



The Hub Project: What We Heard

Community input collected through The Hub Project's public engagement activities, which included in-person events and workshops and the City of Kingston's online Get Involved platform, will directly inform the City of Kingston's public art strategy and projects for the intersection of Princess and Division Streets. Through this process, the City engaged more than 350 people. This document summarizes what we heard from the community.

Culture Days and Princess Street Promenade Pop-up

On September 29, 2018, the Crazy Dames, a consulting trio who specializes in urban planning and cultural engagement in cities and public spaces, and the City's cultural services department facilitated an arts-based engagement event to launch The Hub Project. The event took place as part of the Princess Street Promenade and over the Culture Days weekend. The purpose of the event was to:

1. Inform Kingston residents about The Hub Project
2. Engage Kingston residents and visitors walking along Princess Street who may not otherwise attend an engagement opportunity
3. Educate the public about new approaches to public art and the purpose of The Hub Project
4. Collect feedback and ideas on public art priorities, themes and types
5. Create excitement for the project's next steps

At the event, participants were provided with printed still images of the intersection at Princess and Division Street and invited to use paint pens as well as public art icons to represent their visions for public art types atop the printed frames. In addition to the site-specific frames, blank pieces of paper were given to participants to draw and write their visions, priorities and themes for Kingston.

Community Stakeholder Workshops

On Wednesday, March 6 and Thursday, March 7, the City of Kingston hosted two community stakeholder workshops to explore how we can enliven The Hub with public art and other creative means. Stakeholders invited to the workshops included local businesses who work in the area of Princess and Division Streets, artists and arts organizations, urban planners, developers, students and community groups.

Facilitated by the Crazy Dames, the engagement activities were intended to educate people about the Hub Project and public art, and collect feedback on themes and types of public art and other design elements for the intersection.

Four questions were used to guide the engagements:

- What do downtown Kingston/the intersection represent to you?
- What sorts of imagery would you want to see at this intersection?
- What do you think of when you hear 'Princess and Division'?
- What makes a place memorable for you?

Get Involved Page

In addition to the in-person engagement sessions, the City hosted an interactive platform through its [Get Involved website](#) for members of the public to post their ideas for public art types and themes. Participants were invited to submit ideas between September 2018 and March 2019.

Key Messages and Themes Identified

A wide range of perspectives were shared through the various public engagement opportunities. Overall, participants identified the need for the public art at the intersection of Princess and Division Streets to reflect the following themes and approaches:

Interactive/collaborative storytelling of diverse histories, cultural diversity and inclusion

- Many participants felt that representation of cultural diversity is needed in the area 'because Kingston is inclusive'
- Work with members of Indigenous communities to showcase and highlight Indigenous histories
- Uncover lost histories
- Tell stories that link histories: 'Reconcile our past, present and future'
- Highlight prison and re-integration success stories with positive representations;
- Kingston's farming heritage

Establishes a sense of pride

- Some participants discussed the need to celebrate the City of Kingston, with a branded sign (digital or mural) at the intersection.

Focus on the present and future

- Some felt that Kingston explores its history in too much detail and for this intersection, the public art could instead focus on the present and/or future (diversity, environmental sustainability, use of technology).

Site specificity

- Many were interested in digging into the site-specific history, present and/or future and ensuring the public art speaks to a site-specific concept.

Adds vibrancy and colour to the area

- Participants indicated they want the area to be more vibrant and lively and see colour as a key way to revitalizing the area.

Acts as a community space for gathering, events and interaction

- Participants suggested the need for more gathering spaces, opportunities for play and interaction. Ultimately, people are interested in public art that could help create community connections; a place to stop and get to know their neighbours.

Incorporates natural, green and sustainable features

- Imagery and integration of plants, greenery and water features was seen as a priority. This was repeated over the consultations.

Water/Lake Ontario

- Water and Lake Ontario were repeatedly identified as key themes for the area. Suggestions for public art included waterfalls on sides of buildings, murals of water and communal fountains.

Climate change and resilience

- Kingston recently declared a climate change emergency. Participants feel public art should reflect the goal to become a more sustainable and resilient city.

Involves diverse public art types

- Participants appreciated a diversity of public art typologies (including temporary, permanent, interactive, digital and audio). Public art that could spark interaction was the most desired throughout the consultations. Participants ultimately recommended that whatever the type, it should appeal to a diversity of people visiting the area.

Includes local artists and organizations in the process

- Many participants recommend including local artists and organizations in developing public art for the area. Specifically, there were discussions about incorporating participatory and socially engaged art interventions at the intersection to help engage communities and animate the area in different ways. Ideas included yarn-bombing, community plantings, community art-making, etc.

Is functional and is incorporated into infrastructure

- There were recommendations to integrate public art with infrastructure improvements, such as way-finding (directional signs), parkettes, seating, bollards and sculptural bicycle parking.

Is safe and durable and accessible year-round

- Many identified the need for safe and durable public art to respond to potential vandalism (the late-night party scene in the area). It was also suggested that public art should be accessible in all seasons (either by including permanent and durable art for all seasons or temporary seasonal public art).

Internal City-Building Directors Working Group

In addition to engaging the public for this project, we invited the Crazy Dames to join a meeting of the City of Kingston's recently established City-Building Directors Working Group. At this session, the Hub Project was summarized and we shared what was heard from the public consultations.

As part of this discussion, we explored: how public art can be integrated in the city-building process to help enliven and transform public and privately-owned public spaces; how to ensure an integrated approach to public art at the intersection; and where the various divisions can work collaboratively to find alignment with their priorities and projects.

About the project

Check the [Hub Project's webpage](#) throughout the summer of 2019 for more news or [join the Public Art mailing list](#).