

2025



North Perth **Public Art** Implementation Plan

*Creative
Placemaking through
Public Art*



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND PURPOSE

The introduction of public art into a community can have far-reaching community building, economic and beautification outcomes. The purpose of the North Perth Public Art Implementation Plan ('Plan') is to set the guiding principles and direction for the North Perth Economic Development Advisory Committee (NPEDAC), staff and the public in the introduction and management of public art and creative placemaking initiatives across the Municipality of North Perth.

This Plan will integrate community engagement findings and NPEDAC feedback to guide the implementation of public art within publicly owned and accessible public spaces across the municipality.

Scope: This Plan applies to municipally owned public spaces, both outdoors and indoors, including parks, trails, downtown areas, buildings and facilities.



St. Thomas, ON

2. ADVANTAGES OF A PUBLIC ART PLAN

A public art plan creates a framework for integrating art into public spaces, aligning with community values, and fostering civic pride. It helps to make public spaces more vibrant, inviting, and meaningful. A well-executed public art plan can also boost economic development and attract both residents and businesses. Below is a more detailed look at the benefits:

2.1. Enhancing Community and Identity:

- Reflects Community Values: Public art can showcase a community's history, culture, and unique identity, creating a sense of belonging and pride.
- Connects with Residents: Art can engage residents, sparking conversations and creating opportunities for collaboration and participation.
- Creates Welcoming Spaces: Public art can transform public spaces into more inviting and enjoyable places for everyone.

2.2. Economic and Social Impact:

- Boosts Economic Development: Public art can attract tourism, increase property values, and stimulate local businesses.
- Supports the Arts Sector: Public art programs can create opportunities for artists, contributing to the growth and development of the local creative arts sector.
- Improves Public Safety: Well-lit, vibrant public spaces can deter crime and create a more positive environment for residents.

2.3. Planning and Implementation:

- Provides a Framework: A public art plan establishes clear guidelines, processes, and priorities for commissioning and managing public art projects.
- Aligns with Other Plans: It can align with other municipal plans, such as Official Plans, to ensure that public art complements and supports other urban development initiatives.
- Facilitates Community Engagement: A public art plan should include mechanisms for engaging the community in the planning and selection of art projects, ensuring that the art reflects community needs and values.

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 Accession:** The process of accepting artistic work whether by commissioning, purchase, gift, or other means, into the Municipality's collection of public art.
- 3.2 Ad Hoc Public Art Panel (Panel):** A temporary group made up of municipal staff and community representatives convened to evaluate a specific public art project. A Panel of up to five (5) people will be convened for each selection process. The Panel will be comprised of 2 staff, 2 community members and 1 NPEDAC member. Responsibilities will include identifying potential locations for installation and developing public art evaluation criteria in alignment with municipal procurement requirements. The Panel may include a member of the artist community and/or youth.
- 3.3 Artist:** The designer/creator of an art work who has:
- (1) completed specialized training in their artistic field;
 - (2) is recognized as an artist by their peers as such;
 - (3) is committed to their artistic activity; and/or
 - (4) has a history of public presentation.
- 3.4 Call for Artists:** An issued notice of opportunity to artists that contains the selection criteria and information about an upcoming project and describes the selection and award process.
- 3.5 Commissioned:** An artwork created by artist(s), or in collaboration with artist(s), through a public process and existing in a publicly accessible municipally owned or managed location.
- 3.6 Deaccession:** The process of formal and permanent removal of an artistic work from the Municipality's collection of public art acquired on a permanent or semi-permanent basis.
- 3.7 Gift or Donation:** An existing or proposed work of art offered as a donation to the Municipality for placement at a public site under the Municipality's jurisdiction. All donations or gifts fall under the scope of the North Perth Donation Policy and will be considered if requirements of that Policy are met and it aligns with the intent of the accepted guiding principles and strategic direction of the Public Art Plan.

- 3.8 Public Art:** Original artworks, permanent or semi-permanent, in any medium or discipline, that are placed, installed, incorporated or performed in publicly accessible indoor or outdoor locations in response to the site and for the benefit of the public
- 3.9 Permanent:** Refers to public art that is intended to be displayed for a decade or more, supported by the Public Art Plan and added to the public art collection.
- 3.10 Public Spaces:** Municipally owned areas available and frequently used by the public and can include, but are not limited to, parks, open spaces, trail systems, waterways, road allowances, tunnels, boulevards, streets, courtyards, laneways, squares, bridges, building exteriors, foyers, Council Chambers, meeting rooms, and publicly accessible interior areas.
- 3.11 Semi-permanent:** Refers to public art that is intended to be displayed for variable periods of time.
- 3.12 Temporary:** Refers to public art that is intended to last two years or less.
- 3.13 Short-Term Duration Art:** An original work by an artist(s) that is created for a specific occasion, time frame or event and which is situated at a particular site on a short-term basis. The art may cover a range of forms including, but not limited to, visual art, digital art, sound art, and performance-based work.
- 3.14 Leased Public Spaces:** A space on public property which is leased to a company or member of the public. Lease agreements for municipally owned facilities, where in conflict with this policy, shall supersede the policy.



4. CONTEXT

4.1 Municipality of North Perth Corporate Strategic Plan 2023–2026:

The Plan identifies 2 Goals and Priorities that are linked to public art implementation in North Perth:

Goal 3 – Growth and Economic Development

Priority 3.1 Employers have Access to a Skilled Workforce

Action: Develop, attract and retain a skilled labour pool

Action: Increase the percentage of people that both live and work in North Perth.

Goal 4 – Community Planning and Development:

Priority 4.5 North Perth Offers a High Quality of Life for Residents of All Ages

Action: Preserve, enhance, and promote vibrant and attractive community spaces and downtowns.

Action: Promote, enhance and explore the development of destination amenities, trails and parks.

4.2 Perth County Official Plan (OP):

The approved 2025 OP does not specify locations for public art but encourages types/themes of public art. Section 4.8(i) states that: *Public art in the County shall be encouraged to incorporate themes such as the support and promotion of local history, economic pillars and civic pride.* Should the North Perth Parks and Recreation Services Master Plan be updated to include culture, the OP would carry forward those policies but would not recommend locations outside of what is recommended by the local strategy.

4.3 North Perth Parks and Recreation Services Master Plan:

The most recent Parks and Recreation Services Master Plan created in 2017 recommended creation of an Arts and Cultural Plan but did not reference public art specifically. The Cultural Plan has not been implemented to date.

4.4 North Perth Downtown Areas Community Improvement Plan (CIP) and Façade Improvement Program (FIP):

The CIP for the downtown areas in North Perth and the resulting FIP and Downtown Commercial Design Guidelines references public art grants to private property owners in the downtown areas of Atwood, Monkton and Listowel. It includes design guidelines and grants up to 50% of \$15,000 or 100% of \$3,000 to eligible projects related to facades or public access spaces respectively.

4.5 Donation Policy:

North Perth's Donation Policy applies to donations and gifts to the Municipality. All donations of public art or gifts to support public art installation to the Municipality will reference and follow this Policy.

5. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

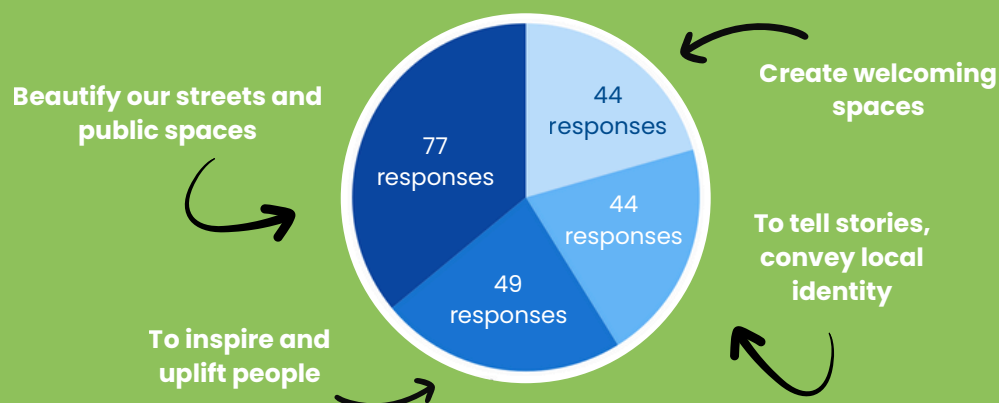
The following guiding principles give direction to staff and create a shared foundation for implementing the Plan:

- 5.1 Responsibility:** Economic Development staff within the Strategic Initiatives department, or their designate, will implement the Plan in accordance with requirements of the Procurement By-law. External public art experts will be utilized to support as expertise and resources dictate.
- 5.2 Maintenance:** Maintenance of municipally owned public art will be planned for as 10 % of the capital costs of the project. Future costs will be considered as part of facility or departmental operational costs through the annual budget process.
- 5.3 Insurance:** Insurance will be held by the Municipality for permanent and temporary public art as approved by the Finance Department. A deductible is expected.
- 5.4 General Exclusions:** The Plan does not pertain to directional elements such as signage, municipal graffiti management in public spaces, work on private spaces, special events, heritage or interpretive plaques.
- 5.5 Budget Consideration:** A capital budget allocation will be presented by staff to North Perth Council for consideration annually to implement the Public Art Plan.
- 5.6 Internal Department Projects:** A portion of the budget (5% up to \$5,000) will be held for internal municipal departments projects (ie: North Perth Public Library) and must align with the guiding themes, types and priorities identified in this Plan. Projects must be submitted to Strategic Initiatives department 3 months prior to budget preparation.
- 5.7 Accessibility:** Public Art will be accessible to all.
- 5.8 Quality of Art:** Public Art that is acquired demonstrates a commitment to excellence and craftsmanship, creativity and innovation.
- 5.9 Variety:** Public Art will be in various art mediums, types, sizes and locations.

6. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS

In the summer of 2024, public consultation using the Municipality of North Perth engagement platform 'Your Say North Perth' surveyed residents on their perceptions and preferences regarding Public Art initiatives both in general and in North Perth. Over 150 surveys were submitted across all age categories. Notably, 35% was received from young adults under age 24 and close to 50% from those under 34. Over 80% of respondents want to see more Public Art in North Perth. The following summarizes key findings and preferences from the engagement that has informed the current Plan and implementation of public art in North Perth. Projects that incorporate more than one type of art or theme will be utilized, where feasible. Additional comments and insight will be referenced in planning ie: specific to a specific art type etc. Opportunities for future engagement will be sought from the public including artists, youth, career starters, residents, and visitors as appropriate.

6.1 Most important Reasons to Invest in art in North Perth:



6.2 Key Themes & Characteristics for public art in North Perth (not ranked order):

- **Community identity:** Representing North Perth's sense of strength, resilience, and the balance between rural roots and modernization.
- **Artistic ideas:** Incorporating vibrant colors, graffiti art, and abstract murals, celebrating both tradition and innovation.
- **Historical significance:** Recognizing the area's history, such as local settler stories, significant events, and contributions during wars.
- **Agriculture and rural life:** Highlighting local farming, rural living, and agricultural heritage.
- **Environmental awareness:** Promoting sustainability, respect for the land, and rural landscapes; landscape, greenery/leaves/ grasses; calming green spaces.
- **Cultural diversity and inclusivity:** Welcoming; Emphasizing multiculturalism, indigenous history, Mennonite heritage, and the growing diversity within the community.
- **Family and recreation:** Including themes of family, sports and fun community activities.

6.3 Favourite Types of Public Art both before & after seeing images:



Gardens and Nature (31%): Gardens and sculptures that blend with nature were mentioned for creating calming, peaceful beautiful public spaces with multi-functional qualities.



Murals and Banners (27.9%): Murals are the most frequently mentioned and favourite public art, especially those that are colourful and vibrant, tell stories, depict history, or highlight local identity. Some respondents noted murals as memorable landmarks that beautify spaces and drive engagement with public spaces.



Sculpture (14%): Sculptural art installations, whether metal or interactive, appealed to many. Pieces that are functional (like seating or shade), educational, or serve as inspiring landmarks for the community are valued.



Interactive Art (7.7%): Many enjoy art installations that engage people of all ages, like sculptures, lighting art or murals designed to be interactive. These installations create opportunities for conversation and community gathering, while offering immersive experiences.



Themed Displays (other): Many admired recurring themed displays like art that changes with the seasons or have different exhibits.

It should be noted that mural placement requires structures or sites that may limit placement. The North Perth Façade Improvement Program involves grants for placement of murals on private property in downtown areas (per CIP) that align with the North Perth Downtown Commercial Design Guidelines. The Listowel BIA has plans for the next 3 years to implement large murals on private buildings. The themes and preferences identified during the 2024 Public Art engagement process will be referenced in the design development. Other community organizations will be approached to promote public art grant opportunities.

6.4 Location Preferences in North Perth:

The survey offered a variety of location types and the following location preferences were supplied in ranked order (most preferred to least):

1. **Downtown**
2. **Parks and playgrounds**
3. **A mix of all locations**
4. **Along hiking and biking trails**
5. **Facilities**
6. **Along major roadways**
7. **Sports fields**

7. LOCATION IDENTIFICATION

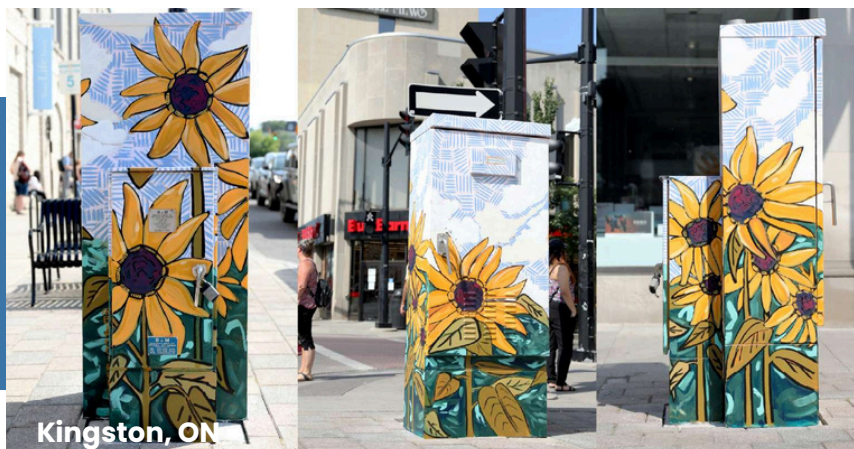
As noted above, public engagement identified favoured locations for public art in North Perth. Broad research of comparable public art policies and public art plans offer guidance on site selection for public art to meet objectives of access, beautification, and placemaking. A site review is recommended in Year 1 of the Plan to explore potential locations for public art across North Perth, including Listowel, Atwood, Monkton, Gowanstown, and Molesworth. This review will consider the factors listed below, as well as the most suitable types of art for each site.

Factors to be considered:

- Clearly visible and physically accessible by the general public;
- Located in an area of high pedestrian traffic to allow access to the greatest # of people;
- Does not impact existing utilities or natural features;
- Maintains a safe public environment as determined by structural, installation and maintenance staff;
- The creativity and intention of the artist aren't compromised;
- Enable ongoing maintenance;
- Will not impact visibility, entryways or traffic sightlines for cyclists, pedestrians or vehicles;
- Not affected by known upcoming capital projects.

General Site Characteristics:

- Trailheads and Trails
- Parks and open spaces across North Perth including Atwood, Monkton and Gowanstown.
- Capital Projects and Studies: infrastructure improvements, streetscape enhancements, planning studies
- Public, sporting and cultural facilities: Steve Kerr, Kin Station, Library
- Other Downtown sites



8. FUNDING SOURCES

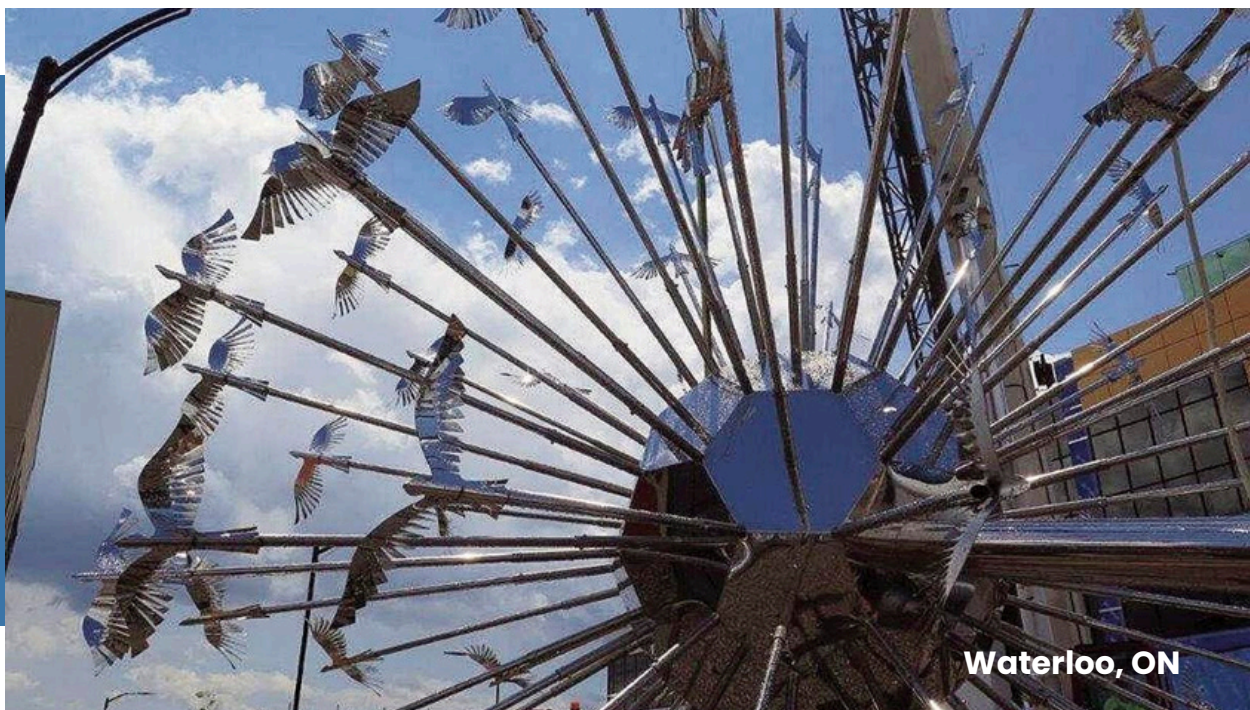
At present, municipal capital funding has been allocated to the North Perth Public Art Implementation Plan. In addition to partnerships that are noted in Section 10, other sources of funding may be explored such as:

Private sector investors, funders or sponsors: Businesses or individuals within North Perth or broader regions may have community interest value creating an attractive community in a broad sense and to attract and retain current and future employees.

Provincial and Federal Grant Programs: Annual or ongoing programs that aim to support arts and culture, community development, economic development or support economic recovery or growth are announced and exist. Prevalence varies but may be accessible.

National and Local Foundations: These are organizations that align with supporting arts and culture and provide grants and funding for specific projects.

Private Banks: Many national banks in Canada have programs to support communities that advance projects associated with culture.



9. ACQUISITION AND SELECTION PROCESS

The process for commissioning, call to artists and acquiring public art is based on principles of openness, equity and fairness. Public art may be acquired through a variety of methods depending on the site, project goals, budget and other factors. In all cases, the process will be in alignment with the North Perth Procurement By-law. Top submissions for a selection process will be given an honorarium to acknowledge competitive achievement and/or additional creative effort in meeting the procurement requirements.

Efforts will be made to distribute and circulate projects widely both within the local arts community and beyond as per the Procurement By-law.

Consideration will be given to maintenance requirements of the artwork, including medium, structural and surface soundness; inherent resistance to theft, vandalism/graffiti, and weathering; the cost of ongoing maintenance and anticipated repairs; and alignment with the advertised selection criteria.

An annual list of projects will be approved at NPEDAC in alignment with the approved budget, strategic priorities and public engagement findings.

A temporary Ad Hoc Public Art Panel of up to five (5) people will be convened for each selection process. The Panel will be comprised of 2 staff, 2 community members and 1 NPEDAC member.

Selection outcomes of the Ad Hoc Public Art Panel will be presented to NPEDAC for approval before fabrication and installation of public art.

The Plan will consider opportunities for public input on a project-by-project basis, such as:

- Community surveys for residents to review proposed art projects and provide feedback as part of the selection process
- Public surveys for residents to provide input on preferred locations for public art projects
- Other engagement methods, as appropriate, to ensure meaningful public participation in the public art process.

10. PARTNERSHIPS

Many public spaces have natural associations with businesses and community organizations. Partnership opportunities will be explored in early phases of public art implementation in North Perth. Partnerships in expertise, promotion, funding and feedback will be pursued. Types of partnerships to be explored include community organizations (business, community and sports organizations) and cross-sectoral businesses (agriculture, manufacturing, finance/professional etc.) The list above is not exhaustive but will initiate discussions.

11. IMPACT EVALUATION AND MONITORING

Measuring the impact of public art is a known challenge. Long-term indicators such as community economic investment and neighbourhood changes (such as reduced litter or crime) are difficult to attribute to public art. Instead, monitoring and evaluation efforts will be focused on:

- Testimonials on the impact of public art projects from the community, artists and selection committee members;
- Qualitative audience responses to public art, including whether or not the art provokes discussion;
- How public art is treated over time, including whether it gets “used” or vandalized, and whether the community takes the initiative to repair or maintain it;
- Media coverage;
- Levels of engagement with public art;
- Explore technological elements, such as QR codes, to evaluate engagement.



12. ART IMPLEMENTAION

This Plan outlines the initial approach for implementing public art in North Perth, incorporating key themes, locations, priorities and characteristics. The timeline and projects are flexible and can be adjusted as needed to reflect evolving priorities and opportunities.

	Action	Art Type or Priority
Year 1	Launch First Ad Hoc Public Art Panel	Introduce and implement first Panel for 1 st Public Art product
	Public Art Project – Steve Kerr Memorial Complex or other Tourism destination	Interactive art with Light based component ie: North Perth Lightbox letters sign
	Public Art Project – North Perth Public Library – Main Branch	Indoor Mural to replace current
	Partnership Exploration	
	Complete Site Review	
Year 2	Public Art Project - Character Square	Integrate Metal Sculpture, Local identity and Seasonal Landscape
	NP Public Art – Library Indigenous Art Series	Mural
	Borrowed Art Installations	Introduction to temporary Borrowed Art Exhibits/ Installments will be implemented
	Initiate Traffic Signal Control Box Wrapping	Use art or imagery to beautify existing infrastructure
Year 3	Public Art Project - Landscape Interactive - Livingston Park	Use existing park identified for development with Facilities to add Public Art into a planned redevelopment of the park