



City of Kingston
Report to Arts, Recreation & Community Policies Committee
Report Number ARCP-25-001

To: Chair and Members of the Arts, Recreation & Community Policies Committee

From: Jennifer Campbell, Commissioner, Community Services

Resource Staff: Danika Lochhead, Director, Arts & Culture Services

Date of Meeting: December 12, 2024

Subject: Update on Murals on Private Property and Pilot Project to Expand Support for Mural Projects

Council Strategic Plan Alignment:

Theme: 4. Foster a Caring and Inclusive Community

Goal: 5.7 Foster culture, history, education, arts and recreation (CHEAR).

Executive Summary:

This report provides an update on the creation and installation of murals on private property in Kingston, following the new process that was approved by this Committee (Report Number [ARCP-23-003](#)) and established in the spring of 2023. The new process included amendments to the Public Art Policy, By-Law Number 2009-140 'A By-Law to Regulate Signs in the City of Kingston' and By-Law Number 2005-100 'A By-Law for Prescribing Standards for the Maintenance and Occupancy of Property within the City of Kingston' to reduce barriers to creating murals on private property.

Exhibit A of this report includes images, locations, names of artists and approval status of all murals on private property, reviewed through this process as either new murals or murals that were installed prior to the new process being established but have been retroactively approved.

This report also provides an update on a three-year pilot project that staff will be launching in 2025 that will expand support for the creation of murals on both public and private property, providing key services that includes covering costs associated with artist fees, paint and supplies (brushes, trays, rollers, etc.), installation (wall priming, equipment rentals, etc.) and

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protective anti-graffiti coating services. A total of \$150,000 will be allocated to cover costs associated with expanded mural support services, through the existing capital public art envelope budget. This program is in alignment with the City's [Public Art Master Plan](#), approved in 2014 that speaks to artist and community-initiated public art projects with funding support provided by the City, and addresses some of the challenges that have been tracked through conversations with artists, community groups and property owners through the murals on private property application process. It's also aligned with Council's Strategic Priorities to Build an Active and Connected Community, specifically to beautify City streets and spaces through graffiti management strategies and community-based programs.

Recommendation:

That the Arts, Recreation & Community Policies Committee recommends to Council:

That staff report back to the Arts, Recreation & Community Policies Committee on the status of the Murals on Private Property pilot project after year one of implementation in Q1 2026, and when the pilot project is completed in Q4 2027.

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Authorizing Signatures:

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY COMMISSIONER

**Jennifer Campbell,
Commissioner, Community
Services**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

**Lanie Hurdle, Chief
Administrative Officer**

Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:

Paige Agnew, Commissioner, Growth & Development Services	Not required
Neil Carbone, Commissioner, Corporate Services	Not required
David Fell, President & CEO, Utilities Kingston	Not required
Brad Joyce, Commissioner, Infrastructure, Transportation & Emergency Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Desirée Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer	Not required

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Options/Discussion:

Background

The City's [Public Art Policy](#) guides the implementation of the [Public Art Master Plan](#), approved by Council in 2014, and provides a framework for commissioning and maintaining public art on municipal property. The Policy and the City's public art portfolio aims to establish Kingston as a hub for creative placemaking through public art that contributes to a vibrant, high-quality public realm in Kingston, engages the community across the City, celebrates and promotes Kingston's identity, and invests in the development of artists.

Since the Public Art Policy first came into effect, multiple new permanent public artworks have been installed, and numerous temporary public art projects have been facilitated, resulting in the enlivening of public parks and spaces across the City, engagement with the community, and paid work and professional development opportunities for local, regional, and national artists. Recently commissioned and existing City-owned public artworks, including murals, can be found on the [City website](#), including a new mural at the Rideau Heights Community Centre by local Indigenous artists, Jaylene Cardinal and Dakota Ward, titled *Wahkohtowin*, a Cree word that expresses the interconnected nature of relationships, communities, and natural systems.

Interest in public art and murals has been increasing, including murals on private property which was not originally included in the City's Public Art Policy. Staff brought a report to the Arts, Recreation & Community Policies Committee (ARCP) at its meeting on April 20, 2023 ([Report Number ARCP 23-003](#)) that sought approval to amend the Public Art Policy, as well as relevant by-laws including By-Law Number 2009-140 'A By-Law to Regulate Signs in the City of Kingston' and By-Law Number 2005-100 'A By-Law for Prescribing Standards for the Maintenance and Occupancy of Property within the City of Kingston' to better support the creation of murals on private property. The amendments as approved ensured that any mural created or installed on private property will go through a review process to ensure content is appropriate for artwork in the public realm, and not be subject to fines or removal.

Additionally, the Public Art Master Plan includes a process for Artist-Initiated or Community-Initiated Requests for Public Art that is intended to facilitate requests that staff receive for funding and/or permissions for public art in or on a City building or space from an artist, curator, community member and/or organization. This process has not yet been formalized as staff have been focused on directly commissioning new public artworks, facilitating open calls for proposals, and providing skill building and public art exhibition opportunities to local artists, based on municipal priorities. However, staff do respond to and manage requests from the community for temporary public art projects and installations on a case-by-case basis, that to-date has only been focused on helping to secure permissions and providing guidance to groups on how to navigate the required permits that are needed.

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Analysis

In the spring of 2023, program guidelines and an application were launched on the [City website](#) to support murals on private property, along with a comprehensive [mural toolkit](#) that provides an overview of best practices and suggestions on what to consider when creating a mural. A communications and outreach plan helped to promote this new process and encourage applications, as well as reach artists and private property owners who had installed a mural prior to the process being launched so that their murals can be retroactively reviewed and approved and in compliance with City by-laws.

Three members of the Art in Public Places subcommittee of the Arts & Culture Advisory Committee, including Em Harmsen, Devon Ostrom and Nicole Daniels, along with Taylor Norris, the City's Public Art Coordinator, convened on May 31, 2024, to review 16 murals, 13 of which were existing murals and identified through staff research and outreach and three of which were new murals submitted through the application process.

Exhibit A of this report includes images, locations, names of artists and approval status of all murals on private property reviewed through this process as either new or existing murals.

The murals were reviewed in consideration of the program's goals and eligibility criteria, and that all applications had the permission of the property owner. All 16 murals reviewed were deemed either "approved" or "approved as existing non-conforming." The approval status of "existing, non-conforming" is in relation to any mural created and installed prior to this process being launched and includes business names and references to services or products offered and/or representation of a logo, alongside the artwork, which would typically require a Signs permit.

Staff have reached out to property owners with murals that have been approved as "existing, non-conforming" but given they were created prior to this process being launched, and there haven't been any complaints from the public, they will not be required to remove or alter the mural. Going forward, any new applications that include a sign component as part of a mural and artwork installation will be required to secure a sign permit, in compliance with the Signs By-Law. Murals as artworks are exempt from the Signs By-Law within the amendments approved by Council, but this does not include murals that function as advertising.

Of the new murals that were approved through the application process, one has been installed, one is in progress and one has not yet started. The mural not yet started is a large-scale mural on private property that is a designated heritage property, which has expanded requirements through the murals on private property program and required a heritage permit and consultation with the Heritage Kingston Committee. Through this consultation some site specific installation methods were recommended in relation to the surface of the wall identified for the mural. Staff supported this application with a report to the Heritage Kingston Committee at its meeting on February 15, 2023 (Report Number HK-23-010) to consult and engage with this Committee and

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seek the necessary permit, which was granted. This mural has not yet been installed due to some required repair work on the wall where the mural was to be located, as well as the need for the applicant to secure sufficient funding to support the installation.

Pilot Project to Provide Expanded Support for Murals

There continues to be growing interest from local artists, community groups, businesses and property owners to lead the creation of new murals on both public and private property to help promote a strong sense of place, facilitate neighbourhood or commercial identity, and help communities create an attractive and positive identity for their area. However, groups are often limited by a lack of access to funding opportunities to support artist fees, supplies, materials and equipment rentals, and access to assistance in the public art commissioning and installation process.

The Public Art Master Plan also speaks to a process for City support, including support for permissions and/or funding for Artist-Initiated or Community-Initiated Requests for Public Art on public property. The intention of this process in the Master Plan is to support artists expanding their practice into the public realm by proposing their own projects and creating public art outside the limits of a predetermined site, theme or medium, in all parts of the City, which can result in greater diversity of public art and new access points for artists and communities.

In response to this priority area of the Public Art Master Plan, ongoing community requests for support for community-led public art, and feedback collected since the murals on private property application first launched, staff will be facilitating a three-year pilot project from 2025-2027 that will include enhanced services and support for murals on both private and public property. Services offered will include funding for artist fees and coordination of services including wall priming, paint and supplies (brushes, trays, rollers, etc.), production and installation costs (equipment rentals, print for vinyl design, etc.), and protective anti-graffiti coating.

This pilot as a component of the Public Art Master Plan will be supported with up to \$150,000 from the existing Public Art Capital funding earmarked for plan implementation. Murals are considered temporary and all applicants that receive funding are required to maintain the mural for a minimum of two years. Preference for funding and support services will be given if local artists are hired for the mural project and a diversity of artists, art forms and new public artworks are represented.

This pilot project also aligns with broader placemaking efforts and provides work opportunities for artists. Two open calls will be launched over the three-year pilot project to encourage applications through the existing mural application form that will be updated to include public properties as eligible sites and will be reviewed and approved in consultation with various City departments in addition to private property. Applicants will be encouraged to reach out to the City's public art team to determine access to a selected public property before applying, which

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would be formally granted after the application and artwork design has been reviewed and approved by the Art in Public Places Subcommittee and based on existing eligibility requirements. All applicants will be required to complete an application form to identify the location, artist names and selection process, proposed artwork design, community benefits, any public engagement completed, approval from the property owner, budget, and which enhanced services they are seeking.

Eligible applicants will remain the same as the existing murals on private property program (includes artists, non-profit organizations, businesses, property owners and community groups) and the expanded mural services will support murals that have good exposure, are fully visible and/or accessible from public space, have the support of local businesses and neighbours, help to build community partnerships, and select artists through an open process, where possible.

This pilot project and expanded support for murals is also aligned with graffiti management work led by the Public Works department, as part of Council's Strategic Priorities to Build an Active and Connected Community, to develop and promote enhanced graffiti management strategies and solutions across the City. One of these strategies can be through public art, and more specifically street art and murals, which can contribute to beautification and transform blank walls that may be tagged into a site for murals and creative expression. Staff will be bringing a report to the Environment, Infrastructure & Transportation Policies Committee at its meeting on December 10, 2024 that will provide an overview of graffiti management strategies. Staff will also coordinate between departments, where appropriate, to ensure that this pilot project can also provide support to areas, buildings and spaces within Kingston that typically have graffiti and tagging issues.

Existing Policy/By-Law

Public Art Policy

By-Law Number 2009-140 'A By-Law to Regulate Signs in the City of Kingston'

By-Law Number 2005-100 'A By-Law for Prescribing Standards for the Maintenance and Occupancy of Property within the City of Kingston'

Financial Considerations

There is no net new budget request to support this pilot project. Existing approved budget within the capital public art envelope totalling \$150,000 will be allocated to support implementation.

Contacts

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Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted

Karen Santucci, Director, Public Works & Solid Waste

Taylor Norris, Public Art Coordinator, Arts & Culture Services

Exhibits Attached:

Exhibit A – Approved Murals on Private Property

Murals on Private Property Status Updates

Location: Chartreuse Flower Works, 577 Division Street

Artist: Aaron Forsythe

Status: Existing mural - approved, conforming



Location: Daft Brewing, 768 Princess Street

Artist: Eric Williams

Status: Existing mural - approved, conforming



Location: Capt. Matthew J. Dawe Memorial Legion Branch 631, 4045 Bath Road
Artist: Shane Goudreau
Status: Existing mural - approved, conforming



Location: Pizza Monster, 213 Montreal Street
Artist: Eric Williams and Aaron Forsythe
Status: New mural - approved, conforming



Location: Svendsen Brothers Repair Shop, 701 Front Road

Artist: Shane Goudreau

Status: Existing mural – approved, conforming



Location: Various businesses, 993 Princess Street

Artist: Nigel Bowen

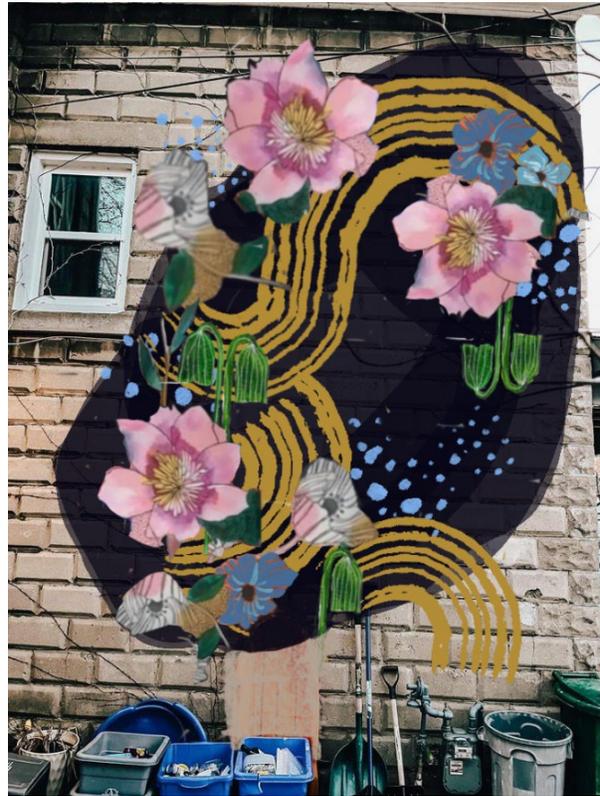
Status: Existing mural - approved, conforming



Location: Frontenac Cycle
Artist: Aaron Forsythe
Status: Existing mural - approved, non-conforming



Location: 117 Raglan Road
Artist: Sasha Jiminez French
Status: New mural - approved, conforming



Location: The Broom Factory, 305 Rideau Street
Artists: Francisco Corbett and Hill Werth
Status: Existing mural - approved, non-conforming (Corbett) and new mural, work in progress – approved, conforming (Werth)



Location: Martha's Table, 629 Princess Street
Artists: Heather Poechman
Status: Existing mural - approved, non-conforming



Location: Spearhead Brewing Company, 675 Development Drive
Artist: Shane Goudreau
Status: Existing mural - approved, non-conforming



Locations: Coal Dock and Delta Hotel Waterfront

Artist: Aaron Forsythe

Commissioned by Tourism Kingston

Status: Existing murals - approved, conforming



Location: Symphony Spa, 295 Brock Street
Artist: Shane Goudreau
Status: Existing mural - approved, conforming



Location: Cannabis Kingston, 471 Princess Street
Artist: Aaron Forsythe
Status: Existing mural - approved, non-conforming

