

To: Economic and Development Services Committee

From: Anthony Ambra, P.Eng., Commissioner,
Economic and Development Services Department

Report Number: ED-26-08

Date of Report: January 7, 2026

Date of Meeting: January 12, 2026

Subject: Advancing Installations Related to Indigenous and Cultural
Heritage

Ward: All Wards

File: 03-05

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this Report is to seek Council approval for upcoming installations in accordance with the Public Art Policy and seek approval for the installation of an exhibition project.

Attachment 1 is an exhibit showing the general location for a temporary exhibition in connection with the Land Acknowledgement sign project on the exterior windows of City Hall.

Attachment 2 is an exhibit showing the proposed location for the Indigenous Language installation at Ed Broadbent Waterfront Park.

Attachment 3 is an exhibit showing the proposed location for the Temporary History Exhibition at Alexandra Park.

2.0 Recommendation

That the Economic and Development Services Committee recommend to City Council:

That based on Report ED-26-08 dated January 7, 2026, concerning forthcoming Indigenous and Heritage Art Projects:

1. City staff be authorized to advance the addition of art to Land Acknowledgement signs at City facilities; that the exterior windows of City Hall be utilized as the location for a temporary exhibition; that funding of up to \$27,000 from the Arts and Culture Reserve 17127 be used to fund the project; and, that the project parameters of the Land Acknowledgment signs be in a form and content satisfactory to the Commissioner,

Economic and Development Services Department, and Commissioner, Community and Operations Services Department;

2. That the associated funding of up to \$90,000 from the Arts and Culture Reserve 17127 to fund the Indigenous Language Project at Ed Broadbent Waterfront Park be approved;
3. That the temporary history exhibition at Alexandra Park be approved; and,
4. That the Director, Business and Economic Development Services, or delegate, be authorized to execute agreements related to the projects as outlined in this Report, and the agreements be in a final form and content satisfactory to the Director, Business and Economic Development Services, and the City Solicitor.

3.0 Input From Other Sources

The following have been consulted in the preparation of this Report:

- Public Art Task Force
- Corporate Performance and Strategic Initiatives - Corporate Policy and Partnerships and Diversity, Equity and Reconciliation divisions
- Facilities Management Services
- Facilities Management Services - Corporate Security
- Facility Operations and Maintenance Services
- Finance Services
- Legal Services
- Legislative Services
- Parks and Roads Operations Services
- Planning Services
- Recreation Services

4.0 Analysis

4.1 Overview and Background

The City of Oshawa's [Public Art Policy](#) (SRV-15-01) ("P.A.P."), approved in 2015, was developed in consultation with community members and provides a framework related to the administration, selection and maintenance of public art in Oshawa.

The P.A.P. reflects the commitment and desire to connect and engage with the community, as well as transform the spaces where we live, work, learn and play into vibrant, inviting and meaningful public places.

In 2017, the City convened a Public Art Committee, now known as the Public Art Task Force ("P.A.T.F."), to assist with the P.A.P. The purpose of the P.A.T.F. is to advise on new installations and priorities, review public art donations and make recommendations on juried public art competitions.

Developed in collaboration with the P.A.T.F. and the community, the [Public Art Master Plan](#) (“P.A.M.P.”) was approved by City Council on June 25, 2018. It guides the ongoing implementation of the City's public art program and outlines the following vision statement for public art in Oshawa:

“Oshawa will be a community where Public Art is innovative, diverse, and accessible to create vibrant public spaces and meaningful connections.”

As per the P.A.P., Council is responsible for “approving the related budget, expenditures and sites” of installations located in or on City-owned buildings and spaces.

4.2 Addition of Art to Land Acknowledgement Signs at City Facilities

At its meeting of June 20, 2022, Council acknowledged and recognized the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and directed staff to utilize these documents as the framework for the City’s Reconciliation efforts (Report CNCL-22-48).

At its meeting of November 20, 2023, Council approved a Land Acknowledgement and Land Acknowledgement Policy. The Land Acknowledgement Policy included plans for signs containing the Land Acknowledgement to be “installed across all facilities in high visibility interior main entrance areas” (Report CF-23-85). The final sign locations will be determined in consultation with the Community and Operations Services Department and may include exterior sign locations when deemed most appropriate.

The installation of Land Acknowledgement signs provides an opportunity to activate the signage with artwork created by an Indigenous artist to platform and celebrate Indigenous art and culture and draw visitors’ attention to the newly placed signs. A large reproduction of the artwork will be installed temporarily on the exterior windows of City Hall, near the Civic Square entrance, to celebrate the project (see Attachment 1). The vinyl wrap will be installed for approximately 18 months and will be perforated to allow building users to see out. The installation will be coordinated in consultation with Facility Operations and Maintenance Services and Corporate Security.

This project has been developed collaboratively by Business and Economic Development Services staff and staff in the Diversity, Equity and Reconciliation Division. A panel of Indigenous community members will be convened to lead the artist selection process.

The P.A.M.P. identifies the priority zones, areas and sites for future installations. The addition of art to the signs at each facility adds public art to every Ward in the City, while the exterior activation at City Hall responds to the downtown urban core receiving the highest level of public interest during the P.A.M.P. consultation. The P.A.M.P. explains, “the urban core is a high priority area for Public Art due to its high volume of pedestrians, high concentration of local businesses, services and retail, public transit nodes and density.”

This project received support from the P.A.T.F. at its meeting held on July 8, 2025. It supports many of the P.A.M.P.'s Guiding Principles in Oshawa, including:

- Public Art will be accessible to all;
- Public Art illustrates the history and diversity of the City;
- Various art mediums, types, sizes and different locations are considered; and,
- Public Art will reveal the unique character of, and foster a positive image for, the City.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Principles of Reconciliation note:

- “8. Supporting Aboriginal peoples' cultural revitalization and integrating Indigenous knowledge systems, oral histories, laws, protocols, and connections to the land into the reconciliation process are essential; and,
10. Reconciliation requires sustained public education and dialogue, including youth engagement, about the history and legacy of residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal rights, as well as the historical and contemporary contributions of Aboriginal peoples to Canadian society.”

This project prioritizes Indigenous perspectives and advances cultural revitalization through the engagement of an Indigenous artist and panel. The City is able to learn from Indigenous community members and showcase an Indigenous artist, creating opportunities for both knowledge and cultural exchange.

4.3 Indigenous Language Installation at Ed Broadbent Waterfront Park

At its meeting of October 2, 2023, Council approved an installation at Ed Broadbent Waterfront Park. The installation proposed was a text-based project by an Indigenous artist or author for installation in Ed Broadbent Waterfront Park.

Ed Broadbent Waterfront Park is a destination park near Lake Ontario which opened in June 2023. This park is located at Simcoe Street and Harbour Road and connects to the waterfront park system and trails.

Ed Broadbent Waterfront Park was designed to encourage gathering with an amphitheatre stage and seating, as well as a network of concrete and asphalt pathways and green spaces. A prominent feature is the Garden of Human Rights with thirteen (13) garden beds representing the thirteen (13) prohibited grounds of discrimination within the Canadian Human Rights Act. The variety of seating in the garden makes this a unique place for quiet reflection.

This project has been developed collaboratively by Business and Economic Development Services staff and staff in the Diversity, Equity and Reconciliation Division. A panel composed of Indigenous community members will be convened to select a writer, artist or knowledge holder to develop text for the project.

The location of the installation within Ed Broadbent Waterfront Park is expected to be at the north end of the park, where the pathways connect on the west side, near the flag poles (see Attachment 2). Facilities Management Services will be engaged to ensure the

final location in Ed Broadbent Waterfront Park is appropriate and does not impact the installation of future washroom facilities. Staff are currently exploring two design options to feature written text in the park:

- Interlocking brick at grade level, featuring engraved stone elements; or,
- Engraved boulders positioned along the edges of the pathways.

The final design will be developed in consultation with the project panel, the artist and relevant City staff to ensure the artwork is safe, durable and contextually appropriate.

While staff are targeting an installation date of spring 2028, the experiences of other municipalities indicate that these types of projects can take significant time to develop thoughtfully, and as such, this timeline is subject to change.

The P.A.M.P. identifies priority zones, areas and sites for future art installations. The Trails and Waterfront Zone are ranked as the second highest priority zone that should be prioritized. Although the development of Ed Broadbent Waterfront Park occurred after the P.A.M.P. was completed, it is situated in proximity to the Waterfront Zone.

This project has been developed in consultation with the P.A.T.F. It received support when first discussed at their April 17, 2023 meeting, and has had support reconfirmed as recently as at the July 8, 2025 P.A.T.F. meeting. This project supports many of the P.A.M.P.'s Guiding Principles for Public Art in Oshawa.

This project prioritizes the celebration of Indigenous culture while providing a learning opportunity for the public to reflect and connect with the Indigenous history of the area. Spotlighting an Indigenous writer, artist or knowledge holder with a permanent installation in Ed Broadbent Waterfront Park supports the City's reconciliation efforts and highlights the enduring presence and contribution of Indigenous communities who have cared for this land since time immemorial.

4.4 Temporary History Exhibition at Alexandra Park

At its meeting of April 29, 2019, Council approved a temporary installation at Alexandra Park created through TeachingCity. Two double-sided structures were installed in the park to display reproductions of student artwork. Report CS-19-50 specified that the life cycle of the artwork installation would be two to three years with the potential of rotating artworks in the space in the future.

City staff are developing an exhibition project for display in Alexandra Park using the infrastructure that was installed to support CS-19-50. The proposed exhibition celebrates the history of Alexandra Park, which was Oshawa's first public park, established in 1906, and is listed as a Class B property in the Heritage Oshawa Inventory of City of Oshawa Heritage Properties.

Staff are exploring a partnership with the Oshawa Museum to provide research and images to support the development of the information that will be included in the outdoor history exhibition to celebrate Alexandra Park's 120th anniversary in 2026. Given the meaningful impact parks have on communities and the history of Alexandra Park being the

first public park in Oshawa, it is valuable to acknowledge the role this area has played throughout the development of the city. This outdoor exhibition will highlight how community use of Alexandra Park has grown over time.

The exhibition panels will be printed using the same method as the TeachingCity artworks and will be installed for a period of up to five years. The installation is expected to take place in the summer of 2026. The exhibition will be monitored for vandalism and deterioration due to weather conditions.

This project is not subject to the Public Art Policy (SRV-15-01) because it is not a public art project. Staff require authority to enter into an Agreement with Oshawa Museum and install the exhibition panels in Alexandra Park on a temporary basis.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 Addition of Art to Land Acknowledgement Signs at City Facilities

Related funds required for this project are estimated to be less than \$27,000, which is inclusive of artist fees, and fabrication and installation funds for the temporary exhibition on the exterior windows of City Hall. This project will be funded through a combination of the Art and Culture Reserve 17127 (the primary funding source) and the Culture Development operating budget for smaller project costs.

5.2 Indigenous Language Project at Ed Broadbent Waterfront Park

Costs for this project are estimated to be less than \$90,000, which is inclusive of artist fees, research and jury costs and funds for fabrication and installation. This project, approved in principle at the October 2, 2023 Council meeting, will be funded through a combination of the Art and Culture Reserve 17127 (the primary funding source) and the existing Culture Development operating budget for smaller project costs.

5.3 Temporary History Exhibition at Alexandra Park

Costs for this project are estimated to be less than \$7,000 which is inclusive of research costs, design fees and funds for fabrication and installation, and can be accommodated within the Culture Development operating budget.

6.0 Relationship to the Oshawa Strategic Plan

This Report responds to the Oshawa Strategic Plan Priority Areas:

"Innovate: Vibrant Culture and Economy" with the goal to attract and promote a vibrant artistic and cultural economy and "Belong: Inclusive and Healthy Community" with the goal to commit to meaningful reconciliation with Indigenous communities.



Hailey Wright, BA Hons, Director,
Business and Economic Development Services



Anthony Ambra, P.Eng., Commissioner,
Economic and Development Services Department

Title: General Location for the Temporary Exhibition in Connection with the Land Acknowledgement Sign Project
Subject: Advancing Installations Related to Indigenous and Cultural Heritage
Address: 50 Centre Street South
Ward: All Wards
File: 03-05

Recommended Window Location



Subject: Advancing Installations Related to Indigenous and Cultural Heritage
Ward: All Wards
File: 03-05



 Staff Recommended Area for Installation

City of Oshawa
Economic and Development Services 



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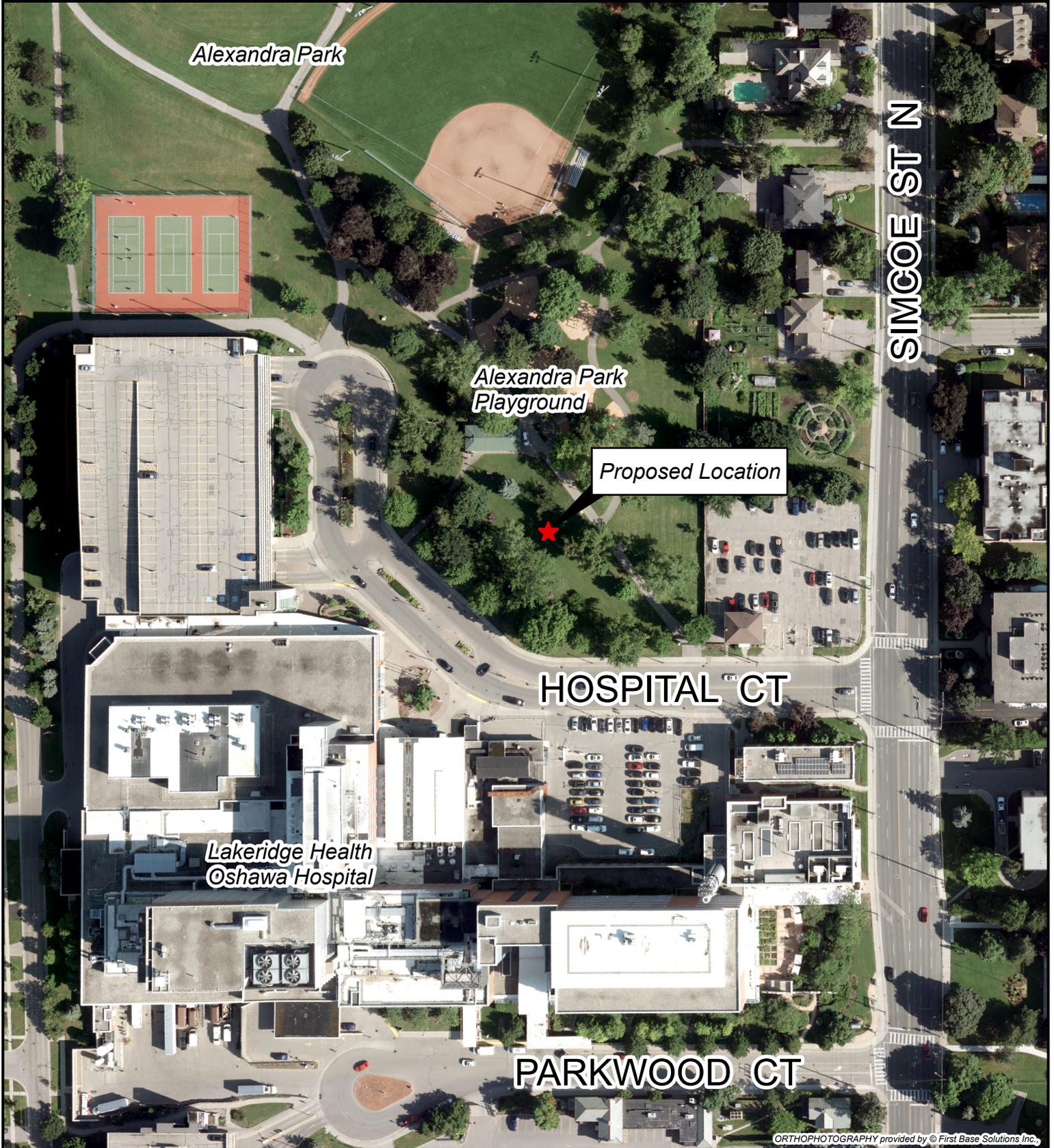
Subject: Advancing Installations Related to Indigenous and Cultural Heritage
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Item: ED-26-08
Attachment 3



 Proposed Location for Temporary
History Exhibition at Alexandra Park

City of Oshawa
Economic and Development Services 



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