

Public Art Policy #66

1.1. The Town of Stratford strives to foster an environment that promotes creativity, boldness, and the pursuit of excellence in cultural experiences, public access to those experiences, and the preservation and enhancement of diverse cultural identities. The municipality recognizes that arts and culture contribute to the quality of life of its citizens and to the enjoyment of visitors. Further, it understands that a strong and vibrant cultural environment promotes a shared sense of identity.

2. Background

2.1. The Town of Stratford's art collection was founded in 2005 to promote the appreciation of art and to document the history of art and culture in Stratford by highlighting works created by local artists.

3. Policy Statement

3.1. Public art is artwork created specifically for public engagement and designed for public locations. It is meant to be engaging and to have a relationship with the immediate community and beyond. Common examples of public art would be large scale sculptures and artworks, multimedia artworks, exhibition or performance spaces or the incorporation of an artistic element into the actual infrastructure of the public space (walkways, murals, fountains, benches, etc.). The Town of Stratford recognizes that public art is integral to the cultural fabric and streetscape of a town.

3.2. An important aspect for the successful development and implementation of a public art program is municipal leadership. The Town of Stratford's public art policy provides a framework and funding for developing and incorporating public art in our community that contributes to the social, economic and environmental quality of life of our citizens.

3.3. The Town of Stratford will ensure a sustainable funding mechanism to initiate, develop, acquire, manage and maintain public art. This mechanism will also be used as an incentive to leverage funds from the private sector and other community stakeholders towards investment in public art projects.

3.4. The Town of Stratford will appoint an Arts and Culture Committee as a sub-committee of the Recreation, Culture and Events Committee with clear terms of reference and set of criteria.

3.5. Any department of the Town of Stratford that is planning new construction of public facilities (Examples: shelters, fences, playgrounds, storage buildings, etc.) or major additions and/or renovations will consult with the Arts and

Culture Committee to identify opportunities to include artful elements into the project.

4. Guiding Principles

4.1. Public art:

- reflects our diverse cultural character and celebrates our living heritage
- builds a more interesting, compelling, and visually rich community
- stimulates economic and cultural development by making the community a great place to live, work and create
- presents a reflection of our cultural richness to visitors
- bears witness to the vibrancy of our community
- promotes professional artists and showcases their work

4.2. Public art exists in a wide range of sizes and media. It can be found indoors and out. It can be durable or ephemeral. It can serve a wide range of purposes from making bold statements about identity to enhancing the appreciation of natural spaces to provoking new thoughts to simply providing a moment of delight. The Town of Stratford values including a wide mix of different types of public art in its collection.

5. Definitions

5.1. “Public art” means artwork created specifically for public engagement and designed for public locations. It is meant to endure and to have a relationship with the immediate community and beyond. (Examples: large scale sculptures, artworks, gallery, exhibition or performance spaces, the incorporation of an artistic element into the actual infrastructure of the public space, such as walkways, murals, etc.).

5.2. “De-accession” means the process of permanently removing, relocating to another jurisdiction, or destroying public artwork from the public art collection.

5.3. “Applicable capital projects” includes new building construction, major additions and/or renovations to existing buildings, and significant park development projects by the Town of Stratford.

5.4. “Non-applicable capital projects” includes road works or other service infrastructure projects (e.g. roads, sewers, etc.).

6. Funding

6.1. Subject to the annual budget approval process, the Town of Stratford will allocate funds annually for the purpose of increasing the presence of art in the Town of Stratford’s public spaces.

6.2. The Town of Stratford will also establish and maintain a Public Art Reserve Fund that will contribute an amount representing 1% of the Town’s

contribution to the total budgeted non-land costs of applicable capital projects. Applicable projects include new building construction, major additions and/or renovations to existing buildings, and significant park development projects by the Town of Stratford. Road work, water services, storm or sanitary sewer work or other service work or infrastructure projects are not applicable.

6.3. **The 1% Town of Stratford contribution shall be capped at \$50,000 per applicable capital project.**

6.4. The funding will specifically be used to cover the costs of:

- Planning, design, fabrication, purchase, installation and maintenance of public art
- Leveraging, partnering, and incenting the private sector and other community stakeholders
- Costs related to administering a process such as a call to artists, competition, or commissioning of an arts project

6.5. The funding will not be used for the following:

- Land purchase, furnishings, and portable equipment (audio visual equipment, computers, etc.)
- Art objects that are mass produced and of generic design
- Those items that contribute to the asset base and normal operating expenses of a department, commission or town asset, such as a museum or gallery, or a private cultural institution
- Artwork acquired through third-party owners, such as private collectors or auction houses
- Architects' fees, except in such cases where the public art component significantly changes a project architect's scope of services

6.6. The Town of Stratford will strive to identify and secure additional sources of funding from other appropriate resources in order to complement the amount that the town has committed. These sources may include other levels of government, agencies, private corporations or individuals.

7. Identification of Projects

7.1. The Arts and Culture Committee will work collaboratively with the Town of Stratford, experts in the community and citizens to develop and review a Public Art Strategic Plan every 5 years. This plan will identify and prioritize potential projects and sites within the Town as well as identify potential partnerships with the private and public sector and other community stakeholders. This plan may also be revised at any time to include previously unidentified eligible public art projects.

8. Initiation of Projects

- 8.1. Using the Public Art Strategic Plan as a guide, the Arts and Culture Committee will, from time to time, initiate a project to commission or acquire public art.
- 8.2. Criteria to be considered in initiating a project include:
 - Budget, including balancing immediate and longer term needs
 - Feasibility, including the capacity of the town to manage the project and maintain the finished work
 - Location, including consideration of priority areas
 - Balancing the public art collection
 - Impact and potential for community engagement
 - Diversity of voices and audiences
 - Creation of opportunity for local professional artists
- 8.3. Prior to initiating a project, the Arts and Culture Committee will consult with stakeholders to ensure that the concept is as strong as possible. The scale of consultations depends on the size of the project and the sensitivity of the location or nature of the project. Stakeholders include:
 - Professional artists
 - Other Town of Stratford departments
 - Residents
- 8.4. For projects with budgets over \$20,000 the Arts and Culture Committee is required to hold community consultations prior to initiating the project.

9. Selection Process

- 9.1. Once it has been determined that a public art project shall go forward, the selection of successful proponents may be a result of a direct commission, an invited competition, or an open competition-call to artists. The Arts and Culture Committee will be responsible to review submissions, make the initial selection(s), and make recommendations to the Recreation, Culture and Events Committee. The Recreation, Culture and Events Committee, taking the Arts and Culture Committee recommendations under consideration, will forward its recommendations to Stratford Town Council for final approval.
- 9.2. The following criteria will be considered during the selection process of an artwork. Some degree of flexibility may be required on occasion to accommodate the diversity of proposals:
 - 9.2.1. Excellence: The work recommended for acquisition by donation or purchase should be of high quality.
 - 9.2.2. Local and Regional provenance: Preference is given to local and regionally significant artists and subjects. Other high quality works from artists outside of the region may also be considered.
 - 9.2.3. Artistic merit: The artwork should reflect the best work of the artist.

- 9.2.4. Art media: All art media will be considered.
- 9.2.5. Relevance and compatibility: Artworks should reflect the intent and objectives of the Town of Stratford's Art Acquisition Policy and should be compatible in material, form, size and content with their surroundings.
- 9.2.6. Public Safety: Artworks should not pose any safety hazard to the public.
- 9.2.7. Size: Artworks should be of a size that can be accommodated in a potential display location, and should be reasonably portable for moving and exhibition purposes, with the exception of those pieces acquired for permanent installation in a specific public venue.
- 9.2.8. Original artworks: Only original artworks will be accepted into the collection, unless exceptional circumstances determine otherwise.
- 9.2.9. Condition of work: The artwork considered for selection must be in excellent condition, preferably ready for exhibition.
- 9.2.10. Budget: Financial implications including the need for ongoing maintenance, storage, installation and relocation of a piece will be considered during the acquisition evaluation process.
- 9.2.11. Diversity of collection: To ensure that the collection contains works from a variety of artists and styles, preference will be given to artworks and styles that have not already been selected in the past.
- 9.3. When choosing among a number of works under consideration, at the same time, for inclusion in the collection, a points system, reflecting the criteria listed above, will be used to rank the works.
- 9.4. In the case where an acquisition is being made of an artwork valued in excess of \$1000, the selection committee must include at least one member who is a recognized professional artist, a person working in a curatorial position in a recognized arts institution, and/or an accredited arts appraiser.
- 9.5. The Town of Stratford may, at its discretion, accept or decline any offers of artwork donations or purchases for the collection.
- 9.6. Public art that is acquired by the Town will form part of the Town of Stratford's art collection, and will be administered and monitored by the Recreation, Culture and Events Department. Maintenance of the public art collection is the responsibility of the Town of Stratford. A joint assessment of every piece in the art collection will be made annually by staff assigned to arts and culture and the Department of Public Works to determine what maintenance needs to

be done and whether that maintenance can be done by Town staff or needs to be outsourced to a specialist.

9.7. In order to maintain an integrity of space, once an artwork is installed in a specific location, the Town of Stratford endeavours to ensure that the area surrounding the artwork be kept free of any, signage, object, snow or debris that may intrude upon the artwork.

9.8. Gifts, donations and bequests of public art shall be considered in a manner similar to all public art proposals. Each gift, donation or bequest shall be reviewed by the Arts and Culture Committee to assess artistic merit, site suitability and context, durability and maintenance requirements, financial implications, public safety and liability. Stratford Town Council will make the final decision.

10. Donation of Artworks

10.1. Donations of artworks may be made to the Town of Stratford's art collection, following the guidelines below.

10.1.1. The donor is required to review, complete and sign the Art Donation Proposal form (Appendix A) in order for the proposed donation to be reviewed by the Stratford Arts and Culture Committee.

10.1.2. Artworks offered to the Town of Stratford will be reviewed by the Arts and Culture Committee based on the selection criteria listed in section 8.2 of this policy.

10.1.3. Should an artwork be accepted into the collection, the Town of Stratford will prepare all necessary documentation to complete the transaction.

10.1.4. Should an artwork not be retained for the art collection, the donor will be advised of the decision in writing.

10.1.5. Appraisals are the responsibility of the donor, unless agreed otherwise by both parties.

10.1.6. If the value of the artwork exceeds \$1,000, an official appraisal by a recognized appraiser is required. The Arts and Culture Committee, at its discretion and expense, may seek an additional appraisal from a second recognized appraiser prior to accepting an art work.

10.1.7. When an appraised gift is accepted into the Town of Stratford's collection, a tax receipt will be issued to the donor.

11. Purchasing Artworks

- 11.1. Based on financial resources available, the Town of Stratford may purchase artworks in accordance with the acquisition guidelines of this policy.

12. De-Accessioning of Public Art

- 12.1. De-accessioning is the process of permanently removing, relocating to another jurisdiction, or destroying public artwork from the Town of Stratford art collection. The Town of Stratford Public Art Reserve Funds the right, and responsibility to de-accession public art. All reasonable efforts shall be made to rectify problems or relocate the artwork where appropriate.

- 12.2. De-accessioning will be considered for works meeting the following criteria:

- Works that require excessive maintenance.
- Works in very poor condition and of insufficient value to warrant extensive restoration.
- Undocumented works.
- Works existing in multiple copies.
- Works that turn out to be inauthentic.
- Works not legitimately acquired.
- Accidental loss or theft of an artwork that can be verified.
- Works that are not or rarely on display due to a lack of suitable display venue.

12.3. De-accessioning Methods

- 12.3.1. The Town of Stratford may dispose of works and other items in its collection by selling, exchanging, donating or disposing of them. The Town of Stratford will only use the de-accessioning proceeds to make improvements to the collection or to purchase works for the collection.

- 12.3.2. Before considering other methods of disposal, the Town of Stratford will endeavour to contact the donor or legal heir of any artwork to be de-accessioned to give them the opportunity to re-acquire the artwork as long as it does not violate the original terms and conditions of the donation.

- 12.3.3. The Town of Stratford will select an appropriate method of de-accessioning of the artwork, including offering the artwork to a cultural institution or other non-profit organization; selling the artwork through a public sale or auction; or, as a last recourse, destroying the work.

- 12.3.4. All de-accessions or disposals will be fully documented and the information permanently maintained in the collection records.

12.4. De-accessioning Procedure

- 12.4.1. Town of Stratford staff will submit a recommendation to de-accession an artwork to the Stratford Arts and Culture Committee for review.

12.4.2. All recommendations to de-accession an artwork must be accompanied by a condition report and proposed method of de-acquisition.

12.4.3. Should the Arts and Culture Committee accept the recommendation of staff, it will forward it to the Town's Heritage Committee for ratification

13. Loans

13.1 The Town of Stratford will not have a loans program at this time.