

Name of Roundtable: Community Impact of Public Art: Measuring Success
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Session 1: 10 attendees
Session 2: 11 attendees
Session 3: 11 attendees

How do we define success?

Practical considerations:

- On budget
- On time
- Risk management
- Maintenance issues
- Importance of the process

Community Impact

- Support for local artists
- Number of people engaged in initial consultation
- Genuine engagement, even if groups are small
- Relationships created along the way
- Raising awareness: record feedback to show how input was effective
- How has project transformed the neighbourhood (i.e., Vancouver Mural Festival)
- Consider community reaction over time
- Community response to removal of a temporary artwork, is it missed?
- Are there conversations about the art?
- How long does it take to recognize a great work of art?
- Which communities are we measuring?
- Can we predict at proposal stage if a work will be a success?
- Encourage artists to have work fabrication done locally (maybe they don't know there are local fabricators)
- Social impact of art on neighbourhoods, comfort and safety of pedestrians and visitors.
- Both positive and negative public feedback shows that the public is engaging.
- Debate reminds us that the public is paying attention to what we're doing.
- Partnerships in a project show engagement. It is not always the end result, but partnerships are created along the way.
- How do we know if we are impacting our local arts communities and helping artists enhance their careers?
- How do we involve emerging artists?
- Council wants to know if our projects have a positive impact locally.

- Artists who are shortlisted in an RFQ process but not selected as the artist can still put this success on their CV to help build their qualifications for the next project.

Advocacy Success

- Projects that have been shared widely on social media
- When residents take ownership of project and share
- When elected officials support the project and become advocates
- Who is the audience we want to reach?
- Do people know about the art in their community? i.e. Lectures/speakers on public art
- Map public art locations in the community and create tours (guided and self-guided)
- Where do we reach out? Libraries, grocery stores, pubs.
- How do we reach out to new people in a variety of areas?
- What is the best time of day to reach people?

Data

- What are we tracking?
- How do we collect data?
- What is the impact on tourism? Local businesses?
- Can the local BIA assist in data collection?
- Include numbers/data in reports to Council
- Compile social media posts
- Is work used as a background for posted photos (i.e. Instagram)?
- Is the work low maintenance, low cost?
- Does the work get graffiti tags?
- Are there letters to the editor or Council?
- Does the project meet its goal? i.e. Does it light up a dark space?
- Value of collections (replacement values, how much does it cost an artist to create?)
- Did the project change the public's opinion of the city?

Strategies

- Surveys, both pre-installation and after
- Compile letters to newspapers
- Website for short-listed proposals (Hamilton)
- Focus groups to develop artist calls
- Community open house consultations
- Provide programming around public artwork to educate public and increase awareness
- Provide programming for public education on new artworks

- Include public art on Jane's Walks and other Community Walk programs
- Have neighbourhoods "adopt" and manage projects—eyes on maintenance (Montreal has independent bureaus)
- Report on benefits of spending for well-designed works to counter perceptions of misspending on art
- Pair local emerging artists with experienced artists
- Hamilton example of artists working with fabricators
- Awards for public art at National, provincial and local levels, plus industry awards (UDI, CCNC)
- Awards allow for formal public recognition, helps establish artists. Grow categories over time. Consider a People's Choice award and recognition of community service.
- Include community engagement as part of the process
- Are artist-in-residence programs having a lasting impact on the community?
- Does a project receive other sources of funding: federal, provincial, grants?
- Use mentorship programs to connect local artists with international artists.
- Festivals
- Town branding, i.e., the Mural Town or the chain-saw art town
- Pair with walking/bike tours – this can lead to health benefits
- Implement art pieces, especially permanent pieces, as part of the experience. Temporary pieces seem to get more attention because the public feel a sense of urgency and less pressure for buy in.
- Build metrics into art projects.
- Donating more than advocating in order to create art pieces accepted by the community.
- Create landmark pieces. Sometimes this is planned, but we can't always know how a piece will be received. We also have to understand that it's hard to find budget for big projects like Cloud Gate.
- Work towards Council approving a private developer % for public art contribution.
- Ask the public. This gives them the opportunity to give direct input and feel involved in the process.
- Cities of Vancouver and Richmond have experimented with asking the public for their feedback on shortlisted artists.
- Public Art bus tours have been popular (i.e. Culture Days) in engaging the public and it provides them the opportunity to learn more about public art in their community.
- Look to neighbouring municipalities for their successes.
- Share stories of successes and failures with the public art community. Be specific about budgets so that they can see what is required for certain types of public art projects.
- Create projects with community identity, these tend to engage the public more
- Create projects that allow established artists to mentor emerging artists.