



Parallel Procurement Strategies

Council Direction: 2. Develop a parallel procurement strategy better suited to encourage applications from local, national and international artists;

In a 2018 online survey, 738 Calgarians expressed that they want The City to better support local artists, and make it easier for Calgarian, Albertan and Canadian artists to apply to public art projects. Through stakeholder engagement, the local arts community has shared that current City procurement practises are cumbersome, complicated and in some cases require an upfront financial investment not required by public art programs in other municipalities.

To address current challenges, and encourage local, national and international talent to apply for future art opportunities, Administration will be shifting from gathering feedback to holding ongoing working group sessions with the local artist community to create an open and welcoming procurement process. This collaborative approach will take place over 2019, with a recommended procurement process ready for implementation in 2020.

Calgarians also stated that they want The City to better support the local creative economy, which can be supported through a parallel procurement process. It should be noted that Administration recognizes the importance of bringing international talent to Calgary to ensure that local talent continues to be invited to other cities; and that Administration is still held accountable to national and international trade agreements that may result in an award to an international artist. To align with the pillars of success, when international artists are selected, Administration is committed to finding opportunities to prioritize investing in the local creative economy. These opportunities will be explored within the Social Procurement pilot utilizing, for example, the Community Benefit Agreement framework which could include requiring artists to provide project-related education locally, mentorship opportunities with the local arts community, as well as encouraging work with local fabricators. Creating a parallel procurement strategy paired with a flexible, pooled funding model will allow Administration to focus on finding opportunities to invest in the local creative economy, which aligns with the pillars for success.

Next steps

Q2 – Q3 2019: Work with the artist community to build a more user-friendly submission process. This includes: language used in Calls to Artists; less complex submission package requirements, and more flexible submission options. Work clarifying options for trade agreement exceptions and exploring options for sole-sourcing Indigenous Artists.

Q3 2019: Work with vendors in the Calgary community to build a more user-friendly submission process for fabrication through social procurement methods and installation projects.

Q1 2020: Report back on these activities to Council.