

Areas for Improvement Observed in the 'Percent For Art' Policy Review

The 'Percent for Art' policy review and analysis conducted jointly by the City of Edmonton and Edmonton Arts Council identified several areas for improvement, as listed below:

1. **One versus several public art policies** - Administration and Edmonton Arts Council suggest that collapsing the four 'Percent for Art' policies into one public art policy to simplify policy interpretation and improve policy implementation.
2. **Better definition of what projects qualify and how the percent for art is calculated** - a more detailed definition would help Administration in calculating the required percent for art component from the municipal capital budgets.
3. **Better definitions of the major participants' roles** in the policy implementation process, such as the Percent For Art Coordinator, the Edmonton Arts Council and City project managers.
4. **Consistent terminology** should be sought in all public art plans, policies and procedures - for example, the use of *Civic Art Collection* and *Public Art Collection*, and other terms.
5. **Allow more flexibility in how art budgets are structured** - for example, indigenous art projects usually require more public consultation and a larger portion of the art budget should be allocated for that purpose.
6. **Project Contingency for larger art projects** - larger art projects carry greater risks which require a contingency budget to ensure successful project delivery (the current 'Percent for Art' policy procedures do not address budget contingency).
7. **Redefine the Art Bank account** - the present 'Percent for Art' policies envision that an Art Bank be established and administered by the City. The Art Bank has yet to be implemented; when it is it may be more practical to be administered by the Edmonton Arts Council. The Art Bank would collect money for conservation, and accept cash donations.
8. Allow **flexibility in the art selection process for smaller art budgets** - allowing direct art purchases for smaller art budgets, instead of hiring of an artist through a competitive RFP process, could improve the operational and 'value-for-money' efficiency of the art program.
9. Customize the qualifying criteria for **small-budget renovation projects** (e.g. under \$1 million), such as projects to replace outdated building systems or equipment. It is often not feasible to allocate a percent for art component, and with these limited art budgets (in this case \$10,000 or less) it is difficult to make a significant artistic impact. Small budget renovation projects could either be exempted from the policy or have their art budgets pooled together for larger art commissions.

The areas for improvement suggested above may be considered in the next 'Percent For Art' policy revision that will follow the Edmonton's 10-year arts and heritage plan update in 2018/2019.