

public art in other parts of the city, large swathes of Toronto are now comparative “public art deserts.”

For this reason, our major recommendations include making public art contributions mandatory for all of the City’s capital projects, as well as pursuing new funding sources, such as a portion of any new hotel tax or vacant property tax. These funds could be pooled into a general public art trust fund and spent anywhere in the city (to compensate for the tendency of development to cluster), and with a view to where a project could have the greatest impact.

Percent for Public Art Program Inventory Map

Please use the zoom-in and zoom-out tool or the mouse wheel to locate Public Art from Toronto City Planning’s Percent for Public Art Program. As new Public Art is built, locations will be added to the map.



Figure 18. Concentration of public art in Toronto. Image courtesy of the City of Toronto, Urban Design Percent for Public Art Program.

These “public art deserts” also tend to be located in parts of the city where large portions of Toronto’s immigrant and visible minority communities have settled.

Thus the concentration of public art near development generates, as a byproduct, serious disparities in access to public art across Toronto’s diverse multicultural neighbourhoods. Even so, development is moving outside of the downtown core, heralding opportunities for public art across Toronto even within the current framework’s limitations. This is an opportunity for community engagement in public art and the commissioning of a more diverse group of artists.

Private ownership of public art. Toronto’s approach to public art generates privately owned public artworks in large and increasing numbers. This is an impressive record. While there are differing views on the merits of this situation, contemporary Toronto stands out from other cities and its own past in this regard. By approximately 2010, Toronto was regularly generating more privately owned than publicly owned works for the first time in its history.

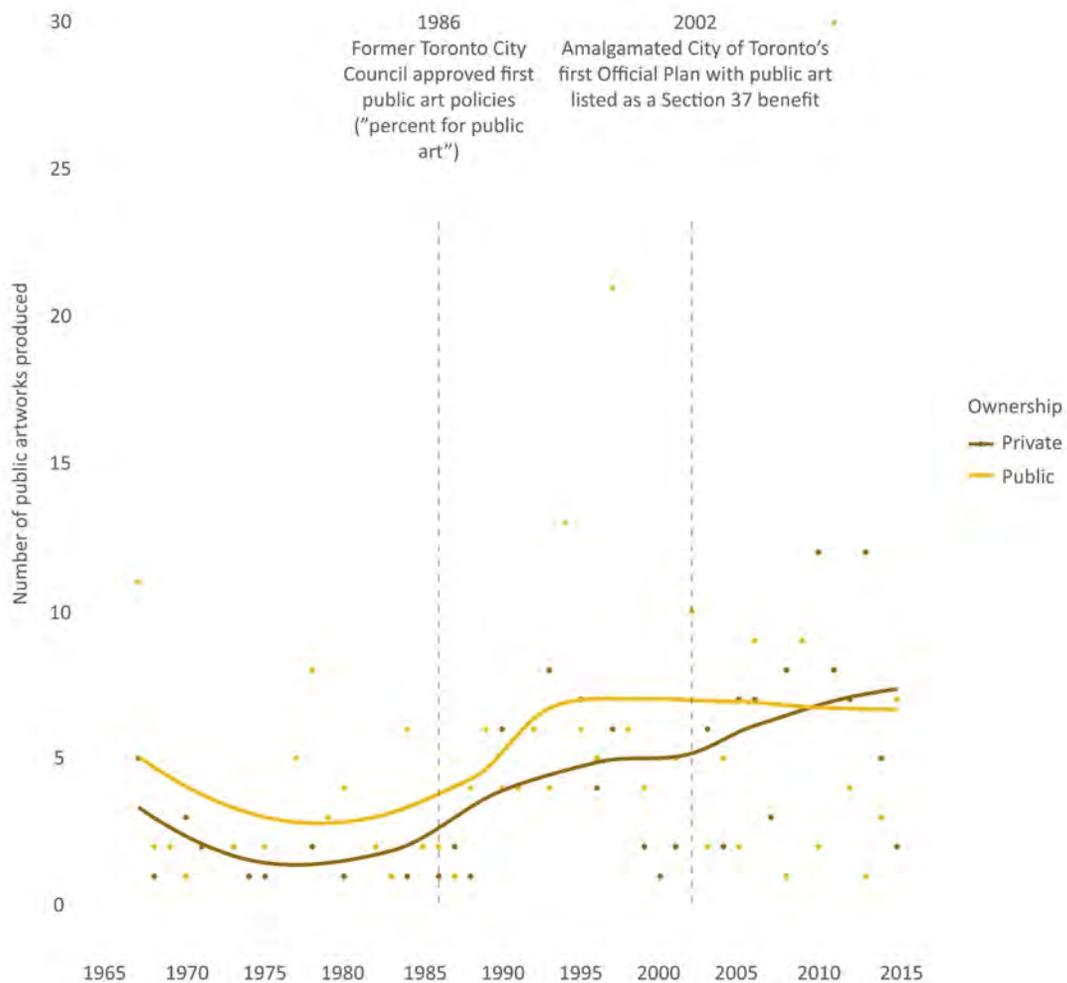


Figure 19. Trends in private vs. public ownership of public art in Toronto. This figure shows a steady increase in private ownership since the implementation of public art as a Section 37 benefit. Data sourced from *The Artful City* project.

Public art in private/public space. Toronto's building boom has primarily been a condominium boom. In contrast to large commercial and civic projects of the past, condominiums generally lack large plazas or similar publicly accessible areas. Yet, because the Percent for Public Art program, as interpreted, generally produces on-site, permanent sculptures, much of the new public art is very constrained. Privately owned spaces, moreover, are not always available to the public at all times, though they are at least meant to be "visually" accessible (such as rooftop lighting).



Figure 20. Eldon Garnet, *Artifacts of Memory*, 2016.⁵ Photo credit: Eldon Garnet.

⁵ Brushed stainless steel, 20' x 20' x 34', Toronto.

In our interview, Terry Nicholson (former director of Arts and Culture in the City) highlighted the problem inherent to this move from corporate buildings to condominium development. As he noted, while corporate buildings, with their open plazas and public realms, did serve as effective hosts for public art, condominium corporations provide few places that are accessible as public areas.

Maintenance. Maintenance is always a core challenge for public art policy. It is exacerbated due to the complex ownership arrangements in Toronto, and because the maintenance budget and plan itself is often a matter for negotiation in the formulation of a development's public art plan. Moreover, because so much public art ends up as the property of a condominium, maintenance becomes part of the condominium board's mandate. While developers may transfer maintenance funds to the condominium as part of their public art obligation, this is not the primary interest or area of expertise for many boards, a situation that creates challenges for conservation. Accordingly, one of our recommendations is to mandate clear guidelines for maintenance and conservation accountability, including requiring accountable parties to contract with accredited conservators and report regularly to the City of Toronto.



Figure 21. Douglas Coupland, *Red Canoe*, 2010.⁶ Photo credit: Paul Orenstein.

⁶ Canoe Landing Park, Toronto.

Gender inequity.⁷ Overall, Toronto has commissioned more public artwork from men than women. However, in most of the City’s major programs, the gap has been relatively small, and has narrowed over time.

On-site commissions are the exception. Those commissions in which developers exert greater control over the selection process have seen a growing divergence, with men receiving the bulk of new commissions as the program expanded. By contrast, off-site contributions — those in which the City manages the selection process — have produced relative gender parity, as has the TTC.

To be sure, individual developers may run fair and open competitions, but the net effect of their increased control over the selection process has been to widen, rather than narrow, the gender gap. Exactly why this gap has opened is not clear and deserves further study; for example, it may reflect the views or assumptions of public art consultants who are relied upon to provide a short list of artists rather than the views of developers or architects.

⁷ We have not yet been able to compile information about ethnicity. Preliminary analysis of artists’ nationalities suggests that Canadian artists have benefited greatly from Toronto’s public art policies. Our information about artist nationality is currently not complete, so this point must be considered provisional.

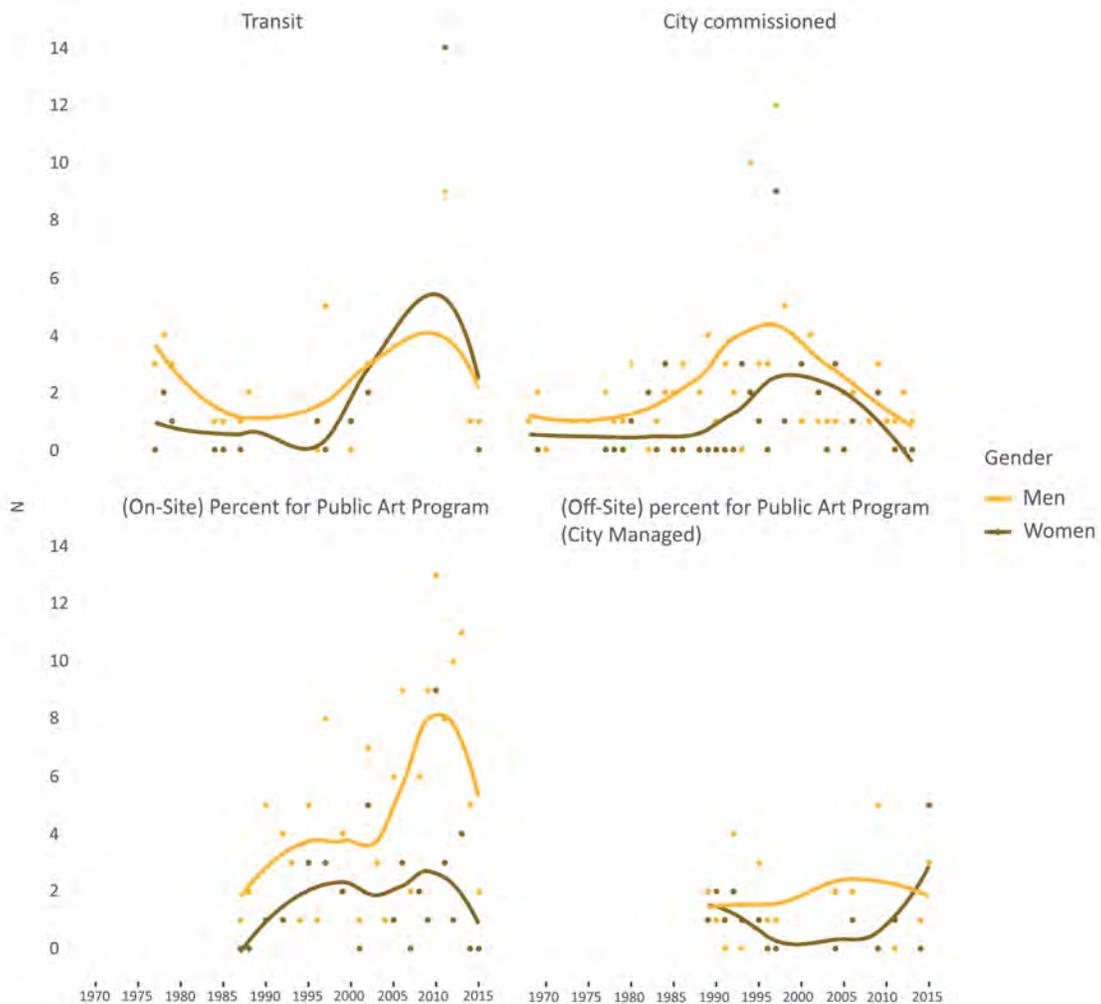


Figure 22: Trends in public artist gender, by program. This figure shows that most programs over time have achieved approximate gender parity, with the exception of the (on-site) developer Percent for Public Art program. In this program, the gender gap has widened. Data sourced from *The Artful City* project.

Public art policy stasis amidst urban dynamism

Toronto's public art policies have remained largely unchanged since they were formulated in the early 2000s. Yet Toronto itself has grown and changed profoundly since then. These changes create new demands that public art policy must meet, and the same changes make it possible to achieve policy goals that might not have been feasible in the past.

Major trends with strong relevance for public art policy include:

More robust and diverse arts sector. The number and range of artists and arts organizations in Toronto has dramatically increased since 2000, far outpacing overall job and business growth. For example, from 1999–2008, the number of dance companies, theatre presenters, fine arts schools, and musical groups more than doubled.⁸ Toronto is now an established global cultural centre with a deep pool of local and regional talent. Toronto and the GTA’s artistic community can support experimentation with a wide variety of media and forms, and its global reputation can attract leading international artists.

Denser urban environment in which more people spend more time in the public sphere. In the past decades, Toronto’s density has steadily increased (20 per cent from 1986 to 2011), and the proportion of the population living in single-family dwellings has steadily decreased (from 35 per cent in 1986 to 27 per cent in 2011).⁹ These are large changes. More people live in close proximity to one another, with less private space. More people live in “vertical communities” — in condominiums, rather than in adjacent housing. The public realm becomes correspondingly more important. In the past, it may have been possible to think of a lively and engaging public realm as a luxury. Today it is a necessity, and policy should treat it as such.

More cosmopolitan. Toronto has become far more cosmopolitan. Non-European immigration has produced vibrant ethnic enclaves in a broadly multicultural city. Non-Christian faiths and nontraditional religiosity have grown. Diverse young people have continued to cluster in dynamic neighbourhoods. Toronto houses the largest Indigenous urban population of any city in Canada. The ethnocultural diversity of Toronto’s artists, including Indigenous artists, has changed considerably. They represent some of the leading voices on the world stage. Yet most public art remains rooted in the monumentalist tradition of European high modernism, and it appears that many of the artists commissioned for significant projects are schooled in a Western contemporary art tradition.

More politically divided. Since amalgamation, Toronto has become a sharply divided city, politically speaking. The single strongest division is between a more politically progressive core (the former City of Toronto) and the more conservative (former) suburbs. Current public art policies tend to feed into this divide by concentrating public art in one part of the city (the core); other areas may often feel left out and resentful. Public art policy needs to ensure that public art is experienced as a collective good accessible to all residents that supports their communities and the city as a whole.

⁸ These numbers come from Statistics Canada’s survey of organizations, *Canadian Business Patterns*, which only includes more formal organizations. Growth in informal organizations is probably larger.

⁹ Data sourced from Statistics Canada.

Ongoing development boom. Toronto’s construction boom continues. While the Percent for Public Art program has generally grown in line with development, it has not yielded any multiplier effects in which more development dollars spark even more public art. Moreover, while overall development in Toronto has seen a fairly predictable year-over-year linear increase, there is a great deal of volatility in the number of works produced each year.

More active and sophisticated cultural policy regime with a track record of success. If generally Toronto’s public art policies have been in stasis, its overall cultural planning and policy agenda has become stronger, more active, and more sophisticated. Successive culture plans have defined a sweeping yet realistic agenda for integrating culture into more aspects of city governance and day-to-day urban experience. Major policy achievements have been realized, such as striving towards the goal of \$25 per capita arts and culture funding, a billboard tax for arts and culture, the completion of major cultural construction projects, and the creation of new Local Arts Services Organizations (LASOs).

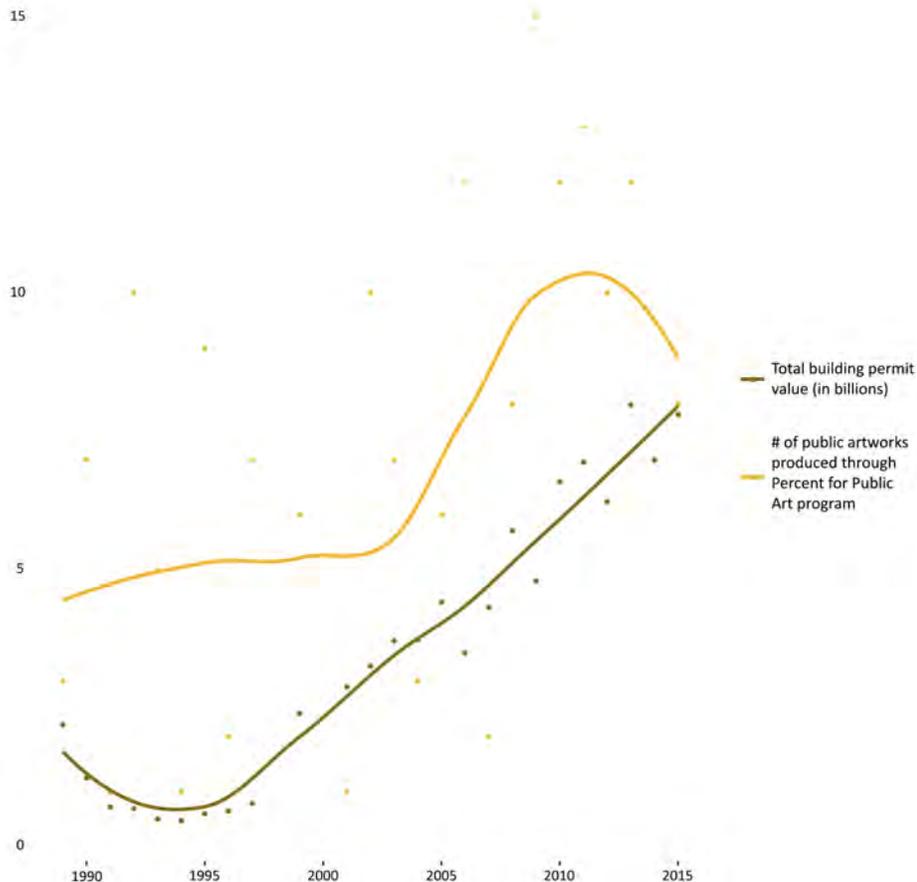


Figure 23: Public art and the building boom. This figure shows two simultaneous trends: the number of public artworks produced through the Percent for Public Art program and the total building permit value in the City of Toronto. While the latter has grown in a steady linear fashion, the former has been more sporadic and volatile. Data sourced from Statistics Canada. Image by authors.

Moreover, since amalgamation there are now more individuals in the City and community who have advanced public art expertise. At the same time, Toronto can draw on a growing base of expertise from around Canada. For example, since its founding in 2002, the Creative City Network of Canada has brought together municipal cultural workers in an ongoing dialogue of cultural policies and programs. Public art has always been a vital part of this dialogue and is one of the reasons that the field has grown in sophistication across the country. This creates huge potential for Toronto, but also highlights the need for coordinated action.

The *Culture Plan for the Creative City* (adopted by the City Council in 2003) formally recommended the development of a public art master plan. While this has not yet materialized, the City is now in a strong position to follow this recommendation. It now has a tradition of confident cultural policy-making and is ready to extend that tradition to the domain of public art; hence our recommendation to revisit that long-standing commitment and finally put it into practice.

At the same time, while public art is sometimes cited in planning documents from other city agencies, rarely is that citation accompanied by clear guidelines for integrating public art as a powerful force for transforming the public realm. Sometimes planning documents even implicitly pit important priorities (such as affordable housing) against public art. A more robust integration of public art into the planning process would recognize that affordable housing and public art should not be counterpoised but rather be intertwined. Affordable housing demands excellent, community-engaged public art.

To facilitate this, our recommendations include integrating public art into all urban design guidelines.

Toronto is in a strong position to revise its public art policies to meet these challenges. In the new Toronto, an attractive, animated, and aesthetically intriguing urban environment is mandatory, not optional. A growing arts community and an effective tradition of cultural policy-making have placed the arts and culture closer to the centre of public consciousness. Public art is increasingly viewed not as a controversial expenditure, but as a crucial public good.

Within this context, artists can act as urban problem solvers (Bringham-Hall, 2016). The Indigenous group Ogimaa Mikana has renamed Toronto streets back to their original First Nations names (CBC, 2016). This coincides with the Indigenous notion that humans are custodians of all spaces, and that humans are not owners of the land. International projects serve as models. For example, Rick Lowe's *Project Row Houses* are works of urban sculpture that have created

thriving neighbourhoods in Houston, Watts, and Birmingham. Chicago artist Theaster Gates founded and directs the Rebuild Foundation, a non-profit organization focused on culturally driven redevelopment and affordable space initiatives in under-resourced communities. Closer to home, The Public Access Curatorial Collective and Dr. Janine Marchessault have undertaken projects such as the [*Houses on Pengarth \(HOP\)*](#) in Lawrence Heights that engage local communities in relation to soon-to-be demolished homes, and both York University and OCAD University host programs for socially engaged art.

In these and other ways, public art can respond to new urban challenges by encouraging citizen engagement, inclusion, and social transformation. Our recommendations accordingly include measures to broaden the geographic scope of public art throughout Toronto's many diverse communities and to create specific funds geared towards supporting Indigenous works, screen-based and media works, and works of shorter duration.

Chapter 4: Toronto Public Art Policy in the Context of the International Municipal Public Art Policy Field

This chapter places Toronto's public art policies in the context of the international municipal public art policy field. The central point of the chapter is that while Toronto was in the past at the leading edge of an international wave of public art policy-making, the field has continued to evolve, and Toronto has in many ways fallen behind.

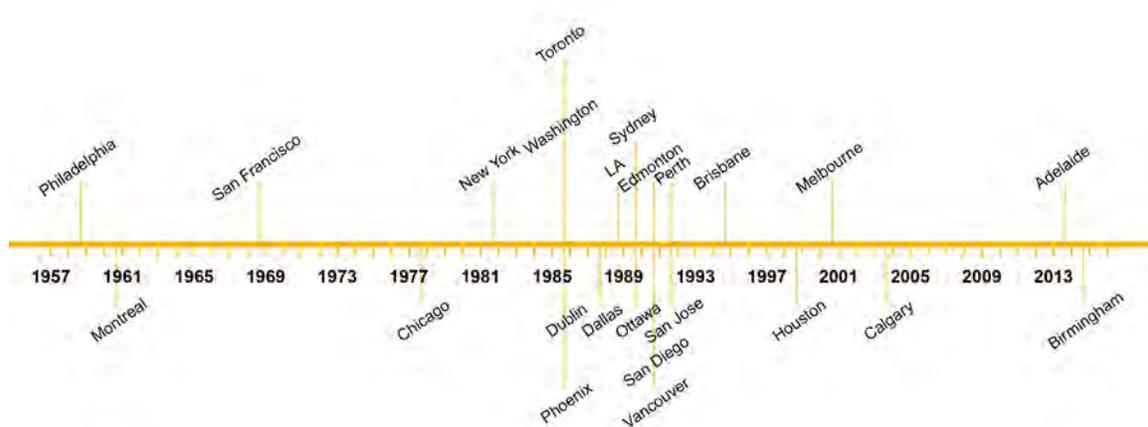


Figure 24. Cities adopting per cent for art ordinances. Image by authors.

Early policies were generally developed with a view to establish public art as a legitimate public policy target. This is now broadly accepted, and most policies in major cities start from the expectation that public art is a vital public good, and they seek to deepen and broaden its character and reach. By contrast, Toronto's official framework is relatively conservative and narrow.

However, other cities' policies can offer inspiration, ideas, and potential models to adopt. They demonstrate that what might seem difficult here is feasible elsewhere, and that with the appropriate commitment, it could be possible here as well.

Comparing Toronto's official public art policy to other cities'

In the following sections, we compare Toronto's official public art policies to those of other cities along a number of different dimensions. We highlight key differences and feature examples and models from elsewhere that we believe might provide especially useful lessons for Toronto. (We do not discuss Montreal in this section, since we give it special attention in **Chapter 7**).

The definition of public art. In the past decades, the field has generally moved towards a more expansive and experimental definition of public art. Indeed, as the Dublin City Council notes in its *Policies and Strategies for Managing Public Art*, “Since 1997... the understanding of public art has broadened to include all art forms and artistic disciplines.” Yet Toronto’s official definitions of public art remain closer to 1997 than 2017; they are relatively cautious and traditionalist.

Comparing Toronto’s definitions to those of other cities makes this clear. While some of this conservatism may be attributed to the limitations imposed by the Ontario Planning Act, that is not the whole story. Ottawa and Mississauga offer particularly telling contrasts. Those cities are subject to the same provincial policies as Toronto, yet stake out much more ambitious definitions of public art. Our recommendations thus include a new definition of public art for the City of Toronto, one that brings together key elements from many cities’ definitions and highlights the diverse forms, media, durations, and goals that public art can include.

- *Toronto*: “Typically, public artists produce **site-specific sculptures** and prominent installations that add character and distinction to a development and the surrounding neighbourhood,” (Toronto Urban Design, 2010).¹⁰
- *Ottawa*: “Public Art Commissions may take the form of a **standalone or architecturally integrated** artwork, **temporary or ephemeral** artwork, **digital artwork and other** visual art forms. The Public Art Program recognizes that public art is a **constantly evolving visual expression**,” (City of Ottawa, 2017).
- *Mississauga*: “Public art is publicly accessible to all citizens and can be in **any medium/media**, take on any shape, form or scale. Public art **can be permanent or temporary**. Public art can include, but is not limited to, **community art, mural art, installation, digital, hoarding, sculpture and street art**,” (City of Mississauga Culture Division, 2016).
- *San Diego*: “Once known mostly as monuments, public art now embraces works that range from monumental works in many **permanent and familiar** materials to those **less expected**, both in terms of **permanency, placement, and interaction**,” (City of San Diego, 2004).
- *San Antonio*: “[Public art] encompasses a **wide range of media**, from permanent sculptures and murals, to **temporary art installations** and art performances. It also embraces **new media technologies** such as **digital**

¹⁰ Emphasis (in bold) added by the authors, for this and all other quotations.

art, video, sound and light-based work, as well as other emerging art practices and genres,” (City of San Antonio, 2015).

- *Perth*: “Art interventions may include **temporary and ephemeral** artworks such as, but not limited to: **murals, short term sculptural and installation works, performance and conceptual works, experimental works** exploring new mediums and approaches, and short term works using light, sound or new technologies. Art interventions may also take the form of **public art events** such as, but not limited to: **artist talks, symposiums, festivals and curated programs** of performance art and installations,” (City of Perth, 2009).

The value of public art. Many cities stress how public art supports values crucial to contemporary, democratic, pluralistic urbanism. They highlight the ways that public art supports a broader agenda and therefore deserves support from city leaders and cities. Key values include: creativity, local and global identity, equity, accessibility, visibility, diversity, inclusion, memorability, animation, buzz, vitality, environmental sustainability, and more.

For example, The *San Francisco Arts Commission Strategic Plan 2014–2019* highlights more socially inclined values that emphasize accessibility and community engagement:

We value:

- Cultural equity and access to high quality arts experience for all
- The arts as a vehicle for positive social change and prosperity
- Artists as integral to making San Francisco a city where people want to live, work and play
- The arts as critical to a healthy democracy and innovative government
- Responsiveness to community needs
- Collaboration and partnerships
- Accountability and data-driven decision-making

(San Francisco Arts Commission, 2014)

These values shape the mandate given to public art programs and the goals associated with it. Toronto official policy tends to stress beauty, innovation, tourism, economic growth, monumentality, memorability, and sense of place. There is relatively little mention of equity, multiculturalism, community engagement, diversity, sustainability, animating public space, or of public art

acting as a means to sustain and retain local artists through commissions and recognition.¹¹

Neglecting these core values distances public art from Toronto’s broader mission. Our recommendations are designed to make these values more central to the definition and practice of public art in Toronto through proposing a wider definition, new funds to encourage diversity among artists and works, and a range of community engagement programs.

The media of public art. As the increasingly broad definitions of public art indicate, there has been a general movement away from sculpture as the predominant medium for public art. Many cities now embrace multiple and mixed media as well as events and festivals. By contrast, Toronto’s formal public art policies tend to highlight a relatively narrow range of media. This makes it difficult to tap into Toronto’s considerable talent pool of artists experimenting across many media and forms of exhibition and performance. Our recommendations are designed to remedy this by proposing funds to encourage work in new media and by redefining public art to include diverse forms.

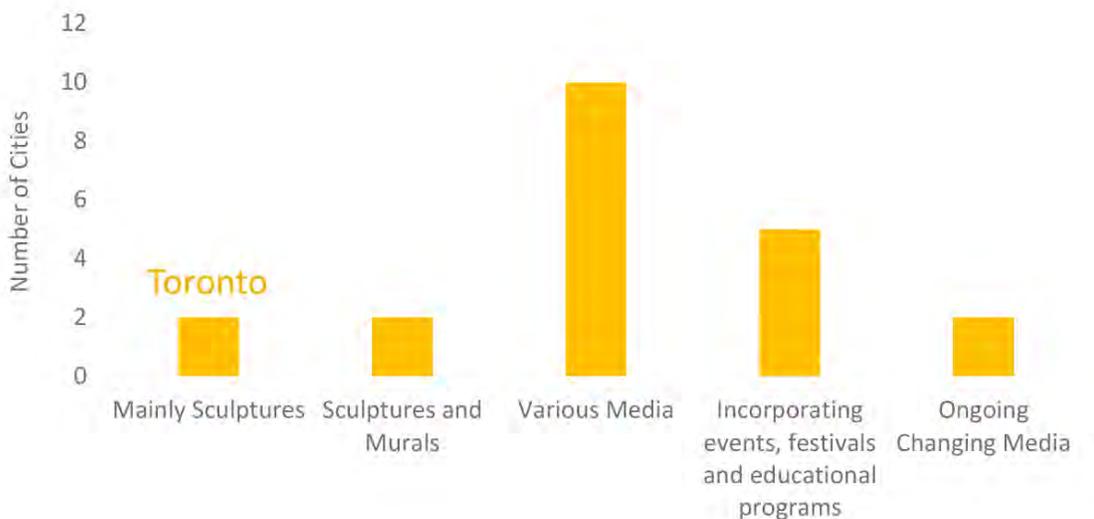


Figure 25. Media included in official definitions of public art. This figure categorizes public art programs by the media they included in their definitions of public art. The categories are arranged from the narrowest to the broadest. While Toronto adopted the narrowest definition, the largest group of cities is in the one that allows various media. Image by authors.

¹¹ Calgary provides an example of a strong commitment to local artists: “Helping local artists take their art to the world. We are aware of Calgarians’ strong desire to use a significant portion of our public art budgets to support local artists and tradespeople. We will work to help build capacity through mentorships, programs, education and smaller projects to allow artists with varying degrees of experience and backgrounds to create public art. This will enable them to compete on larger scale projects or on an international level,” (City of Calgary, 2015).

The lifespan of public art. Just as the media of public art have expanded in many cities, so too have conceptions about the duration of public art. The vast majority of cities formally encourage permanent, temporary, and seasonal art. Toronto's official policies, however, tend to feature permanency and to downplay ephemeral, seasonal, and temporary public art. Our recommendations would bring Toronto more in line with international practice by creating mechanisms for producing works of varying durations.

The funding of public art. Some cities include public art in their annual budgets. This is the case in Brisbane and Melbourne (City of Perth, 2009). However, the most common model for funding public art remains some version of a "per cent for public art" policy.

Yet "per cent for public art" can mean many things. The norm is for the percentage to be mandatory for a city's own projects. In many cases, the percentage is greater than one per cent. In nearly all cases, the percentage is applied according to a clear and regular schedule. Often these funds are aggregated into a public art budget managed by a single city agency — generally an arts and culture department — which may target projects anywhere in the city.

Likewise, it has become common to mandate a percentage of private development budgets for public art. There are several models for this, but the most common is, again, to require a fixed proportion according to clear guidelines. While many programs do connect public art to the development funding it, many also have a system in place to direct portions of funds to a pooled public art trust fund designed to serve other areas.

Toronto's system of case-by-case negotiations, voluntary compliance, and ward-based restrictions is nearly unheard of elsewhere. This is why we strongly recommend that Toronto should prioritize mandating public art contributions, both for its own projects and for private development projects that meet clearly defined criteria. While implementing the former is straightforward, the latter will require more creative thinking about potential additional policy mechanisms outside of Section 37. Possibilities include working to have public art recognized as an eligible development charge by the province.

While moving towards a mandate for public art may go against the grain of current Toronto policies, the fact that so many major global cities have done so indicates that it is possible across diverse legal and planning environments. It can happen in Toronto if we choose to make it so. Consider some examples of how other cities fund public art out of their own budgets:

- **San Diego:** "A discretionary City Council appropriation consisting of **2%** of selected eligible Capital Improvement Project budgets for public art," (City of San Diego, 2004).

- **Brisbane:** “All Capital Works Briefing Documents and Urban Design projects are developed taking into consideration the inclusion of public art. The percentage allocations should be commensurate with the public profile of the site and/or project. This generally averages out between **2.5 and 5%**...Temporary Program — \$250,000 for 6 projects (Funded by City Planning),” (Excerpted from a study by the City of Perth, 2009).
- **Dallas:** “All appropriations for city capital improvement projects, whether financed with city bond proceeds or city monies from any other source, shall include an amount equal to **1.5%** of the total capital improvement project appropriation, or an amount equal to **0.75%** of the total appropriation for a project that is exclusively or street, storm drainage, utility, or sidewalk improvements,” (City of Dallas).
- **Melbourne:** “The program budget is on average \$250,000, which funds the temporary commissions (six commissions at \$30,000 each + program management + sundries (advertising, documentation)). Further to this, 1% of Council’s overall Capital Works Budget, approximately \$400,000, goes towards funding major commissions (one every 18/24 months),” (Excerpted from a study by the City of Perth, 2009).

Several cities require public art in private construction projects that meet certain conditions. While their policy environments differ from Toronto’s, they again indicate that when a city commits to mandating public art, it can find a way to do so. Vancouver, for example, requires public art contributions at a fixed rate for all “rezonings greater in aggregate than 100,000 square feet and to projects where a substantive public benefit is sought.”¹²

The administration of public art. Most major cities house public art in a single office (usually the Arts and Culture department, although a handful use their Planning/Design departments). This creates a more concerted and simpler process. Some cities have arm’s-length organizations that administer public art outside the official city bureaucracy. In Philadelphia, a pioneer in implementing a Percent for Art ordinance in 1959, public art is administrated by the Redevelopment Authority.

¹² In San Francisco, “Section 429 of the Planning Code requires specific projects to provide public artwork on private property equal to 1% of project costs,” (San Francisco Planning Department, 2014). And in Philadelphia, “The Percent for Art clause is included in most Redevelopment Agreements and requires the selected Redeveloper to dedicate an amount equal to not less than one-percent of the total construction cost budget for work(s) of fine art. The clause shall be contained for all projects with a construction budget of \$100,000 or more,” (The Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority, 2015).

Here, Toronto is again is an outlier. It administers public art primarily through the complex relationship between Urban Planning and Culture, as described above. As we saw in Chapter 3, this creates inefficiencies and high transaction costs. For example, funds directed from one office to the other are sometimes never spent. Our recommendations therefore include the creation of a single Public Art Office that spans the Urban Planning and Culture departments.

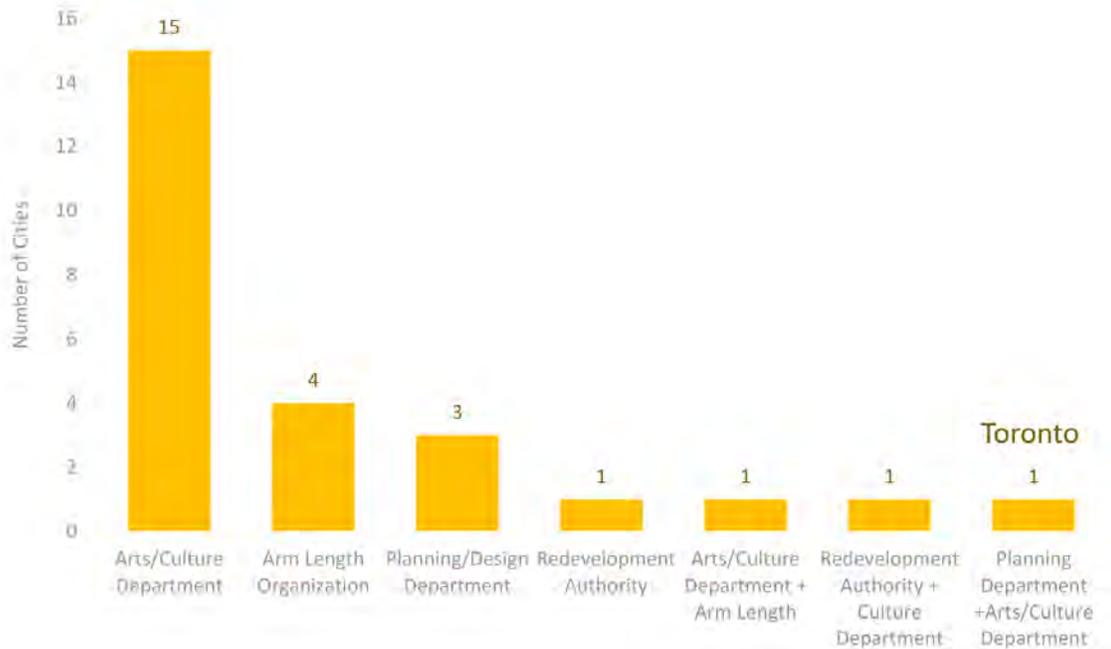


Figure 26. Types of public art administrative agencies. This figure presents the number of cities in our sample by the type of administrative agency. In most cities, the Arts/Culture department runs the program. The figure highlights Toronto's unique and complex administrative situation: it is the only city in which Planning and Culture split administration of the program. Image by authors.

Maintenance

Maintenance is one of the core challenges faced by public art policy. Wherever they are located, artworks are affected by the elements: light, temperature, humidity, accidents, vandalism, and more. Toronto generally includes a maintenance budget and plan in a project's public art plan. However, while there are typical recommended practices suggested by city staff, these are not part of a comprehensive policy.

By contrast, many cities recommend or have developed a strategic plan for maintenance that offer alternative models for Toronto to consider.

Public Art NEXT! San Jose's New Public Art Master Plan (2007) recommends that conservation efforts be central to the city's policies. It suggests provisions to:

- Support the findings and recommendations in the condition assessment of the collection and a strategic plan for conservation, restoration and maintenance recently commissioned by the Public Art Program.
- Provide adequate financial and staff resources to implement the findings and recommendations in the assessment and strategic plan.
- The Public Art Program has commissioned a team of art conservators to inspect the collection, evaluate maintenance needs and develop a conservation plan for the public art collection. Their recommendations should form the basis for increasing annual General Fund allocations to maintain the collection.

(Bressi et al., 2007)

Other conservation and maintenance policies include regular surveys of the current collection; predictable and regular maintenance contributions; clearly delimited standards of maintenance responsibility; partnerships to encourage civic and neighbourhood groups to “adopt an artwork” that they commit to maintain; and fostering collaboration between artists, cultural professionals, engineers, and conservators.

These examples indicate some of the challenges in developing a clear and comprehensive maintenance policy. Yet they also offer models Toronto could draw from when it develops its broader public art master plan.

Expanding public art presence

Many cities face the challenge of expanding the presence of public art beyond individual sites and throughout their many neighbourhoods and communities. They have pursued several policy avenues for meeting this challenge, some of which we summarize here.

Districts

One powerful approach to heightening the impact of public art beyond an individual building or site is to plan public art for entire districts. Over the years,

many cities have recognized the need both for a comprehensive public art plan and for local districts to cultivate approaches and styles distinctive to that area. In numerous cases, they produce separate plans for different parts of the city, such as the downtown, a ravine system, the airport, and more. These are often developed with additional local partners.

Siting public art in districts and planning the cultural ecosystem is used to tackle challenges related to urban identity, equity in dispersion of resources, walkability, and more. The City of Toronto has recently begun to develop some local area plans, including *Public Art Strategy, West Don Lands, Toronto* (Anholt, 2009); *Lower Don Trail Access: Environment + Art Master Plan* (2013); and the upcoming *Scarborough Centre Public Art Master Plan*.

Examples from other cities point towards models for carrying that important work much further. They inform our recommendations to more aggressively utilize existing policy tools for pooling public art contributions collected through Section 37; to create dialogue across projects; to establish a centralized Public Art Trust Fund from City capital projects and new public and private funding sources, capable of targeting any part of the city; to build a district-oriented approach into a new Public Art Master Plan while simultaneously fast-tracking new local area public art plans; and to partner with Toronto's existing LASOs to build a strong public art presence in all parts of the city.

City centre and downtown

Cities often designate the downtown area as a distinct zone for intensive public art development. Given its central position, they typically encourage major spectacles to attract tourists and residents from across the city. This downtown district strategy is often used as a tool to generate a coherent physical identity for the sprawling city. Many recognize its capacity to knit the rest of the city together, to create the feeling that the city offers ongoing exciting events, and to demarcate boundaries that give meaning to the movement through urban space.

The city of Sydney uses districts to foster the notion that the city is an organically interconnected whole, on the metaphor of the human body:

City Centre Urban Structure:
George Street = Spine
East-West connectors = Ribs
Important intersections = Vertebrae
Squares = Rooms/Heart and other organs
Lanes and Streets off George Street = Circulatory system
... Public art picks up where road closures and infrastructure improvements leave off and is an important part of any plan for urban renewal. Public art offers legibility. A single brief put to teams of artists and architects could reinforce the spatial identity of the city.

(City of Sydney, 2013)

San Jose's Office of Cultural Affairs and the city's Redevelopment Agency articulate a series of "frames" that reflect the different functions public art could offer to the downtown area, creating a sense of pace, functioning as navigation between city sites, building a sense of urban dynamism, and improving walkability by upgrading streetscapes (City of San Jose, 2007).

Toronto has first-hand experience of the power of major temporary pieces to galvanize and bring together many people, with Ai Weiwei's *Forever Bicycles* and Craig Samborski's *Mama Duck* offering examples. Our recommendations include expanding these sorts of large-scale temporary exhibitions and earmarking a portion of funds generated by a new City hotel tax towards them, as these kinds of events can have immediate benefits for the hospitality industry.

Expanding public art beyond the core: parks, waterways, neighbourhood districts

Toronto is not alone in experiencing a strong pull of public art towards its downtown. Yet other cities have not stood by and let this happen as if it were beyond their control.

For example, in Boston's *Strategic Plan for Arts and Culture* (2015), the concentration of cultural activity in the downtown area is perceived as a severe problem that results from racism and widening income disparities. These other

cities provide models for how Toronto can seek to push back against the deepening of its “public art deserts” proactively, without only waiting for spreading development to somehow take care of the problem on its own. Utilizing the park system is one key strategy. Toronto’s Arts in the Parks program already brings free, family-friendly arts events and activities, providing a strong foundation for a deeper incorporation of public art. For example, in New York City, parks are recognized as a resource with underutilized potential, which could assist in promoting cultural equity and serving deprived areas:

Virtually any park in New York City can host a public artwork, and nearly one in ten parks has done so. Our Artist’s Guide to NYC Parks Public Art Sites highlights two dozen parks that show promise and potential as community art hubs. These parks are in highly visible and well-trafficked locations, but exist in neighborhoods that have been underserved by cultural programming.

(City of New York Parks and Recreation, 2016)

Waterways provide another strategic opportunity for dispersing public art outside the urban core. To enhance public engagement with its waterways, Houston/Harris County’s Cultural Arts Council established a set of maps plotting the natural systems, the infrastructure, the neighbourhoods, and the gathering places.

Boston offers models of strategic initiatives designed to create a more equitable distribution of public art across the city. For example, its 2015 plan calls for the creation of three “arts innovation districts” outside of the city centre. It also adopts an overall approach to neighbourhood districts that involves public-private cooperation and the creation of works and the promotion of arts and culture.¹³ Accordingly, our recommendations include creating strong arts districts in Toronto, partnering with local arts and community organizations, and artist-in-the-community residence programs.

¹³ “Tactic 4.2.2 City-led Short-term: Promote the development of public art and performance opportunities in neighborhood settings, and explore sustainable options for public and private financing of public art, through partnerships with Boston Main Streets, community development corporations, and other community organizations and City departments. Tactic 4.2.3 City-catalyzed Short-term to Long-term: Support the creation and promotion of arts and cultural districts and creative development opportunities within and across Boston’s neighborhoods by partnering with neighborhood, community development, and other civic organizations,” (City of Boston, 2015).

Facilities and infrastructure commissions

One of the most direct ways cities can expand the presence of public art throughout their neighbourhoods is to utilize their own facilities as public art hubs. In Ottawa, the public art program provides opportunities for local artists to display new and retrospective exhibitions in public galleries, including a gallery in the city hall (City of Ottawa). Calgary's Public Art Program developed a separate public art plan for four new recreation facilities (City of Calgary, 2013).

Toronto has numerous possibilities in this regard, such as libraries, fire and police stations, community centres, city councillor offices, courthouses, and other civic buildings.

Vancouver provides a valuable model for the incorporation of art into civic infrastructure, preserving historical sites, enhancing new buildings, and encouraging large-scale district projects.¹⁴

Our recommendations include proposals geared towards more deeply integrating public art into all infrastructure projects in Toronto: mandating a public art contribution in all City capital projects; including public art in Heritage Canada and Ontario infrastructure projects in the city of Toronto; and embedding artists in City agencies to facilitate the inclusion of public art in City projects from their inception.

Community engagement

While Toronto has very little by way of community engagement in the public art process, various cities provide models for how to do so. They stress the contribution of public art to their diverse communities and neighbourhoods and highlight the importance of community engagement in the process of selecting and producing public art.

¹⁴ "1. When the city builds new public facilities — such as new parks and recreation buildings, pump houses, and police, fire and library construction projects — there should be a firm commitment to incorporating public art from the earliest stages of design.

2. The Public Art Program should commission art projects that are retrofit into existing civic facilities, particularly as way of letting communities identify places and projects that could be important to them, but only under the most appropriate circumstances.

3. For agencies with vast reconstruction programs (primarily the Waterworks, Sewers and Streets), the Public Art Program should consider collaborating on 'Departmental' or 'Citywide System' plans," (Program Review and Design Framework for PA, Vancouver, 2008).