

ART IN PUBLIC PLACES POLICY CONSULTATION SUMMARY



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Background

Consultation was undertaken to determine clear and consistent purposes, goals, definitions and best practices related to art in public places to guide the development of an Art in Public Places Policy and associated guidelines and processes. In a series of 12 conversations held between November 2019 and January 2020, 57 artists, arts administrators, arts community leaders and City staff contributed their perspectives.

Prior to each discussion, staff shared a presentation defining what constitutes the public realm and the different ways in which the City of Hamilton currently commissions Art in Public Places; the City of Hamilton Public Art Vision Statement (2016); as well as several other external resources describing the value of public art and placemaking.

Two questions were posed as a jumping off points to inspire broader discussion:

- How do you think Art in Public Places benefits the community?
- Thinking about the next 5 to 10 years, what are the most meaningful things that new Art in Public Places projects can do for the community?

Key Themes

Multiple key themes emerged from the consultation discussions, identified in the post-consultation summaries and verified by participants. These themes included:

- **Placemaking** - artists can make a unique contribution to the evolving physical, cultural and social identities that define a place and support its ongoing evolution.
- **Social Cohesion and Cultural Understanding** - art in public places can act as a catalyst for discourse, social engagement and reinforce social connectivity.
- **Empower artists, arts organizations and community groups** to take greater ownership of the public realm.
- **Embracing digital and social media technology** to assist in accessibility, share stories and bring people to places.

- **Public Health and Belonging** - art in public places as a necessity to health of community - encouraging active living and social connectedness essential to mental health.

Consultation Matrix

The following matrix outlines the topics addressed in the 12 consultation meetings.

How do you think Art in Public Places benefits the community?	Who addressed?
Citizen/neighbourhood ownership and pride of place. Participation and sense of care/responsibility to the neighbourhood.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Lab students • Community leaders • Melissa Bennett • Arts Advisory Commission • City staff
Art is for the public. Public access to art/“democratic” - public art belongs to all of us. Creates a non-commodified space which are becoming increasingly scarce.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Lab students • Community leaders • Tor Lukasic-Foss/Claire Lougheed • Colina Maxwell • Yvonne Felix
Breaks down walls of gallery to be more inclusive and accessible. Not waiting for the public to come to the gallery but bring it to them. Art shouldn't be separated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Lab students • Community leaders • Melissa Bennett • Colina Maxwell • Arts Advisory Commission
Provides us with permission to stop and gather; signals to citizens that they are valued and invited in public spaces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community leaders • Tor Lukasic-Foss/Claire Lougheed
Can enable us to see the city in a different way and notice things previously overlooked in the urban landscape - introducing citizens to new spaces that they return to outside of an art context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art Spin Hamilton
Encourages social engagement/facilitates connection to others/empathy/varied cultural expression/social cohesion. Can break isolation and instill happiness, a sense of safety and belonging.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Lab students • Community leaders • Tor Lukasic-Foss/Claire Lougheed • Melissa Bennett • Arts Advisory Commission • Art Spin Hamilton
Increases safety of public spaces. Transformative ability for stigmatized neighbourhoods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Lab students • Tor Lukasic-Foss/Claire Lougheed • City staff
Evoke feelings and reactions in people. Art is supposed to make you feel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community leaders
Improves quality of life - enriches environment, day-to-day well-being with colour and texture. Mundane objects can be transformed (e.g. utility boxes).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Lab students • Community leaders • Melissa Bennett • Colina Maxwell • City staff
Attracts visitors to neighbourhoods - economic impact. Beauty and vibrancy attracts tourism.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community leaders • Arts Advisory Commission
Expression of community identity - to selves and to visitors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community leaders

How do you think Art in Public Places benefits the community?	Who addressed?
Where limited art education opportunities, can bring art in to children’s lives and present the possibility of art as a career (sustainability of arts sector).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community leaders • Arts Advisory Commission
Invites businesses to invest in neighbourhood improvements and more art.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community leaders • Tor Lukasic-Foss/Claire Loughheed
Tool for public discourse - can reflect values and demonstrate discontent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community leaders
Provides employment opportunities for artists. Demonstrates respect for the creative process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community leaders • City staff
Public art levels the playing field for differently-abled artists as is “about the art” rather than the artist. It provides access to a level of success that may not otherwise be available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yvonne Felix

Thinking about the next 5 to 10 years, what are the most meaningful things that new Art in Public Places projects can do for the community?	Who addressed?
Representation of Indigenous culture visually in public places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shelly Hill • City staff
Placemaking - artists can make a unique contribution to the evolving physical, cultural and social identities that define a place and support its ongoing evolution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All
Social Cohesion and Cultural Understanding - art in public places can act as a catalyst for discourse, social engagement and reinforce social connectivity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All
Empower artists, arts organizations and community groups to take greater ownership of the public realm.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All
Embracing digital and social media technology to assist in accessibility, share stories and bring people to places.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All
Public Health and Belonging - art in public places as a necessity to health of community - encouraging active living and social connectedness essential to mental health.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most/emphasis from City staff
Can be a tool of reconciliation for City and marginalized communities to address misunderstandings. Build Cultural Understanding - tell some of the stories we have in Hamilton and individual communities (e.g. reconciliation, immigration, industry). Public education regarding land & original ownership; reinforce acknowledgement of Indigenous communities. Reflect globalization/movement of people, while owning “Hamilton” identity. Engage millennials/reflect changing demographic of city. Can introduce historical (and possible future) narratives and stories into community that may have been previously eclipsed. Community Art can be a tactic to elevate lesser-known cultural artist communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shelly Hill • Community leaders • Arts Advisory Commission • City Lab students • Colina Maxwell • City staff • Creative Café
Think of Art in Public Places in Hamilton as part of an international conversation (not just local). Take risks, start a conversation. Be a leader. Benefits include: pride in our work; acknowledgement; being part of the national discourse regarding what is happening in our country; put Hamilton on the map.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community leaders • Melissa Bennett • Colina Maxwell • Kim Selman
Spaces for temporary performances (e.g. pop up stage, Speaker’s Corner)/artist showcase/events to encourage artists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community leaders
Encourage emerging artists in neighbourhoods other than James Street North (e.g. other art crawls or spaces to exhibit/sell without financial barrier).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community leaders

Thinking about the next 5 to 10 years, what are the most meaningful things that new Art in Public Places projects can do for the community?	Who addressed?
Arm artists with knowledge of City processes, access to funding for art in public places so that they feel empowered and that they have permission. Make processes more transparent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community leaders • Arts Advisory Commission
Foster mentorship between experienced and emerging artists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community leaders • Melissa Bennett
Facilitate cultural exchange with visiting artists. This can bring new skills in to the community and ensure we aren't in a cultural bubble.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colina Maxwell
Grow Hamilton into a City where art can be found everywhere and grassroots “guerrilla” art in public places is encouraged - serendipitous discoveries. Encourage and facilitate whimsy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community leaders • Tor Lukasic-Foss/Claire Lougheed
<p>Properly funded and well-rounded community and temporary art programs - e.g. matching program and bigger grants for a smaller pool of artists - \$5 K minimum. Can encourage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More community-level projects. • Projects that are topical and responsive to contemporary issues. More open-ended projects. • Work in different neighbourhoods outside of downtown or big building projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kim Selman
Geographic diversity of temporary and community art projects. Placemaking in communities that don't have a strong sense of identity. Start with seed projects to show what is possible in areas not accustomed to art. Have patience as it may take a while to build culture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts Advisory Commission • Kim Selman • Art Spin Hamilton
Build story of Hamilton in the digital realm - “digital space making”. Augmented reality technologies will become common place in the next 10 years. Can commission digital pieces as temporary art - has a large tourist appeal. One advantage is that it avoids physical restrictions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community leaders
Market art in public places projects as tourism - facilitate projects that can draw photographers, Instagrammers, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community leaders • Creative Café
Empower communities by letting them know about opportunities and assisting them in navigating City processes (or simplifying them) - e.g. through a communication strategy, one-stop-shop/hotline and by precedent-setting project to demonstrate what is possible. Address fear that impulse to do work in the public realm will be stymied by regulation/bureaucracy. Consider how to reduce bureaucratic hoops - what is the bare minimum that is required?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community leaders • City staff • Art Spin Hamilton
Cultivate culture/sense of possibility amongst businesses/corporations regarding funding/commissioning art work in the public realm.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community leaders • Tor Lukasic-Foss/Claire Lougheed
More documentation of Art in Public Places projects - particularly community and temporary art. Past projects have rarely been documented or documentation is not publicly accessible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colina Maxwell
<p>In 5 years, nearly 40% of the population will be living with a disability. There is an opportunity for the arts to embed accessibility in our process to ensure inclusion - we could be leaders to demonstrate possibilities to the business community.</p> <p>Technology can assist in making art in public places accessible (both for those with disabilities and new English language learners). Some possible approaches:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include more interpretive signage with accessibility in mind - e.g. an audio component. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community leaders • Colina Maxwell • City staff • Yvonne Felix

Thinking about the next 5 to 10 years, what are the most meaningful things that new Art in Public Places projects can do for the community?	Who addressed?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate wifi cellphone beacons to allow for the use of specialty phone applications. • Ensure there is a power source nearby (e.g. plug for breathing apparatuses). • Consider environment around the piece re: accessibility - no barriers, ramps, cane friendly. • For those unable to venture into public space or experience the work in person - could use street maps to create a virtual tour online. A more advanced approach: digital weight scanning / haptic simulators of public art collection paired with an interpretive map. • Consider: closed captioning, tactile works, sound works, headphones, create means for work to be enjoyed in absence of stimulation. 	
<p>Hamilton has the highest proportion of people living with disabilities in Ontario - including artists. Consider accessibility in Art in Public Places process, e.g.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking whether artists require accommodation as part of the Call for Artists process. • Opening up ways of submitting - e.g. allowing for video/audio proposals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yvonne Felix
<p>Move beyond art works that are simply consumed visually - encourage more engagement and interactivity e.g. through digital. Could be done through partnerships (e.g. QR codes/“Public Art Bingo”). Incorporate time/performance - based art and create infrastructure for this to happen in public. Extend beyond the visual to the tactile, multi-sensory.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colina Maxwell • Arts Advisory Commission • City Lab students • Community leaders • City staff • Yvonne Felix • Creative Café
<p>Encourage work that is topical/ties to larger culture.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colina Maxwell • Kim Selman
<p>Inclusivity: mental health; youth; elderly; people living with disabilities. Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) led projects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tor Lukasic-Foss/Claire Lougheed • Colina Maxwell • Yvonne Felix
<p>Design public spaces that are designated for public art - e.g. they are “prepped” for it. Incorporate in Secondary Plans - consider - where are spaces for public art? Consider pre-zoning for temporary art where safe.</p> <p>Think outside the box regarding spaces that are already available, e.g. farms and community gardens - these are already mapped and strong possible sites for public art, cemeteries, alleyways (private). Consider providing design guidelines/public art resource to private developers - what are the possibilities and what should they be considering?</p> <p>Engage artists in design process for buildings - e.g. through Integrated Art.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City staff • Creative Café
<p>Consider more projects that encourage alternative movement through the city - that are pedestrian and bike friendly and change the urban environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Art Spin Hamilton
<p>Works that explore sustainability/climate change or that employ sustainable methods should be given preferential treatment (e.g. through specific calls or a lens applied to all calls).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative Café

Comments Regarding Development of an Art in Public Places Vision Statement

Capture an emotional layer/questioning or critical of how we see ourselves and how we want to evolve. Ensure that the emotional value of art in public places be made more prominent as part of the Vision.

Participants

September 26, 2019

- City Lab students (McMaster students)
 - Hannah Lobb, Ameya Nair, Gurvir Chana, Salo Rodriguez Solarte, Ada Zhu

October 29, 2019

- Urban Indigenous Strategy
 - Shelly Hill (Senior Project Manager - City of Hamilton)

November 11, 2010

- Community Leaders
 - Leon Robinson (Visual Artist, Concrete Canvas Festival)
 - Mike Kukucska (Fabricator and Photographer, “HAMILTON” Sign Designer)
 - Petra Matar (Visual Artist, Architect, Hamilton Audio Visual Node)
 - John Smith (Media Artist, Hamilton OPTICKS)
 - Kerry Jarvi (Executive Director, Downtown Hamilton BIA)
 - Eli Nolet (Visual Artist, Arts Educator, Youth Advisory Committee)
 - Dope Chief (Visual Artist)
 - Stephanie Vegh (Visual Artist, Former Executive Director of Hamilton Arts Council)
 - Shirley Madill (Executive Director - Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery, Former Chief Curator - Art Gallery of Hamilton)
 - Queen Cee (Visual and Performing Artist, Community Artist)

Follow-Up Interview - Community Leaders

November 18, 2019

- Tor-Lukasic-Foss (Director, Programs and Education - Art Gallery of Hamilton, Artist)
- Claire Loughheed (Executive Director, Dundas Valley School of Art)

November 20, 2019

- Melissa Bennett (Curator of Contemporary Art - Art Gallery of Hamilton)

November 22, 2019

- Colina Maxwell (Executive Director - Centre [3] for artistic + social practice)

November 26, 2019

- Arts Advisory Commission
 - Councillor Jean-Paul Danko
 - Monika Ciolek
 - Janna Malseed
 - Annette Paiement
 - Lisa LaRocca
 - Monolina Bhattacharyya-Ray

- Ranil Sonnadara

November 29, 2019

- Kim Selman (Strategic Initiatives Lead - Cobalt Connects)

December 2, 2019

- City of Hamilton staff
 - Mike Field (Manager of Transportation Operations, Public Works)
 - Cynthia Graham (Manager, Landscape Architectural Services, Public Works)
 - Kara Bunn (Manager, Parks and Cemeteries, Public Works)
 - Rikki Frith (Project Manager, Neighbourhood Development, Health and Safe Communities)
 - Carlo Gorni (Coordinator, Urban Renewal Incentives, Planning and Economic Development)
 - Chris Herstek (Director of Recreation, Healthy and Safe Communities)
 - Christine Newbold (Manager, Community Planning and GIS, Planning and Economic Development)
 - Sarah Linfoot-Fusina (Cultural Projects Specialist, S.E.A.T., Health and Safe Communities)
 - Dina Urciuoli (Project Manager Facilities and Compliance, Public Works)
 - Robyn Ellis (Manager, Strategic Planning, Capital and Compliance, Public Works)
 - Jocelyn Strutt (Project Manager, Neighbourhood Development, Healthy and Safe Communities)

December 9, 2019

- Jordyn Stewart (Art Spin Hamilton, Artist)
- David Trautrimas (Art Spin Hamilton, Artist)

December 26, 2019

- Yvonne Felix (Public and Community Artist)

January 10, 2020

- Creative Café - CoWork at The Cotton Factory attendees:
 - Annette Paiement (Coordinator)
 - Debbie Ellis
 - Susan Barton-Tact
 - Karen Logan
 - Harrison Wheeler
 - Kamila Miszelska
 - Alyssa Tisson
 - Judy Marsales
 - Paize Usiosefe
 - Patty Lynes
 - Lesia Mokrycke
 - Shane Clair
 - Marta Hewson
 - Jerrod Hewson
 - David Hudson