

December 22, 2005

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

TESTIMONY REGARDING 2002-05 STRATEGIC PLAN FOR CULTURAL COUNCIL OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY BY ALLISON SAMPSON

Completion of the Santa Cruz County Cultural Plan in 1999 was immediately followed by two years of significant organizational changes at the Cultural Council. So it was with much gratitude and hope that the Cultural Council Board of Directors received a grant from the Packard Foundation in 2001 to undertake a long-term Strategic Planning process.

After due diligence and final approval by the Packard Foundation the Cultural Council contracted with consultant Allison Sampson of Los Angeles.

The six month process included Board, staff, and stakeholder interviews and focus groups. Two off-site retreats, and frequent interaction among the Board's Strategic Planning Committee and the Council's Executive Director culminated in the final version of the Plan delivered in June of 2002.

The development of the Strategic Plan involved many people throughout the Santa Cruz community who generously gave their time and intellect to inform the process. The Council's wide range of diverse constituents articulated their expectation of the Cultural Council's role for the future in this fast-paced changing environment.

It is not an easy task to conduct a comprehensive Strategic Plan for a 23 year old organization in transition. The success of the Plan was due in large part to the expertise of consultant Allison Sampson. It took in-depth and significant skills to drive this process with firmness and diplomacy and Ms. Sampson did that.

The Plan accomplished its goal: to ensure the viability and professionalism of programming and operational activities for the Cultural Council. Its usage in the last three years has helped me and the Board to approach our business with common understanding and purpose.

The Cultural Council of Santa Cruz County was fortunate to employ the services of Allison Sampson and to end up with a working document which has been invaluable in the progress this organization has experienced since June of 2002.

Dr. Alberto P. Rafols
Executive Director
Cultural Council of Santa Cruz County