of \$2,575 for the Playhouse Arts and Fairy Festival’s 2026 Arcata Fairy Festival to be held on the Arcata Plaza on June 28, 2026.

## **INTRODUCTION:**

The Arcata Fairy Festival is a whimsical, family-friendly community celebration featuring live music, dance, costumed revelry, arts and crafts, and creative activities for all ages. Originally held in 2018 and 2019, the event made a post-pandemic comeback in 2023, 2024, and 2025 drawing over 5,000 attendees. After years of grassroots coordination, 2026 will mark a new chapter for the festival with Playhouse Arts—Arcata’s local arts agency—stepping up to serve as the host organization.

The Fairy Festival is a beloved event that provides a free, inclusive, and accessible experience for the Arcata community and visitors and is designed with an intentional focus on family-friendly programming, environmental sustainability, and equitable community benefit. The event promotes local artists, makers, and performers; emphasizes sustainability and waste reduction; and supports local nonprofits. The organizers have requested that the City sponsor the event through a fee waiver in support of its community benefit and alignment with City values.

## **BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION:**

The rates charged for the use of the Plaza for a special event are intended to cover staff costs as well as maintenance, barricade fees, utilities, equipment servicing and equipment and permanent restrooms. The traffic control fee for this event is approximately \$1,275. The cost to use the Plaza for the 2026 Arcata Fairy Festival event is approximately \$1,300 for use of the area from 6 a.m. June 26 through 9 p.m. that day. A \$500 deposit will be required from the Fairy Festival to ensure clarity and responsibility for cleanup. Staff are recommending that the Council provide support for the festival in an amount equivalent to the anticipated use fees for the event, in the amount of approximately \$2,575.

**BUDGET/FISCAL IMPACT:**

Although the City Council has not identified specific events to receive support from the City, the City Council did express its desire to support events in the City and set aside \$25,000 for that purpose. Although there were no specific events identified in the budget at that time, festivals, and festivities that are open to the public at no charge, attract visitors from near and far, and provide benefit to the community, such as the Arcata Fairy Festival, seem to be the type of event the Council should consider support with the budget set aside for that purpose.

If approved, the funds for the event would come from 101-10-01-52104. Funds used from this account in this fiscal year include \$12,500 for similar sponsorship requests, leaving a remainder of \$12,500 for other such requests. Approximately \$9,925 would remain for the support of other events or community projects over the remainder of the fiscal year.

**RECOMMENDED COUNCIL ACTION:**

Motion to approve a sponsorship in an amount equivalent to the Plaza event and traffic fees of \$2,575 for the Playhouse Arts and Fairy Festival's 2026 Arcata Fairy Festival to be held on the Arcata Plaza on June 28, 2026. Consent Calendar vote.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- A. Fairy Festival Email to Council dated 2/23/2026