

Town of Aurora

PUBLIC ART STRATEGY

2025-2029

PREPARED BY

Town of Aurora & Oddside Arts

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1.0 LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Town of Aurora acknowledges that the Anishinaabe lands on which we live and work are the traditional and treaty territories of the Chippewas of Georgina Island, as well as many other Nations whose presence here continues to this day. As the closest First Nation community to Aurora, we recognize the special relationship the Chippewas have with the lands and waters of this territory. They are the water protectors and environmental stewards of these lands, and as a municipality we join them in these responsibilities.

We further acknowledge that Aurora is part of the treaty lands of the Mississaugas and Chippewas, recognized through Treaty #13 as well as the Williams Treaties of 1923.

A shared understanding of the rich cultural heritage that has existed for centuries, and how our collective past brought us to where we are today, will help us walk together into a better future.

2.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Aligned with the Town's Cultural Action Plan, Official Plan, and Strategic Plan, the Public Art Strategy (PAS) will direct the development and implementation of a successful public art program in Aurora from 2025 to 2029. It establishes transparent processes for the administration and implementation of public art projects within Aurora's municipal boundaries that foster strong partnerships, embrace diverse perspectives, showcase artistic creativity, and prioritize accessibility.

3.0 WHAT WE STAND FOR

As an expression of culture, public art can deepen connections between and within the neighbourhoods where people reside, work and visit. The Town's PAS is guided by the knowledge that art serves as a reflection and integral part of our changing communities. It is imperative that municipally supported public art initiatives account for various experiences and perspectives, including communities that have been historically disenfranchised or underserved. A PAS centred on recognizing diverse perspectives and engaging with different lived experiences will ensure that public art in Aurora reflects the depths of our people and enhances our collective sense of belonging.

3.1 OUR VISION

While implementing the PAS, the Town will view the public art process as a community endeavour that builds bridges between diverse backgrounds, values and aspirations. The Town will strive to create a public art community of practice that supports the growth of local artistic talent, prioritizes an equitable engagement with our diverse communities, and centres accessible public art practices.



3.2 OUR VALUES

We value **Collaboration, Inclusion, Engagement, Sustainability, Connection, and Accessibility**, which will serve as the foundation for all stages of the public art process, including acquisition, community engagement, artist selection, and conservation practices.

We will:



Collaborate with community partners to ensure that public art projects align with the diverse perspectives of Aurorans.

Emphasize the importance of cultural and social **Inclusion** in public art initiatives, including for historically marginalized and underserved groups.



Maintain **Engagement** with community members throughout the public art process by focusing on education and mentorship, fostering community leadership and creativity, and establishing responsive feedback channels.

Support **Sustainable** public art practices that consider the environmental impact of public art and prioritizes local sourcing of materials used to create public art, wherever possible.



Highlight how public art can **Connect** Aurora's communities and visitors with diverse cultures and heritages, dynamic public spaces, the natural and built environment, and the local arts, culture and heritage sector.

Incorporate the belief in universal design that recognizes the broad diversity of people so that municipal public art projects are **Accessible** to residents and visitors.



4.0 DEFINING PUBLIC ART

Broadly, **Public Art** can be defined as **art in any medium created for, and placed in the public realm**. Examples of spaces where public art can be situated include parks, streetscapes, intersections, underpasses, facilities, or any other publicly accessible space. Public art can take multiple forms, including street furniture, art pavilions, murals, temporary or permanent sculptures, living art using integrated technology, and more. The Town understands public art as including an array of art forms and practices and is centred on the goal of embracing diverse experiences and amplifying those voices that have been under-represented within our public spaces.



Community Builds Community
mural by Moonlight Murals
Collective



Wooden pole carvings at John
Abel Park by Bobbi Switzer



Little Free
Art Gallery

More specifically, Public Art refers to original works of any medium that is:

A

Planned in alignment with the Town's strategic planning priorities, as well as the Public Art Vision and Values.

B

Informed by established processes that gain community feedback through a range of online and in-person engagement tools.

C

Created by one or more Professional Artists, with priority given to Artists with relevant knowledge of the Town, its diverse communities, and its histories.

D

Planned and executed for the specific purpose of being placed and experienced in a publicly accessible space.

E

Relevant to the site or context in which it is placed and experienced by the public.

Example: The 2024 Aurora FUTURE GROUNDS project produced 8 banners designed by youth artists.
Art: *Guided by the Waves* by Madison Kwok



Some Public Realm initiatives, such as community art projects, even when created or led by a professional artist, are not defined as public art if their acquisition does not follow the Town's established process.

Refer to **Appendix A** for additional definitions.

5.0 INVESTING IN PUBLIC ART

The Town may fund public art initiatives using three primary sources: Municipal Funding, Developer Investments, and Not-For-Profit Collaborations.

5.1 MUNICIPAL FUNDING

The Town's Official Plan (OP) recognizes the importance of public art to Aurora's built environment and its ability to promote tourism and contribute to the economic vitality of the Town. Furthermore, it states that "Council will promote the creation of public art that reflects the Town's cultural diversity and heritage by:

I

Encouraging public art initiatives on properties and within buildings under the jurisdiction of the Town;

II

Encouraging the inclusion of public art in all significant public and private sector developments, including areas of high pedestrian traffic and mixed-use developments;

III

Promoting the concept of, and actively soliciting, gifts of cash grants and gifts in-kind to the Town to implement public art initiatives; and,

IV

Requiring that 1% of the capital budget for all major Regional and local municipal buildings be dedicated to public art."

The Town may utilize the public art reserve and maintenance and conservation budget to (a) establish community engagement programs related to public art, (b) assist with artist selection and public art acquisition, and (c) maintain, conserve and deaccession public art.



5.2 DEVELOPER INVESTMENTS

Private funding for municipal public art often comes from developers or commercial investments. The Town's Planning and Development Services Department works to secure public art contributions through the development application review process. To help frame the review process, the Town shall encourage the inclusion of public art in significant developments in line with the objectives of the Town's OP. The inclusion of public art in developments provides community benefits by enhancing the public realm and streetscape.

Public art financial contributions are held within the Town's Public Art Reserve fund for future allocation toward eligible public art projects. All eligible public art projects are to be planned and undertaken by the Town as per the public art processes identified in the PAS. The Town is also responsible for the maintenance and conservation of the public art collection.

5.3 NOT-FOR-PROFIT COLLABORATIONS

Collaborating with local cultural not-for-profit organizations could provide additional funds for the Town's public art initiatives. By partnering with not-for-profit organizations, the Town could support grants unavailable to government agencies. These may include the Aurora Cultural Centre, local community organizations and groups, and external organizations that are valuable partners.

In addition to these three funding sources, in some instances, local businesses may provide financial or in-kind support for public art. In-kind support could include offering logistical assistance such as materials and studio space to support artists.

5.4 ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET

Relying predominantly on developer investments to fund public art means that some neighbourhoods will lack public art relative to others where development and growth is more prevalent. To ensure there is an equitable distribution of public art across Aurora, an annual operating budget is recommended to support public art in areas where no new developments or developer investments are planned. An annual operating budget could also be used to support local mentorships, regular programming and educational activities, marketing efforts, and seasonal or temporary pilot projects.

6.0 GOVERNANCE

6.1 CULTURAL SERVICES DIVISION

The effective management of the Town’s public art program requires various competencies that are not likely found in a single staff member. Therefore, a collective approach that includes cross-departmental collaboration and the occasional use of external expertise, is required. As the Town’s public art portfolio expands, staff will continually evaluate the skills and experience needed to successfully support the public art program.

Cultural Services staff is responsible for the administration of the public art program and implementation of the PAS and related policy. Staff will prepare annual workplans for Council approval with recommendations regarding potential opportunities for public art, including preferred site locations, public engagement strategies, selection panel membership, funding sources, and more.

Similar to the donation process followed by the Aurora Museum & Archives, staff will also review potential public art donations based on merit, condition, future conservation considerations, and other key factors, before determining its appropriateness for the Town’s public art collection.

6.2 TOWN COUNCIL

In addition to approving the PAS and corresponding Public Art Policy, Town Council approves the annual public art work plans prepared by staff, Art Selection Panel membership, as well as negotiated developer agreements that include public art provision terms.

6.3 ART SELECTION PANELS

Panels comprised of local citizens and art professionals can be formed on a project-by-project basis to review artist credentials or artwork concepts for selection. Panellists are paid a fee for their time unless otherwise contracted by the Town.



6.4 PUBLIC ART ADVISORY COMMITTEE

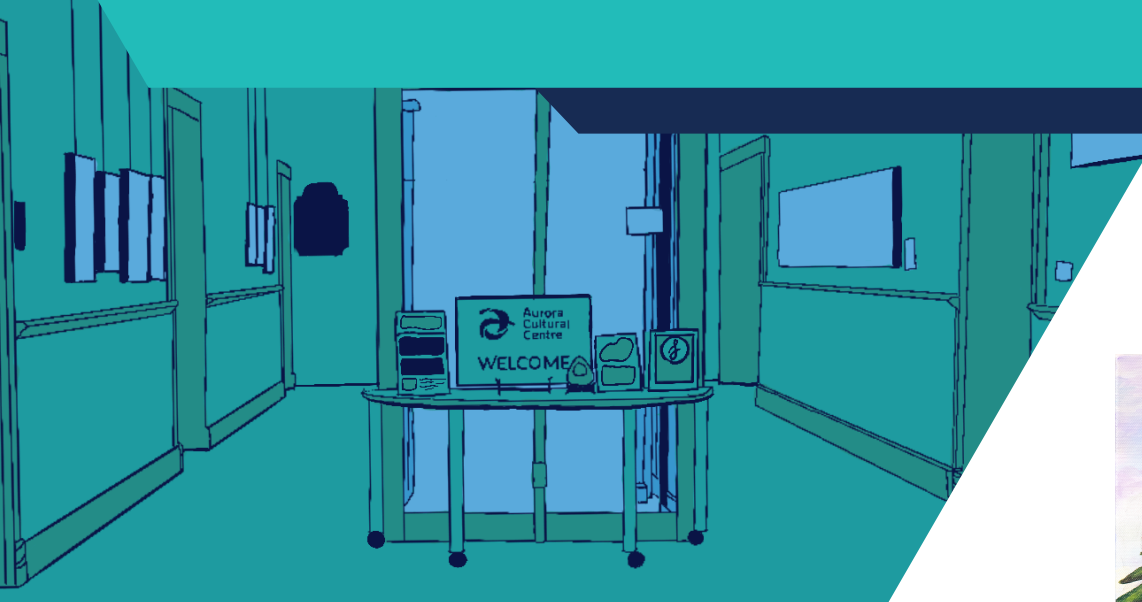
As the public art program matures, the Town may consider establishing a Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC) composed of diverse community partners, including:



The PAAC would help Town staff oversee the public art program to ensure it reflects diverse perspectives and addresses various community needs. The committee's responsibilities would include:

- Assisting in the development of annual work plans for Council approval.
- Reviewing and evaluating public art project proposals.
- Establishing project-specific selection panels that include residents, artists, community groups, historians, cultural leaders, and other relevant parties.
- Coordinating with other community groups and Town committees to align public art projects with related local strategic priorities.





7.0 PUBLIC ART ACQUISITION

An acquisition constitutes the addition of an object or work of public art into the Town's public art collection whereby ownership is transferred to the Town. The public art acquisition process involves acquiring artwork for public spaces through various methods, often involving a jury or committee to ensure transparency and quality. Public art that is already in existence will be integrated into the public art collection on a case-by-case basis. If existing pieces do not meet the public art definition and evaluation criteria, they will not be accepted, but they may continue to exist outside of the formalized collection or might be eligible for deaccession. Acquisition methods include:

7.1 COMMISSION

The Town directly hires an artist to create a specific piece of art for a public space.

7.2 PURCHASE

The Town purchases existing artwork from an artist or gallery guided by the Town's Procurement By-law.

Request for Proposals (RFP) and Call to Artists (CTA) should reflect the Town's commitment to amplifying diverse community and cultural narratives. The themes or guidelines for RFPs and CTAs must consider unique community dynamics and how they may be reflected in the public space. They should also encourage collaboration between artists and community partners to ensure that original works align with community values and aspirations.

Many municipalities use a jury composed of art professionals, community members, and subject matter experts to evaluate and select artwork.



Unity's Gilded Embrace
Sydney Achtermeier
(2024)

7.3 LOAN

The Town borrows artwork, at no cost, from another institution or individual for a specific period.

7.4 LEASE

The Town leases artwork, for an agreed upon fee, from another institution or individual for a specific period.

7.5 DONATION

The Town accepts a voluntary, ideally unconditional, gift of artwork intended for permanent or long-term display in a public space, without any compensation or nonmonetary consideration to the donor. Similar to the Aurora Museum & Archives' process, the following steps are to be taken regarding a potential public art donation:

1

Referral to complete an online Donation Inquiry Form.

2

Evaluation of the form by Cultural Services staff, and others as deemed necessary.

The following evaluation criteria are considered when assessing any proposed donation:

Connection to Aurora	Artistic merit
Condition	Material
Size	Storage factors
Future conservation requirements	Provenance

If the donation meets the Town's criteria, the accession process would begin. If it does not, the individual is informed in writing of the Town's decision not to accept the donation.

The Public Art Donation Review Process is further outlined in **Appendix B**.

The Public Art Process Map is outlined in **Appendix C**.

8.0 CROSS-DEPARTMENTAL COLLABORATION

As required, the Cultural Services Division will seek input from various other municipal divisions to provide feedback on certain topics related to public art. Some examples include:

- Negotiations with developers regarding public art funding (Planning)
- Advising on upcoming plans and projects and reviewing potential public art sites (Parks, Roads, Facilities)
- Program budgeting and implementation of municipal capital projects (Finance)
- Reviewing potential public art sites in streetscapes and transit corridors (Transportation, Planning, Economic Development)
- Reviewing public art maintenance procedures and assisting with collection assessment (Facilities)
- Preparing artist contracts (Legal)
- Record keeping and documentation (Records Management)
- Marketing and communication strategies related to call to artists, public art unveilings, etc. (Corporate Communications)

9.0 MAINTENANCE AND DEACCESSION OF PUBLIC ART

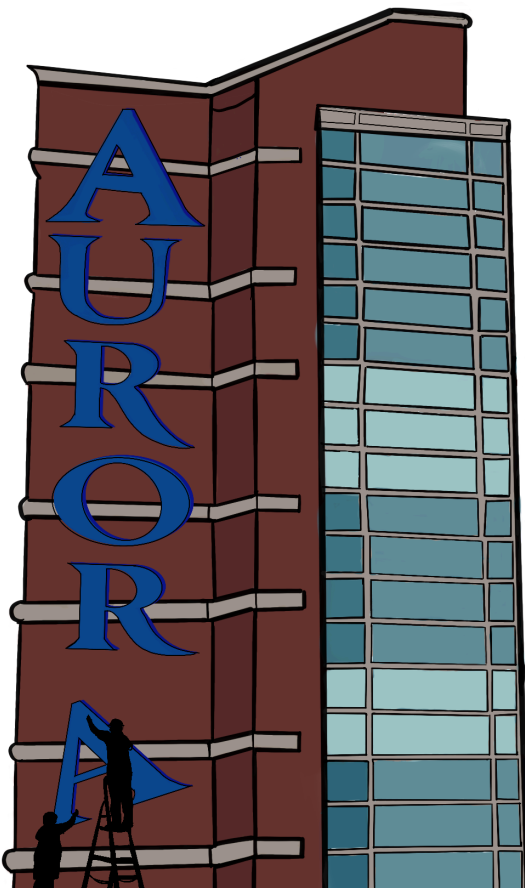
Works of public art come in many varied materials and forms which will have distinct types of maintenance and conservation needs. The following principles should be followed when caring for the Town's public art collection:

9.1 REGULAR MAINTENANCE

Maintenance plans must be established prior to the establishment of art in public space and must include routine inspections, repairs, and cleaning. Artists must provide maintenance manuals for their artworks and a minimum of 10% of every public art project budget must be set aside for future maintenance and conservation.

9.2 DEACCESSIONING

Deaccessioning is the formal process of removing an object from the Town's public art collection. The Town's deaccessioning process must account for community feedback and include procedures for community consultation and alternatives to removal, such as relocation or conservation. Artworks should only be deaccessioned, when necessary, based on safety, relevance, preservation reasons, artist conduct, or other related factors.



9.3 DOCUMENTING AND ARCHIVING

As part of the Town's public art process detailed records will be maintained, including artist information, historical context, and maintenance history. In doing so, the Town will ensure that its public art archives are preserved, which may inform future projects and decisions.



10.0 SITE SELECTION

To create a robust public art program that differentiates and highlights Aurora's uniqueness, it is important to prioritize sites where public art can be placed.

10.1 SITE SELECTION CATEGORIES

To highlight Aurora's unique character, 8 public art site categories have been identified:

10.1.1 Key Civic Sites, such as Aurora Town Square, Aurora Town Hall, as well as parks and other municipal facilities on highly visible sites.



Aurora Town Square



Aurora Town Park

10.1.2 Gateways into Aurora, such as Highway 404 and Wellington Street, Yonge Street and Henderson Drive, and Yonge Street and St. John's Sideroad.

10.1.3 Heritage Areas, such as Northeast Old Aurora Heritage Conservation District, and Historic Yonge Street.



A community art project in 2017 led by muralist Ted Hamer.

Canada 150 Milestone Mural located at Aurora Town Square.



Fleury Park



Aurora Promenade



Aurora Go Station

10.1.4 Parks and Trails, such as Sheppard's Bush Conservation Area, Oak Ridges Trail, and Fleury Park.

10.1.5 Major Private Developments, such as Addison Hall Business Park, SmartCentres Aurora North, and Aurora Centre. Some municipalities set minimum square metre thresholds to determine which new private development sites will receive public art (e.g., 100,000 square metres and over).

10.1.6 Transit Hubs and Corridors, such as Regional Arterial Roads, Major Transit Station Area, and Yonge Street Multi-use Path.

10.1.7 Streetscapes within Intensification Areas, such as Aurora Promenade, Cultural Precinct, and Downtown Aurora.

10.1.8 Sport and Recreation Facilities, such as Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex, Aurora Family Leisure Complex and Aurora Community Centre.



Tree sculpture by Jeff Taylor along Tim Jones Trail in the Aurora Community Arboretum. Created from a 20 ft stump of a felled 185 year old Bur Oak tree.



Aurora Community Arboretum

10.2 SITE EVALUATION CRITERIA

Public art sites will be selected based on the following evaluation criteria:



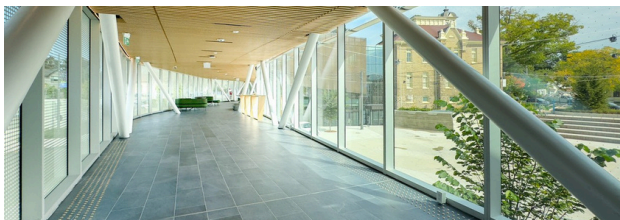
ACCESSIBILITY

Is the site accessible by various modes of transportation within Aurora?



VISIBILITY

Is the site easily visible and is it in proximity to high pedestrian activity?



RELATIONSHIP TO PROPOSED ARTWORK

Does the location possess unique architectural and/or natural features and will the addition of public art enhance the overall environment and public experience of this location?



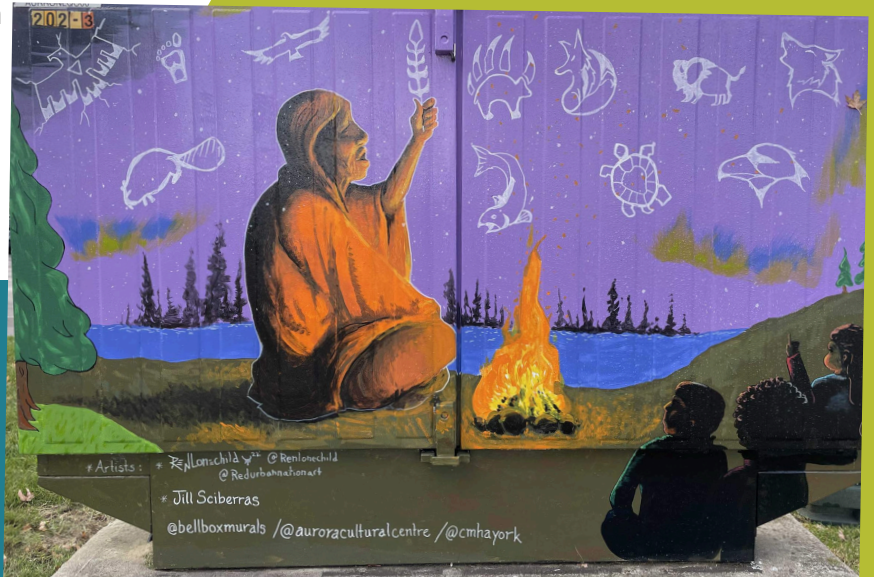
CAPACITY

Does the site possess the physical qualities and prominence that are conducive to hosting public art?

The 2022 Aurora Bell Box Murals Project responds to #83 from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report, which calls for Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists to undertake collaborative projects and produce works that contribute to the reconciliation process.

Theme: Language, Stories, & Connection to the Land
Mural by Ren Lonechild (2022)

Located at Pederson Drive
(Between Bayview Ave and Earl Stewart Drive).



11.0 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

When the community is meaningfully engaged, public art can be the cornerstone of neighbourhood enrichment, cultural identity, and public space enhancement. A strategic approach to public art creation should incorporate the community in cultivating art calls, selecting artists, and ensuring that mentorship opportunities exist throughout the project pipeline.

Effectively cultivating public art calls is about outreach and accessibility, but also inclusivity and representation. The Town understands that utilizing diverse platforms such as social media, community newsletters, and presentations to local organizations can attract a wider range of artists. This transparency and respect for the community's voice supports artist development and encourages meaningful participation.



Shifting Soil workshop facilitated by Oddside Arts, St. Maximilian Kolbe High School

11.1 PUBLIC OUTREACH STRATEGIES

In implementing the PAS, staff will utilize various public outreach strategies, including, but not limited to:

11.1.1 Art Ambassadors

The use of ambassadors can be integral to the public art process. These dedicated community members will promote public art, gather feedback, and engage with residents. Their role is vital for bridging gaps between the public and artists, fostering broader community participation, and strengthening the connection between residents and art projects.



A diverse range of community members can fill the role of an Art Ambassador, each bringing valuable expertise and connections. This includes individuals working in cultural institutions, like museum curators or art educators, who can offer insights and networks within the art world. School principals and educators can also play a significant role by engaging students and families in art initiatives. Small business owners committed to supporting local arts and culture can also leverage their networks

and resources to promote public art projects. Including Art Ambassadors in these varied contexts will help to ensure that a wide cross-section of the community embraces and supports public art initiatives.

It is important to note that community members serving as Art Ambassadors should be compensated for their time and efforts to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of their role.

11.1.2 Open House Meetings

Meetings should be held in the community to allow residents to discuss their vision and provide feedback at certain public art project milestones, such as upon artist selection, early art concept development, and final art proposal before fabrication begins.

11.1.3 Education and Programming

Education is key in enhancing the public's understanding and appreciation of the arts. Artist-in-residence programs will bring artists into the community for workshops and demonstrations. Public art tours and talks will provide insights into the history and significance of existing artworks. At the same time, partnerships with schools will integrate public art into educational curricula, fostering a younger generation's appreciation for the arts.



Organizing art events and festivals and adding public art to existing events will highlight public art and make it more accessible to the community at large. Implementing temporary or pop-up art installations in high-traffic areas will also highlight public art and encourage interaction with community members.



Aurora Bell Box Murals Project in response to Call to Action #83 from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report.

Pictured are Atessa Hooshvar and Sharon Rigby whose mural at 11 Mosley Street speaks to Indigenous history specific to Aurora.

12.0 SUPPORTIVE INFRASTRUCTURE

To support artists throughout the public art process, the Town will provide the following support based on the nature of the project and available resources, including staffing and budget:



In 2024 cultural arts organization, Oddside Arts, collaborated with Town of Aurora and the Aurora Cultural Centre to offer a public art mentorship opportunity to 8 youth.

12.1 EXPERIENCED MENTORS

The Town of Aurora acknowledges the historic disparities in the public art sphere. More specifically, we recognize that historically marginalized groups are not often given the opportunity to create, collaborate on, or select major artworks. Through mentorship, underserved and emerging artists are guided through the complexities of the public art process. Fostering collaborations between equity-deserving and emerging artists can be an effective way to drive innovation in the arts. The creation of mentorship programs could also allow for the acquisition of art from other provincial and international artists who would mentor local artists and provide recommendations on strengthening the local arts sector.

12.2 TRAINING AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Training on such topics as public art installation, community engagement, project management - including assistance with budgeting, logistics, and regulatory compliance - and related subject matter can enhance artists' skills and confidence. Providing these opportunities will also provide long-term benefits to the artistic community and alleviate some administrative burdens on artists to ensure smoother project execution.

12.3 NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES AND RESOURCE SHARING

The Town has strong partnerships with key local arts and culture organizations that it will foster to create effective and beneficial collaborations between artists and other arts and culture professionals.

In Comes the New Generation!
by Joycelyn Ng (2024)



These opportunities will build strong connections between artists, art administrators, the community, and other related parties.

Moreover, the Town will make it a priority to develop resource sharing infrastructure that allows artists to better connect with materials, equipment, and creative space.

12.4 APPLICATION PREPARATION WORKSHOPS

By providing clear instructions and supportive resources to help artists complete the application process, barriers will be reduced for emerging artists, in particular. These workshops would include in-depth instruction on how to complete the application as well as tips on portfolio building.



12.5 CREATE PLATFORMS FOR ARTISTS

The Town will work with local arts and culture organizations to create platforms for artists to showcase their work. Such platforms will include temporary exhibitions, art fairs, and community events. The Town will continue to consider additional platforms that will provide an effective way for artists to feature their work in creative and innovative ways.

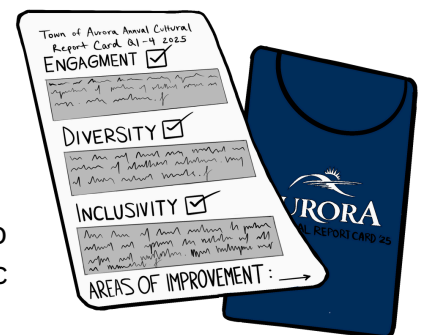
August Swinson painting a mural entitled *Before the Land was Broken* at the Aurora Museum & Archives.

12.6 PILOT PROJECTS AND SHORT-TERM COMMISSIONS

The Town will consider launching pilot projects and utilizing short-term commissions to stimulate public discourse about a place and lay the groundwork for potential longer term public art projects.

13.0 IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING

A system of ongoing feedback and assessment will be implemented throughout the public art process to allow for adjustments and improvements based on input from artists, mentors, peers, and community members. Surveys, questionnaires, and interviews are some of the evaluation tools to be used to determine the successes and challenges of each public art project, and this feedback will be used to refine future processes.



Adapting and innovating based on feedback will ensure that public art projects remain relevant and responsive to the community's and artists' evolving needs.

By adhering to a comprehensive feedback framework, the Town can create a public art landscape that enhances its physical surroundings and resonates deeply with the community it serves. Through transparent processes, diverse collaborations, and inclusive practices, the Town will seek to cultivate a vibrant and representative public art scene that enriches the lives of all residents.

The Town's PAS will be evaluated at the five-year mark, with recommendations made on ways to strengthen the program.

14.0 CONCLUSION

This Public Art Strategy represents a commitment to leveraging the transformative power of public art to create a more vibrant and culturally rich environment for all. The strategy's emphasis on fostering community engagement, building opportunities for local artists, and embedding inclusivity and equity in the public art process, will ensure that public art serves as a catalyst for positive change.

15.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank all residents, artists, cultural professionals, arts, culture and heritage organizations, and staff who have contributed to the development of the Public Art Strategy.

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Local Government	Mayor and Council
Oddside Arts	Nico Taylor, Co-Founder Queen Kukoyi, Co-Founder Allison Rolle, Cultural & Public Art Analyst Tracey Prehay, Cultural & Public Art Analyst
Bespoke Collective	Sabrina Richards Co-Founder & Director of Research & Planning
City of Toronto	Catherine Dean (Former) Public Art Officer
STEPS Public Art	Collin Zipp Public Art Manager
Artists	Clarissa M. Lewis Joycelyn Ng, illustrator for the Public Art Strategy

Town of Aurora Public Art Working Group

Andrea Araujo, (Former) Special Events Program Assistant, Town of Aurora
Lisa Hausz, (Former) Manager of Economic Development & Policy, Town of Aurora
Robin McDougall, Director of Community Services, Town of Aurora
Phil Rose, Manager, Cultural Services, Town of Aurora
Suzanne Haines, Executive Director, Aurora Cultural Centre
Grazyna Tonkiel, Music and Visual Artist
Jennifer Worden, Community Member

16.0 FEEDBACK

Your feedback is welcome. Please let us know what you think about the Public Art Strategy. To request a copy in a different format, or to send us your comments, please contact us at:



EMAIL

infotownsquare@aurora.ca



MAIL

50 Victoria Street, Aurora ON
L4G 1R3



VIEW THE PAS ONLINE

Please visit aurora.ca



APPENDIX A. PUBLIC ART DEFINITIONS

Acquisition is the procuring of public art through commission, purchase, donation, gift, or bequest.

Accession is the procedure of acquiring and recording a public artwork as part of the Town's Public Art Collection.

Art Acquisition Group refers to a team that focuses on acquiring art for a collection, whether it is a museum, gallery, or private collection. They may act as an advisory group for acquisition decisions or directly manage the process of finding and securing artworks.

Art Selection Panel is a group of people composed of art professionals and members of the community selected to serve as members of a jury to evaluate an artist for selection for an art opportunity.

Artist-initiated Artwork is when an artist proposes their own idea for a public art project or responds to a call for a public art project without a defined site and related parameters. An artist-initiated call could ask artists to respond to a specific topic of community interest or importance.

Artist Mentorship is when an emerging artist works with an established artist, on a project relevant to their area of work and interest, for which they are compensated for. Mentee artists should be selected by the established artist together with an art professional. The goal is to develop productive matches that help to develop emerging artists' professional skills and experience.

Artist Residency is when an artist works closely with a host organization, often over an extended period, to create artwork. Artists for a residency are typically selected through a credential call and/or interview selection process.



A collection of coasters designed by residents during a 2025 Doors Open art activity to launch the Aurora Public Art Strategy.

Calls for Artists is a document that describes a public art opportunity and invites professional artists or artist teams to apply for the project. There are three main types of public art calls: Requests for Qualifications (RFQ), Requests for Proposals (RFP), and Expressions of Interest (EOI).

A Commemoration is a work that is designed to honour a particular idea, individual or event.

Community Art is an artistic activity that involves community members and is based in a community setting. It is characterized by interaction or dialogue with the community and often involves a professional artist collaborating with people who may not otherwise engage in the arts.

Copyright, as defined by the Government of Canada, applies to original literary, dramatic, musical, and artistic works that are in a fixed material form...and means that a copyright owner has:

- The sole right to produce or reproduce that work or a substantial part of it in any material form.
- The sole right to perform that work or any substantial part of it in public.
- If the work is unpublished, the right to publish it or any substantial part of it.

De-accession is the procedure of removing an object from its site and from the Town's Public Art Collection.

Digital Public Art is temporary or permanent art that uses digital technology as an essential part of the creation, process, and/or presentation.

Equity-deserving (or equity-seeking) communities, as defined by the Canada Council for the Arts, are communities that:

- Face significant collective challenges, disadvantages, and discrimination in participating in society and achieving equal access, opportunities, and resources.
- Face marginalization created by attitudinal, historic, social, and environmental barriers based on age, ethnicity, disability, economic status, gender, nationality, race, sexual orientation, and transgender status.
- Actively seek social justice and reparation to address their history of marginalization.

Installation is a three-dimensional work of art that are site specific and often intended to transform the public's perception of a space.

Integrated Public Art forms a physical part of a building, structure, or landscape. If the site were to be redeveloped, the art would be as well.

Land Art (or Earth Art) are made directly within the landscape, usually using natural materials from the site. These works are often documented through photography.

Local Artist is an artist who lives or works in the Town of Aurora, or who can demonstrate a strong connection to the Town.

Maintenance Plan is created by the Artist and explains how an artwork accepted into the Town's Public Art Collection should be cleaned, maintained, and repaired during its lifetime.

Mural is any piece of graphic artwork that is painted or applied directly to a wall, ceiling, or other permanent substrate where the primary purpose is to aesthetically enhance the general surrounds as well as the surface it covers.

Public Art refers to original works of any medium that meet the following criteria:

- a) Planned in alignment with the Town's Public Art Vision and Values.
- b) Informed through established processes that gain community feedback through a range of online and in-person engagement tools.
- c) An original work that is created by one or more Professional Artists, with priority given to Artists with relevant knowledge of the Town, its diverse communities, and its histories.
- d) Planned and executed for the specific purpose of being placed and experienced in a public space.
- e) Must be relevant to the site or context in which it is placed and experienced by the public.
- f) Must be acquired using the Town's established processes and community engagement channels.

The **Public Realm**, as defined by the Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI), "is the publicly owned places and spaces that belong to and are accessible by everyone. These can include municipal streets, lanes, squares, plazas, sidewalks, trails, parks, open spaces, waterfronts, public transit systems, conservation areas, and civic buildings and institutions. It can be a passive environment, such as sitting at a café, or an active environment, such as cycling in a bike lane, or a combination of both. It can also be an interior space such as a library or a recreation centre, or an exterior space such as a multipurpose trail or a public square.



Professional Artist, as defined by the Canada Council for the Arts, is “an artist who: has specialized training in the artistic field (not necessarily in academic institutions), is recognized as a professional by his or her peers (artists working in the same artistic tradition), is committed to devoting more time to artistic activity, if possible financially, and has a history of public presentation or publication.”

Public Realm Elements are artistic elements in the Public Realm, that may or may not also serve a functional purpose, that are not conceived or created by a Professional Artist.

Public Art Collection includes works of public art belonging to the Town of Aurora that will be maintained and insured by the Town. The Collection will not include unsanctioned public art or public art that does not align with the Town’s definition of public art.

Stand-alone Public Art is a work of public art that is not a physical part of a building, structure, or landscape.

Temporary Public Art is created for a specific occasion, specific period or event and which is situated at a particular site on a temporary basis.

Street Art is art developed in public spaces that encompasses different media, techniques, and subject matter. Street art can include, but is not limited to, traditional graffiti, stencil graffiti, sticker art, wheatpasting, video projection, art intervention, flash mobbing, street installations, poster art, LED art, mosaic tiling, yarn-bombing, and tactical urbanism.

Social Practice Art also referred to as socially engaged art can include any art form led and conceived by a Professional Artist that involves people and communities in debate, collaboration, or social interaction.

A custom Aurora sign to celebrate cultural festivals and events in the Town of Aurora, including the holiday season.



APPENDIX B. PUBLIC ART DONATION PROCESS

Step 1: Public Art Donation Inquiry Form received by the Town

Step 2: Cultural Services staff review the Inquiry Form and proposed donation to see if it meets the following basic criteria:

- (a) an artist has created/will create the proposed artwork
- (b) the artwork has clear authenticity and provenance
- (c) compatibility with Town plans and policies
- (d) technical feasibility if there is a proposed site
- (e) artistic merit
- (f) physical condition
- (g) maintenance/conservation requirements

If the donation meets all the requisite criteria, the donor will receive a letter from the Town informing them that their donation is accepted contingent upon:

- (a) a signed donor release
- (b) donation appraisal (where a tax receipt is requested)
- (c) maintenance and conservation plan
- (d) unless waived by the Town, the donor is responsible for all costs related to the donation including, but not limited to, appraisal, transportation, engineering, site prep, installation and at least 10% of the value of the donation to cover future maintenance and conservation costs
- (e) review by the Art Acquisition Committee if one has been established

If the donation does NOT meet the requisite criteria, does NOT align with Town plans and policies, and/or is NOT feasible for the site, and the artwork's suitability cannot be adequately addressed, then the donor will receive a letter from the Town informing them why the donation will NOT be accepted.

Step 3: Cultural Services staff will draft a report on the proposed donation and present it to the Art Acquisition Committee, if one has been established, for review.

If the Art Acquisition Committee does NOT recommend the Town accept the donation, the Town will issue a letter informing the individual why the donation will NOT be accepted.

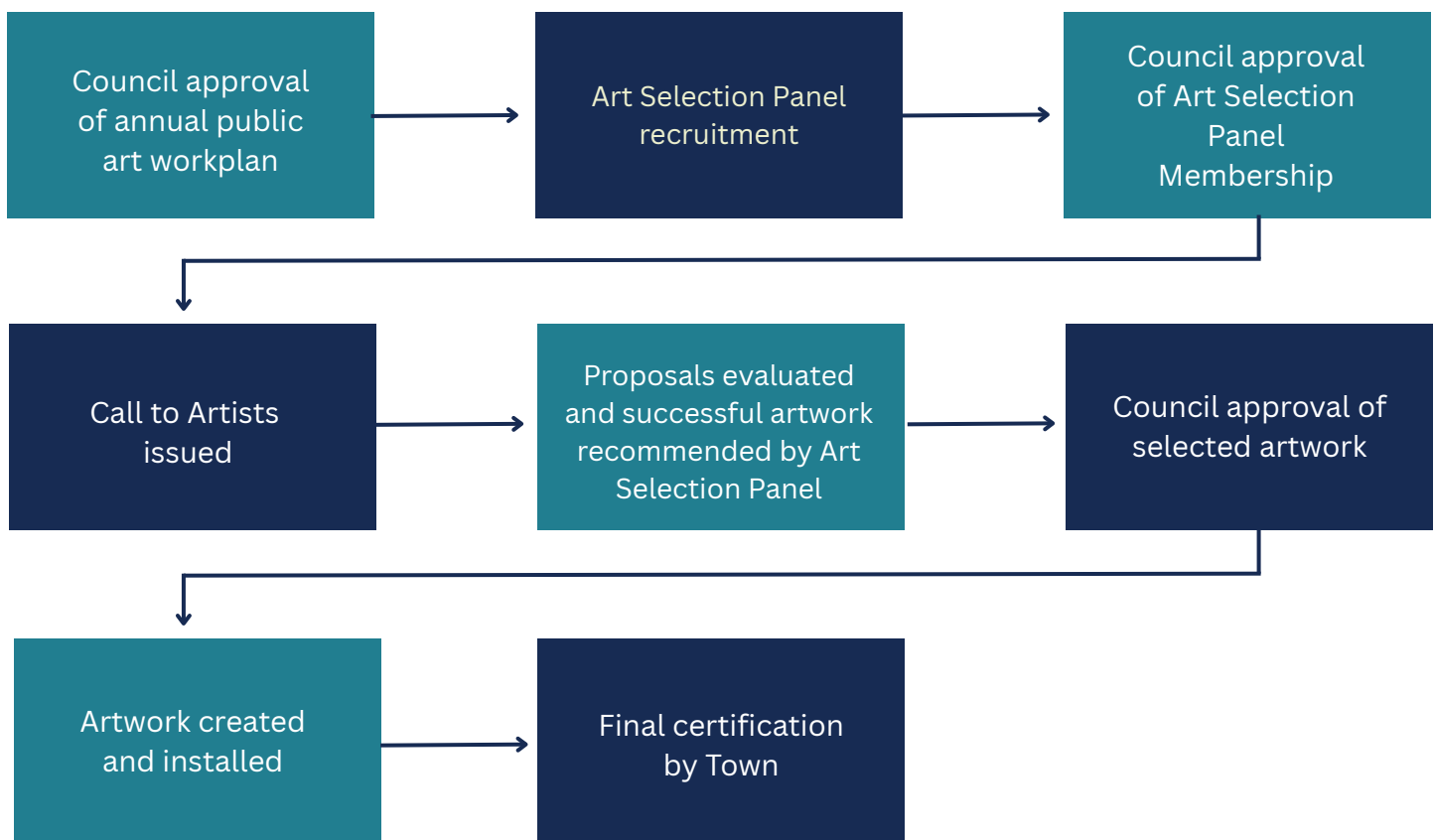
Step 4: Cultural Services staff will prepare an information report for Council regarding the acceptance of the public art donation.

Note: If the Town forms a Public Art Advisory Committee in the future, the PAAC will be asked to review all donation proposals based on the criteria above.

APPENDIX C. PUBLIC ART PROCESS MAP

The following diagram identifies the typical process to be followed for municipal public art projects:

Municipal Public Art Process



Note: some municipalities have processes for temporary art installations, which may involve different procedures than permanent acquisitions.

APPENDIX D. CONSULTATION AND FINDINGS SUMMARY

Contributors:

Glodeane Brown, Community Outreach and Production Manager, Mississauga Arts Council

Katriina Campbell, Public Art Officer, Economic Development and Culture, City of Toronto

Shuraine Otto-Olak, Public Art Coordinator, Waterfront Toronto

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Jenneen Beattie, Executive Director, Worth Gallery

Charmaine Lurch, Professor Gender Studies and Cultural Geography, Queens University

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Ashley Jane-Lewis, Postdoctoral Fellow, Toronto Metropolitan University

Shanice Bernicky, Carleton University

Julianna Smith, Interdisciplinary Artist, Toronto ON

Catherine Tammaro, Multi-disciplinary Artist, Toronto ON

Grandmother Kim Wheatley, Multi-Award Winning Artist and Educator

Rachel Fender, Programming Supervisor, Economic Development and Culture, City of Toronto

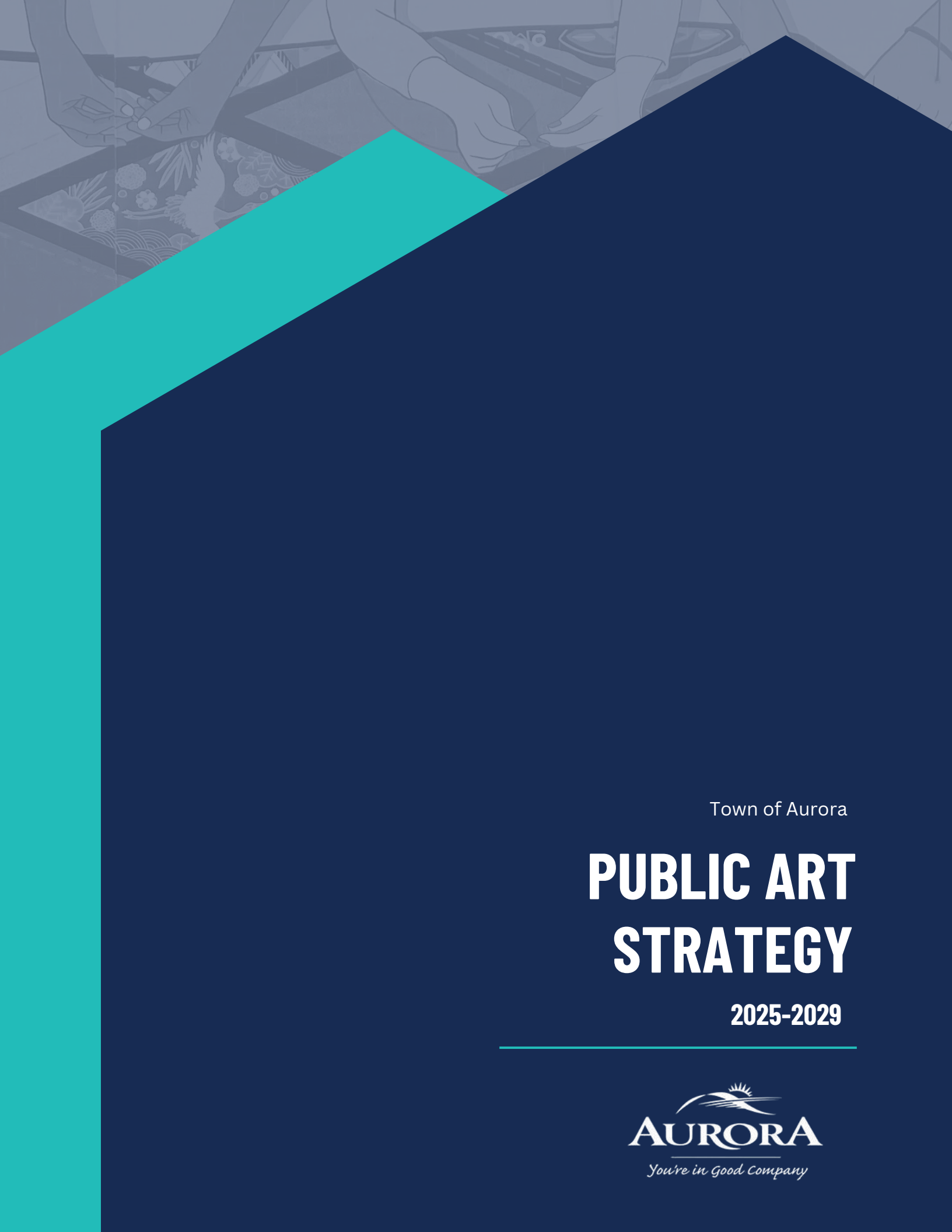
Key Themes and Recommendations:

- There are multiple projects suitable for smaller Towns like Aurora, including temporary and permanent structures (murals, sculptures, art pavilions, etc).
- Public art strategies may emphasize a wide-range of forms of public art.
- Public art projects can promote tourism and community pride through the prominence of art installations and cultural events.
- Public art projects should support local and emerging artists through the development of public art opportunities and mentorship programs.

- Promote opportunities for skill-building for artists regarding the integration of art into public spaces and parks.
- Public art strategy and policy should acknowledge and address the lack of diversity in the location's public art sphere.
- Community involvement and engagement in public art initiatives were cited as pivotal to the success of public art projects.
- Public art strategy and policy should consider integrating inclusivity and collaboration with cultural organizations and community stakeholders.
- Establishing transparent communication channels with community stakeholders was cited as pivotal to creating collaborative processes.

APPENDIX E. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- What is Public Art? - Lawrence Heights - Public Art Engagement
 - <https://lawrenceheights.oddsidearts.ca/public-art/>



Town of Aurora

PUBLIC ART STRATEGY

2025-2029

