



**City of Kingston
Information Report to the Arts Advisory Committee
Report Number AAC-19-001**

To: Chair and Members of Arts Advisory Committee
From: Lanie Hurdle, Commissioner, Community Services
Resource Staff: Colin Wiginton, Cultural Director, Cultural Services
Date of Meeting: January 24, 2019
Subject: Arts Advisory Committee Orientation

Executive Summary:

The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Arts Advisory Committee (AAC) with a high level overview of the Committees' mandate as well as their related responsibilities. This report also includes information about key strategies, plans and policies relevant to the Committee and it also includes a list of priority projects that will involve the AAC members in 2019.

Kingston is widely recognized as a city that is culturally rich. People enjoy living in, working in and visiting Kingston in large part due to the vitality of its cultural life that includes artists, arts organizations and other arts-based resources. The Kingston Culture Plan (KCP), approved by Council in 2010, also envisions Kingston as "a city in which all sectors of the community work together to enhance Kingston's distinctive identity, enrich the cultural life of residents and attract newcomers, audience and visitors from around the world".

Within this context, the AAC functions as an advisory committee to Council, meaning it is established to provide advice to Council in accordance with the Committees' mandate. The Committees role is defined as advisory and consultative alongside the need to "ensure that City of Kingston arts policies and strategies serve the needs of the arts community and, in turn, the residents of Kingston."

The membership of the AAC has recently changed in tandem with the results of the municipal election and the associated commencement of a new term of Council. This report, along with a presentation to be provided by City staff, is intended to equip new Committee members with the information they need to fulfill their responsibilities as they relate to the mandate of the AAC.

Recommendation:

This report is for information purposes only.

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Authorizing Signatures:

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY COMMISSIONER

Lanie Hurdle, Commissioner, Community Services

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Gerard Hunt, Chief Administrative Officer

Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:

Jim Keech, President & CEO, Utilities Kingston	Not required
Desirée Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer Commissioner, Corporate & Emergency Services	Not required
	Not required

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Discussion:

The AAC was approved in 2007 and established in 2008. Since its creation, the Committee has had a positive impact on the arts in Kingston, amplifying the voices of Kingston's artists and arts organizations while enhancing mutual understanding and collaboration within and among Council, City departments, local arts organizations and artists. The AAC also provides support and advice to City staff and to relevant community partners and groups who are recognized as stakeholders with a vested interest in the arts in Kingston as well as the cultural life of the city overall. The City of Kingston's [Committee By-Law \(2010-205\)](#) defines the mandate of the AAC as follows:

"The Arts Advisory Committee will serve as an avenue of communication and consultation between the arts community and the municipal government, it being understood that the arts include creative expression in all its forms. The mandate of the Arts Advisory Committee is to ensure that City of Kingston arts policies and strategies serve the needs of the arts community and, in turn, the residents of Kingston. Through regular communication with staff and Council, the Arts Advisory Committee will foster awareness of City of Kingston's corporate goals pertaining to the arts community. Its mandate includes reporting on the following to the Arts, Recreation and Community Policies Committee."

Particular areas of focus include the following:

- Ensure the continuing implementation of the recommendations contained in the KCP;
- Provide input into the development of arts policies and strategies offered by effectiveness and best practices;
- Making staff and Council aware of changing conditions and opportunities within the arts;
- Advising staff and Council as to the impact, actual and potential, of broader policies, programs and regulations on the Kingston arts sector; and
- Maintain close linkages with Heritage Kingston and its Working Groups to ensure coordination of initiatives related to the implementation of the KCP.

The AAC composition includes two City Councillors, citizen appointees, community-based arts groups, education representatives and four technical representatives who are nominated by the Kingston Arts Council (KAC), as well as the KAC's Executive Director.

The Evolution of the Arts Advisory Committee

In its original iteration, the AAC included one City Councillor, two members of the public and eight arts representatives nominated by the Executive of the Board of the KAC. The Committees' attention at that time tended to focus on a diversity of artistic disciplines with a particular emphasis on ensuring the arts-based programs administered through the City served the needs and priorities of artists and arts organizations.

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In 2008, the Cultural Services Department was established for the first time as a distinct department within the City of Kingston and the KCP followed in 2010. That changed the landscape in which the AAC functioned in that the KCP called for the Cultural Services Department to be positioned as a municipal cultural development agency that exists to organize the resources, knowledge and experience of the community, business, labour and institutional spheres and other departments at City Hall to build cultural vitality not only within the cultural sector but throughout the city as a whole.

The KCP also included a recommendation that called for the expansion of the AAC's membership so its efforts would align better with the work of the Cultural Services Department. Part of the rationale included a need for greater diversity as well as the need to engage stakeholders from sectors outside the arts as partners who could help with relationship building and who could also help promote the value of the arts and culture more broadly. The AAC was also identified in the KCP as playing a key role in the development of a public art policy for the City of Kingston as well as supporting the creation of other new initiatives such as the Mayor's Arts Awards.

In 2012, the AAC prepared and submitted its first-ever report card that highlighted the fact the arts sector in Kingston continued to face many challenges ([Report Number ARCP-12-012](#)). Accessibility and engagement were two topics of particular concern as was inclusivity related to the arts. Also of concern was the ability of stakeholders within the arts sector to work together to deliver a variety of opportunities for Kingston residents to engage with the arts and culture in ways that met their needs. The following year, the Cultural Services Department recommended a series of changes related to the committees that supported its work and that resulted in revisions being made to the AAC's mandate and membership that were broader-based and much more inclusive ([Report Number 13-135](#)). The intent of these revisions was to ensure the AAC would be better positioned to represent the evolving dynamics of the arts sector in Kingston that includes an increasingly rich community of artists, enthusiasts, arts professionals, educators, audiences, participants and community members.

Also important to note is the relationship between the Cultural Services Department, the AAC and the KAC that has also evolved over the past ten years. From the beginning, the AAC has offered input to the Cultural Services Department to support the ongoing implementation of the KCP and to act as a resource and connection to the arts community. The continued presence of the KAC as an active contributor to the AAC is reflective of its role as an independent arts service organization that engages with the City of Kingston through a Service Level Agreement to help administer and support programs like the City of Kingston Arts Fund (CKAF) and the Mayor's Arts Awards. A significant difference between the AAC and the KAC is that the AAC fulfills an advisory function whereas the KAC exists at arms-length from the City and is able to pursue advocacy work on behalf of artists and the arts community as part of its larger mandate.

The Working Context for the Arts Advisory Committee

The work of the AAC is guided by multiple City plans, strategies, policies and programs. Many of those documents can be accessed online through the City of Kingston website and are briefly described here for reference.

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Kingston Culture Plan:

The KCP was unanimously approved by Council in 2010 and provided the City of Kingston with its first-ever municipal cultural plan. The KCP recognizes that Kingston's existing cultural resources enrich the lives of local residents and visitors and that they can be a source of considerable wealth creation. The KCP also makes the case that cultural resources can be used to achieve a diversity of strategic objectives municipalities pursue that extend beyond the cultural sphere such as economic growth, neighbourhood development and social cohesion. It is structured around a strategic framework that is meant to support cultural vitality in Kingston by highlighting three areas of focus that includes Stories, Places and Capacity. Each area of focus includes a number of recommendations that, together, are meant to articulate a sustainable, authentic, long term vision for cultural vitality in Kingston. The KCP includes a total of 60 recommendations to be implemented over ten years and well over 80% of the recommendations have now been addressed or are complete.

Public Art Master Plan:

The City of Kingston's Public Art Master Plan was approved by Council in July 2014 and sets out a vision for Kingston to be known as a hub of creative placemaking with an innovative program of public art that recognizes and builds on the City's diverse history, engages its community and inspires its future leaders. The Public Art Master Plan provides staff with the framework needed to develop and maintain public art within a municipal context and that also creates consistent standards for public art presented in the public realm, whether it be in the form of civic initiatives or projects initiated by the private sector. The Plan also recommends five main areas of focus, including (1) public art capital projects; (2) temporary public art, street art and public art platforms; (3) community arts, public engagement and education; (4) artist and arts sector development; and (5) a public art development program.

Public Art Policy:

The Public Art Policy guides the development and implementation of the Public Art Master Plan. The Policy provides Council, City staff, the arts community and the broader community with a mechanism through which the City of Kingston can assess, acquire and manage works of public art presented within municipally-owned spaces through a combination of purchases, loans, commissions or donations.

Kingston Commemorations Strategy:

The purpose of the Kingston Commemorations Strategy is to establish clear, consistent and consolidated protocols and decision-making processes as effective means to work with and respond to local community members with the intention of fostering a multi-faceted dialogue regarding people, places, events and ideas with significance to Kingston's heritage through a diversity of commemorative forms. The strategy covers a period of ten years and includes all forms of commemoration found on City-owned property or that require City approvals. Some crossover exists between the Kingston Commemorations Strategy and Kingston's Public Art Master Plan because public commemorations can, and often do, take the form of public art.

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Recent revisions to the City of Kingston's [Official Plan](#) are also relevant to the work of the AAC in that this document now makes specific reference to the arts and culture in ways that make them much more important in relation to planning processes. Section 7.5 of the Official Plan speaks to the City's resources related to the arts and culture and explicitly states the City of Kingston has a responsibility "to promote the City as a centre for arts and culture and support the inclusion of spaces, facilities and services that can generate and sustain cultural vitality in the downtown core, in existing and newly developing neighbourhoods, and in development projects." Section 7.6 also speaks to the importance of public art and advocates for "creative place-making across Kingston through contemporary and innovative public art initiatives and programs that recognize and build on the City's diverse history and engage residents and visitors alike."

Working Groups

Council may authorize the creation of working groups from time-to-time that are tasked with dealing with specific topics or working on particular projects that are relevant to a Committee's mandate. These working groups and their memberships are approved by Council and are often required to work in concert with other committees or external organizations as well as members of the public. Working groups may exist on an on-going basis or may be temporary depending upon their Terms of Reference but their activities and authorizations are required to be reviewed on an annual basis.

Examples of past working groups associated with the AAC include the following:

- **Mayor's Arts Awards Working Group:** Appointed in response to a recommendation identified as part of the KCP to develop a report on a potential Mayor's Arts Awards program to be reviewed by the AAC. This Working Group drafted a Terms of Reference for the awards program that outlined an assessment process, jury selection process as well as the types of recognitions to be awarded through a program that is now administered on an annual basis.
- **City of Kingston Arts Fund Review Working Group:** Appointed in response to recommendations identified as part of the KCP to review this funding program and to recommend updates to the CKAF mandate, Terms of Reference and administrative plan.
- **Visual Arts Strategy Working Group:** Appointed as a result of a priority setting exercise by the Committee that identified a need to research and assess the status, strengths and weaknesses of the visual arts in Kingston and to report back to the AAC with an analysis of key issues and recommendations that can be used to inform future development and planning, both on the part of the community and the City of Kingston.
- **Local Music on City Properties Working Group:** Appointed as a result of a Council motion to research and bring back a set of findings on how the City of Kingston could promote the local music scene more actively using various platforms available to the municipality. This working group reviewed a range of issues such as content selection, artist recognition, distribution and budgets, and offered a series of insights and recommendations based on their findings.

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Examples of recently active and upcoming working groups associated with the AAC include the following:

- **Poet Laureate Working Group:** Appointed every four years to deliberate and identify a candidate for the Poet Laureate position in accordance with the eligibility and appointment criteria as defined with the Terms of Reference for this program.
- **Public Art Working Group:** Appointed on an annual basis to review processes, policies and plans related to the Public Art Program in order to make recommendations to staff. This working group also helps to review donation requests and to review, nominate and approve individuals to participate in juries related to specific public art projects.
- **Mayor's Arts Awards Nominations Working Group:** Appointed annually to deliberate and select the recipients of the Mayor's Arts Awards across three categories.
- **Professional Development Working Group:** Appointed as a result of a priority setting exercise by the Committee to research and share findings regarding professional development opportunities relevant to the arts community and to identify specific actions and activities the AAC may pursue to ensure that individual artists and arts organizations have access to professional development opportunities that are meaningful, relevant and effective.
- **Local Music Working Group:** To be appointed in 2019 as part of a pilot project to select local musicians to be featured as part of a playlists to be distributed through various mechanisms, including the City of Kingston website as well as partner websites to raise the profile of local musicians and the local music scene.

These working groups function as collaborative teams and report to the AAC through briefing notes prepared either by working group members or by City staff acting as a resource person. Membership in these working groups typically consists of City Councillors, members of the AAC and interested members of the public who are identified through various means and whose appointments are approved by Council.

Priority Projects in 2019

In accordance with [Committee By-Law \(2010-205\)](#), all Advisory Committees are required to submit an annual report to Council that highlights the work that has been completed over the course of a year. These priority areas are often directed by Council but are also closely tied to the Cultural Services Department's work plans and include the following priorities in 2019:

- Support for the on-going implementation of the KCP;
- Support for the on-going implementation of the Public Art Master Plan and Public Art Policy;
- The annual review and endorsement of the administration plan for the CKAF submitted by KAC;

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- Participate in a review of the CKAF Review as part of a larger review of the City of Kingston's funding programs related to arts, heritage and culture that also includes the City of Kingston Heritage Fund;
- Grand Theatre Operational/Business Plan review; and
- Support for the development of the cultural industries in Kingston.

Annual Reports

The AAC is required to submit an Annual Report to Council, on or before May 31st of each year, through the Arts, Recreation and Community Policies Committee with respect to the matters outlined in Section 2.5 of By-Law Number 2010-205.

Committee Resources

Many of the strategies, plans, policies and documents needed to support Committee members in fulfilling responsibilities are linked in this report for reference and are available through the City of Kingston website. Committee members are also encouraged to contact City staff with questions regarding processes, policies, timelines and other issues related to Committee work over the course of their tenure.

Notice Provisions:

Not applicable

Accessibility Considerations:

Not applicable

Financial Considerations:

Not applicable

Contacts:

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Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:

Danika Lochhead, Manager, Arts and Sector Development, Cultural Services

Exhibits Attached:

Not applicable