

Edmonton

CITY OF EDMONTON

DOWNTOWN PUBLIC ART GUIDE AND INITIATIVES

> edmonton arts council

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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The lands on which Edmonton sits and the North Saskatchewan River that runs through it have been the sites of natural abundance, ceremony and culture, travel and rest, relationship building, making and trading for Indigenous peoples since time immemorial. Edmonton is located within Treaty 6 Territory and within the Métis homelands and Métis Nation of Alberta Region 4. We acknowledge this land as the traditional territories of many First Nations such as the Nehiyaw (Cree), Nakota Sioux (Stoney), Anishinaabe (Saulteaux), Niitsitapi (Blackfoot) and Dene peoples.

Edmonton owes its strength and vibrancy to these lands and the diverse Indigenous peoples whose ancestors' footsteps have marked this territory as well as settlers from around the world who continue to be welcomed here and call Edmonton home.





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To promote and support all forms of artistic endeavour in Edmonton's downtown and reinforce the downtown's role as a regional, national, and international centre for the development and enjoyment of the arts, culture, and entertainment.

INTRODUCTION

Downtown Edmonton is the vibrant heart of the city and region and the number of Edmontonians living, working, visiting and attending institutions in the Downtown continues to grow. It is Edmonton's distinct cultural, economic, institutional and mobility hub.

Edmontonians appreciate the significant and far-reaching economic and social benefits of a strong downtown arts, culture, and entertainment industry. The Arts District in particular, centred around Sir Winston Churchill Square with its world class arts and cultural venues, is an increasingly vibrant downtown hub and continues to evolve as the primary and key destination for cultural and entertainment events in the Capital Region. Public Art enhances and creates special public places, bringing people of all demographics together to build communities and connect. Murals, sculptures, public art, iconic architecture and grand landscapes create a more interesting and vibrant downtown. Art also contributes to the City's economy and culture by promoting local artists and tourism.

The Downtown Edmonton Public Art Guide promotes exploring new opportunities for all types of art in publicly accessible spaces throughout the Downtown. The guide not only directs and supports public art in the Downtown, it also identifies a range of potential initiatives that will increase the presence of art and culture making Downtown spaces more vibrant and attractive.

The focus areas of this plan are the boundaries of the *Capital City Downtown Plan and the Quarters Downtown Plan*. However, initiatives that support the overall vibrancy of the core and adjacent areas will also be considered.



THE DOWNTOWN EDMONTON PUBLIC ART GUIDE PROMOTES EXPLORING NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL TYPES OF ART IN PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE SPACES THROUGHOUT THE DOWNTOWN.



IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC ART

Public art refers to paintings, murals, street art/graffiti, sculptures, events, installations, digital media or sound and can be temporary or permanent, tangible or intangible.

Cities are increasingly recognizing the importance of dedicated sites and programming for rotating or changing artworks over time. There is strong evidence that cities with an active and dynamic cultural scene are more attractive to pedestrians, visitors, and businesses and attract greater visitation. More and more, cities see the value of public art as a way to strategically re-connect residents and visitors with public places and their historical, physical, social, economic and cultural transformation. Public art is a positive sign of a city's cultural health, helping create and reinforce a place's civic identity as well as a sense of belonging and enjoyment.

Public art establishes unique and active spaces. It can build an iconic reputation for a city, and transform urban spaces into vibrant expressions of human imagination. Edmonton has proven that temporary/transitory artworks such as the Impulse and Loop (2017), art events like Nuit Blanche (2016 & 2018) and the annual Works Art & Design Festival, consistently draw large numbers of people downtown. A flourishing art scene offers employment opportunities that sustain and stimulate the social and cultural sectors. Cities that support creative sectors, arts and great public spaces are more likely to have stronger growth in their economic, social and cultural sectors. PUBLIC ART ESTABLISHES UNIQUE AND ACTIVE SPACES. IT CAN BUILD AN ICONIC REPUTATION FOR A CITY, AND TRANSFORM URBAN SPACES INTO VIBRANT EXPRESSIONS OF HUMAN IMAGINATION.





Tangible investments have been made in Downtown catalyst projects to help attract new investment and growth. These projects led to additional investment in a number of artworks at 108 Street, Alex Decoteau Park, Rogers Place, 96 Street and Kinistinaw Park. These investments are complimented by transitory projects, such as the #YEGCanvas program and the Arts District. The success of these art installations has underscored the significant opportunity for Downtown to become an attractive, vibrant art destination. The Downtown Edmonton Public Art Guide identifies where and how to focus future efforts.



CITY POLICY DIRECTION

Public art plays a critical role in achieving the goals set out in the City Plan.

City Plan's big-city moves 'Catalyze and Converge' and 'Inclusive and Compassionate' are about putting Edmonton in a position to continually improve its competitiveness and readiness in a changing world, while opening up, connecting and nurturing creative opportunities within all sectors of the community. We must create the conditions, places and partnerships to retain and attract new talent and strengthen cultural identity, healing and fostering shared community visions.

Along with The City Plan, two plans, the Capital City Downtown Plan and the Quarters Downtown Plan, have been guiding investment for more than a decade, and are supported by other strategies and implementation plans, especially the Downtown Vibrancy Plan and the Edmonton Economic Action Plan. The arts have been identified in these plans as critical elements for the core's well being and are further guided by Connections and Exchanges: A 10 Year Plan To Transform Arts and Heritage in Edmonton. These key documents and this guide align the City Plan's key values of Belong, Live, Thrive and Create. This guide builds on the ambitions and actions in the various plans and also identifies initiatives that help achieve the overall goals of enabling and promoting art that enhances downtown vibrancy. See Appendix 1 for further detail on associated plans.

THE DOWNTOWN EDMONTON PUBLIC ART GUIDE AIMS TO INCREASE THE ROLE ART PLAYS IN SUPPORTING THE GROWTH OF EDMONTON'S DOWNTOWN.



VISION

OBJECTIVES

A Downtown alive with arts, culture and heritage has significant economic and social benefits, and supports the Downtown as a primary destination in the region. It helps put Edmonton in a position to continually improve its competitiveness and readiness in a changing world. Supporting culture and creating beautiful and well designed Downtown spaces and places will create the conditions needed to retain the talent we have and attract new talent.

Public Art goes beyond making a city attractive: it contributes to its unique identity and shows its commitment to creativity, taking chances, and dynamic engagement with its citizens. It defines and reflects the character of a place and its people, and the stories we learn and share. Public art enhances public places and deepens community relationships through meaningful engagement and consultation. Art plays a crucial role in community building, tourism and economic development. This guide seeks to optimize the role art plays in the Downtown's growth and sustainable prosperity.

The Downtown Edmonton Public Art Guide aims to increase the role art plays in supporting the growth of Edmonton's Downtown. The guide helps the City and other arts organizations focus their efforts on public art that creates a vibrant downtown.

The guide contributes to the Connections and Exchanges: A 10-year Plan to Transform Arts and Heritage in Edmonton plan's three 'ambitions' which provide guiding vision statements that look to a longterm future for arts in Edmonton.



OBJECTIVE 1: ALIVE WITH ARTS AND HERITAGE

Arts are fundamental, essential elements of any public and civic project and in the long term will be viewed as an essential part of our Civic identity.

This ambition seeks to support opportunities for the arts to be actively engaged in civic planning and implementation processes. The intent over time is to ensure Edmontonians feel a strong connection to their city and neighbourhoods, and remove barriers to participate in cultural experiences.

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OBJECTIVE 2: A HUB FOR EXTRAORDINARY CREATION AND REPUTATION

Edmonton is a beacon for cultural expression where artists are fully supported and encouraged to be bold, challenged, productive and connected.

This ambition seeks to encourage better artistic networking and collaborative platforms between various communities to recognise and encourage the sharing of ideas, skills, and opportunities to allow artists to flourish and prosper. Edmonton becomes a place artists want to be.



OBJECTIVE 3: A THRIVING AND WELL-FUNDED ARTS AND HERITAGE ECOSYSTEM

Edmonton is a city that supports its cultural ecosystem with purpose, vision and flexibility.

This ambition seeks to secure funding long term models and strategies to foster, attract and retain artists. By ensuring new and existing arts organisations are economically resilient it will foster stability and greater innovation in the sector.

The Downtown Edmonton Public Art Guide brings forward and highlights various initiatives to enable these Connection and Exchanges goals.

Enable art to be part of broader city building initiatives

Identify a variety of public art initiatives and opportunities that increase public access to arts, cultural and educational resources and experiences

Identify art selection criteria and **suggest** possible locations for public art initiatives

Help prioritize potential sites that reflect the guiding **ambitions**

Provide jobs to local artists and art professionals, and sustain a viable arts and cultural economy in Edmonton



BJECTIVE



IMPLEMENTATION APPROACH

City-owned public art is primarily acquired through the Edmonton Art Council and The Works International Visual Arts Society (The Works). Implementation of the initiatives in this guide requires partnerships and collaborations with these two key partners as well as other arts and culture organizations, agencies, industry, downtown employers and land owners, and Edmontonians. Appendix 2 contains more detail on the network of partners who need to work together to implement the initiatives outlined in this guide.

Initiatives in this plan require resources to be implemented. The estimated resource requirements are grouped and marked as follows:

Timelines	Resources to implement
Short (1–2 years)	Up to \$50,000
Medium (3–5 years)	\$50,000 - \$100,000
Long (over 5 years)	\$100,000 - \$250,000+

Reallocating and utilizing existing resources and partnerships and leveraging actions in other plans will be done whenever possible to efficiently and effectively implement the initiatives in this guide.



PUBLIC ART SELECTION CONSIDERATIONS

The desired outcome of this guide is to support Downtown's sustainable growth and ongoing activation. The following considerations will help to maximize the impact art has on downtown vibrancy and revitalization efforts.

Vibrancy and Growth – consider how art placement or programming supports strategic directions to increase the Downtown's vibrancy and growth

Unifying Art and Design – using art as a medium to create or unify themes or characteristic elements in the Downtown public spaces or its distinct character neighbourhoods

Focal point – developing art as reason to visit or add value to a site

Artwork on a Higher (or lower) Plane – placement of art in locations to encourage exploration of space beyond the immediate pedestrian realm

Public furnishings and infrastructure – embellishing and adding value to functional elements

Transformational Light Based Art – transformational opportunities to spaces with minimal physical intervention and winter activation

Landmarks – art to help navigate the core and define key locations

Parks and Plazas – consider larger or programmed art that accommodates larger gatherings **Interactive** – art that encourages play for all ages, but especially children

Accessible placement – ensure art is accessible and visible to all, and maintainable

Context – respect and celebrate existing sensitive sites and/or ensure conext is understandable if drawn from other inspirational considerations.

These considerations explore ways art could be better integrated into the Downtown's overall efforts to create attractive urban and public space. New artworks must respect the integrity of existing public art installations, and should be accessible and respectful to all.

Downtown Public Art can be illustrated through a variety of shapes, placements and experiences that may be agreeable to, or challenge, the surrounding urban environment. There is no right or wrong way to art design and site selection and there may be many successful approaches. Some best practice examples and possible desirable outcomes that can be put forward for consideration are provided in *Appendix 3*.

Along with the large and permanent artworks that possess standalone landmark status, equivalent to that of great civic buildings and open spaces, there are other public art and urban realm experiences that can also make art and urban space relevant, playful and engaging to a broader population base and fulfill economic directives.





The following initiatives present opportunities to animate and activate the downtown as the main arts and cultural destination in the city, to generate further investment and employment opportunities in the arts and culture sector. Some initiatives are best implemented through established arts organizations, while others could be championed by any interested party. Public support will be available where needed.







OBJECTIVE 1: ALIVE WITH ARTS AND HERITAGE

The initiatives below are aligned with the three ambitions' outlined in The Connections and Exchanges: A 10-year Plan to Transform Arts and Heritage in Edmonton.

Some creative and artistic activation initiatives described may not produce pure art objects. Instead, they are collaborative, communal initiatives where people create something new, beautiful, vibrant, and meaningful, transforming places and spaces into attractive and artistically animated destinations.

The following initiatives outline potential partners and processes. In each case, best practices should be followed, and consider the following:

- Funding sources and ownership
- Calls to artists
- Artist and artwork selection relevance
- Ongoing care and maintenance
- Accessibility
- Contracts and project management
- Engagement and consultation

INITIATIVE 1: ESTABLISH A DOWNTOWN PUBLIC ART WORKING GROUP TO IDENTIFY STRATEGIC LOCATIONS FOR PUBLIC ART.

This initiative brings together key partners to identify locations in the downtown for future public art interventions that support efforts to increase the downtown's vibrancy and investment. A map would be created and updated to reflect strategic locations that ties into a larger online site showcasing existing sites

Timeline: Short

Resource Requirements: Up to \$50,000

Potential Partners: City of Edmonton, Edmonton Arts Council, The Works, Downtown Business Association, Downtown Community League

- Chosen strategic sites have art placement
- Online database developed



INITIATIVE 2: DEVELOP AN ONGOING ART COMMISSION PROGRAM.

This initiative establishes an ongoing program to commission public art for locations identified by the Downtown Public Art working group. A key role of the art commissions would be to draw attention and activity to those locations identified in initiative #1 and increase vibrancy and investment in the immediate area.

The program will be administered by an individual or multiple arts organization to ensure a regular stream of creativity is drawn to downtown by providing a predictable funding stream for a variety of art types, media, placemaking activities and partnerships. This also allows organizations to pursue additional funding/sponsorships and partnerships.

Timeline: Short

Resource Requirements:

Between \$50,000 - \$100,000

Potential Partners: City of Edmonton, Edmonton Arts Council, The Works, Downtown Business Association

Measures of Success:

- Number of partnerships with artists, arts organizations and businesses.
- Amount of funding obtained from other orders of government
- Number of art locations in Downtown

INITIATIVE 3: EXPAND PUBLIC ART IN DOWNTOWN LANEWAYS.

This initiative builds on the success of art programs and activations already installed in Edmonton laneways, specifically Alley of Light and Spur Line Alley. Expanding the program involves targeting specific downtown laneways as locations for ongoing artwork activation. Art activations could range from murals or graffiti on walls to more elaborate three-dimensional works and over time could become a signature component of the city's public art scene. Lessons from other cities show they become major attractions and draws.

Timeline: Medium

Resource Requirements:

Between \$50,000 - \$100,000

Potential Partners: City of Edmonton, Edmonton Arts Council, The Works, Downtown Business Association, Building Owners And Managers Association, Downtown businesses and land owners

- Number of partnerships with artists, arts organizations, businesses and property owner
- Amount of funding obtained from other orders of government
- Number of Downtown back alleys that feature public artwork





INITIATIVE 4: ESTABLISH AN ONGOING DOWNTOWN MURAL PILOT PROGRAM.

This initiative builds on the success of the multiple murals that exist throughout the Downtown. These murals have proven to be a successful way to transform blank walls into attractions people want to visit. Setting up a program with ongoing funding ensures aminimum number of high quality, impactful murals are created each year at strategic locations identified by the downtown public art working group. A pilot program will enable organizations that have the infrastructure and networks in place such as The Works and Rust Magic to demonstrate success that could lead to a more robust mural program.

- Work with the Edmonton Arts Council, Capital City Cleanup, the Works and Rust Magic to develop a three to five year pilot program.
- Determine the pilot program Lead and implementation approach.
- Identify potential locations and sites that have willing owners.
- Aim at creating several (2-3) murals per year

Timeline: Short

Resource Requirements: Up to \$50,000

Potential Partners: City of Edmonton, Edmonton Arts Council, The Works, Downtown Business Association, Rust Magic, businesses, other orders of government

Measures of Success:

- Number of high quality, impactful murals that are created
- Amount of funding obtained from other orders of government

THIS INITIATIVE BUILDS ON THE SUCCESS OF THE MULTIPLE MURALS THAT EXIST THROUGHOUT THE DOWNTOWN.





INITIATIVE 5: CONDUCT DESIGN COMPETITION FOR 'VISTA VIEW' CHAIRS IN KEY LOCATIONS.

Inspired by the Parks Canada Red Chair initiative, The Design Competition for 'vista view' chairs will allow artists to design a chair or bench that is unique and durable for placement in key locations. It provides an opportunity for local branding as well as the identification of key landmarks and vista locations.

- Identify key downtown locations for 'vista view' chairs
- Develop a scope for the 'vista view' chairs design competition
- Seek funding to pilot 3–4 locations
- Establish a competitive process for artists and design teams to design the 'vista view' chairs

Timeline: Short

Resource Requirements:

Between \$50,000 - \$100,000

Potential Partners: City of Edmonton, Edmonton Arts Council, The Works, Downtown Business Association, Explore Edmonton

- Number of social media posts
- Number of applications for the design competition







INITIATIVE 6: PILOT A WINTER WARMING HUT EVENT.

Inspired by Winnipeg's successful winter warming hut program, this initiative would provide an opportunity to showcase architecture + art and encourage more people to visit the Centre City during the winter months. Design firms and artists would participate in an annual design competition where their huts could be voted on and if successful their huts would be placed throughout the Downtown for people to enjoy, and embrace winter.

Successful huts would become part of an expanding portfolio that draws people in and supports the development of future walking tours and outdoor activities.

- Work with the Alberta Association of Architects and art groups to develop competition guidelines
- Establish a project sponsor for the event
- Develop potential networks and locations to place huts
- Explore walking and interpretive trails that huts could support

Timeline: Short

Resource Requirements: Between \$50,000 - \$100,000

Potential Partners: City of Edmonton, Alberta Association of Architects, The Works, Downtown Business Association, Alberta Professional Planners Institute

- Number of participants in competition
- Number of visits to the warming huts







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INITIATIVE 7: EXPLORE EXPANDING RECOGNITION PROGRAMS IN THE PUBLIC REALM.

This initiative builds on the unique way Edmonton celebrates its well-known citizens with creative and artistic outdoor tributes to them dispersed throughout downtown.

Many cities publicly celebrate famous individuals with artistic plaques or interpretive information. Redcliff in Australia turned a lane into a Bee Gees tribute to celebrate their association with the town. Edmonton's Walk of Honour downtown celebrates Indigenous artists who have blazed trails in the film industry, similar to Hollywood's walk of Fame. These installations not only serve as a tribute to specific groups or individuals, they are also local attractions.

Working with existing recognition programs, such as the Walk of Honour, created by the Dreamspeakers' Festival Society, opportunities exist to explore how these could be elevated to become attractions in the downtown area. Programs could be rehabilitated or expanded to create back alleys filled with memorabilia, or small, one-off markers to highlight individuals or events, all with an emphasis on making them publicly accessible in artistic ways.

- Explore partnerships with existing recognition programs
- Explore various best practices and case studies
- Pilot one or two projects with existing programs

Timeline: Medium - Long

Resource Requirements: Between \$50,000 - \$100,000

Potential Partners: City of Edmonton, Edmonton Arts Council, Downtown Business Association, Dreamspeakers Festival Society, Edmonton Historical Board, Edmonton Heritage Council

- Creative partnerships with recognition programs
- Number of visits to the recognition sites









INITIATIVE 8: EXPAND THE NEON SIGN MUSEUM.

Building on the success of Edmonton's existing Outdoor Neon Sign, this intiative explores the opportunity to expand the museum and consider other locations it could expand to.

The Neon Sign Museum features a collection of historic signs that tell a story about Edmonton's and Alberta's commercial neon past and celebrate the creative and artistic endeavours that went into this commercial medium. The restored signs are attached to the walls of buildings along 104 Street just south of 104 Avenue. The collection has been growing creating a need for other locations to display new signs, preferably on 104 Street or within walking distance of the original location.

Any new location should support the activation of surrounding properties/businesses while ensuring the sign's artwork is clearly visible. Michael Phair Park has been identified as a suitable location and would align with the Alley of Light concept associated with the site.

- Continue to accommodate qualifying neon and historic signs as and when they are offered.
- Explore options for suitable new sites where signs may be displayed within reasonable walking distance of the original location.
 Further investigations into expanding into Michael Phair Park and aligning with the Alley of Light Concept.
- Maintain and update an online presence to share information on the signs and museum.
- Continue to develop partnerships and potential sponsorship, promotional and merchandising options to acquire, operate and maintain the signs.

Timeline: Short - Medium

Resource Requirements: From \$100,000 - \$250,000 +

Potential Partners: City of Edmonton, The Works, Alberta Sign Association, Downtown Business Association, land owners

Measures of Success:

- Number of signs that are installed per year
- Number of land owners that partner with the museum

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LIKE MOST GOOD THINGS, EDMONTON'S OUTDOOR NEON SIGN MUSEUM IS A PARTNERSHIP.





INITIATIVE 9: DEVELOP AN ART IN ARCHITECTURE FORUM

Developing an Art in Architecture Forum would create a platform for multi-disciplinary idea sharing and inspiration. The desired outcome would be a network that successfully supports investment and inclusion of locally relevant artistic detailing into downtown developments.

The loss of many historic properties and lack of artisan detailing in newer developments has meant some areas have lost their richness and texture. This initiative would create an opportunity for architects and developers to network with artists and artisans with the ultimate goal of creating locally relevant and contextual artistic architectural detailing in new buildings.

Timeline: Short

Resource Requirements:

Under \$50,000

Potential Partners: City of Edmonton, Design and building professionals (AAA, ULI, UDI), Edmonton Arts Council, Downtown Business Association, NAIT, land owners, Media Architecture Design Edmonton

Measures of Success:

- Number of buildings that incorporate art in architecture or built form
- Partnerships with artists and developers and architects

INITIATIVE 10: CREATE A DISCOVERABLE ART EXPERIENCE THROUGHOUT DOWNTOWN, TIED TO LOCAL STORIES AND HISTORIES.

This initiative seeks to install small interactive sculptural characters throughout the downtown to provide a whimsical sense of discovery and tie them all into evolving local stories. Inspired by the dwarfs in Wrocław in Poland or Life Underground in New York, smaller–scale somewhat whimsical themed artworks and programs are scattered in such a way that they are small delights to stumble across.

The characters could be drawn from local context and environment and be accompanied by a series of short ongoing and evolving stories that link the characters and allow people to explore downtown. The artworks also work as stand-alone elements of interest when discovered.

Timeline: Medium

Resource Requirements:

Between \$50,000 - \$100,000 to start but if expanded and well programmed from \$100,000 -\$250,000+

Potential Partners: City of Edmonton, Edmonton Arts Council, Edmonton Heritage Council, The Works, Downtown Business Association, Writers Guild of Alberta, Sculptors' Association of Alberta

- Number of installations
- Number of stories and books tied to installations
- Number of social media posts







INITIATIVE 11: DEVELOP A TRAVELLING ART PROGRAM.

This initiative builds on the popularity and success of travelling artworks that have been major attractions, as demonstrated by "Impulse and Loop" in The Quarters in 2017 and 'the colourful beans,'. The program would seek to attract major works into the downtown for major events or festivals, it would primarily encourage the development of local travelling works, to display locally and then travel elsewhere to promote Edmonton's artistic reputation.

The program would be administered by an arts organisation every 3 – 4 years in collaboration with other arts or festival groups, especially where partnerships can be leveraged. Where possible, works should consider strategic locations identified by the downtown public art working group or placed in locations that would benefit from additional activation or exposure.

Timeline: Medium

Resource Requirements:Between \$50,000 - \$250,000+ dependent upon grant and sponsorship available each go around.

Potential Partners: City of Edmonton, Edmonton Arts Council, The Works, Downtown Business Association, Community Partners (arts groups and festivals), Landowners, real estate or retail businesses.

Measures of Success:

- Number of Partnerships with artists, arts organizations, businesses, regional partners
- Regular coordination with festivals, markets and other outdoor events
- Art features in multiple exhibits and locations

Demand for works being exhibited outside of Edmonton





INITIATIVE 12: DEVELOP AND INCORPORATE ART INTO RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES SUCH AS CLIMBING WALLS, ICE RINKS AND SKATE PARKS ETC.

This initiative looks to incorporate artistic lenses and elements into recreational opportunities downtown, ranging from climbing walls to outdoor ice rinks. Promoting recreational opportunities with artistic elements could draw people to areas that would other wise be underused or in need of growth, while supporting healthier activities for residents and visitors alike.

Working with ellness or recreational groups, the downtown could develop a network of recreational spaces with a strong artistic presence. Partnerships and sponsorship opportunities could provide greater artistic design opportunities to encourage visitation beyond the recreational activity.

Recreational activities could include ice rinks, skateboard parks, gym & play equipment, climbing/ice walls, basketball hoops, etc.

Timeline: Short - Medium

Resource Requirements:

Between \$50,000 - \$100,000

Potential Partners: City of Edmonton, Edmonton Sports Council, Edmonton Arts Council, The Works, Downtown Edmonton Community League, Downtown Business Association, Explore Edmonton, Sports groups and organisations.

INITIATIVE 13: DEVELOP INCENTIVES FOR PLACEMENT OF ART ON CONSTRUCTION HOARDING.

This initiative seeks to formalise opportunities for art to be displayed on construction hoarding in the downtown.

Currently there are limitations to what can be put on hoardings due to existing regulations, but they offer great opportunities to enable developers and art organisations to display works to thousands of passers-by to enjoy.

Establishing formal opportunities and options may be beneficial, where interested arts organizations, education institutions, nonprofits and developers collectively work together in partnership to create very public galleries. Opportunities to develop databases of participating art groups for developers to access or developing annual designs that can be shared with developers should they be interested, could be explored.

Standards would need to be developed to comply with various regulations.

Timeline: Medium

Resource Requirements: Between \$50,000 - \$100,000

Potential Partners: City of Edmonton, Edmonton Arts Council, The Works, Downtown Business Association, Development Industry, Arts groups and art colleges.

- Partnerships with artists, arts organizations, and businesses.
- Accessible and uptodate database maintained
- Minimal regulations or administrative processes
- Coordinate with festivals, markets and other major events









INITIATIVE 14: **DEVELOP A DESIGN PATTERN BOOK** THAT CELEBRATES EDMONTON'S **MULTICULTURAL HERITAGE.**

Many Cities or towns have pattern books or design guides to establish unique marketable or elements to make them distinct. This initiative would seek to encourage future stylistic elements for Edmonton or portions of its core, that are based on locally or regionally cultural, historic or potential design trends, patterns, motifs, colours, and other elements. The work would produce a pattern book that could be applied to aspects of the built form and the urban environment, whether in form, detailing or colour pallets.

It is not intended to be a requirement but a vision that can be adopted and evolve over time until a distinct local design style or feature emerges.

The work is best done in consultation with local planning and architectural schools and professional



Timeline: Long

Resource Requirements: Between \$50,000 -\$100,000

Potential Partners: City of Edmonton, Edmonton heritage Council, Edmonton Arts Council, Alberta Professional Planners Institute, U of A Planning School, Alberta Association of Architects U of Athabasca Architectural program, Alberta Craft Council, Edmonton design Committee, Indigenous arts/cultural sectors in Treaty 6

- Partnerships with arts organizations and professional design and planning associations
- Regular adoption of elements of a completed pattern book
- Distinct 'Edmonton' vernacular characteristics evolve.
- Minimal regulations or administrative processes



INITIATIVE 15: DEVELOP A UTILITY BOX ART PROGRAM IN THE DOWNTOWN

This initiative seeks to formalise a program to cover downtown utility boxes in art or wraps. Inspired by other successful programs, this program would target poorly located utility boxes and those that offer little aesthetic value to a neighbourhood and give these objects aesthetic and interpretive value.

Utility boxes could become local art features and/ or provide historical interpretation functions and help limit graffiti. This could be accomplished through photographic, painted, art or written text and become part of established and ongoing arts and heritage walking tours.

Ideally, the design intent would be to encourage a collaborative partnership between artist and historians to ensure the displays can be appreciated for their content as well as artistic and creative value.

Some utility boxes could also be adapted or redesigned to provide a street furnishing function, such as seating elements.

Timeline: Short

Resource Requirements: Between \$50,000 –\$100,000

Potential Partners: City of Edmonton, Edmonton Arts Council, Edmonton Historical Board, Edmonton Heritage Council, Edmonton Downtown Community League, Utility companies/owners

Measures of Success:

- Number of utility boxes adopted by this program
- Sponsorship

INITIATIVE 16: ESTABLISH DOWNTOWN PEDESTAL SITES FOR ROTATING SCULPTURE PROGRAMS.

This initiative is inspired by successful rotating public art exhibits, such as Hall D at the Edmonton Convention Centre or the more famous versions, like the 4th plinth in London, which have brought people back on a regular basis. The intent is to establish a variety of locations throughout the core, where art is rotated on a regular basis to encourage repeat visits to make the sites an attraction in their own right. This would encourage greater visitation, supporting local businesses and the core's vibrancy.

A variety of sites could be piloted. Sites could be smaller locations or very visible in major public spaces. Ideally local artists would be given preference

A successful program would require consistent, knowledgeable curatorial partnerships and leads, with strong funding partnerships and sponsorships.

Timeline: Short

Resource Requirements: Between \$50,000 - \$100,000

Potential Partners: City of Edmonton, Edmonton Arts Council, The Works, Downtown Business Association, Alberta Foundation for the Arts, Canada Council for the Arts, Sponsorship/partners

- Ongoing partnerships with artists, arts organizations, and businesses
- Rotate regularly to keep things fresh
- Multiple locations
- Evolves or expands over time









INITIATIVE 17: ESTABLISH A DIGITAL MEDIA/LIGHT PROJECTION PARTNERSHIP WITH DOWNTOWN ARTS ORGANIZATIONS.

This initiative builds on lighting initiatives underway and develops a vibrant local ecosystem that provides regular and significant projection shows that light up downtown's buildings and public spaces to be a major attraction in the winter months.

Creative light shows and art projections draw significant crowds and create 'event-like' experiences, and increasingly animate surfaces that are either too large, too high, or not appropriate for a mural or other art forms.

A projection art program could support and enable new media artists, digital colleges and arts organizations to develop and evolve to provide greater access to new media infrastructure and grow projected public artwork in the downtown on a regular basis. The desired outcome is that a variety of art scales will emerge, from full building mapping to small window projections, from floor interaction to static projections. Timeline: Short - Medium

Resource Requirements:From \$100,000 - \$250,000+

Potential Partners: City of Edmonton, Edmonton Arts Council, The Works, Film & Video Arts Society of Alberta, Arts organisations, Colleges with digital programs, Downtown Business Association, Sponsorship/Partnerships

- Number of light installations per year
- Number of locations per year



INITIATIVE 18: PILOT ART ON THE ROAD RIGHT OF WAY.

This initiative builds on the immediate and visible success of painted roadways or asphalt art to turn road surfaces, especially crossings, into works of art and placemaking exercises. Painted roadways significantly transform spaces into places, especially when piloting initiatives that may seek longer-term changes to how spaces may be used.

Treatments can be temporary or permanent depending on the civic need or occasion and may support safety initiatives or festivals, while others such as Spur Line Alley in Strathcona act as stepping stones to enable permanent patio and pedestrian prioritization.

This initiative offers opportunities to change the way we perceive how road rights-of-way could be used. This would require consultation with traffic regulations and guidelines to set up processes to allow art to be put down, primarily on those spaces with the greatest pedestrian traffic flow or spaces underutilized by vehicles that could be transformed or support festivals or other activation activities.

Timeline: Short

Resource Requirements: Up to \$50,000 or between \$50,000 - \$100,000 depending upon the scale and programming

Potential Partners: City of Edmonton, Edmonton Arts Council, The Works, Developers, Festival and Market groups, Local schools and community leagues

- Ongoing partnerships with artists, arts organizations, festivals, markets and other outdoor events
- Regular programming
- Multiple locations
- Maintain and be realistic about lifespans







INITIATIVE 19: PILOT A CONCRETE BARRIER ART PROGRAM.

Barriers are effective short term tools to create safer pedestrian open spaces or bike lanes and this initiative seeks to allow a program to make these mundane concrete barriers more attractive through art or colour. A successful program or initiative would enable barriers along key corridors or events to be open to artistic opportunities.

Options could include enabling those responsible for events to coordinate their own art, to having partnerships with artists or art organizations to propose conceptual designs or have yearly themes.

As most barriers are City assets they could be returned with art on for others to enjoy or primed to be neutral or for future work

Timeline: Medium

Resource Requirements: Up to \$50,000 or between \$50,000 - \$100,000 depending upon the scale and programming

Potential Partners: City of Edmonton, Edmonton Arts Council, The Works, Developers, Festival and event groups

Measures of Success:

- Ongoing partnerships with artists, arts organizations, festivals, markets and event groups
- Regular programming
- Multiple locations



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INITIATIVE 20: DEVELOP AN INTERACTIVE ART GALLERY WALL AS AN OUTDOOR CULTURAL INSTITUTION ATTRACTION.

This initiative is to create a partnership to develop a signature interactive outdoor art gallery that promotes the Arts District institutions and potential Edmonton sport teams, that could become a significant downtown attraction. Inspired by the 'living pictures' in the Harry Potter series, this gallery would seek to place a collection of large gaudy picture frames hung on a prominent blank wall to showcase images that would ideally promote exhibits from the Art Gallery of Alberta, Royal Alberta Museum, downtown theatre groups and the Oilers or Edmonton Football institutions.

The images are posted in a static format, but occasionally elements of each image interact in some animated way with others in other frames so that they appear to be a living connected animated wall of images within fixed frames. The 'canvasses' are digital to allow such programming.

Some commercialization through partnerships with advertising companies for example, would provide revenue and expertise to program and maintain the exhibits. The sport institutions would also draw interest and exposure from other groups less tied to the cultural institutions. Timeline: Medium - long

Resource Requirements: From \$100,000 - \$250,000+

Potential Partners: City of Edmonton, Edmonton Arts Council, The Works, Alberta Gallery of Art, Royal Alberta Museum, Citadel Theatre, Winspear Theatre, Oilers Entertainment Group, Advertising group (Pattison, Bigskymedia etc.), Edmonton Digital Arts Colleges, Edmonton Public Library

- Ongoing partnerships with artists, cultural institutions, advertising companies and digital collages
- Regular programming
- Increased visitation
- Evolves or expands over time











INITIATIVE 21: ESTABLISH DOWNTOWN PEDESTAL SITES FOR ROTATING SCULPTURE PROGRAMS.

This initiative establishes an ongoing program to invite and commission artists to create public art in the locations and formats of their choosing.

An Artist-Initiated Project enables unusual and creative opportunities in places that may not have been considered. Ideally, artists choose their own sites, but they can draw from the strategic locations identified by the downtown public art working group. Public and privately-owned sites would be eligible if they are publicly accessible and an agreement with the owner can be reached.

This program should be operated by an established arts organization and the grant could also be used to promote sponsorships and partnerships, especially if on private land. Finished works may not become part of the City's public art collection but should be accessible to the public.

Timeline: Short

Resource Requirements:

Up to \$50,000 or between \$50,000 – \$100,000 depending upon the scale and programming desired.

Potential Partners: City of Edmonton, Edmonton Arts Council, The Works, Property owners, Downtown Business Association

Measures of Success:

- Ongoing partnerships with artists, arts organizations and businesses
- Regular funding obtained from sponsorship or partnership
- Increased visitation
- Evolves or expands over time

INITIATIVE 22: DEVELOP A STOREFRONT GALLERY INITIATIVE.

This initiative seeks to develop programs or partnerships that turn vacant or empty storefronts into temporary art galleries or cultural exhibits. Empty storefronts do not promote a vibrant downtown and filling empty frontages reduces the overall feeling of vacancies and adds interest to the street. A program between property owners and artists or art groups to allow vacant spaces to be used as public galleries would add significant interest to the streetscape. Opportunities may lie in allowing interior space to be used for temporary studio space as well.

An overseeing body within an established art or business group could act as a connector between artists and available spaces. The initiative could also promote arts, cultural events and other major festivals.

It is acknowledged that temporary spaces are disruptive to the artists for any serious setup, but this may provide a very public interface or provide central locations for short term exposure.

Timeline: Medium

Resource Requirements: Up to \$50,000 or between \$50,000 - \$100,000 depending upon the scale and programming

Potential Partners: City of Edmonton, The Works, Downtown Business Association, Building Owners and Managers Association, Art colleges, Explore Edmonton

- Ongoing partnerships with artists, arts organizations and businesses
- Regular sponsorship or partnership
- Few empty frontages

PUBLIC ART

INITIATIVE 23: ASSIST EMERGING ARTISTS AND ARTISANS MARKET THEIR ART DOWNTOWN.

This initiative builds on the success of farmer market type establishments and promotes the establishment of a network of smaller commercial units for artist and artisan vendors throughout the downtown, especially clustered around key nodes and points of interest.

European Winter Christmas markets are a major draw and are purposely scattered throughout the downtown rather than concentrated in one location. The downtown's two outdoor markets, the Downtown Farmers Market and El Fresco on 104th, have proven to be successful draws. By either enlarging their offerings or developing a new entity, more vendors, with art and artesian emphasis, could be scattered throughout the downtown on the weekends in clusters of activity. This would draw more people to the core and encourage them to explore further afield. Selected vendors would be placed closer to existing nodes of activity to ensure existing businesses benefit from potential extra foot traffic.

Ideally, a partnership between the two market ventures and other arts and craft groups would ensure a wider variety of experiences and provide more opportunities for new artists and artisans and increase downtown's outdoor vibrancy. Infrastructure to support small outdoor market type vendors, especially artists and artisans, located throughout the downtown in areas where people are likely to gather would expose artists and new businesses to new markets.

Timeline: Medium

Resource Requirements: From \$50,000 – \$250,000+.

Potential Partners: City of Edmonton, The Works, Alberta Craft Council, Downtown Business Association, Edmonton Downtown Farmers Market, Private Market groups, Explore Edmonton, Art colleges, Indigenous Artist Market Collective

- Ongoing partnerships with artists, arts organizations and businesses
- Multiple locations
- Coordinate with festivals, markets and other outdoor events
- Evolves or expands over time



The City Plan The newly adopted City Plan (2020) objectives support the development and celebration of art and culture. Of the six values—Access, Belong, Preserve, Live, Create and Thrive—four specifically touch on the importance of art in some manner as an important element for a prosperous and attractive city. The plan calls specific attention to Centre City as a regional hub and a place that is where creative spaces emerge and arts, design and culture flourish. (policy 6.2).

The Capital City Downtown Plan

PLANNING

CONSIDERATIONS

The Capital City Downtown Plan recognizes the possibilities that public art provides, and its impact on the city's growth and investment goals of pedestrian intensification, revitalization, and adding further cultural and artistic texture to the downtown.

The Plan identifies the goal—arts, culture and entertainment—as one to 'promote and support all forms of artistic endeavour in the downtown and reinforce downtown's role as a regional, national and international centre for the development and enjoyment of the arts, culture and entertainment.'

The plan recognizes the need to add and advance artwork to downtown parks, parkettes, alleyways, and open spaces. It calls for expanding downtown public art festivals or new public art events and temporary/transitory arts-based programming and specific policy calls to 'expand the current downtown Public Art program.' (policy 8.1)



The Quarters Downtown Plan and Quarters Downtown Urban Design Plan

The Quarters Downtown plan and its supplementary documents state that public art can create a sense of identity for individual neighbourhoods and create a unique place, a destination, a focal point for activity, a meeting place, or landmark. Direction is provided to incorporate public art into publicly accessible open spaces, and become signature features to the developments underway, to create a welldesigned parks and public streets network.

BREATHE

BREATHE, the Green Network Strategy, establishes a framework for describing and assessing the functions of public places using three themes: Ecology, Celebration, and Wellness.

Downtown Public Places plan

The Downtown Public Places Plan outlines an enhanced open space network for downtown Edmonton and The Quarters. This builds from the Capital City Downtown Plan and BREATHE:

Green Network Strategy, and provides strategies for improving the functionality of downtown public places and making the downtown more liveable.

Connections and Exchanges: A Ten-Year Plan To Transform Arts and Heritage in Edmonton

Connections and Exchanges is Edmonton's 10– year arts and heritage plan. It seeks to infuse culture, arts and heritage into every aspect of Edmonton's civic fabric and expand Edmonton's arts and heritage audiences. This plan articulates the vision and roadmap to transform Edmonton's cultural landscape. While this document has a city– wide application, it is relevant to the downtown and supports its role as a hub for arts and culture. All the plans and supplementary documents recognize that art can humanise the urban environment by introducing thoughtfulness, humour and aesthetic value, and emphasising the cultural or historic significance of particular places. Aside from the creative aspects, the plans especially recognize the economic and social value and importance of the arts to foster and maintain employment, investment and growth.

Downtown Vibrancy plan

The Downtown Vibrancy Strategy is a call for action to activate the core. It provides a series of steps and actions to take in the short term to promote vibrancy in our downtown. The strategy is based on collaboration and partnership between a number of organisations and entities with a vested interest in the future of downtown Edmonton.

Edmonton Economic Action Plan

The Edmonton Economic Action Plan consists of tangible, specific actions that advance the direction provided in The City Plan and ConnectEdmonton. The Plan details priority actions to be carried out by the City and identifies how the City coordinates its efforts to leverage the strengths of its economic development and community partners. It seeks to support job creation, diversify industries, and support emerging markets

POTENTIAL PARTNERS

City-owned public art in Edmonton is primarily acquired through two partners The Works International Visual Arts Society (The Works) and the Edmonton Arts Council. Other key groups also contribute to the arts scene and collections.

Edmonton Arts Council (EAC) is an arms-length not-for-profit organization created by City Council in 1996 to represent Edmonton's arts community and provide expert advice on issues that affect the arts. Its mandate also supports, promotes and funds the arts and cultural community in Edmonton. It is also tasked with building, managing, and caring for Edmonton's Public Art Collection and administering the Percent for Art Program, which typically are not in partnership with the private sector.

The Works International Visual Arts Society (The

Works) was given the responsibility to run the Art & Design in Public Places Program (The Places) in the downtown by the City through the 1997 Capital City Downtown Plan in recognition that public art can fulfill greater city-building objectives. This community-based organization has a mandate to encourage partnerships between the private and public sectors to help revitalize Edmonton's downtown through the placement of publicly and privately funded works of art and design.

Arts District is the collective grouping of the major cultural institutions centred around Churchill Square, which include The Winspear, Citadel, Alberta Art Gallery, Royal Alberta Museum and Library. These provide more programming opportunities, increasingly beyond their facilities.

Arts Habitat was formed in 1995 as an initiative through the Edmonton Arts Council to provide safe, affordable and appropriate living and working space for artists.

Alberta Craft Council (ACC) and art galleries -

ACC is the Provincial Arts Service Organization that develops, promotes, and advocates for fine craft in Alberta. Typically the ACC, along with private galleries, promotes art and crafts within their facilities, but adds to the art landscape in the downtown and represents artists capable of public art works.

PRINCIPLES FOR SITE SELECTION

Site selection plays a key role in the creation and placement of public art in the downtown. The following principles should be considered during the site selection stage:

1. Prioritising **publicly accessible** spaces like plazas, parks, streetscapes, street walls, with high pedestrian traffic that are frequently visited by city residents, downtown workers and other users, and tourists.

2. Integrating art with the **functionality** of the surrounding buildings and landscape so that the artwork enhances people's experience of the space.

3. Make the artwork a key **attraction** in locations that focus on gatherings and where surrounding businesses are supported.

4. Art locations are **complementary** to the urban character where they exist, such as heritage areas.

5. Artwork should be placed where there is sufficient space to allow visitors to freely and safely approach and or **experience** the artwork.

6. Consider how artwork could serve as **landmarks** in areas where enough public open space or vistas exist to make it memorable and contribute to the downtown's wayfinding infrastructure.

7. Ensure that artwork **will not obstruct** windows, entryways or desirable sightlines, nor divert pedestrian, cyclist or vehicular movement (unless specifically intended to do so).

8. That artwork is accessible for conservation and **maintenance** requirements.

9.A key consideration would also be to coordinate principles set out in the BREATHE and Big Moves in the Downtown Public Places Plan that provide some direction on how public spaces should be best used and developed.

CRITERIA FOR DOWNTOWN PUBLIC ART SELECTION

Criteria for Downtown Public Art selection supports the downtown's sustainable growth and ongoing activation. The following considerations will help maximise the impact art has on downtown revitalization efforts.

It is easy to be captivated by large and permanent artworks that possess standalone landmark status, equivalent to that of great civic buildings and spaces. But there are other urban design considerations that can make art more meaningful and engaging to a broader population base and fulfil economic directives. These considerations explore ways art could contribute to outcomes beyond artistic purposes to better integrate the artwork into the downtown's overall efforts to create attractive urban and public realms. New artworks must respect the integrity of existing public art installations, and will present curatorially driven opportunities to cluster public artworks. Artworks should be accessible to all, culturally aware and sensitive, non-offensive or non-discriminatory.

Downtown Public Art can be illustrated through a variety of shapes, placements and experiences that may be sympathetic to, or challenge, the surrounding urban environment. There is no universal formula to guide art design and site selection, but there are many successful approaches, best practice examples and possible desirable outcomes that can be put forward for consideration in the process.

A. Vibrancy and Growth

Public Art that supports the downtown's overall vibrancy and sustainable growth.

B. Unifying Art and Design

Public Art that creates visual or conceptual unity of the downtown's character areas and streets and is typically done through streetscaping, architecture and urban design measures. However, opportunities to bring artists and designers together present a great way to unify the area's distinct character, and provide moments of joy, provocation, or reflection and more compelling reasons for pedestrians to visit.

C. Focal point

Public Art that creates a new way for people to interact with an area. The scale of the artwork can vary but the impact should add vibrancy and enjoyment to residents and visitors alike and become the focal point or landmark that draws people in. People–gathering places are already occupied and artistic intentions should consider the existing communities. Smaller or repetitive works along a stretch of blocks can be equally exciting.

D. Artwork on a Higher (or lower) Plane

Public Art that interacts with the public and challenges perspectives and expectations. People rarely look up when they are walking, and rarely see anything exciting when looking down. Present rooftops, exterior walls, and the ground as opportunities to encourage artists, the public, and developers to think about space in creative ways.

E. Public furnishings and infrastructure

Artistically designed furnishings offer the greatest simple enhancement to streetscape projects that may otherwise have limited creative opportunities due to regulations and standards. From tree gates to bike racks, they offer opportunities to develop or tell stories.

F. Light Based Art

Public Art that is light-based affect the senses differently than other art mediums, and Edmonton's Winter City strategy encourages the creative use of light. Artists who work with light have the ability to transform spaces without significantly changing the existing location. Careful consideration of its impact will add to the downtown's attraction and liveliness, especially in winter.

G. Landmarks

Well-placed landmarks make a difference in how people get around and experience a place. Placement of art at key intersections or where streets terminate may help define urban edges and locations, especially where there are few buildings. Whether it's highly visible and monumental in scale, or smaller and repeating, depends upon the context and location. Strategically located art can provide landmark functions for important sections of streets or places and help pedestrians navigate around the downtown.

H. Parks and Plazas

Parks and plazas should be identified for larger permanent public art because they are natural gathering spaces and pedestrian thoroughfares. Artists could also be engaged at the conceptual stages of some civic projects in order to help achieve shared goals and increase site-integration possibilities. Pre-existing parks and plazas should also be considered as platforms for permanent, temporary or rotating artworks, or for artistic programming.

I. Interactive

Downtown should be a place that is playful and accessible for families and children, and reflects the communities that live nearby. Safe and accessible spaces for families to gather and for children to play are key to enlivening their experiences, and consideration on how children play or interact with works of art should be taken seriously. Playfulness doesn't only mean playable, it can also mean that the artwork's subject matter or content is playful, witty, and humorous and engages more audiences.

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J. Accessible placement

Public Art should be accessible and barrier-free to people of all physical, cultural, social and economic backgrounds. Public art placement should be clearly visible and/or physically accessible so that it can be easily appreciated by everyone. If located in an area of high pedestrian traffic with the greatest exposure, sufficient space should be provided to account for people spending time with or near the installation.

Placement should also consider how it affects windows, entryways or desirable sightlines, or constrains pedestrian, cyclist or vehicular movement (unless specifically intended to do so). Suitable space to appreciate works should be considered as well as reasonable access to provide ongoing maintenance.

K. Context

When a site or artwork is being considered, those sites with heritage or character areas need to be respected and built upon. Considering the integrity of existing public art installations, while offering new opportunities to contribute to the creation of new destinations, is also necessary.

Public art initiatives should be designed to be conceptually site-specific, ensuring the initiative/ artwork connects to its location and draws from the site's users, residents, cultures, and the natural, living or built heritage. Whenever possible, permanent initiatives will be encouraged to become physically and/or conceptually integral components of the chosen location.



