

# ARTS, CULTURE, AND TOURISM PLATFORM



## Full Policy

New York City's recovery requires an approach that will safely "re-open" the City's many cultural gems and encourage tourism, support artists and cultural workers, and build on the pandemic-era embrace of our open spaces. This proposal takes bold steps to reinvigorate the City's status as a global cultural leader, and an unparalleled destination for residents and visitors alike.

- This summer, the City should begin its cultural revival through a Grand Re-Opening Festival
- Once the City has fully reopened, a Wiley administration will:
  - Make sure the reopened New York is a better place for artists and others in the cultural and tourism industries to live and work
  - Provide support to local cultural institutions
  - Continue to fund the city's unrivaled vibrancy through accelerated capital investments in Parks for the People and enhanced Open Culture and Open Streets programs.

**Recovery for Creative Workers and Cultural Institutions Invest \$100 million dollars in a Creative Economy Recovery Program to put arts and culture workers back to work and help cultural institutions to recover.** Traditional performing arts venues have remained fully closed throughout the pandemic. The City must work creatively to promote economic activity while also supporting the arts. Workers have lost wages, many are still struggling with unemployment or underemployment, and many arts jobs vanished during the pandemic. Maya is proposing a \$100 million dollar program that will provide direct grants to artists and performers to get them back to work and to cultural organizations, arts-related businesses and artisans who are essential to the industry, and institutions for operating expenses. These grants will prioritize communities that are underrepresented in these industries and institutions serving communities most impacted by the pandemic, as well as small, community-based organizations. **Launch the Council on Arts Revival with Equity (CARE)** Recovering in a way that captures the needs of the creative economy and its workers is ongoing work that needs ongoing commitment and must be informed by those most impacted and conscious of the needs of this community of workers. Maya will convene the Council on Arts Revival with Equity (CARE), a council of arts and culture workers, advocates, community leaders, independent businesses and artisans, and other

relevant experts, who will provide ongoing advice, council, and recommendations on how to ensure that the City's recovery is inclusive of the needs of those working in the creative economy and that relief is being granted in a way designed to promote and foster equity in creative industries. **Support and Invest in Arts-Related Businesses** Investments must be made so that arts-related businesses can pay their employees, pay rent, and ensure safe and healthy working environments. In order to support this essential ecosystem made up of costume designers, sign makers, and many more, Maya will set aside 20% of the \$30 million Small Business Emergency Grant Program proposed in her [Save our Small Businesses Platform](#) for small businesses in the arts and culture sector. These funds will be strategically allocated by prioritizing grants for those hardest hit by the pandemic, and who support majority people of color and immigrant workers.

**Stage a Grand Re-Opening** *The Grand Reopening is an exciting new way to encourage New Yorkers and tourists to safely re-engage with their City and, at the same, support arts, culture, small business and incentivizes widespread vaccination. The Grand Reopening, built around a week-long festival throughout the boroughs in September, will signal a new phase for tourism and culture and showcase all that the City has to offer, featuring the best of New York City's arts, culture, and food. Building on proposals from the Center for Urban Future and others, Maya is calling on the Administration to immediately put the following plan in motion.*

- The Mayor's Office should work in partnership with Cultural Affairs, Nightlife and Media & Entertainment, as well as local businesses, local artists, and local communities to throw a major Grand Reopening festival
  - The Grand Reopening festival will take place throughout the week of Labor Day, and feature both indoor and outdoor activities
- The festival will be COVID-Responsible, with health and safety protocols fully in place, and will be held only if at least 70% of NYC residents are fully vaccinated, a number determined in consultation with public health experts). Vaccines may be required for certain indoor events depending on health conditions, and will be encouraged for all attendees.
- The festival will incorporate elements of San Genaro, Mardi Gras, and the World's Fair, taking place in all boroughs, highlighting the performing arts, art exhibitions, culinary diversity, and our world class green spaces
  - MTA will be free during the festival week
  - Union labor will be used for all productions/performers to the maximum extent possible
- The festival will be co-created with New York communities through an equity lens – involving and engaging residents, artists, & cultural groups from hardest-hit communities and historically marginalized communities

**Make New York City a Better Place for Artists and Others in the Cultural and Tourism Industries to Live and Work** **Protect Performing Artists** Many of the City's performing artists, and the thousands of other workers that make their work possible, work on Broadway or at Lincoln Center. These venues are critical not only for the world-class cultural offerings they provide, but also because they are vital economic engines for the City. Unfortunately, some of the organizations that run these venues are attempting to use the pandemic as an excuse to lower

wages and remove worker protections. These efforts to undermine unionized workers are particularly galling when they are carried out by wealthy non-profit organizations that enjoy City tax breaks and City funding. Maya understands that performing artists have suffered tremendously during the pandemic and that this industry will be one of the last to reopen. When it does, she will insist that wealthy venues and artistic institutions hold artists and other workers harmless—publicly advocating for labor agreements that maintain pre-pandemic wages and protections (and she has already publicly expressed support for these principles). She will also work with performing arts organizations on programs to make these cultural institutions more affordable and subsidize the cost of attendance for certain performances.

**Work to Diversify the Performing Arts Industry** By and large, the performing arts and entertainment industries have a poor track record when it comes to diversifying their work forces—particularly at the highest levels. Maya is committed to pushing the industry to change. She will support the considerable efforts underway by performing arts unions to bring more diversity to the industry. Working with organized labor, cultural institutions, the Department of Cultural Affairs, the Mayor’s Office of Media and Entertainment, as well as outside partners, Maya will launch a major initiative to encourage a more diverse workforce. Specifically, this includes supporting existing pipeline/apprenticeship programs that provide a pathway into the industry for members of historically underrepresented groups, championing existing campaigns run by organized labor to push the industry to hire a more diverse work force, providing paid internship programs that introduce students to opportunities in the industry, creating more opportunities in the Summer Youth Employment Program that introduce young people to arts jobs, investing in grant programs to support efforts to diversify boards, and supporting other innovative approaches to diversifying the industry. And while programs like the City’s recent effort to assess the diversity of cultural institutions are a good start, she will enhance the program with meaningful and measurable goals for the performing arts.

**Accelerate Large-Scale (\$1 billion) Capital Spending** As part of her New Deal New York plan, Maya committed to \$1 billion in capital spending to support the arts and culture. This program will help put the City’s artists, performers and cultural workers back to work by providing performance and studio spaces, and through other capital expenditures that support arts and culture in the City. Maya understands that New York’s iconic performing arts venues are an extremely important part of the City’s economy, and often support good union jobs. These institutions will be eligible to benefit from these capital expenditures, as will informal cultural institutions like NYCHA resident associations, local community based organizations, and arts collectives. Importantly, Maya will prioritize projects in areas that were hardest hit by the pandemic and that serve historically underrepresented communities, and those lacking in cultural resources. She will insist that organizations that benefit from this spending treat their artists and workers fairly. To accelerate spending, and the accompanying economic stimulus, Maya will consider projects already in the pipeline, as well as new proposals. And Maya will be a champion of capital spending reforms that will allow these projects to be completed in a timely manner and on-budget.

**Enhance Open Culture & Open Street Programs** The City’s Open Culture program provides arts and cultural organizations with the opportunity to stage permitted performances on City streets. But while a good concept, the program still lacks performer wage and safety standards. Maya is calling on the City to immediately establish reasonable worker protections in partnership with the relevant unions. And to establish reasonable guidelines for wages at these events. Maya is also calling on the City to begin to crowd-source programming—

working with local communities to develop and present cultural programming that they want to see. **Create Parks For the People** [Invest in a major expansion of our Parks for the People](#), which will boost tourism while simultaneously expanding the public spaces available for cultural life and recreation, in a way that emphasizes community-first park use from the start and centers racial equity and environmental justice. Bring land currently in private hands into the public domain:

- Replace [Trump Golf Links](#) at Ferry Point with an expansion of Ferry Point Park that fits [the needs, desires, and budgets of Bronx residents](#) and creates local jobs in maintenance and cultural programming.
- Work with ConEd to open more of its land in Northern Astoria and elsewhere to the public, significantly extending the waterfront trail, designing the park to meet residents' open space goals.
- Work to achieve [The Trust for Public Land's goal](#) of 100% of residents living within 10 minutes of a park and close the park equity gap in high-need underserved neighborhoods
- [Connect the fragmented NYC Greenway](#) on the Brooklyn waterfront, creating a contiguous space for pedestrians, cyclists, communities, and culture.

***Ensure that equity is at the core of all relief from these programs*** Maya is committed to building a recovery that centers those communities who have been hardest hit by the pandemic and have been historically underserved. Communities of color, folks with disabilities, immigrant communities, and many more have been disproportionately impacted by COVID, and this is because of systemic inequality that has left these communities marginalized and underrepresented in many industries including arts and culture. In order for this recovery to help these communities and foster equity in the creative economy, all relief must apply an equity lens to ensure resources and support are going to the communities that need it most. Maya will commit to centering principles of equity and will ensure that New York City recovers for all people.