POLICY CONTENT:

1.0 PURPOSE

Kitchener is a vibrant community where the best forms of public art explore our diversity, tell our stories, and welcome artists to use creativity and imagination to make our public spaces landmarks and gathering places.

The goal of the public art policy is to contribute to the City’s cultural identity and its strategic priorities. Better quality of life, increased social cohesion, good urban design, broad community involvement, increased potential for economic development and public access to the arts are some of the intended benefits.

2.0 SCOPE

2.1 The policy serves the City of Kitchener’s many neighbourhoods. It supports the development of partnerships with the general public, the arts community and arts service organizations, and with institutional and private sector partners.

2.2 The policy supports:

(a) Involvement of citizens, including young people, in public art projects whenever possible;

(b) Opportunities for the involvement of educational institutions whenever possible; and,

(c) The continuation of current youth programming.

2.3 Two citizen advisory committees are directly involved in the public art program: the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee and the Public Art Working Group.
2.0  SCOPE, CONT’D

2.4 The policy affects the following City departments: Economic Development, Finance, Legal, Facilities Management, Community Services, and Development and Technical Services (Planning, Engineering). The Arts and Culture Unit, Community Services Department, is primarily responsible for policy implementation.

2.5 The policy governs programming which results in the permanent acquisition and/or temporary display of public artworks. Program funding derives from a one percent allocation applied to civic projects with construction budgets over $100,000. The municipal public art collection develops through this program.

2.6 Eligible projects include new construction or construction that achieves major changes in the scope of the facility such as new programs, services or functions. This does not include projects where only routine maintenance is being carried out.

2.7 The policy does not govern programming under the Industrial Artifacts Project title, nor the Artist-in-Residence program.

3.0  DEFINITION

Public Art: original art works, permanent or temporary, in any medium or discipline, placed, incorporated or performed in publicly accessible indoor or outdoor locations in response to the site and for the benefit of the public.

For the purposes of this policy, Public Art does not include plaques, archival collections or heritage assets already supported by other budgets, committees and policies.

4.0  POLICY

4.1 Through the public art program, the City acquires art works of excellent quality for the purpose of permanent or temporary displays in public places such as civic buildings, civic plazas, streetscapes, and open spaces (parks, trails).
4.0 POLICY, CONT’D

4.2 A master plan for public art contains strategies for the best use of funding and preferred sites based on specific criteria. Criteria for preferred public art sites and art works include high visibility locations and appropriate scale, ease of public access, relevance to the community, ease of maintenance, consistency with the City’s Urban Design Guidelines and Neighbourhood Design Guidelines, quality of the art work, budget considerations and equitable distribution of sites throughout the City.

4.3 One percent of the costs of civic projects with construction budgets in excess of $100,000 are allocated to a consolidated public art capital account. The maximum allocation at the one percent contribution is $300,000.

4.4 Civic construction projects contributing to the consolidated capital account are eligible for a public art project as follows:

(a) Projects that generate less than $10,000 (e.g. one percent of a capital budget less than $1 million) are supplemented from the consolidated account to the $10,000 level for any one public art project

(b) Construction projects that generate more than $100,000 (e.g. one percent of a capital budget greater than $10 million) will consume 60% of the one percent allocation for their public art project. The remaining 40% of the one percent allocation is contributed to the consolidated fund for use by smaller projects and to complete the priorities of the community as expressed in the public art master plan.

(c) Construction projects that generate an amount between $10,000 and $100,000 will consume the exact amount of the percent allocation for their public art project.
4.0 POLICY, CONT’D

4.5 The program offers a choice of options for municipal public art projects:

(a) Public art projects at civic sites; public art projects at priority sites:

All potential sites are assessed with the following criteria:

Ownership: The site should be owned by the City or there should be assurance that an agreement for its use is attainable.

Public Exposure: If outdoors, the site should have complete public visibility and unrestricted access at all times, and offer easy surveillance to minimize opportunities for vandalism. If indoors, the site can be used and/or enjoyed by the public at least five business days per week a year, less statutory holidays (252 days).

Significance: Locations of historical significance or that function as gateways into districts and neighbourhoods provide special opportunities for art work.

Safety and Preservation of Art Work: Sites where high levels of chemical use for snow removal, or where maneuverability of snow clearing machinery is required may present problems for some public art installations. Medians in roadways may not be suitable sites due to the level of risk caused by vehicle collisions.

(b) Temporary installation projects such as digital projections on the Berlin Tower,

(c) Promotion of the collection and public education.
4.0 POLICY, CONT’D

4.6 Civic construction projects are reviewed annually to identify those eligible for one percent assessments. Eligible projects include: community centres, fire stations, arenas, City Hall and other public-access facilities, Kitchener Memorial Auditorium, parks and trails, and streetscape improvements with elements of feature landscape designs.

These projects will be reviewed using the same criteria described in Section 4.5

4.7 The program continues to support public art objectives as described in the Official Plan and other approved planning documents.

4.8 The City engages in public art partnerships with the private sector, the institutional sector, arts organizations, and other governments.

4.9 The City encourages the private development sector to participate voluntarily in the percent for art program.

4.10 In construction projects for which the City has provided grants or loans to an outside agency, the terms of the loan or grant agreement include a requirement for public art to be included in that project. The grant or loan must be in excess of $100,000. The one percent allocation will not exceed $300,000.

4.11 The public art collection is documented and maintained to the highest standards.

5.0 IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Roles and Responsibilities

5.1.1 The Arts and Culture Unit manages the public art program and is responsible for project development and monitoring, competition processes, collection management, communications, and partnership creation. However, the program’s implementation depends on participation from many departments in varying degrees. These roles range from contract preparation to art work maintenance.
5.0 **IMPLEMENTATION, CONT’D**

5.1.2 The Arts and Culture Advisory Committee’s permanent sub-committee, the Public Art Working Group (PAWG), provides specialized advice on policy, program and projects and champions the program in the community. All acquisitions, whether by competition-derived commission, direct purchase, or donation, are reviewed by PAWG and then by the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee. This advisory committee support is communicated to Council when recommendations are made. PAWG members routinely serve on competition juries.

5.1.3 Both the general community and members of the arts community participate in competition juries to provide balance and stakeholder involvement. Ward councillors are invited to participate on a public art juries which serve their wards.

5.1.4 Public art celebrations are designed to be public events.

5.2 **Project Planning**

Public art information is included in RFP documents for eligible construction projects. With this approach, public art is integrated earlier into the capital project for both efficiency and optimum results.

5.3 **Acquisition Methods**

A variety of acquisition methods are used to better serve the needs of unique projects and situations and the overall mandate of the collection. Open competition-generated commissions, invitational competition-generated commissions, direct purchases and donations are used.

5.4 **Jury Procedures**

Competition juries ensure a fair public process through balanced participation by community representatives, other project stakeholders and professional arts community representatives. Competition juries function in accordance with established procedures.
5.0 IMPLEMENTATION, CONT’D

5.5 Technical Review of Proposals

All commission proposals derived from competitions, and proposals for direct purchases, are reviewed by an interdepartmental staff team and, as needs warrant, by outside experts, to assess compliance with mechanical, structural, health and safety, and maintenance requirements.

5.6 Education

Public education strategies include, but are not limited to, participation on juries, communication tools such as signage, artist talks, brochures, website information, and public art symposia.