

# Memorandum

To: ACEDAC Members

Date: Thursday, June 12, 2025

From: Quyen Hoang, Public Art Program Lead

File: #2713889

Subject: Public Art Plan (2026-2036) Progress Update

## Purpose

The purpose of this memo is to:

- Provide ACEDAC background information regarding the Public Art Plan;
- Share an update on the progress of the Plan;
- Receive feedback from the ACEDAC regarding the draft content.

## Background

In 2018, a draft public art plan was developed and presented to Council. This Plan was subsequently referred back to staff and the Public Art Advisory Committee for further consideration and development. Council directed staff to further develop the Plan to include non-colonial histories; the interests of Indigenous, under-represented and marginalized communities; and specific histories related to labour and industrialization.

In 2022 a revised Public Art Policy was adopted by Council that reflected the City's commitments to equity, reconciliation and social justice. With this work complete, staff re-engaged in the development of a Public Art Plan that was to build on the guiding principles of the new Policy alongside Council's 2018 direction. The Policy's guiding principles are as follows:

### Value

The Public Art Policy and supporting processes value the role of artists and public art in civic life. Artists should be trusted and supported to ask questions and take risks. Public art engages history and place and has the capacity to create dialogue and inspire social progress.

### Respect

The Public Art Policy and supporting processes ensure respectful practices for artists and their rights, for the land and environment and for everyone involved.

### Reconciliation

The Public Art Policy and its supporting processes reflect a commitment to Reconciliation and recognize the rights of Indigenous peoples. Public art is planned, developed and executed on the unceded territory of the Halkomelem speaking peoples and has a responsibility to decolonize its practices and ensure the voices, traditions and knowledge of the Halkomelem speaking peoples are respected and represented on their lands.

### Equity

The Public Art Policy and supporting processes commit to anti-oppressive, anti-racist and anti-assimilation approaches and strive to ensure that all artists and community members are represented and have opportunities to participate, access and experience public art.

### Capacity Building

The Public Art Policy and supporting processes commit to developing artists through programs, projects and educational opportunities that foster learning and build capacity.

#### Innovation

The Public Art Policy and supporting processes encourage and foster brave, experimental and innovative ideas and approaches.

#### Stewardship

The Public Art Policy and supporting processes promote responsible management and stewardship of the funding for the development and implementation of public art projects as well as the maintenance and conservation of artworks in the Public Art Collection and the ongoing engagement with public art.

On April 25, 2022, Council endorsed the development of this new plan and approved funding to hire a consultant team to facilitate the process.

The new Public Art Plan is being developed by two consulting firms: AARTPLACE led by Anabella Alfonzo and CMCK Public Art, led by Ciara McKeown, with support from Ryan Rice, as the Engagement and Indigenous Relations Advisor.

### Public Art Plan

The 2026-2036 Public Art Plan will:

- Provide a clear vision for New Westminster and set a direction for the Public Art Program for the next ten (10) years.
- Inform the development and prioritization of new projects, define clear goals and outcomes and guide future decision-making and resource allocation.
- Support opportunities to share the city's history, diversity and its journey towards reconciliation while supporting the interests and practices of artists engaged in public art.

### PARTIAL DRAFT PLAN OVERVIEW

#### Vision Statement

Public art in New Westminster creates opportunities for artists and communities to experience and engage with the city in new and dynamic ways.

#### Principles

The Public Art Plan Principles build upon the Guiding Principles in the City's Public Art Policy to address public art past and present, to support City priorities, and to guide the future direction of public art in New West.

- **CONTEXT** (supports Policy principles of Reconciliation, Respect and Value)  
All public art respects and is sensitive to Indigenous ancestral legacies to the land. It also considers the layered histories and stories of place. Artists engage with the unique character and conditions of place in New West.
- **AMBITION** (supports Policy principles of Innovation, Value and Equity)  
Public art is bold, pushes beyond the boundaries of the typical and challenges the status quo. It empowers artists to do their best work (quality) and engages in cultural, political and contemporary art discourses and conversations.
- **STEWARDSHIP** (supports Policy principles of Stewardship, Innovation and Equity)  
New voices, artistic practices and mediums are represented, balancing sustainable, purposeful growth of the collection through meaningful direction.
- **RELATIONSHIPS** (supports Policy principles of Value, Respect, Reconciliation)  
Build trust by listening and engaging with a diversity of voices and perspectives to sustain meaningful relationships that are reciprocal.

- **SUPPORT** (supports Policy principles of Capacity Building, Value and Respect)  
Public art projects have robust support structures that ensure artists are not isolated in navigating their work with the city. Cultural safety and care are prioritized, knowledge and expertise are shared. Budgets and fees offer fair compensation for all arts professionals involved in the program.
- **EQUITY** (supports Policy principles of Equity, Reconciliation and Capacity Building)  
Further equity and inclusion in public art processes by removing barriers to increase access to opportunities, adapting procurement methods and broadening types of opportunities and methods of selection.

### Goals

The following Goals are for public art in New Westminster over the next ten years. Alongside the Principles, these goals form the foundation that will guide all aspects of public art commissioning and programming.

#### Build Education and Awareness

- Increase staff knowledge to build awareness of the breadth and diversity of public art and associated policy and processes.
- Increase community awareness and interest in public art through a communications plan and educational programming to expand knowledge of artistic practices.

#### Support Artists

- Intentionally and strategically commission underrepresented art and artistic practices to broaden access to public art and extend the reach of the public art program in New Westminster.
- Continue supporting artists from the region while bringing in new artists from further afield to broaden the impact of the program, and demonstrate the benefits of public art.
- Create a range of opportunities directed to local and urban Indigenous artists. Artists will be supported and empowered to create meaningful and culturally relevant artwork.
- Develop a social procurement approach to public art that considers a flexible, decolonized process and removes systemic barriers.
- Develop resources and toolkits for artists such as lists of local and regional businesses and experts connected to public art — including fabricators, engineers, and others.

#### Meaningful Involvement

- Work with local nations and urban Indigenous advisors to develop meaningful involvement throughout the commissioning process for Indigenous and non- Indigenous public art opportunities.
- Develop consultative processes and/or protocols for knowledge-sharing, site evaluations and considerations, to understand the concerns and expectations of local nations for public art.
- Engage with communities in reciprocal ways that deepen the relationship and understanding of place, and support engagement throughout the public art commissioning process.
- Integrate artists into City processes across City departments to encourage longer and earlier artists' involvement and to embed artistic thinking into civic work.

#### Create Impact

- Commission art that will enliven civic spaces and be experiential, to contribute to a dynamic urban realm: rotate programming; artworks of short durations; use existing platforms etc.
- Initiate and support partnerships with communities to enrich civic dialogues and engender a reciprocal, collaborative environment for public art.

- Increase public programming and develop discourses/conversations related to histories and artwork concepts to support projects.

### **Opportunities**

The following categories overlap with one another to form the direction for public art commissioning opportunities. They offer a balance, so there is always a breadth of opportunities. For example, a geographic area may be addressed alongside art typologies, achieving an enriched opportunity, but ultimately the goal is to inform decision-making for a balance of opportunities.

- Art Typologies (range of artworks)
- Capital Projects (eligible civic construction projects or funding)
- Priority geographic areas (neighbourhoods)
- Sites of Significance (historical/cultural significance)
- Community Partnerships (collaborations/partnerships with community and organizations)
- Programming and Initiatives (projects, programs, education)

### **Engagement**

The following outlines the engagement process for the Public Art Plan:

- Indigenous Artists & Cultural Professionals: Focus Group Roundtable
- Staff: One-on-One Interviews
- Arts Sector Professionals: Information Session
- General Public: Online Survey, Social Media
- Advisory Groups: Direct Consultation

### **Work plan and Schedule**

#### Completed Work:

Current State Analysis, Discovery and Research is complete.

The deliverables included: reviewing current conditions and preliminary analysis; engaging with staff, relevant Task Forces and Advisory Committees; developing a stakeholder and community engagement strategy and plan.

#### Current Phase:

Partial plan draft and ongoing engagement (full draft due June 31, 2025)

Deliverables include: engaging with staff, relevant Advisory Committees and community and present findings; developing draft of the Public Art Plan including proposed Vision & Principles, Goals, Priorities and Opportunities

#### Next Phase:

Deliverables include: further engagement; ongoing development of Public Art Plan

#### Completion

Final Public Art Plan (due October 31, 2025)

Final Public Art Plan Document (pdf format) to include: Summary of context analysis; Vision & Principles; Goals; Priorities and Opportunities; What We Heard; Implementation criteria and recommendations; further engagement, potential partnerships, maintenance & conservation.

### **Discussion**

Staff requests feedback from the ACEDAC.

Are there any additional opportunities the 10 year public art plan should consider to?

1. align with or support the interests of local arts and culture organizations

2. align with or support the interests of local business

Are there improvements around clarity in the 10 year public art plan to consider?