



CITY OF AURORA

# ART IN PUBLIC PLACES

MASTER PLAN | 2019-2024



# CONTENT

INSET: Proposal image of the façade of the Central Recreation Center, integrated art glass by David Griggs and Scott Parsons, to be completed spring 2019. RIGHT: Volunteers working on the painting of “Aurora 610” temporary mural by Yulia Avgustinovich, celebrating the then soon-to-open Stanley Marketplace, 2016.



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“Coalescence”, by Bimmer Torres (bimmer t.), 2017. Designed for the Dayton Street Day Labor Center, the artist worked with the center to hire day laborers to help paint the mural celebrating their work and lives.



“Glove Two” by Rik Sargent, 2018. After Glove Bench (2002) was de-accessioned and removed, a playground fabricator recreated the artwork from the artist’s original drawings in a more durable material. Located at the Aurora Sports Park.



“Stories Interweave”, (close-up) by Joe O’Connell (Creative Machines), 2017. Located on the plazas under the Colfax Bridge R Line station, these eight light sculptures celebrate Aurora’s diversity with individual stories.



# INTRODUCTION

## “Ascentiate”

Media: Aluminum, paint, polycarbonate

Artist: Douwe Blumberg, 2018

*When you visit this memorial, do not expect to find a list of names, references to the event, or other elements that you might find at other memorial sites. Instead, the hope of everybody involved in this project is for you to experience comfort, peace, hope and strength –and that something of sustaining beauty and deep meaning has been created for all of us to enjoy. Enjoy it now, and imagine it in five years, and in 10 years, as the plantings become mature and the landscape is rich.*



## “Stories Interweave”

Media: Stainless steel, powder coating, LED lighting, lumen XT and electronics

Artist: Joe O’Connell, 2017

Part of the award-winning partnership with the Regional Transportation District (RTD).

## PURPOSE OF THE ART IN PUBLIC PLACES 5-YEAR MASTER PLAN

In 2014, the Art in Public Places Commission completed a five-year Master Plan ranging from 2014-2018. This document has been a tool used to guide the commission, Public Art staff and the city for the development and implementation of the Art In Public Places (AIPP) Program. The AIPP Program has been a successful program and has completed most of the goals, projects and objectives outlined in the 2014-2018 plan.

The commission undergoes an annual planning session in January of each calendar year. The purpose of this meeting is to outline the strategic planning effort which guides the next five years of the AIPP Program. This year, the Art in Public Places Commission selected a sub-committee along with staff to work on updating the formal five-year Master Plan. It is important to set the goals and objectives, mission, values and target projects for the next five years for the Art in Public Places Program.

## PROGRAM MISSION AND VISION

The mission of the Art in Public Places Program is to create great places that contribute to neighborhood development, economic vitality and enrich and engage the community of Aurora. The city of Aurora Art in Public Places Commission envisions establishing a unique identity for the city of Aurora while contributing to the civic pride of the community and creating a sense of place.

The variety of media and styles reinforces and expands Aurora’s commitment to improve the aesthetic character of its public places. Public Art in Aurora encourages interaction and meaningful connections among diverse communities while educating people about the value of the arts in their community.



# PLAN UPDATE

## PUBLIC OUTREACH EFFORT

As part of the Five-Year Plan update, the Art in Public Places Commission sought public input from those who live, work or play in the city. The commission created a brief three-question survey which was presented and shared at a variety of public meetings, sent to city staff and was posted on the commission’s social media as well as the city’s website and social media. The commission received more than 550 survey responses!

### PUBLIC MEETING OUTREACH

- NANO (North Aurora Neighborhood Organization) - Thursday, Feb. 8, 2018
- Affiliate Fair Aurora Association of Realtors Booth - Friday, Feb. 16, 2018
- Ward IV - Sunday, Feb. 18, 2018 from 6:30-8:30 p.m.
- Ward I - Tuesday, Feb. 20, 2018 from 6-8 p.m. at Martin Luther King Jr. Library
- Tips & Leads, Aurora Chamber of Commerce - Tuesday, Feb. 20, 2018
- Ward II - Thursday, Feb. 22, 2018 from 6:30-7:30 p.m. at Beck Recreation Center
- Aurora Cultural Arts District Board meeting - Tuesday, Feb. 27, 2018
- Ward III - Wednesday, March 14, 2018 from 6-8 p.m.
- Ward V - Tuesday, March 20, 2018 from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. at Heather Gardens Clubhouse
- Ward VI - Wednesday, March 28, 2018 from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. at Tallyn’s Reach Library

### OUTREACH SURVEY

The Art in Public Places Commission determined that creating a short survey would be the most efficient way to gather data from the public. The survey included the following questions:

1. What does public art in Aurora mean to you?  
Describe in one or two words.
2. If you could place a public art piece anywhere in Aurora, where would it be?
3. What types of art would you like to see in the city of Aurora? Circle as many as apply:
  - a. Two-Dimensional Art (painting, drawing, prints, photography, collage, mixed media, murals, mosaic, stained glass, etched glass, etc.)
  - b. Three-Dimensional Art (sculpture, ceramics,

- c. Media Arts (film, video, digital art, light art, sound art)
- d. Functional Art Elements (shade structures, benches, sun dials, weather vanes, tile, terrazzo, art integrated into architecture, etc.)
- e. Other

The online version of this survey, which was created through Google Forms, asked a few optional questions from the survey respondents including their age, email for outreach efforts, and if they are an artist that lives or works in Aurora.

These questions served the purpose of not only gathering public input but creating a database of individuals who are interested in the public art program in Aurora. It also serves to collect names of artists in Aurora that we might be able to target with future art calls.

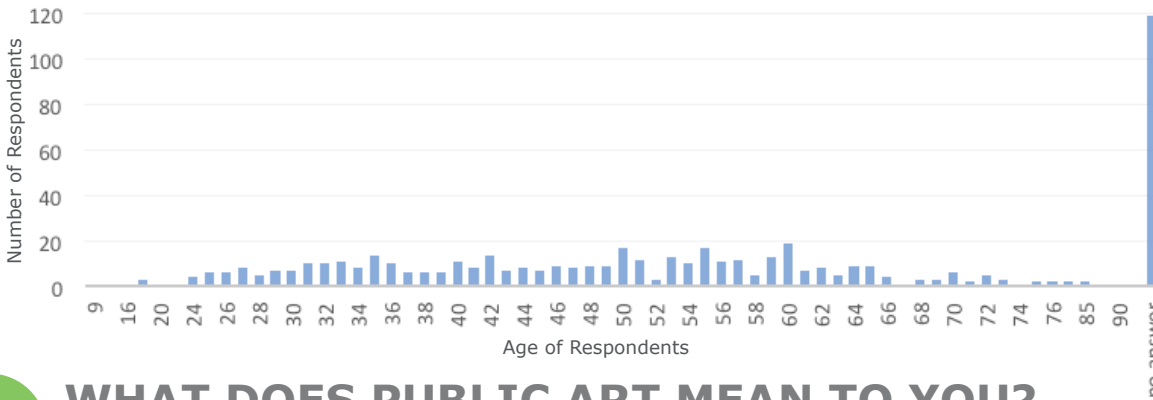
To publish the survey to the community, the commission took a two-pronged approach. First, commissioners attended Ward meetings, neighborhood meetings and business association meetings to give brief presentations on the mission and to collect surveys. These surveys were given on paper and were later transcribed into an electronic version.

The survey was also published online and was sent out through the commission’s social media platforms as well as through the city to community members and employees.

### SURVEY RESULTS

The Art in Public Places Commission received more than 550 responses to the survey through a combination of both methods. The commission compiled data on respondent age to see whether it was a varied sample. 80 percent of the respondents answered the question of age; the average age of the respondents was 49.9 years.

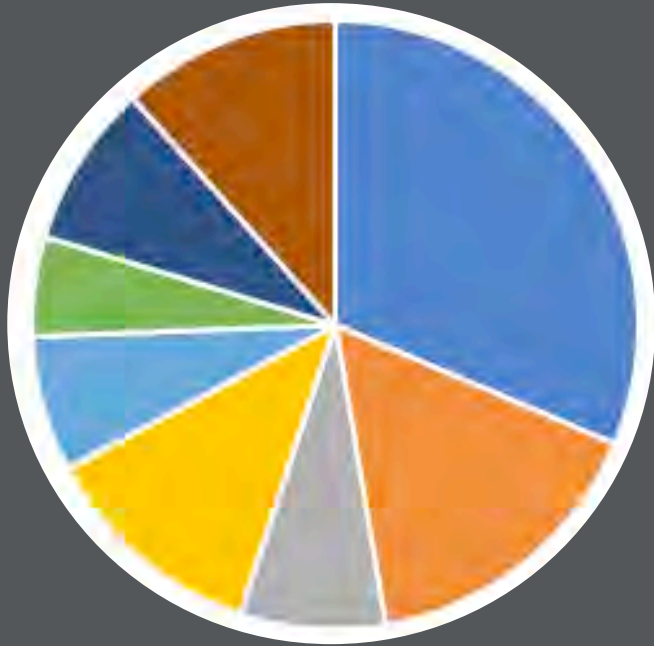
### AGE DEMOGRAPHICS OF SURVEY RESPONDERS



### WHAT DOES PUBLIC ART MEAN TO YOU?

Next, the survey asked respondents to describe what public art in Aurora means to them in one or two words. While there was a breadth of responses, there were a few key words that stuck out as shown in Table 2.

Additionally, there are a few noteworthy phrases that are worth highlighting in this plan. The majority of the feedback was positive, but there was some negative feedback relative to public art as a 'waste of money' or being 'just okay'.



- Beauty
- Community
- Culture
- Inspiring
- Nothing
- Creativity
- Money/Waste
- Interesting



**"ART IN PUBLIC PLACES IS A THREAD OF THE EMOTIONAL FABRIC OF LIFE."**

*"Public art signifies a community that cares about the quality of life for residents and visitors. It is an enhancement to the community, elevating the intellectual capital of an area."*

**"I THINK IT IS A REFLECTION OF HOW THE CITY FEELS ABOUT ITSELF."**

*"Public art in Aurora means an expression of creativity and celebration of the different cultures that make up the city."*

**"GREAT TO HAVE IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD. IT CREATES PRIDE IN OUR AREA OF THE CITY."**

*"It enhances our city to take its place as a credible metropolitan area."*

**"AURORA COMING OF AGE."**



"On the Move 1"

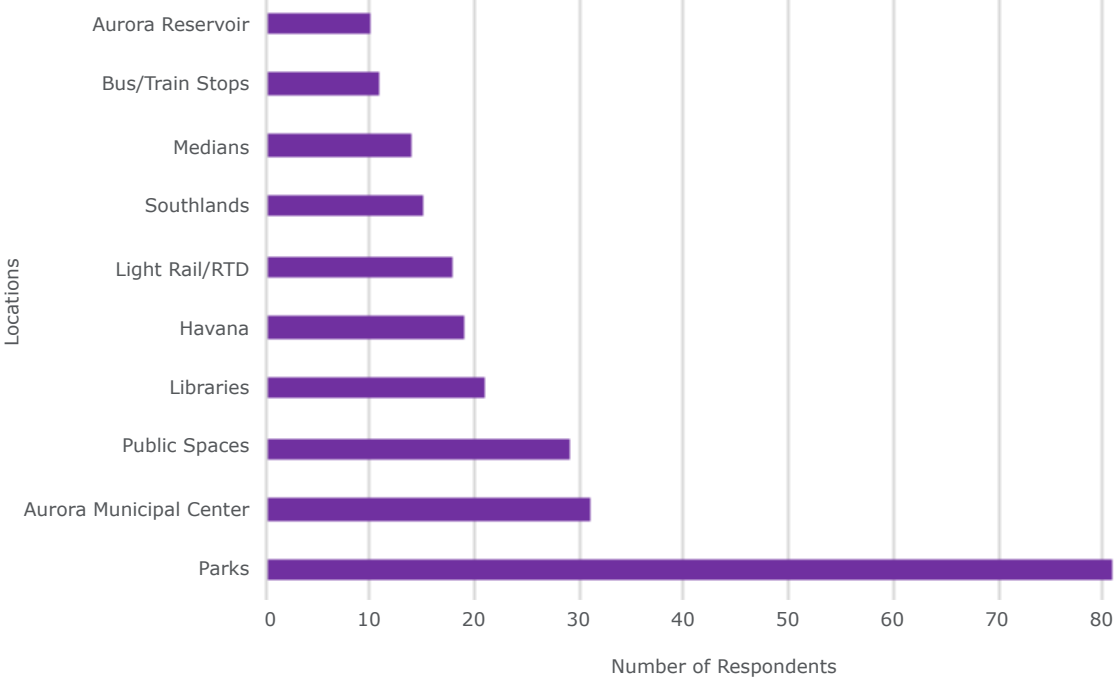
Media: Dichroic glass and aluminum

Artist: Gordon Huether, 2017

The public art along RTD's R Line was recognized in 2017 by the New York Times as one of the Top Places to See Public Art in the country.

The next question asked, if you could place a public art piece anywhere in Aurora, where would it be? Some of the locations were very broad, including entire city wards. Some were specific to cross-streets and exactly where on the intersection the respondent would like to see an art piece. The commission will maintain this list and continue to reference it as projects arise. While public art is overwhelmingly a positive aspect to the citizens of Aurora, there is work to do in regards to outreach and education on public art funding, getting neighbors involved, and working towards a more beautiful Aurora. Table 3 illustrates some of the top responses in relation to locations of Public Art in Aurora. Additionally, there are a few noteworthy places that are worth highlighting as an insightful comment.

**PREFERRED PUBLIC ART LOCATIONS**



**NOTEWORTHY PLACES**

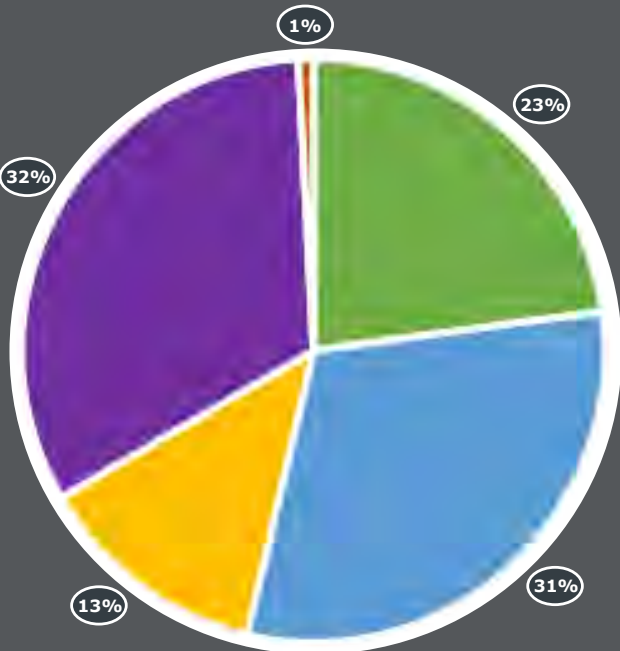
- **"I love that the art is in public places, but I would absolutely adore it if these were paired with benches or tables where one could sit looking at the art and contemplate it while having lunch or talking. Most of the art you kind of see while you are on the move... walking or driving."**
- **"When the development happens near the Iliff Station, I would like to something nice either at the intersection of Black Hawk and Iliff or something that can be visible from the road."**
- **"Along Colfax, in areas that look run down that can use some color and beautification while also preserving the character of the neighborhood."**





# WHAT TYPES OF ART WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN THE CITY OF AURORA?

The final question asked, what type of art would you like to see in the city of Aurora? There was a tremendous amount of responses for this question, with many respondents offering multiple preferences. There were 1,378 responses with a large preference for functional art (32 percent) and 3D art (31 percent).



- None
- Two-dimensional art (painting, drawing, prints, photography, collage, mixed media, murals, mosaic, stained glass, etched glass, etc)
- Media art (film, video, digital art, light art, sound art)
- Functional art elements (shade structures, benches, sun dials, weather vanes, tile, terraces, art integrated into architecture, etc)
- Three dimensional art (sculpture, ceramics, fiber art, glass, etc)

## OUTREACH SUMMARY

The Aurora Art in Public Places program understands the importance of engaging, polling and continuing to outreach to the public in regards to public art. After all, much of the reason for creative placemaking through public art is to actively work towards a community space that is serving the residents and visitors of the city of Aurora.

Through the outreach and survey efforts associated with this plan update, much of the feedback has been utilized to guide this planning document. Responses to what art in Aurora means, types of art, and location of art, have assisted in guiding the goals

and objectives for the next five years. Some of the many take-aways include a better understanding of areas that the public would like to see more art or where the public would not want to see art. The response to types of art will guide the commission in exploring innovative and traditional types of art for the city. Additionally, by polling the age of respondents, there is a better understanding of the gaps in outreach and how to better improve outreach to a diversity of ages and demographics. It is important for the current and future generations of Aurora to guide the development and procurement of public art with the publics input at heart.

# GOALS AND OBJECTIVES



"Aurora 610"

Media: Traffic paint

Artist: Yulia Avgustinovich, 2016. Approximately 350 volunteers participated in creating this temporary mural painted directly on the Clinton Street, south of the Stanley Marketplace.

## GOAL 1: DIVERSITY

"Facilitate art that reflects the city's diversity in culture, history, beliefs, heritage, race, age, ethnicity and gender."

### Objectives:

- Implement the Art in Public Places Diversity Statement, review and update as necessary.
- Promote and encourage diversity in community panel members, artists, commissioners, and types of art.

## GOAL 2: EDUCATION

"Continue to educate residents, visitors and stakeholders to increase understanding within the community about public art in Aurora through outreach, social media and events."

### Objectives:

- Promote and educate through the city website, social media, QR Codes on-site and other opportunities.
- Promote the program at city events.
- Build and maintain relationships with schools in Aurora.
- Educate the Art in Public Places Commission through annual site visits, visiting other communities and commissions, and engaging with other art groups.

## GOAL 3: ADVOCACY

"Advocate for public art in the city of Aurora through outreach efforts, staff, city budgeting and other local and state art groups."

### Objectives:

- Send Art in Public Places staff to annual trainings, workshops, awards ceremonies, in order to increase the program's visibility and continual education and outreach for staff members.
- Create and maintain an outreach list to advocate for the program. Such groups could include ARISE, Leadership Aurora, Citizen Academies and other opportunities.
- Regularly communicate with elected officials.
- Annually advocate for the program through the budget process.





## GOALS AT A GLANCE



Diversity



Education



Advocacy



Public Engagement



Maintenance



Innovation



“Lenticular Dreams”

Media: Kinetic stainless steel and powder coat

Artist: Reven Swanson, 2018. The artist worked with students at Aurora Central High School, and community members, in the development of the concept and elements for this series of three kinetic sculptures.

### GOAL 4: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

“Engage and connect the public to public art in Aurora through interacting with the pieces, participation in the art selection process and plan updates, education and outreach efforts.”

#### Objectives:

- Foster relationships and partnerships with private and public entities to promote public art.
- Evaluate the Art2C program on Havana.
- Explore opportunities to develop art tours and other avenues to engage the public.
- Select art that is stimulating and engages the public.
- Attend Aurora City Council Ward meetings.
- Review and update mission statement as needed.
- Support appropriate efforts and activities within the Aurora Cultural Arts District.

### GOAL 5: MAINTENANCE

“Review and continually update a maintenance plan for the entire collection.”

#### Objectives:

- Annually evaluate the progress in relationship to the 2016 collection conversation survey.
- Help advise staff regarding prioritizing projects by balancing cost, public interest and vendor availability for maintenance and repairs.

### GOAL 6: INNOVATION

“Encourage and foster art that is innovative, creates a sense of place, sparks conversation and community, and captures Aurora’s diversity.”

#### Objectives:

- Use public art as a tool to promote design excellence. Continue to work with other city departments and divisions such as Parks, Planning, Engineering and Public Works, as well as developers to create quality places within the city through art.
- Strive to select art that reflects Aurora’s culture of innovation.
- Develop opportunities for new artistic methods, mediums, contexts and concepts.
- Explore new sources of revenue and partnerships.

## ADMINISTRATION & MAINTENANCE



“Zig Zing”

Media: Painted steel

Artist : Robert Ellison, 2007. This sculpture underwent significant repair work in 2018, with the growing emphasis on maintenance and conservation of this valuable art collection.

Funding for administration and maintenance comes from:

- Twenty-five percent of the one percent mandated by the Art in Public Places Ordinance except for bond-funded and Conservation Trust Fund projects which do not contribute to the funding for administration and maintenance due to the stipulations of each funding mechanism.
- Additional funding for administration and maintenance comes from the role that the Public Art coordinator plays in working with private developers planning projects at transit-oriented development sites or for Metro Districts, both of which have a public art requirement. The Public Art coordinator works with them on their development of a Public Art Plan and moves it through the approval process. The program collects a fee to assist in the costs of overseeing the evolution of the public art these sites as the construction of the site moves forward, sometimes over a couple years, and sometimes over 20 years or more.

An appropriate level of funding for administration of the Art in Public Places Program and maintenance of the collection is important because:

- A collection of this size and value (over 4 million dollars) requires professional management to ensure this valuable asset of cultural significant artworks is preserved as a legacy.
- An active, professional and community minded public art program is an essential resource for a city of this size to be attractive and competitive for residents, homeowners, businesses and visitors.
- The public art staffing level must grow to effectively meet the needs of the growing city.



“Art In Motion” proposal drawing. Artist: David Garcia, 2018. This mural, designed for the front of The

People’s Building, celebrates the arts and the arts district. Scheduled for completion in late 2018.



**PUBLIC ART STAFF**

The Art in Public Places Program is administered through the Public Art Office, Cultural Services Division, in the Library and Cultural Services Department. There is one full time staff member, the Public Art coordinator --who is responsible for managing and overseeing all aspects of the Program-- and one part-time temporary administrative staff member providing support. Public Art staff is responsible for all tasks including but not limited to:

- Presentation of program recommendations to the Aurora City Council
- Liaison to the AIPP Commission
- Management of budgets and contracts
- Review and recommendations regarding policies and procedures
- Orientation and management of art selection panel members
- Facilitation of art selection processes
- Project design review for quality and code compliance
- Oversight of art installation and construction management
- Periodically commissioning a professional collection conservation survey to help guide regular maintenance as well as repairs and restoration
- Management and oversight of art maintenance and conservation processes
- Maintenance of public art database
- Inter-departmental collaboration and cooperation
- Public relations and marketing
- Fostering strong relationships with colleagues and

artists locally, regionally and nationally

- Working with private developers on public art requirements for metro districts and Transit-oriented developments

**INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COLLABORATION AND COOPERATION**

Inter-departmental collaboration and cooperation is the backbone of a strong, meaningful and connected public art program.

**BUDGET**

On an annual basis, the city’s Budget Office reviews the budgets allocated for capital projects in the upcoming years and provides a list of the funded projects to the Public Art coordinator through the financial supervisor of Library and Cultural Services. This annual review and report helps to ensure that public art staff and the AIPP Commission can plan projects efficiently and effectively. In addition, the Budget Office oversees compliance with the Public Art Ordinance ensuring that all construction projects with budgets of \$100,000 or more are making the appropriate set-aside for public art.

**PROJECT PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT**

The Public Art coordinator is responsible for coordinating the review of public art projects with relevant city of Aurora departments and divisions including Planning and Development; Parks, Recreation and Open Space; the Building Code Division and Facilities Management Division. When

a public art project is planned to be placed at a city facility, staff from that facility participate in the planning process.

The success of public art projects depends upon strong and collaborative relationships with all city departments before, during and after new construction projects. Beginning the public art planning process in advance of new construction design will ensure the quality and integration of art into city facilities and other amenities.

Beyond these steps in specific project management elements, the Public Art coordinator is involved in many city-wide teams that provide the big picture perspective and insights into longer planning initiatives on behalf of the city. The coordinator keeps the AIPPC informed. These teams include

- City Code Revision
- Comprehensive Plan Staff Working Group
- The Westerly Creek Task Force (and several sub-groups)
- Grant initiatives
- Aurora Urban Renewal Authority

This enables the Art in Public Places coordinator to develop a forward-thinking perspective with breadth and depth.

**MAINTENANCE AND INVENTORY**

Regular collection maintenance efforts as well as repairs and major restorations are guided by the periodic commissioning of a professional collection

conservation survey. This involves the detailed evaluation of each piece which is then graded from A (in excellent condition) through F (badly, in need of repairs.) The survey also includes a budget component with estimates for regular maintenance as well as costs related to short term immediate repairs through major restorations. This information is used together with public interest, vendor availability, and other factors to establish maintenance, repairs and restoration priorities.

When necessary and appropriate, public art staff will perform minor repairs and cleaning, including graffiti removal. Major work requires special tools, materials, facilities, training, and expertise in a field that is highly technical and rapidly changing.

Public art staff work to ensure the integrity of Aurora’s Public Art Collection by overseeing that any maintenance and/or repairs to the public artwork are made according to fine art maintenance and conservation practices by conservation professionals in a timely manner and within the parameters of available funding.

**REPRODUCTION OF PUBLIC ART IMAGES**

When images of works in Aurora’s Public Art Collection are reproduced in our publications, or provided to media or for outside publications, artists must be given credit for the artwork and the appropriate source must receive photo credits for the use of the image.



# SUCCESS AND CHALLENGES

Over the past five years, the Art in Public Places Program has grown into a stronger, more dynamic, and publicly engaged public art program. The program measures success in a multitude of ways, many of which are seen through the ways in which people engage with the collection and the process.

### PREVIOUS FIVE-YEAR SUCCESSES (2014-2018)

As part of this Five-Year Plan Update, it is important to highlight the achievements and program successes from 2014-2018. Some of these successes include:

- Development of a strong social media presence. This has in turn increased public awareness for the program.
- Presentations to a variety of groups has also increased the awareness to the program.
- An increase in the number of people applying for open seats on the commission as a result of increased awareness, many of the applications unsolicited.
- Thinking more strategically about where public art is best placed.
- Increased the public awareness of the Art in Public Places by commission participation at events including Global Fest, Buskers, Brews and BBQ and the RTD's R and A lines openings.
- Art2C on Havana which is a strong rotating art program and partnership that has been actively servicing the Havana Business Improvement District for nearly a decade.
- Serving in an advisory capacity to the 7/20 Memorial Foundation to help fund and facilitate an impactful Memorial Art piece, "Ascentiate," by artist Douwe Blumberg.
- Actively exploring and funding new areas of art such as integrated art.
- A successful and award-winning partnership with RTD on the R Line and A Line art pieces.
- The community outreach that has helped inform this Five-Year Plan.

- The establishment of a maintenance plan and collection conservation survey as a key to successful to collection maintenance.
- The popular piece titled, "Glove Bench," was decommissioned and replaced with "Glove Two," both by artist Rik Sargent.
- The program continues to work on communication to a larger audience.

### ONGOING PROGRAM CHALLENGES

In addition to the program successes, there are always challenges and constraints to overcome. Some of these challenges include the following:

- Due to the program's ongoing success, the art collection and program continues to grow, which in turn puts a strain on the small staff. Additional staff and staff time would enable the program to explore a myriad of opportunities that will help to create a more livable, attractive and dynamic city.
- While there are city dollars allocated for the art program, most of the money comes from development and the one percent fee as adopted in the Art in Public Places Ordinance. This puts constraints on staffing, maintenance and general overhead costs. A regular general fund allocation would help the program to grow in a manner that is consistent with the growth of the city.
- Appropriately addressing the city's diverse populations which means many things such as public outreach to a large area and diverse citizen group and creating an Art in Public Places Comision that reflects the city's demographics.

### ANNUAL WORK PLAN

The Art in Public Places Program maintains an internal working document to track upcoming, current and potentials for public art in Aurora. This document acts as a guiding strategic plan for implementing the Five-Year Plan as funds are made available, construction projects are underway, and additionally tracks the project year projected five years out. Plans are shared with Library and Cultural Services budget supervisor, who meets with the commissioners twice annually. This ensures that all funds are being effectively expended and that budgets are not exceeded. This also allows the implementation of the art to be flexible and organic. The document outlines a vision in which new public art projects are anticipated in all six city wards over the next five years. Art in Public Places Program staff maintains and updates this document monthly.

"Uptown: A Place for Art & Community"

Media: Acrylic on medium-density fibreboard

Artist: Jason Needham, 2007. This mural underwent major restoration in 2018, and was relocated to a new permanent home at Downtown Aurora Visual Arts, just south of its original location.





# CONCLUSION



“Starchild”

Media: Acrylic paint on stucco

Artists: Jonathan Lamb and  
Micahel Ortiz, 2015



“Dragonfly/Giraffe”

Media: Powder coated steel

Artist: John King, 2009

This kinetic sculpture underwent a full restoration in 2018.

Implementation of this Master Plan will be accomplished through support from partnerships in various sectors of the Aurora community. The Commission and staff work will continue work alongside community members, partners, Council, and artists to further the creative placemaking and other public art initiatives for the current and future residents and visitors to the City of Aurora.

## THE ART IN PUBLIC PLACES PROGRAM

(AIPP) is governed by a nine-member Aurora City Council-appointed commission. The AIPP commission is responsible for making recommendations to the Aurora City Council regarding the public art program, including project budget allocations, strategic planning and development of policies and procedures. Each commissioner advocates for arts and culture to be an integral part of the community. They collaborate with community organizations and educate citizens about public art. The commissioners focus on fostering experiences surrounding public art, engaging residents and visitors alike.

## Members of the AIPP commission

(as at Sept. 2018)

- Laura Noe, Chair
- Rachel Granrath, Vice Chair
- Amy Cheslin
- Rick Forsman
- Celina Kaur
- Robert Niedringhaus
- George Peck
- Brittany Pirtle
- Julie Weinheimer

## City of Aurora staff

- Roberta Bloom, Public Art Coordinator
- Carina Bañuelos-Harrison, Public Art Assistant
- Gary Margolis, Cultural Services Division Manager
- Patti Bateman, Director of Library and Cultural Services



## "Coalescence"

Media: Aerosol paint and latex

Artist: Bimmer Torres (bimmer t.), 2017

Created with the input and assistance of the day  
laborer community.



### **Art in Public Places**

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