Barrie

2025–2035

Shaping Barrie's Cultural Future

Culture Plan Update & Public Art Strategy

Land Acknowledgement

The City of Barrie acknowledges the traditional territory of the Anishinaabeg people, which include the Odawa, Ojibwe, and Pottawatomi Nations collectively known as the Three Fires Confederacy. We also acknowledge the Wendat Nation (Huron) who occupied these lands prior to the middle of the 17th century.

We are dedicated to honouring Indigenous history and culture and recognize the enduring presence of Indigenous peoples on this land. We are committed to moving forward in the spirit of reconciliation and respect with all First Nations, Métis, and Inuit People.

Thank You

This project was made possible with support from Barrie's Economic & Creative Development and Recreation & Culture Services departments, the Barrie Arts Advisory Committee, the Barrie Public Art Committee, and the dedicated creatives, cultural leaders, and organizations whose passion and vision are driving Barrie's cultural future forward.

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Background 2.1

Public Art Strategy

Public Art Strategy Goals

Public Art Policy Context

Engagement Insights

Public Art Strategy Goals

Public art is increasingly recognized as a vital element of city-building, adding immense value to public spaces, enhancing quality of life, and strengthening a city's attractiveness and competitive advantage. Cities known for their defining public art landscapes have often achieved this through strong leadership, supported by consistent investment, policies, and cross-departmental collaboration that enable public art to flourish. As a result, public art becomes a defining feature of daily life, with benefits that are far-reaching, including fostering connection and pride among residents, improving mental health and safety, and creating a distinctive and appealing destination for visitors. Cities with successful public art programs have not only strengthened their civic identity but also driven cultural tourism, economic growth, and long-term community well-being.

Recognizing these benefits, the City of Barrie is taking a strategic approach to public art by integrating a 10-year public art strategy within the Culture Plan Update. This is to provide a clear vision and direction that aligns with best practices to implement public art across the City.

Guiding this Strategy is the City of Barrie's definition of public art:

"...visual art that exists in the public realm. It includes all works that are commissioned, purchased by, or donated to the City to be located in publicly accessible spaces. Public art may be functional as well as aesthetic, free standing or fully integrated into the structure of a site."

Mother Nature Mosaic Mural, Meg Leslie and Angela Aujla, 2024. Photo credit: City of Barrie.

The goals of this Public Art Strategy are to:

1. Equip the City of Barrie with a 10-year vision, set of goals, thematic guidelines, and definitions of the types, roles, and locations of public art in Barrie. These are intended to be utilized by City staff and partners to support the acquisition of new public art across the city, and to establish a clear framework for creating a cohesive and impactful collection.

2. Outline current best practices in community engagement and artist selection to support City staff in implementing public art projects.

3. Provide recommendations to update the current Public Art Policy (2012) based on best practices for governing, funding, and implementing public art projects to support the continued sustainability and growth of Barrie's Public Art Collection.

Public Art Policy Context

City Council approved the first *Public Art Policy* in 2012, which solidified the City's commitment to enhancing public spaces through art. The purpose of the Policy was to establish a process for commissioning, acquiring, and managing public art in an open, equitable, and fair manner that meets professional standards. It also outlines annual funding recommendations for public art.

In 2021, the City approved the *Community Engaged Art Policy*, to support the *Public Art Policy's* goal to identify and involve diverse communities in the creative planning process, thereby encouraging civic pride. The *Community Engaged Art Policy* sets out a process for City departments and stakeholders to develop community-engaged public art projects.

With the recent establishment of a part-time Public Art Coordinator position, Barrie's public art program has grown significantly, bringing permanent works and seasonal exhibits to the downtown core and expanding into neighbourhoods. However, as Barrie's population is projected to grow and the City updates its Culture Plan, an updated Public Art Strategy is required to guide City staff in public art acquisitions and provide recommendations on how to update Barrie's *Public Art Policy*.

Engagement Insights

This Public Art Strategy builds on research and community engagement undertaken as part of the Culture Master Plan Update. Key insights related to public art that emerged from this process are highlighted on the followng page.

INSIGHT 1

Strengths of Barrie's Public Art Program

Clear Processes: The *Public Art Policy* outlines processes for City commissions and donations, aligning with best practices.

Collaborative Decision-Making: The Barrie Public Art Committee (BPAC) integrates community objectives into City decisions by acting as an advisory body to City staff and Council on public art policies, competition guidelines, donation requests, and management and promotion of the Public Art Collection.

Diverse and Engaging Collection: Barrie's Public Art Collection features a variety of styles and mediums, including murals, sculptures, and functional art, enhancing the city's visual landscape.

Strong Cross-departmental Partnerships: Collaboration among City departments, Council, and community groups has successfully integrated public art into broader City initiatives, including programs such as Art on Transit and Graffiti Abatement Artwork in partnership with Barrie Transit and Traffic Services or Community Improvement Artwork in partnership with Councillors.

Support for Local Artists: Barrie's Public Art Programs support local and regional artists, supporting economic growth and contributing the city's cultural identity, reflecting Barrie's history and values.

INSIGHT 2

Challenges Impacting Public Art

Limited Funding: Public art relies on municipal funding, which primarily supports smaller-scale, temporary works. This limits the program's ability to expand, diversify the collection, and commission large-scale, landmark artworks. Unlike other municipalities (such as the Region of Waterloo, Markham, Richmond Hill, Ottawa, and Toronto), Barrie does not currently implement a Percent-for-Capital-Projects program to fund public art. Other cities, including Mississauga, Pickering, and Vaughan, are exploring this model.

Uneven Geographic Distribution: Most artworks are concentrated downtown and along the waterfront, limiting access and exposure for residents in other neighbourhoods.

Indigenous Relationships and Representation: Current (and future) public art projects on City-owned land should be reviewed in consultation with Indigenous communities, rightsholders, and other organizations or community groups to ensure that public art authentically represents Indigenous living histories and traditions across Barrie.

INSIGHT 3

Future Aspirations for Public Art in Barrie

Expand Public Art Across the City: While still growing the collection downtown, future initiatives should also prioritize bringing art into all neighbourhoods, creating vibrant art experiences citywide.

Balance Temporary and Permanent Works: A mix of landmark permanent installations and dynamic temporary works will create an engaging public realm year-round for residents and visitors.

Prioritize High-Impact Locations: Key gathering places, such as the waterfront, Meridian Place, larger community parks and greenspaces, and community centres, should be focal points for new public art.

Celebrate Barrie: Public art should showcase local talent and reflect the city's diverse communities and histories.

Enhance Indigenous Visibility: Strengthening relationships with Rights-Holders and Indigenous Peoples will ensure public art meaningfully represents Indigenous culture, history, heritage, and futures.

Garden Party, by PRNT Collective, Brightening Barriers 2022. Photo credit: City of Barrie.

A Vision for Public Art

2.2

Barrie's Vision for Public Art

Public Art Guiding Principles

Barrie's Vision for Public Art

The vision statement was developed based on priorities identified in the engagement process. It serves as a guiding inspiration for developing public art over the next 10 years. While created for the City of Barrie, it can be championed by City partners, artists, and other collaborating entities to support a cohesive and unified approach to public art.

Public art will become a defining feature of Barrie's identity and its communities, celebrating local talent while positioning Barrie as a cultural destination that attracts national and international artists.

Public Art Guiding Principles

The following statements can guide the City of Barrie in its implementation of the Public Art Vision, and ensure that art becomes a defining feature of the city's identity.

Public Art in Every Ward: Public art is present in all wards across Barrie, enriching the lives of residents and visitors through accessible and engaging experiences that reflect and celebrate the unique stories, heritage, and identities of Barrie's communities.

Create a Diverse Public Art Program: A dynamic and evolving public art landscape reflects a wide range of artists, art forms, and projects, creating engagement and excitement.

Support Local Artists: Local artists at all career stages—whether emerging, mid-career, or established— have opportunities to develop and showcase their practice.

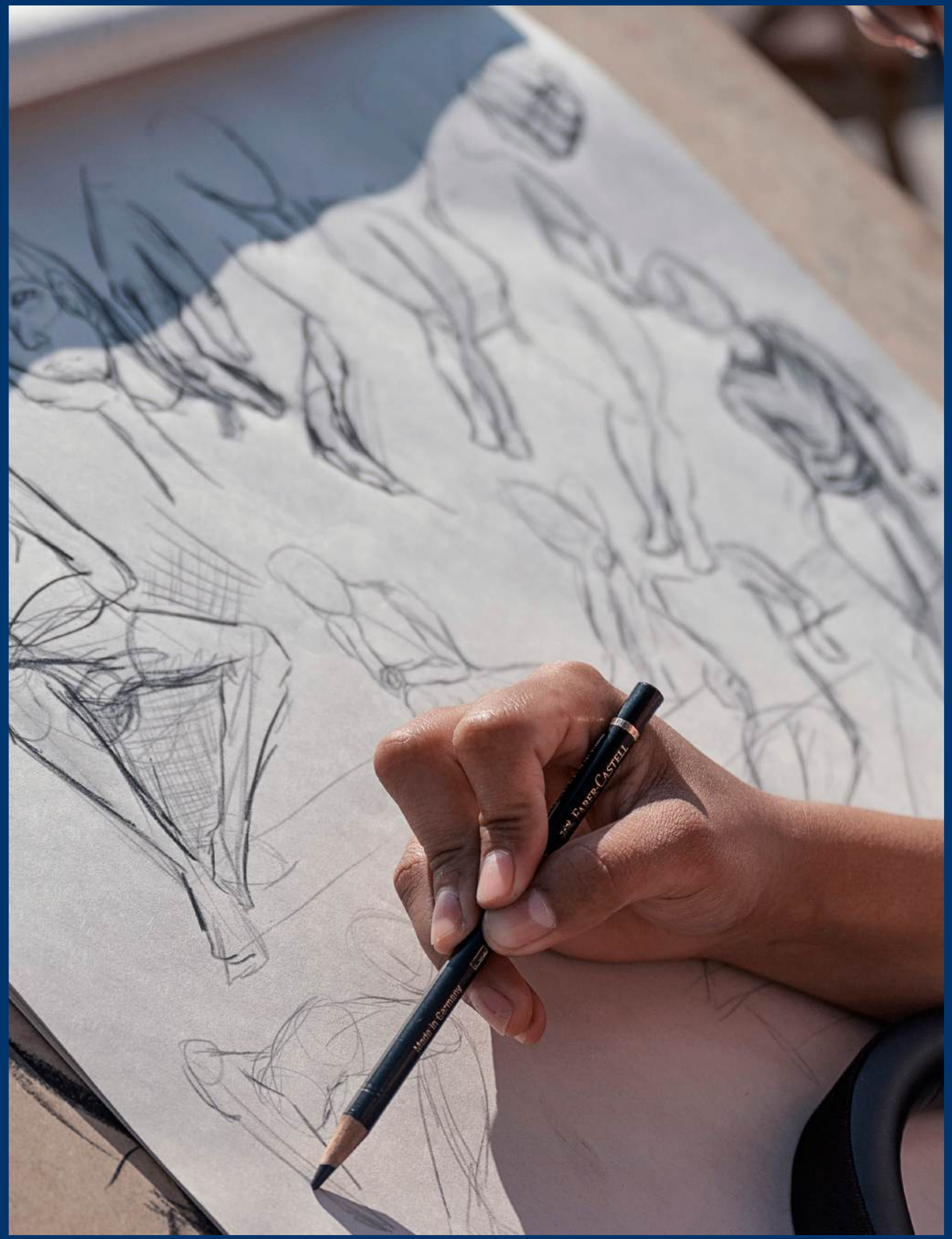
Collaborate with Indigenous Peoples: Public art honours and celebrates Indigenous experiences, cultures, and traditions through authentic representation and respectful collaboration with Indigenous communities.

Attract National and International Talent: National and international artists contribute to Barrie's public art scene, elevating the work and reputation of local artists, fostering creative exchange and inspiration, and supporting cultural tourism.

Promote Equity and Inclusion: Public art reflects Barrie's diverse population and supports equity-deserving artists, fostering a more inclusive cultural landscape.

Engage the Community: Community members actively participate in the art-making process, fostering civic pride, ownership, and connection to public art that enriches their surroundings.

Promote Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship: Public art integrates sustainability by using eco-friendly materials and raising environmental awareness, especially in relation to Barrie's natural landscapes.



Curatorial Framework

2.3

Thematic Guidelines

Public Art Typologies

Location Opportunities

This section provides a framework to support City staff and partners in commissioning and acquiring new public art that aligns with Barrie's Public Art Vision. It offers guidance on thematic priorities, suitable public art forms, and strategic placement to ensure a cohesive and impactful collection.

These recommendations do not alter the existing Public Art Policy, but rather serve as a resource for City staff to make informed decisions on where public art should be located and what types of projects should be prioritized. By outlining key themes, art forms, and site selection criteria, this section helps ensure that Barrie's public art program reflects the city's cultural vibrancy, engages diverse audiences, and creates meaningful experiences for residents and visitors alike. Public Art staff are responsible for maintaining the relevance and appropriateness of these guidelines to align with current best practices or community needs for the City of Barrie.

Thematic Guidelines

Thematic Guidelines provide a framework for a cohesive and impactful public art program in Barrie, shaping artistic visions and project goals. They support City staff in decision-making and project evaluation while offering direction to external groups contributing to the city's public art landscape.

The following six themes arose from engagement, where community members were asked what values public art should embody. The themes are designed for flexibility and adaptation to project goals, artistic intent, and community needs, ensuring that public art remains relevant, meaningful, and responsive to Barrie's evolving cultural identity. Each project does not need to encompass all themes and additional themes can be explored if they support Barrie's Public Art Vision or reflect the cultural, historical, social, and environmental identities of Barrie.

Additionally, each theme is not tied to specific locations, allowing City staff, artists, and communities to determine which ones best resonate with each project or space. The following pages offer further guidance on how public art themes can align with various location typologies across Barrie, although these recommendations remain adaptable.

Barrie's Public Art Themes:

Celebrating Community: Highlight the unique stories and identities within Barrie's communities, fostering a sense of belonging and pride through public art.

Championing Sustainability: Sustainability in public art involves both the meaning of the artwork and the materials used. It offers an opportunity to educate the public about environmentally responsible practices and ensures that the art complements and enhances the surrounding landscapes and environment.

Embracing Diversity: Celebrate the rich tapestry of cultures in Barrie, ensuring that public art reflects and honours the diversity of the city, making everyone feel included.

Fostering Innovation: Encourage the exploration of new artistic methods and technologies in public art. Support experimental and cutting-edge projects that challenge traditional boundaries and inspire new ways of experiencing art in the public realm.

Honouring History and Heritage: Pay tribute to Barrie's historical roots, creating meaningful connections between the past, present, and future.

Prioritizing Indigeneity: Celebrate Barrie's Indigenous living heritage and cultures as well as the Indigenous Peoples in Barrie today by working with Indigenous artists and supporting the authentic representation of Indigenous worldviews, traditions, practices, and stories through public art.

Dividers Made Into a Juncture, by Jon Sasaki and Jennifer Davis. Photo credit: City of Barrie

Public Art Typologies

To achieve the City's Public Art Vision, diverse art forms should be implemented across Barrie. The following art forms have been identified to illustrate the diversity of public art. These art forms are not mutually exclusive, as a single artwork can embody multiple forms.

Types of Public Art:

Sculptures: The most commonly known form of public art, sculptures are three-dimensional artworks typically created from materials including but not limited to stone, metal, or wood.

Murals: Typically painted onto walls, buildings, or public surfaces, murals are artworks that can also be carved, applied, sculpted or assembled (e.g. mosaic, photographic prints, bas-relief).

Architecture or Landscape Integrations: Artworks that are embedded into architecture or landscape designs. Through this art form, art and design become one, enhancing the aesthetic or cultural significance.

New Media: New media involves artworks created using digital technologies, augmented and virtual reality, video, light, and sound-based art. Interactive art installations, which react to data or human interactions, are one of the most common forms of new media art.

Eco-Art or Land Art: Eco-Art or Land Art refers to artworks created using eco-friendly or organic materials. This artwork tends to focus on environmental themes or have an underlying message about sustainability.

Performance Art: Performance art is an art form where artists use their bodies, actions, or live presentations to convey artistic expressions and concepts.

Functional and Play-Based Art: Art that combines artistic expression with utilitarian purposes or interactive components. Through art, items like public furniture (e.g. benches, tables) or other public amenities (e.g. lighting, playgrounds) are transformed into multifunctional artworks.

Art Installations: Art installations, like sculptures, are three-dimensional works, but they focus on creating a dialogue with their environment and the viewer. Inherently site-specific, they aim to craft immersive, participative, or contemplative experiences by playing with space, time, and volume.

Functions of Public Art:

Public art can serve a multitude of functions, each contributing uniquely to the cultural and social fabric of a community. Potential roles that public art can play in Barrie include:

Landmark Feature: Serving as a prominent and recognizable element that acts as a focal point, offering key visuals or cultural significance to aid in orientation and enhance the sense of place.

Gateway Marker: Signifying transitions or entry points to neighbourhoods, districts, or the city, welcoming visitors and creating a sense of arrival.

Wayfinding: Assisting with navigation and orientation in urban environments by providing visual cues that guide people through spaces.

Activating/Animating Spaces: Adding energy and vibrancy to public spaces or revitalizing underutilized areas to make them more engaging.

Commemoration: Honouring historical events, figures, or cultural milestones through artworks that preserve collective memory and offer opportunities for education and reflection.

Cultural Celebration: Reflecting the diversity and heritage of the community by showcasing the traditions, values, and identities of different groups within Barrie.

Stimulate Dialogue: Provoking thoughtful exchanges and challenging perspectives to raise awareness and encourage meaningful conversation of relevant social, political, cultural, and historical topics.

Traffic Cabinet Artwork, LiftiD & Sage, 2023. Photo Credit: City of Barrie.

We Are Atmosphere (detail), by Lisa Hirmer, Seeds to Sow 2024. Photo Credit: Cameron Stamper.

Location Opportunities

During the engagement for the City of Barrie's Culture Plan Update and Public Art Strategy, community members were asked "Where should public art be located?". The most popular locations for public art mentioned were along the waterfront, public squares, and community facilities (45-50%), followed by parks, green spaces, and street infrastructure (37%), neighbourhoods outside of downtown (20%), and City and transportation infrastructure (10%).

To expand on community feedback, and align public art locations with the City of Barrie Official Plan 2051 (2023) and relevant reports (e.g., City of Barrie Waterfront Strategic Plan (2023)), the following key location typologies were developed:

Community and Cultural Facilities: Barrie's public facilities, such as community centres and cultural venues, serve as essential gathering spaces within the city. Integrating public art into these locations can strengthen community bonds, celebrate diversity, and enrich the cultural experiences available to residents and visitors. Additionally, opportunities also exist for public spaces like Meridian Place and City Hall, which serve as central community gathering spaces for all of Barrie.

The Waterfront: The waterfront is a prime location for public art, with its existing collection of monumental pieces, multi-use trails, and year-round attractions. Opportunities for art include developing art trails, seasonal installations, and new landmarks that highlight Barrie's unique character and enhance the waterfront experience.

Parks and Natural Spaces: Barrie has 300 hectares of scenic park space, which is beloved by community members for its passive uses, playgrounds, community gardens, trails, beaches, and sports fields. In these spaces, artwork can serve to engage new audiences (i.e., those who are typically involved in recreational activities), further community connection and highlight unique natural features in Barrie.

Corridors and Gateways: Engaging people while in motion—whether through bike networks, pedestrian pathways, or key access points into the city or neighbourhoods. Art in these areas can create a sense of welcome and orientation, transforming transit routes and entry points to enhance the journey for commuters and visitors alike.

The following pages provide detailed guidance on how to adapt public art themes, types, and roles according to each location typology. To align with the City of Barrie's existing Public Art Categories, these pages offer objectives for each category and draw on examples from other municipalities to illustrate how various types of artwork have been interpreted and applied across different locations. These Public Art Categories are defined as:

Permanent / Long Term: These artworks are part of the City's public art collection and were commissioned, purchased by, or donated to the City. The care and maintenance of these objects is managed by City staff.

Temporary & Exhibitions: Public art that is on view for a short period of time. Some are part of temporary exhibitions organized by the City, some are artworks made of materials that are temporary in nature, some are on limited display due to the programs that initiated them.

Infrastructure / Public Realm*: These artworks are commissioned by the city through inter-departmental partnerships. They are temporary artworks fabricated to beautify civic infrastructure.

Additionally, the Community Partnerships public art category, which the City defines as public art that is initiated by local community groups or artists and supported by the City, should continue to be pursued and supported across all location typologies outlined in the following pages.

*Currently the Infrastructure / Public Realm category pertains to temporary projects. However, with the potential Municipal-Percent-for-Public-Art Program or future interdepartmental partnerships, opportunities may arise to commission permanent artwork.

Community and Cultural Facilities

Barrie's public facilities, such as community and recreation centres, cultural venues, and public spaces like City Hall and Meridian Place, serve as essential gathering spaces within the city. Integrating public art into these locations can strengthen community bonds, celebrate diversity, and enrich the cultural experiences available to residents and visitors. Art in these spaces provides great opportunities for community-engaged art that brings children, youth, newcomers, and older adults into public art practices.

POTENTIAL THEMES
> Celebrating Community
> Embracing Diversity
> Honouring History and Heritage
> Prioritizing Indigeneity

POTENTIAL ARTWORK TYPES
> Sculptures
> Murals
> Architectural Integrations
> New Media
> Art Installations

POTENTIAL ARTWORK ROLES
> Landmark Feature
> Activating/Animating Spaces
> Commemoration
> Cultural Celebration
> Stimulate Dialogue

The east end (puzzled), composite digital image at Eastview Arena by Andrew Maize, 2022. Photo credit: Andre Beneteau.

Public Art Opportunities

Long-Term Artworks
Objectives:
- Create a landmark or gathering space that helps reinforce the identity of the community space, furthering connection and a sense of community.
- Community-engaged art can deepen a sense of ownership and strengthen community ties.

Priority Locations:
- New facilities, like libraries and community and recreation centres.
- New and existing public squares and community gathering spaces.

Temporary Exhibitions
Objectives:
- Activate community spaces with new and exciting experiences that authentically reflect the surrounding neighbourhood.
- Community engaged art can help infuse spaces with current community values.

Priority Locations:
- New and existing community and cultural facilities.
- New and existing public squares and places of community gatherings.

Infrastructure / Public Realm
Objectives:
- Enhance the design of the City buildings and spaces by creating iconic works that serve as memorable experiences for visitors.
- Involve artists in design teams for new buildings or public spaces to seamlessly integrate art into the architectural vision.

Key Locations:
- New facilities, like libraries, community, and recreation centres.
- New and existing public squares and places of community gatherings.

Public Art Examples

↗ "A Mischief of Could-be(s)" and "UGO" are two public art installations in Edmonton as part of the City's Civic Precinct Public Art Project which aims to connect Centennial Plaza and Churchills Squares' East Gardens under a unified art concept and design, which is inspired by children's freedom to interpret and imagine the world through play. The tree-like sculptures by artists Erin Pankratz & Christian Pérès Gibaut are made of ceramic tiles and mosaic and designed to spark imagination and encourage playful interaction for people of all ages, especially children. The project is a collaboration between the Edmonton Arts Council, local artists, the Child Friendly Edmonton Initiative to create child-friendly components within the Civic Precinct.

↗ Lumen is the City of Waterloo's annual, free, all-ages festival. The Festival is run by the City of Waterloo's Art and Creative Industries team (Create Waterloo) with a focus on artwork that explores the interplay of light, art, and technology located throughout uptown Waterloo.

Every September, 30+ visual, interactive, new media, and performance-based installations are features in various indoor and outdoor locations. The program is supported by partnerships between the tech industry, local and international artists, and local arts and education organizations.

↗ The City of Burlington recently selected artist Xiaojing Yan to create a new sculpture for the Skyway Community Centre. A citizen jury shortlisted three finalists, with community members selecting winning artist, Yan, and their design titled "Ephemeral Reverie". The intent of the project was to create an artwork that complements the design of the new community centre, while acting as a beacon for the main entrance of the building, and promoting sustainability.

The Waterfront

The waterfront is an ideal location for public art, featuring a collection of monumental pieces, multi-use trails, and year-round attractions. *The Waterfront Strategic Plan* (2023) highlighted public art opportunities, including the creation of gateway artworks at key locations and trail access points, rotating public art and light installations, and an arts trail along the West Shore. Furthermore, the Plan emphasizes that public art should reflect the unique diversity of Barrie. The following section builds on these recommendations, outlining priority locations for future art installations.

POTENTIAL THEMES
> Celebrating Community
> Embracing Diversity
> Honouring History and Heritage
> Prioritizing Indigeneity

POTENTIAL ARTWORK TYPES
> Sculptures
> Landscape Integrations
> Eco-Art or Land Art
> Functional and Play-Based Art
> Art Installations

POTENTIAL ARTWORK ROLES
> Landmark Feature
> Gateway Marker
> Wayfinding
> Activating/Animating Spaces
> Commemoration
> Cultural Celebration

Note: The original design intent for Military Heritage Park included a public artwork in the central roundhouse plateau, however, an artwork was not included in the final design of the space. In the absence of current allocations of resources, it is not deemed a priority location in this Strategy. Priority locations focus on key access points or high traffic spaces along the Waterfront.

Public Art Opportunities

Long-Term Artworks
Objectives:
- Artworks to act as landmarks or gateways at key access points and viewpoints along the waterfront, creating a distinct and memorable sense of arrival.
- Establish sight lines between artworks to create an art trail, encouraging visitors to explore the waterfront.

Key Locations:
- Expanding public art to the South Shore, including Centennial Park, Will Dwyer Park, South Shore Park, etc.
- Main access points & gateways (e.g., South Shore Trail entrance).

Temporary Exhibitions
Objectives:
- Engage Barrie residents with the waterfront year-round through art activations and installations that revitalize underutilized spaces and attract visitors throughout all seasons.

Key Locations:
- Along the Waterfront Trail.
- Expanding public art to Centennial Park, Will Dwyer Park, South Shore Park.

Infrastructure / Public Realm
Objectives:
- Use art to enhance infrastructure and facilities along the waterfront, such as lighting, seating or even flood mitigation infrastructure.
- Incorporate creative placemaking to enhance wayfinding, the waterfront's brand and identity, and to support storytelling of nature and the histories connected to the waterfront.

Key Locations:
- Areas or features that are undergoing redevelopment or redesign.
- Walkways, sidewalks, and along the Waterfront Trail.
- Gateways and access points (i.e., entrances to parking lots, trails, parks, playgrounds,and beaches).

Public Art Examples

↗ Celebration Circle at the Spirit Garden is an open-air pavilion and outdoor theatre along Thunder Bay's waterfront. The form of the Celebration Circle is inspired by Roy Thomas' concept for the space to pay homage to Turtle Island based on the Anishinaabe Creation Story. The site was designed in collaboration between Indigenous artist and architect Ryan Gorrie of Thunder Bay and Brook McIlroy architects. Its form is inspired by traditional Anishinaabe bentwood building techniques using wood harvested by Indigenous artist George Price and fabricated at Fort William First Nation.

↗ Winter Stations is a single-stage international design competition held annually in Toronto. Participants are tasked with designing temporary winter art installations which incorporate existing lifeguard towers spaced strategically across the city's Kew and Woodbine beaches. The program highlights different artists and activates the waterfront area in the winter months.

Winter Stations draws hundreds of individuals, families, and dogs visiting Toronto's waterfront.

↗ New York artist Matthew Geller created a large, water-collecting swaying bench sculpture for Norfolk. Virginia's NEON District in 2016, funded by a National Endowment for the Arts grant, to raise awareness about sea-level rise and flooding in the city. In 2023, this unique public art installation was relocated to the Water Street Open Space along the Elizabeth River Trail, where it continues to serve as both a functional bench and a thought-provoking piece about Norfolk's relationship with water and climate change.

Parks and Natural Spaces

Barrie has 300 hectares of scenic park space which is beloved by community members for its passive uses, playgrounds, community gardens, trails, beaches, and sports fields. In these spaces, artwork can serve to engage new audiences (i.e., those who are typically involved in recreational activities), further community connection and highlight unique natural features in Barrie.

POTENTIAL THEMES
> Celebrating Community
> Embracing Diversity
> Honouring History and Heritage
> Prioritizing Indigeneity

POTENTIAL ARTWORK TYPES
> Sculptures
> Landscape Integrations
> Eco-Art or Land Art
> Functional and Play-based Art
> Art Installations

POTENTIAL ARTWORK ROLES
> Landmark Feature
> Gateway Marker
> Wayfinding
> Activating/Animating Spaces
> Cultural Celebration

East and South Composition, by Native Art Department International, Seeds to Sow 2024. Photo credit: Cameron Stamper.

Public Art Opportunities

Long-Term Artworks
Objectives:
- Develop landmarks and attractions that connect community members and visitors to the natural spaces on Barrie
- Create opportunities that celebrate significant natural heritage features in Barrie.
- Support Indigenous traditions, storytelling, and heritage with art that connect to the land.

Key Locations:
- New or redeveloped parks that can incorporate art into the design, creating site-specific pieces.

Temporary Exhibitions
Objectives:
- Encourage the activation of parks year-round.
- Support community building with art that reflects the local community, especially Indigenous art and art from equity-deserving groups.

Key Locations:
- Existing parks that may be underutilized or would benefit from additional programming.

Infrastructure / Public Realm
Objectives:
- Similar to the Waterfront, art can enhance park infrastructure and facilities, such as lighting and seating or even flood mitigation. Artists can also design recreational facilities, like playgrounds or sports courts.
- Art as creative placemaking can also help to enhance wayfinding through spaces.

Key Locations:
- New or redeveloped parks that can incorporate art into the design, creating site-specific pieces.

Public Art Examples

↗ Manidoo Ogitigan (Spirit Garden) is a public art installation in Kingston's Lake Ontario Park. The project is the result of a partnership between the City of Kingston, Alderville First Nation, and Cree artist and landscape architect Terence Radform from 2013 with the work opening in 2021. The work itself represents the past and present relationship between the First Nation and the Katorokwi/ Kingston region. The art features wampum belts, the symbolism of the medicine wheel, and many culturally significant plants, arrange to represent the layout of the Alderville Methodist Church Layout. It also offers a space for reflection, ceremories, and education.

↗ Arts in the Parks is a free, family-friendly summer initiative that brings public art, theatre, music, film, and workshops to parks across Toronto, making the arts accessible to all communities. The program is run by Toronto Arts Foundation in partnership with the Toronto Arts Council, City of Toronto, and Park People. The City of Toronto, through its Arts and Culture Services and Parks, Forestry, and Recreation departments, works closely with Toronto Arts Foundation to support the arts programming and facilitate the permit process.

↗ Fungi of the Woods by LeuWebb Projects is located in a forested park just outside the Burnhamthorpe Community Centre in Mississauga. The artwork is an imaginative interpretation of the sociability of mushrooms that is conceptually based upon the ways in which community members connect with each other.

Designed to be accessible, tactile, and multifunctional, the artwork provides seating, shade, and opportunities for play and sensory engagement. The installation, a rubberized surface made from 3,500 pounds of recycled Canadian tires—funded by Kal's RePlay Fund, a community program of Kal Tire—enhances safety and sustainability.

Gateways and Corridors

Gateways and corridors include roads, bike networks, pedestrian pathways, and key entry points into the city and its neighbourhoods. Art in these areas can create a sense of welcome and orientation, transforming transit routes and entry points to engage residents, visitors, and commuters as they move through the city.

POTENTIAL THEMES
> Celebrating Community
> Embracing Diversity
> Honouring History and Heritage
> Prioritizing Indigeneity

POTENTIAL ARTWORK TYPES
> Sculptures
> Murals
> Architectural Integrations
> New Media
> Functional and Play-Based Art

POTENTIAL ARTWORK ROLES
> Landmark Feature
> Gateway Marker
> Wayfinding
> Activating/Animating Spaces
> Stimulating Dialogue

Art on Transit, Brad MacMillan, 2023. Photo credit: City of Barrie.

Public Art Opportunities

Long-Term Artworks
Objectives:
- Transforming daily commutes with artful experiences, allowing everyone in Barrie to benefit from public art.
- Artworks can also act as gateways, signifying entry or transition points into a neighbourhoods or place, and creating a sense of arrival and unique identities for the different areas across Barrie.

Key Locations:
- Key entry points into the city, gateways to the downtown, and access points into neighbourhoods.

Temporary Exhibitions
Objectives:
- To encourage the use of active or public transit in Barrie, where art can improve the sense of safety and encourage alternatives to modes of transportation.

Key Locations:
- Bike trails, multipurpose trails, and public transportation routes.

Infrastructure / Public Realm
Objectives:
- Use art to enhance the use of City transportation infrastructure while also improving the sense of safety for pedestrians and transit users.
- Integrate art into major City infrastructure projects from utility boxes and fire hydrants to new bridges that connect communities. The design of these features can be reinterpreted or enhanced with artwork.

Key Locations:
- Intersections and crosswalks, especially those which have high pedestrian traffic.
- Bike and transit infrastructure (e.g., bus stops, bike lanes, bike parking).
- Bridges and main roads or highway access points.

Public Art Examples

↗ The Tawatinâ Bridge in Edmonton is a shared-use pathway that showcases over 500 paintings depicting the River Valley's plants, animals, and the history of First Nations, Métis, and settlers in the area. The artwork reflects the connection between the people and nature in this space. Artist David Garneau, along with a diverse team of First Nations, Métis, Black, Asian, and European artists, drew inspiration from his meetings with Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and his own experiences in the Valley to capture Edmonton's four seasons and rich history.

↗ Art Bus: Connecting Communities with Public Art in Calgary wrapped seven transit buses with original artworks. The buses were in service for 12 weeks in the fall of 2024, and were seen by an estimated 76 percent of Calgarians seven times, for a total of 10.3 million impressions. In addition to the exterior bus wrapping, panels on the inside of the bus shared information about the artist and displayed some of their pre-existing artworks.

This temporary public art project provided opportunities for artists, offers an engaging visual art experience for citizens, and celebrates Calgary's cultures, communities, histories, geography and diversity.

↗ Connections by Barbara Bernstein, a Virginia artist, consists of seven designed windscreens for Arlington, Virginia's Potomac Yard/Crystal City Transitway stations. The goal of the project was to contribute comfort, sustained visual engagement, legibility and safety to the transit environment. Each windscreen has an iteration of a simple line becoming an intricate, flowing interdependent pattern. The design provides a unifying concept for the seven stations overall, while distinguishing each station individually through colour and creating distinct landmarks.

Public Art Location Criteria

When locating art within key location typologies (Community and Cultural Facilities, The Waterfront, Parks and Natural Spaces, Corridors and Gateways) or elsewhere in Barrie, the following selection criteria can help identify optimal locations. They act as guiding questions for City staff to consider when selecting or approving a public art location.

Visibility

- ☐ Does the site provide clear visibility for the public, and does it maximize public viewing opportunities?
- ☐ Does the site provide unique and interesting sightlines, viewpoints, or vistas?

Accessibility

- ☐ Is the site accessible by multiple modes of transportation?
- ☐ Is the site within a pre-existing network of active and public transportation networks?
- ☐ Does the site experience high levels of pedestrian traffic or have the capacity to support increased traffic?
- ☐ Is the site physically accessible to allow all people to easily access, view, and engage with the artwork?

Compatibility

- ☐ Will the artwork add to or complement the current or planned artwork and experiences?
- ☐ Will the artwork enhance the overall public realm environment and pedestrian experience?
- ☐ Does the site support the goal of locating public art across all wards in the city?
- ☐ Is the site culturally, societally, or environmentally appropriate to host artwork?
- ☐ Does the site provide opportunities to celebrate Barrie's unique identity, character, and community?
- ☐ Does the site reinforce and align with the City's other goals, plans, and strategies (e.g., *Barrie Official Plan 2051 (2023)*, *Waterfront Strategic Plan (2023)*, etc.)

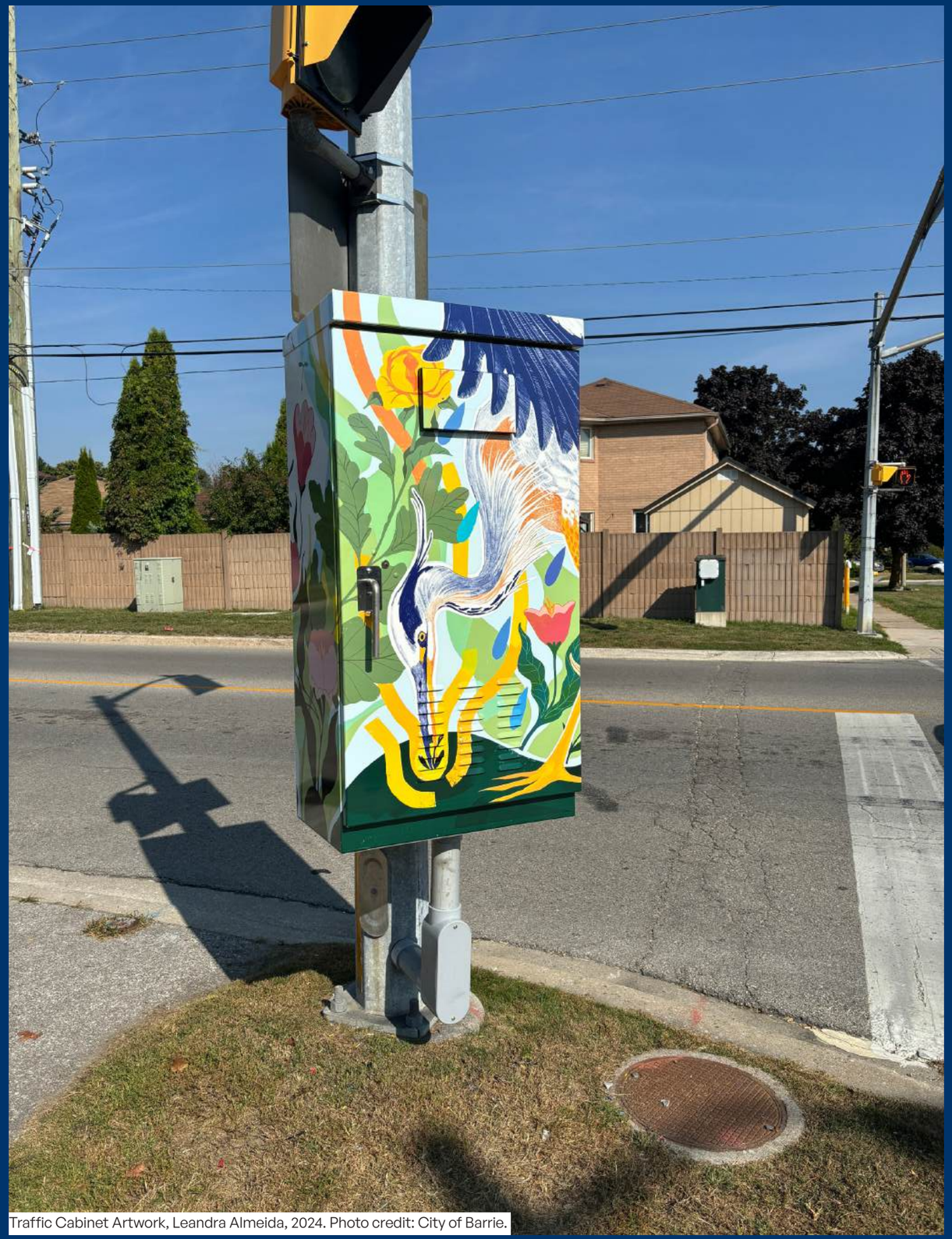
Capacity:

- ☐ Does the location allow for adequate maintenance and de-accessioning (e.g., power, water supply, equipment, etc.)?
- ☐ Can the location support an artwork safely without compromising structural integrity or protected environments?

Additional Placement Guidelines

When evaluating a site for public art, it is important to consider how the piece will interact with its surrounding environment.
Artwork placement should:

- Not block windows, entrance ways, or pathways.
- Not block vistas, viewpoints, or critical sight lines.
- Not impede pedestrian circulation into and around the site.
- Not restrict regular activity on the site (e.g., maintenance, security, programming, public use, etc.)
- Consider the impacts of sun, shade, wind, freeze/thaw, and weather exposure (all seasons).
- Not overwhelm or compete with other surrounding elements.



Traffic Cabinet Artwork, Leandra Almeida, 2024. Photo credit: City of Barrie.

Implementation Guide 2.4

Public Art Best Practices

Governance Model

Funding Public Art

Private Sector Incentives for Public Art

This implementation guide is to be used by Public Art staff, in conjunction with Economic and Creative Development, Council, and departments across the City of Barrie. It provides guidance on the governance and implementation of public art, outlining best practices for project execution—from artist selection to community engagement. Additionally, it offers recommendations for adapting the Barrie Public Art Policy to ensure effective oversight of all projects and alignment with current community needs and municipal priorities.

Public Art Best Practices

This section builds upon Barrie's Public Art Policy by providing guidelines on best practices for artist selection and community engagement. It serves as a supplementary resource to support the policy, offering practical insights for implementing public art projects.

Barrie's Public Art Policy (2012) outlines the process for commissioning public art, including the artist selection process, selection panels, and evaluation criteria. While no changes are recommended to the policy's existing framework, the following best practices provide additional guidance for designing and implementing fair and inclusive artist selection processes.

Culture Night Out, 2024. Photo credit: Tanja-Tiziana

Best Practices for Artist Calls

To ensure artist calls are equitable, inclusive, and accessible, City staff should consider the following:

- Provide information in multiple languages or offer language support or translation services for artists.
- Allow applicants to share information through multiple formats such as written text, audio descriptions, videos, interviews, face-to-face meetings or allowing for hard-copy applications to accommodate different communication styles and accessibility needs.
- Provide support when the Call opens for applications by offering office hours or information sessions where applicants can ask questions or receive informal feedback. Answers to questions should be publicly available.
- Ensure that all information is in conformity with Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). A clear accessibility statement, in the Call-for-Artists document, should state the commitment to accessibility and providing contact information for accessibility-related inquiries.
- Value different forms of education, training, and experience by evaluating the suitability of artists based on their letters of intent and examples of previous work or shared proposals instead of their CVs. Artists from equity-deserving groups may face systemic barriers and access to opportunities, knowledge, education, and resources.
- Clearly articulate the City of Barrie's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in the Call-for-Artists, and describe how these principles will be applied throughout the selection process.
- Use clear and inclusive language that avoids jargon or technical terms that might be confusing to some artists. Certain vocabulary may unintentionally exclude groups, such as the word 'jury', which can have negative associations for those who have been disproportionately affected by the criminal justice system.
- Offer financial support through grants or stipends to cover application fees, materials, or transportation costs for artists who may face financial barriers. The costs associated with participating in the call should be transparent and reasonable.
- Embed mentorship opportunities to allow artists who have historically faced barriers to access skill training opportunities to grow their practice and ability to work on public art projects.

Best Practices for Selection Panels

Selection panels evaluate artist applications based on project goals and artistic merit. The following best practices ensure a fair and informed selection process:

- Committees should reflect the diversity of the arts sector and the population of Barrie in general. Members should represent people of different ages, backgrounds, experiences, and abilities, as well as a range of professional expertise related to the arts.
- For culturally specific artworks, there may need to be non-local members who have the adequate expertise or experience to aid in the art selection.
- Canadian Artists' Representation/Le Front des artistes canadiens (CARFAC) fee schedule should be used to guide minimum rates of selection panel members.

The City of Barrie's Public Art Policy Appendix I: Community Engaged Art Policy, defines community-engaged art as forms of collective artistic expression. In this field, individuals who are not professional artists actively participate in the artistic process, and the artistic process is considered as important as the final artistic product. Both the social and artistic outcomes of community engaged art have value.

The following pages provide additional guidance on planning and facilitating meaningful engagement between artists and community members.

Steps for Community Engagement:
When planning community engagement for a public art project, the following considerations should guide the process:

- **When to Engage the Community**: Community engagement can occur at any point in the public art process, whether it is identifying locations, themes, or supporting the artist in development of the final artwork. When identifying an approach for community engagement, it is essential to consider the required time, energy, and resources required, along with whether the artist is willing to collaborate.
- **Who Should be Engaged:** When identifying a community to be engaged, the following questions should be considered:
  - » Who will be affected by the artwork, or who are you looking to attract with the artwork?
  - » Who is part of this community, and how are they internally diverse?
  - » Is this a community that expresses itself through art? What forms of artistic expression are community members comfortable with?
  - » Are these community members interested and invested in the co-creation process and outcomes of the artwork?
- **How to Engage:** Traditional engagement methods include a virtual survey, open houses, or focus groups. While these methods can be successful, an alternative method is arts-based community engagement, which centres art within community engagement activities. For example, traditional engagement may use an online survey, whereas arts-based engagement could include a drawing workshop. Who leads the engagement will vary depending on when engagement occurs, for example, the City may lead engagement to identify locations for public art and an artist may use an art-based workshop to co-create artwork or be inspired by the community.

Best Practices for Community Engagement:
The following can support City staff to ensure engagement is meaningful and inclusive.

- Clearly identify the roles for the artist(s), project partners, and community members and communicate parameters around what can be influenced in the project and what cannot, along with outlining how the feedback will be used.
- To support the engagement of a broad diversity of participants, the engagement approach should be culturally and socially appropriate for the specific community being engaged.
- When promoting the opportunity, use a variety of methods (both digital and analog), take advantage of existing social networks, and promote in places that the community gathers or frequents.
- Ensure the engagement events are accessible for those with disabilities and clearly state what supports will be provided (e.g., accessible parking, elevators, closed-captions, interpreters, multiple languages, etc.)
- Consider offering food, travel compensation, or childcare to enable more people to join the event.
- To avoid consultation fatigue, use existing community events, minimize time commitments, and ensure participants feel their contributions are meaningful by keeping them informed about the outcomes.

To learn more about community engaged art, the Ontario Arts Council has developed, "Framing Community – A Community Engaged Art Workbook."

Compliment Clouds, by Petra Victoria, Brightening Barriers 2022. Photo Credit: Cameron Stamper.

Governance Model

The City's primary role with regards to public art is the funding and management of Barrie's Public Art Collection. This includes commissions, acquisitions or donations of public art on City-owned land, along with the on-going maintenance and conservation of these works.

The following section provides recommendations on best governance practices to support the continued growth and sustainability of Barrie's Public Art Collection. The recommendations can be used to update the City's current Public Art Policy.

Roles and Responsibilities
A strong governance structure ensures the City can effectively manage public art today, while planning for future growth. To this end, the following resources are recommended to strengthen public art leadership and ensure sustainable program management. This section contains recommendations on new or adjusted roles and responsibilities. As they are approved, the *Public Art Policy* should be updated.

Current Governance Model:
Public art is overseen by the Public Art Coordinator, within the Economic and Creative Development Department. The Public Art Coordinator is a part-time staff member who acts as the project manager for the Public Art Program, overseeing acquisitions and the development of new programs, and serving as a liaison between other City departments to identify opportunities for public art across City projects. The Public Art Coordinator also liaises with the Barrie Public Art Committee (BPAC), which serves as an advisory body to City staff and Council on public art policies, competition guidelines, donation requests, and management and promotion of the Public Art Collection.

City Council's role is to approve all public art policies and approve the budget allocated for Public Art annually through the City's municipal budget process. City Council also approves all permanent public artworks commissioned by or donated to the City of Barrie (as endorsed by the Barrie Public Art Committee), as well as annual budgets for the maintenance and cleaning of the City's public art collection.

Proposed Governance Model:
While this model has yielded positive results for public art in Barrie thus far, there are certain key challenges that limit the growth and impact of Barrie's Public Art Program.

- The program is constrained by insufficient funding, restricting both expansion and new initiatives.
- The part-time Public Art Coordinator consistently operates beyond capacity, making it difficult to balance building and maintaining interdepartmental relationships, managing projects effectively, responding to community needs, and aligning the program with best practices.

Adapting the program's funding and governance is necessary to achieve the Public Art Vision.

Many small to mid-sized Canadian municipalities, including Markham, Kingston, Mississauga, and Brampton, employ at least one full-time public art professional. A similar investment is needed in Barrie to support and sustain its growing public art program.

Recommendation: Elevate the part-time Public Art Coordinator position to a full-time Public Art Officer. This role would support both temporary and permanent public art projects, including commissioning works on municipal property through a recommended Municipal Percent-for-Public-Art Program.

Public Art Officer Responsibilities include:
- Reporting on the Public Art Program to the Manager of Small Business and Creative Sector, Director of Economic and Creative Development, Senior Leadership, and City Council.
- Acting as the Staff Liaison for Barrie's Public Art Committee and Art Selection Committees.
- Chairing the Interdepartmental Public Art Working Group to identify opportunities for public art in City projects and plans.
- Identifying annual acquisition opportunities for long-term public art commissions in City-owned spaces through the Municipal Percent-for-Public-Art Program.
- Developing temporary public art programs and opportunities for artist capacity building.
- Assisting Planning and Development staff in identifying opportunities under the Private Sector Contributions stream.
- Evaluating donation and commemoration requests prior to the Public Art Committee's recommendations.
- Overseeing the conservation, records management, and documentation of the Public Art Collection.
- Identifying emerging trends and issues in public art to inform and align City policies, plans, procedures, and programs.

Best Practices for Public Art Management:
Additional recommendations to align the governance of public art with best practices include:

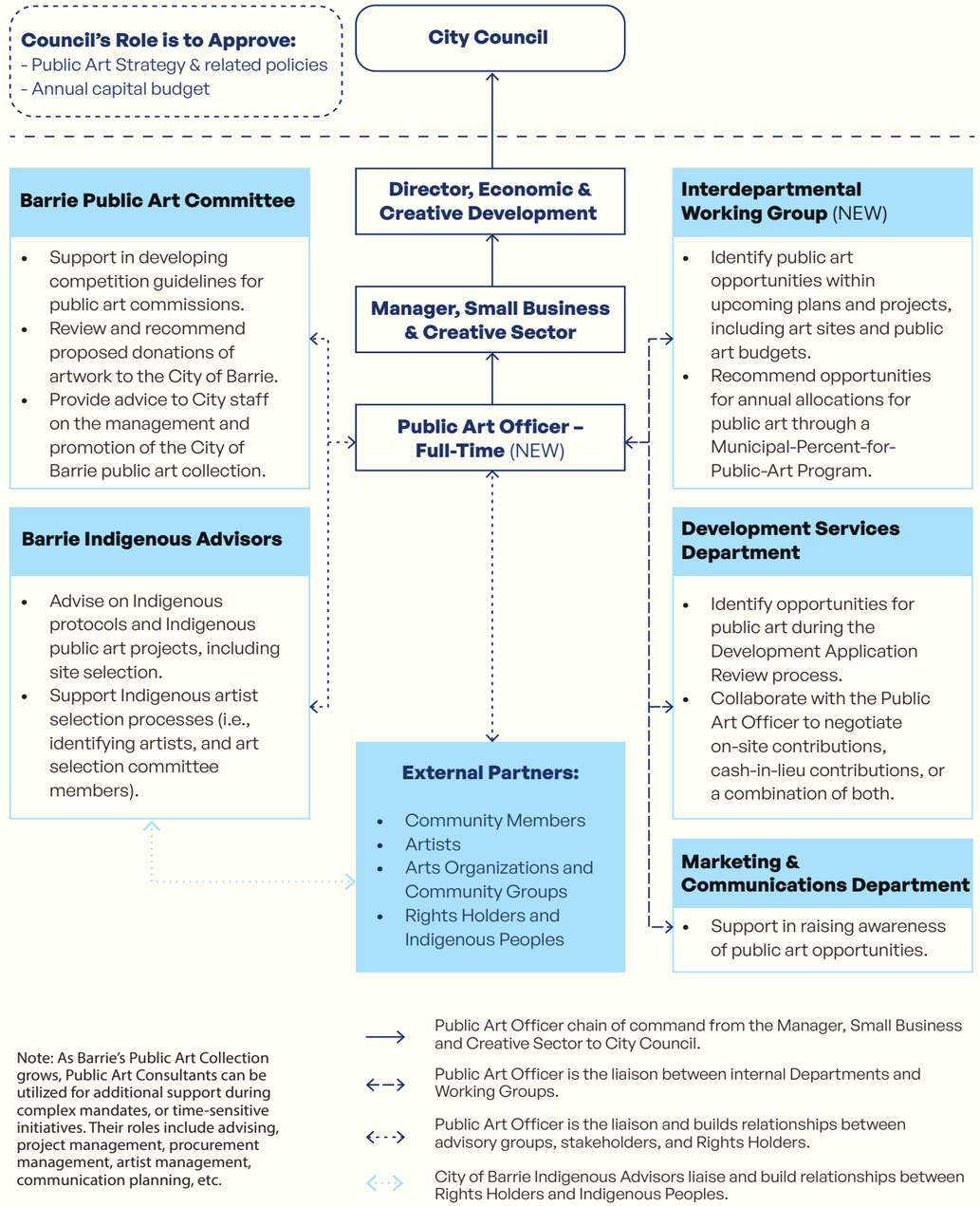
- **Encourage Interdepartmental Collaboration:** Form an Interdepartmental Public Art Working Group to foster cross-departmental commitment to public art and identify opportunities early in City plans and projects.

- **Support Indigenous Leadership in Public Art:** Build on existing Indigenous relationships and advisory groups within the City of Barrie to support Truth and Reconciliation efforts, advance opportunities for Indigenous artists, and increase the visibility of Indigenous art, culture, traditions, and heritage. This could be a subcommittee specific to culture and art if a City-wide Advisory Circle is developed.

- **Embed DEIA in Decision-Making:** Apply Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) principles to all decision-making processes, ensuring diverse perspectives are represented. For the Barrie Public Art Committee (BPAC), this means reflecting the community's diversity and incorporating a range of viewpoints in decisions. This can be achieved by creating opportunities for youth representatives and building relationships with organizations that serve newcomers, racialized groups, and equity-deserving communities. These efforts will broaden committee membership and ensure more diverse voices are included in the process. Additionally, a structured approach with assigned seats can be utilized to ensure a diversity of expertise and backgrounds, for example, the City of Vancouver has a specific number of seats allocated for artists, art professionals, urban designers, developers, and the public.

- **Expert-driven Decision-making:** Municipal public art programs typically reserve City Council's role to approving annual budgets and policies related to public art. This approach exemplifies best practices by respecting the expertise of advisors, art selection committees, and community members. By focusing City Council's role on oversight rather than direct involvement in art selection, it helps mitigate bias and subjectivity, fostering trust within the community and ensures that the selected artworks reflect broader public values and cultural relevance.

Recommended Governance Model:
The proposed governance model for Barrie's Public Art Program introduces a full-time Public Art Officer role and emphasizes best practices, such as forming an Interdepartmental Public Art Working Group, establishing an Indigenous Advisory Circle, and collaborating with the Private Sector.



Funding Public Art

The Public Art Reserve fund is currently the main source of funding for public art in Barrie. Established following the approval of the 2014 Business Plan, the fund started with an initial allocation of $25,000 and has increased annually by 10% for ten years. As of 2024, it has now reached its annual contribution limit of $60,408.76. Recently, in an effort to enhance the City of Barrie's role in developing public art, 50% (~$30K) of this annual Reserve Fund contribution has been allocated to support temporary public art projects, such as the Brightening Barriers initiative.

However, there are limitations to the current funding model:

- Annual funding is insufficient to support new temporary programs or expand current projects, resulting in additional funds being pulled from the Reserve, as well as a reliance on philanthropic donations to address the remaining shortfall (e.g., Seeds to Sow initiative). These external monetary donations are unpredictable and unreliable, making it difficult to sustainably grow or support public art programs. Moreover, securing supplemental funding falls outside the responsibilities of public art staff and the volunteer members of the Barrie Public Art Committee.
- Annual funding does not provide a sustainable source of funding for permanent or long-term public artworks. Overuse of the Reserve could leave insufficient funds for the following year's programming or impact the Public Art Maintenance Reserve.

Recommendation: A feasibility study is recommended to assess the potential revenue impacts and resourcing requirements for the following mechanisms for funding public art. As new funding models are approved by the City of Barrie, the Public Art Policy should be updated.

Potential Funding Mechanisms for Public Art:

Increasing Maximum Contributions to the Public Art Reserve: Resume the 10% increase for the annual contributions to the Reserve Fund over the next 10-year period, starting at the current (2024) allocation level, and reassess community needs at the 10-year mark to determine if funding needs to be increased or held. The annual allocation can support the following:

- Developing the City's Temporary & Exhibitions program, that can improve access and visibility of public art across the city.
- Supporting local artists and community groups through mentorship programs, artist residencies, grants, and events focused on networking and creative skill development.

Municipal Capital Projects Percent-for-Public-Art: Cities across North America have been proactive in dedicating between 0.5% to 2% of their municipal capital project costs to fund public art. This investment not only enhances the cultural and aesthetic appeal of urban environments, but also supports the growth and evolution of public art collections to meet the needs of expanding populations.
To align Barrie with municipal best practices, a funding program can be initiated with a 0.5% allocation, and increasing each year to achieve 1% by (or before) the 10-year mark on this Plan. Municipal projects that have construction budgets over $1 million should be required to contribute a percentage (between 0.5% and 1%) of their capital projects towards public art.
Qualifying projects can include:

- Parks, recreation, culture, and community services construction and renovation projects.
- New civic building and facilities construction projects and major additions or renovations to existing buildings
- Public infrastructure improvements and reconstruction projects (streets, bridges, streetlights, etc.).
- Transportation projects

Funding from the program should be pooled annually, rather than tying funds to the project of origin. This allows artwork to be planned equitably across the city, and at the scale required for the chosen site. This can support the growth of the City's Permanent/Long Term collection and Infrastructure / Public Realm collection.
For each resulting public art project, a minimum of 10% of the project budget would be dedicated to maintenance and allocated to the Public Art Maintenance Reserve.

Municipal Fees & Services:
Some municipalities supplement their Public Art Reserve by redirecting revenue from fees and services toward public art commissions. Examples include allocating funds from hoarding signage fees or recreation fees. In Toronto, a staff report on updating the City's Sign Bylaws recommended applying a monthly fee of $5.60 per square metre for advertising space on construction hoarding within the Right-of-Way. The revenue generated is directed to the Arts and Culture Services, Economic Development, and Culture Division reserve fund to support the commissioning, acquisition, and maintenance of public art.

Integrating Public Art into Planned & Existing Capital Budgets: In addition to the 1% program and Reserve Fund, public art can be directly integrated into new or renewed Municipal facilities, parks, and infrastructure projects. This can involve supporting artist-led design teams and artist residencies which allow artists to identify opportunities for public art, lead or contribute to the infrastructure design process, and/or develop a site-specific artwork for a given planned capital project.

For example, a new park project with budget for lighting, seating, and walkway design should require a local artist to support the selected landscape architecture firm in the design process to identify opportunities for art integration and/or design direction.

Grants: City staff should seek grants from federal, provincial, and other funding agencies for projects and initiatives that align with the Public Art Vision. Some grant requirements exclude municipalities, and in these cases, City staff can seek partnerships with local organizations and community groups with similar interests in supporting public art (e.g., Downtown Barrie BIA).

Sponsorship & Philanthropy: Sponsorships are opportunities for brands and businesses to make a positive community impact while increasing brand awareness and reaching target audiences. The City should continue to use philanthropy as a way to supplement the public art program, but it should not be depended on as a sustainable way to fund Municipal public art projects.

Why We Knit, by Tracey Anne Martin, Brightening Barriers 2022. Photo Credit: Cameron Stamper.

Budgeting for Public Art Projects:

The budget for a public art project varies depending on several factors, including the complexity of the project, such as materials, size, and timeline; the type of artist involved, whether emerging or established, local or international; and the intended permanence of the artwork, whether temporary or permanent. As these variables shift, so too will the financial investment required. The following can serve as a broad guideline for the City to use to determine the funding needing for a specific project or desired outcome. The estimates are based on 2024 costs, and will need to be adjusted for inflation.

Public Art Budget Ranges per type of Project*			
$25,000 - $99,000	**$100,000 - $500,000**	**$500,000 - $999,999**	**$1,000,000+**
• Smaller-scale temporary artworks and installations. • Community events or workshops	• Series of mid-to-large scale temporary artworks. • Small site-specific permanent works (e.g., creative way-finding, landscape integrations). • Mentorships or artist residencies.	• Mid-to-large site-specific permanent artworks that can be a focal point of a plaza, park, building, or infrastructure.	• Large-scale iconic landmark artworks that define the city or an area within the city.

*High-level budget ranges for reference purposes only – actual budget requirements will vary based on the scope of a given project.

Private Sector Incentives for Public Art

The City of Barrie can engage the private sector in contributing to public art through the development application process. Integrating public art early in the development planning process can benefit both the development and the city's public art landscape. Public art that is incorporated into privately-owned public spaces can have positive impacts on property values and lease rates, aid in generating visual interest and identity for a development, elevate a development's brand image, create a unique sense of place, develop community support, and become a visitor destination.

Currently, the City of Barrie does not have incentives or a formalized process for acquiring public art through private sector contributions. The following section outlines processes for encouraging the private sector to invest in public art.

Recommendation: Explore incentives for private sector contributions of public art during or after construction, either on-site or through off-site alternatives (e.g., cash in lieu). As new processes are adopted, the Public Art Policy should be updated accordingly.

Private Sector Contributions:
The private sector can contribute to Barrie's permanent public art landscape in three ways:

1. On-site Contributions: A public artwork is approved by the Barrie Public Art Committee and is produced and installed by the developer on a development or redevelopment site.
2. Off-Site Contribution: A cash-in-lieu option for the developer to contribute to the City's Public Art Reserve Fund. These funds support the development of the Public Art Collection.
3. Mixed Approach: Combining on-site contributions and off-site contribution methods, however, this approach should only be used when the budget for public art is sufficient to still maintain an impactful and meaningful artwork for the On-site Contribution.

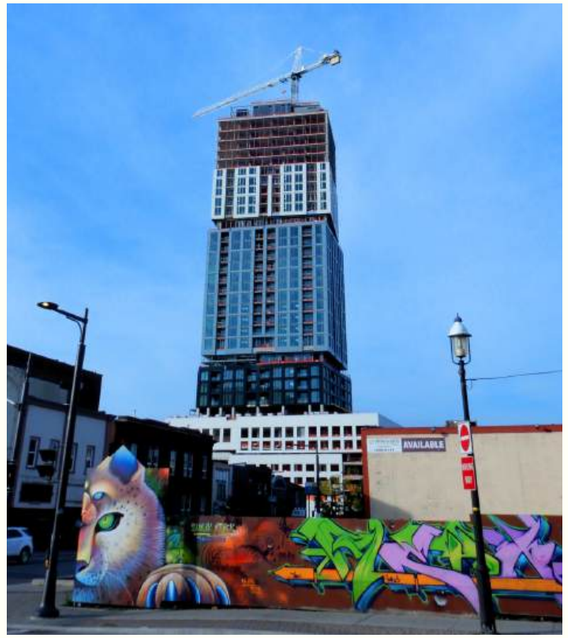
Best practices include:

- Public Art staff and Development Services should identify public art opportunities in development reviews at the earliest stage possible (e.g., Pre-Application Consultation Meeting).
- To guide negotiations, the City can use the industry standards for calculating the required public art budget which include one percent of Gross Construction Costs (GCC). Percentages are adjusted based on project size and complexity. Public Art staff are responsible for ensuring contributions are adequate for permanent artwork.
- The type of artwork, as well as the scale, placement, and integration of the artwork within the development plan, must be thoughtfully conceived within the development process to respect the artist's vision and allow the artwork to have its own voice rather than being considered as an architectural or landscape "feature."
- The developer is encouraged to engage a third-party public art consultant early in the design process to identify opportunities for site-specific artwork. The public art consultant should also be an advocate for the artist and ensure the artist's practice and integrity is maintained throughout the process.
- The public art consultant, on behalf of the developer, shall submit a public art plan outlining the opportunity, location(s) for public art, artist selection process (ensuring that is if fair and maintains equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility principles), maintenance plan, timeline, budget, and how the work will be promoted. This will be reviewed by the Barrie Public Art Committee, and their recommendations will be validated by City of Barrie Economic and Creative Development.
- Public art should be located in places that offer free and unobstructed access to the work, such as plazas, courtyards, setbacks, facades, entryways, etc.
- A diversity of public art styles, types, and locations should be encouraged across different developments. It is suggested that artwork be innovative, creative, and experimental to create an engaging built environment and stimulate civic discourse. Artwork should also reflect the surrounding areas, unique identity, history, and evolving and diverse community.
- Maintenance of the artwork is typically managed by the developer, property owner, or condominium corporation. However, in some instances, the artwork may be donated to the City of Barrie. In the first scenario, a maintenance endowment of 10% of the total public art cost is required, though this amount may vary based on the artwork's complexity, durability, and materials. In the case of a donation, these funds would be provided to the City.

Art At Construction Sites:
As Barrie grows and evolves, construction sites and vacant lots awaiting development can negatively impact the urban environment, creating unsightly "dead" spaces and causing visibility and navigation issues. To enhance the experience for pedestrians and passersby in these areas, cities worldwide have turned to public art to maintain an active and welcoming public realm during the construction process.

Construction Hoarding is one opportunity to enhance a site undergoing construction. The benefits include:

- Add vibrancy to the public realm, which can encourage active transportation (walking, cycling, etc.)
- Support surrounding businesses who may be negatively affected by construction.
- Improve wayfinding and navigation of urban spaces.
- Offer paid opportunities for local artists and promote their work to new audiences.
- Raise awareness about upcoming changes coming to the city in a meaningful way that engages residents.
- Mitigate against vandalism in the form of graffiti or illegal postering.

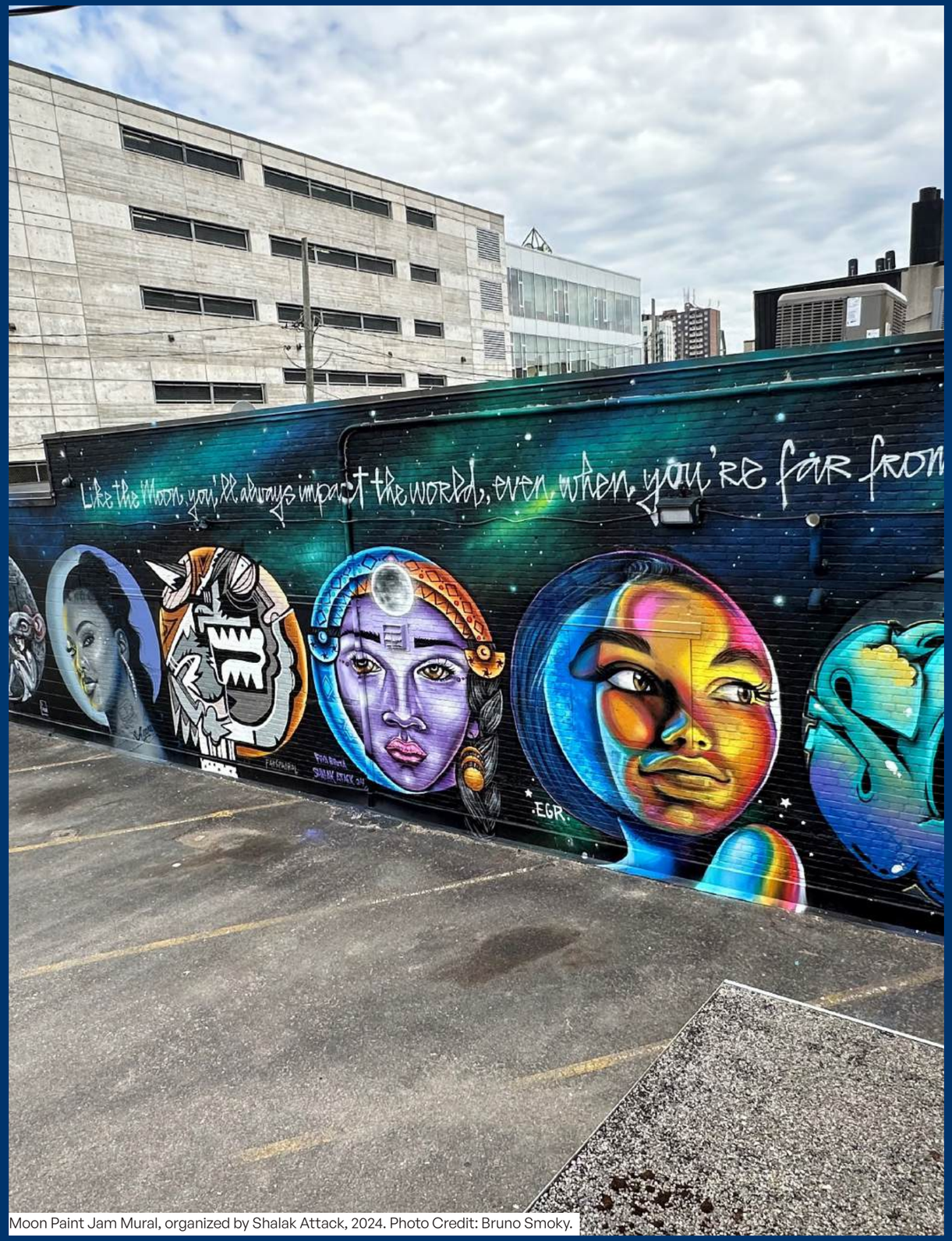


Best practices for mandating construction hoarding includes adapting Sign By-laws to include the following provisions:

- Require 50% of the total area of construction hoarding be dedicated to public art.
- Prioritize at-grade hoarding for displaying public art.
- Require that artwork reflect the surrounding community context (e.g., historical, social, cultural, environmental).
- Provide exceptions on signage permit fees for the area covered by artwork.
- Offer exceptions for developments by non-profit organizations.
- Construction hoarding approvals can occur during the development approvals process or by Ward Councillors.

Examples:

- City of Toronto requires 50 per cent of the surface area of the hoarding be used for community art, subject to consultation with the Ward Councillor.
- Sydney, Australia requires developments in high traffic areas to cover their hoarding in art by a living Australian artist, or historical images relevant to the area where the hoarding is located. Developers can commission their own artist, or they can use artworks licensed by the City of Sydney, free of charge. The City of Sydney receives the licensing rights of 10 artworks to be used by developers.



Moon Paint Jam Mural, organized by Shalak Attack, 2024. Photo Credit: Bruno Smoky.

Public Art Action Plan

2.5

Recommended Actions for Implementing the Public Art Strategy

Public Art Action Plan

The following outlines an action plan for implementing the Public Art Strategy over a 10-year period. The action plan includes budgets, timeline, and responsibilities. The categories in the action plan correspond to the following:

Responsible: Indicates the lead City of Barrie department, along with what departments will need to support or collaborate on the action. Additionally, external partners may be indicated when relevant for additional support or coordination on the action.

Resource:
Operating Budget
Capital Budget:
$—Under $25,000
$$—Under $50,000
$$$ — Under $100,000
$$$$ — Over $100,000

Timeline:
Short-term: Year 1-3
Medium-term: Year 4-6
Long-term: Year 7-10

	Recommended Actions	Resource	Responsible
SHORT-TERM	Update the *City of Barrie Public Art Policy* 2012 (Updated 2021) in alignment with the Public Art Strategy, including roles and responsibilities and funding. Additional best practices can be included as an appendix.	Operating	**Lead:** Economic & Creative Development
	Update relevant corporate policies, plans, and strategies to align with the Public Art Strategy.	Operating	**Lead:** Economic & Creative Development
	Share the Public Art organization chart, both internally and externally, clearly indicating and delineating main points of contact.	Operating	**Lead:** Economic & Creative Development **Support:** Marketing & Communications Department
	Develop a communications plan for widely sharing the City of Barrie's Public Art Vision, Goals, and Thematic Guidelines.	Operating	**Lead:** Economic & Creative Development **Support:** Marketing & Communications Department
	Form an Interdepartmental Working Group on public art with representative(s) from each relevant Municipal department, with meetings to be scheduled quarterly.	Operating	**Lead:** Economic & Creative Development **Support:** Recreation & Culture Services, Corporate Facilities Department, Development Services Department, Transit Services, Parks Planning & Parks Operations, Waste Management & Environmental Sustainability Department.
	Formalize a process for private sector public art contributions and update the *City of Barrie Public Art Policy (2012, updated 2021)* as needed.	Operating	**Lead:** Economic & Creative Development **Support:** Development Services Department
	Explore incentive programs for private sector contributions for public art during or before construction of a development or redevelopment (e.g., public art on construction hoarding, subsidies to activate vacant or underdeveloped spaces, etc.)	Operating	**Lead:** Economic & Creative Development **Support:** Development Services Department
	Resume the 10% increase for the annual contributions to the Public Art Reserve Fund over the next 10-year period to expand funding for Temporary / Exhibition projects.	Capital: $$$-$$$$	**Lead:** Economic & Creative Development
	Explore opportunities to expand funding for Permanent/Long-Term artworks and Public Realm Infrastructure. For example, develop a Municipal Capital Projects Percent-for-Public-Art program, starting with an initial allocation of 0.5% for specific Municipal capital projects with construction budgets over $1 million. The initial 0.5% allocation acts as a pilot initiative to assess its effectiveness and staff capacity. The goal is to gradually increase the percentage to 1% over a 10-year period, aligning with the City's staff capacity and implementation feasibility.	Capital: $$$$	**Lead:** Economic & Creative Development **Support:** Corporate Facilities Department, Development Services Department, Infrastructure Department

	Recommended Actions	Budget	Responsible
SHORT-TERM	Explore options to use Municipal Fees & Services charges to supplement Public Art funding.	Operating	**Lead:** Economic & Creative Development
	Develop a Full-time Public Art Officer position.	Operating	**Lead:** Economic & Creative Development
	Continue to build relationships with local First Nations and Indigenous Peoples, drawing on existing advisory groups connected to the City of Barrie to develop practices for supporting Indigenous artists and communities and increasing the visibility of Indigenous Peoples.	Operating	**Lead:** Economic & Creative Development
MEDIUM-TERM	Integrate public artwork into capital projects that align with the Public Art Location Typologies (i.e., Community and Cultural Facilities, The Waterfront, Parks and Natural Spaces, Corridors and Gateways) utilizing funding from the Percent-for-Municipal-Capital-Projects Program or project budgets.	Capital: $$$$	**Lead:** Economic & Creative Development **Support:** Corporate Facilities Department, Development Services Department, Infrastructure Department, Recreation & Culture Services Department, Parks Planning and Parks Operations, Waste Management & Environmental Sustainability Department
	Hire artists on design-teams for Municipal capital projects to integrate creative thinking and identify opportunities for public art at the onset of a project.	Capital: $	**Lead:** Economic & Creative Development **Support:** Corporate Facilities Department, Development Services Department
	Evaluate the Public Art Program and Collection to assess if there are gaps in the current Collection that need to be filled with specific programming (e.g., Indigenous artwork, artwork that represents Barrie's community experiences (newcomer, youth, etc.). Explore opportunities for both temporary and permanent artwork to address the gaps.	Capital: $$$–$$$$	**Lead:** Economic & Creative Development
	Evaluate the Public Art Program and Collection to analyze if there are locations with an absence of public art, and work towards ensuring communities across Barrie benefit from the positive impacts of public art. Explore opportunities for both temporary and permanent artwork to address the location gaps.	Capital: $$$–$$$$	**Lead:** Economic & Creative Development
	Explore opportunities to increase the funding envelope for temporary public art and artist capacity building programs. For example, resuming the 10% increase for the annual contributions to the Reserve Fund over the next 10-year period.	Capital: $$$	**Lead:** Economic & Creative Development

	Recommended Actions	Budget	Responsible
LONG-TERM	Enhance Barrie's identity as a public art destination by developing a large-scale public artwork along the waterfront and downtown that can draw national and international artists to collaborate with the City.	Capital: $$$$	**Lead:** Economic & Creative Development **Support:** Corporate Facilities Department, Development Services Department, Infrastructure Department
	Enhance Barrie's identity as a public art destination by locating public art at gateways and entry points to the city.	Capital: $$$–$$$$	**Lead:** Economic & Creative Development **Support:** Corporate Facilities Department, Development Services Department, Infrastructure Department
	Expand public art programs to activate all wards with both temporary and permanent public art	Capital: $$$–$$$$	**Lead:** Economic & Creative Development
	Review and evaluate the Public Art Strategy to determine what has been achieved, what remains relevant, and what requires updating.	Capital: $$$–$$$$	**Lead:** Economic & Creative Development

Barrie

Thank You.