

DRAFT

ART IN PUBLIC PLACES

2026 MASTER PLAN



Erie County
Public Art Plan



ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC ART PLAN



MISSION

The Erie County Arts in Public Places (AIPP) Initiative seeks to make art accessible for all Erie County residents and visitors and to support a sense of community connection and civic pride.

The initiative aims to improve quality of life, support local artists, and foster a vibrant artistic environment that reflects the diverse culture and creativity of Erie County residents.

**MAKE ART ACCESSIBLE
FOR ALL COUNTY
RESIDENTS AND VISITORS
AND SUPPORT A SENSE
OF COMMUNITY
CONNECTION AND
CIVIC PRIDE.**

HISTORY

In 2023, the County Legislature passed Erie County Local Law #4 to further develop the county's financial support of public art. The law created a funding mechanism related to certain capital projects. Specifically, the law requires one percent of the cost of qualifying capital projects to be allocated to a "Public Art Fund". The maximum public art allocation for any capital project is \$10,000. The present balance within the Public Art fund is \$220,722.54; \$84,988.54 remaining from the 2025 appropriation, and a 2026 appropriation of \$135,734.

The fund supports the implementation of public art projects chosen by the Art in Public Places (AIPP) Committee and finalized in the annual Master Public Art Plan.

Art Featured on Cover Page:

Queen City Kaleidoscope, Cassandra Ott and Chuck Tingley
Downtown in Color, Kayla DeLeon
Body, Monet Alyssa Garrett (Kifner)
Cloud of Hope, Laura Valkwitch
Shattered, Scott Olmstead
600-610nm., Andy Krzystek

AIPP COMMITTEE

VOTING MEMBERS

Chairperson: Alexa Wajed

Co-Founder, Eat Off Art

Vice Chairperson: Donald J. Siuta

Director, WNY Artists Group

Committee Member: Susan O'Connor Baird

Board Member, Buffalo AKG Art Museum

Committee Member: Bernice Radle

Executive Director, Preservation Buffalo Niagara

Committee Member: Edreys Wajed

Co-Founder, Eat Off Art

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

Erie County Executive: Mark C. Poloncarz

Designee: David Bojanowski

Chairperson of the Legislature: Timothy Meyers

Chairperson of the Legislature's Community Enrichment Committee: Jeanne Vinal

Designee: Tina Shortt

Legislature Minority Leader: John J. Mills

Designee: Bryan Fiume

Commissioner of Public Works: William Geary

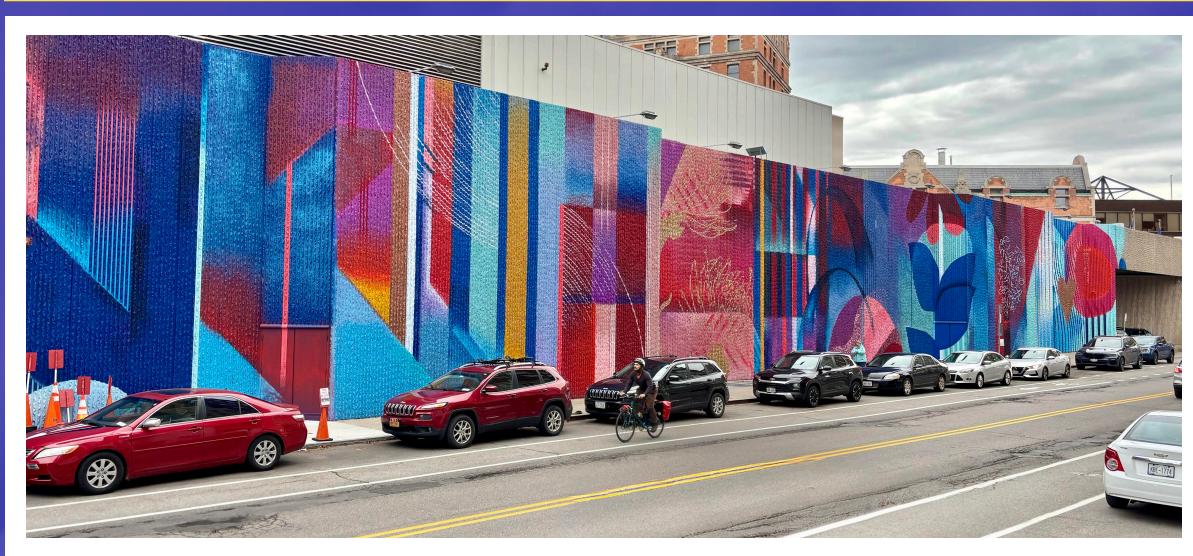
2025 AIPP MAJOR WORKS

COMPLETED AT ERIE COUNTY HEALTH MALL & BUFFALO CONVENTION CENTER

Overview

As detailed in the 2025 Master Public Art Plan, Erie County's AIPP Committee released a Call for Art inviting local artists to submit proposals for public art projects at five locations throughout Erie County: Seneca Bluffs Natural Habitat Park, Como Lake Park, Ellicott Creek Park, Erie County Health Mall, and the Buffalo Convention Center. Fifty-eight (58) proposals were received and reviewed by the Selection Committee. In reviewing eligible submissions, the committee considered the artist's professional background and experience with similar projects, the proposed design and its relationship to the site and broader community, as well as maintenance requirements associated with the project.

Three proposals were recommended for implementation, with two of three moving forward upon contract execution. The selected artists, Erie County residents with applicable experience, presented projects that activate and beautify public spaces, engage the community, and reflect Erie County's unique values and culture.



BUFFALO CONVENTION CENTER MURAL BY CASSANDRA OTT AND CHUCK TINGLEY

Address: 153 Franklin Street, Buffalo, NY, 14202

Title: Queen City Kaleidoscope

Public Art Location: Exterior wall along Pearl Street

Artist Description: Our mural design covers the majority of the proposed Buffalo Convention Center wall and is inspired by Buffalo's beloved blue and red. We used these colors as a springboard to create a vision for a colorful corridor down Franklin Avenue. Buffalo is full of murals depicting its namesake bison and legendary wings, but Buffalo is so much more than those icons. The welcoming communities, deep histories and industry along Lake Erie are represented here in a harmonious swell of blues and reds. Elements representative of nature, waves and fingerprints line the sidewalk with a sea of colorful connections that welcome the community and visitors to the region. Highlights of a metallic gold are interspersed throughout the design to represent the sun over Lake Erie and add interest.



ERIE COUNTY HEALTH MALL MURAL BY LAURA VALKWITH

Address: 1500 Broadway Ave Buffalo NY 14212

Title: Cloud of Hope

Public Art Location: Exterior wall on the east side of the building.

Artist Description: This artwork invites viewers to pause and reflect, offering them a moment of tranquility and inspiration in their everyday lives. It could serve as a gentle reminder of the beauty in nature and the vastness of the world above us, encouraging everyone to look up and dream.

Statement from the County Executive

“This is more than a work of art, it’s a symbol of how public spaces can reflect and uplift the communities they serve.”

- Mark Poloncarz

2025 AIPP SMALL WORKS ACQUISITION PROGRAM

Erie County Launches Public Art Collection

Overview

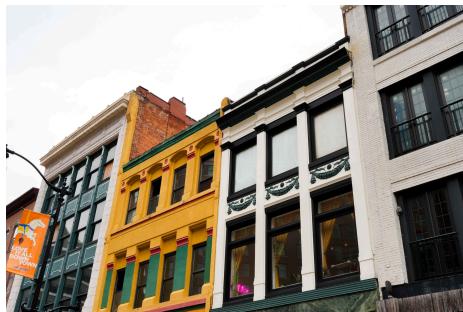
The Art in Public Places Committee is dedicated to transforming Erie County's public spaces into vibrant, welcoming environments that celebrate the diversity and creativity of the region. In the summer of 2025, the AIPP Committee released a Call for Art to consider the purchase of artwork for display inside various county-owned facilities. These works would comprise Erie County's first Public Art Collection. The Call for Art received over 300 responses, reflecting the extraordinary talent within our region. Through an extensive selection process involving a semi-finalist and finalist round in which works were reviewed online and subsequently in-person, the AIPP Committee acquired 22 pieces from 17 local artists. Works include paintings, collages, photographs, mixed media and sculptural works. Currently on display at the Buffalo Convention Center, the works may be rotated periodically to other county-owned facilities such as libraries, government offices, and community centers.

The Small Works Acquisition Program fosters engagement, sparks dialogue, and creates a sense of belonging while providing local artists with meaningful opportunities to shape the aesthetic and cultural identity of Erie County. The selected artists represent Erie County's creative community, and their contributions ensure that public spaces throughout the county remain dynamic, inspiring, and inclusive.

2025 ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC ART COLLECTION



Max Collins
Is Winter Over?



Kayla DeLeon
Downtown in Color

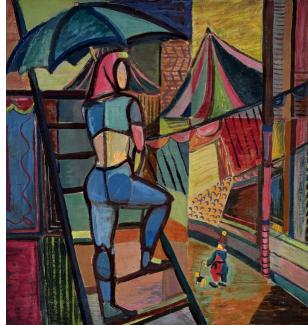


Doretha Edwards
The Academy Steps

2025 ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC ART COLLECTION



Christina Francis
Magical Thinking at Hoyt Lake



Wilhelmina Godfrey
Untitled (Backyard Circus)



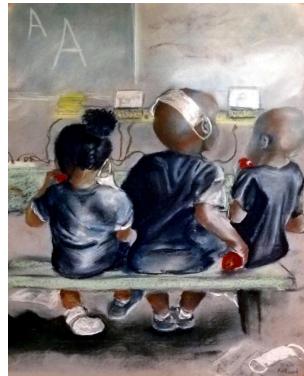
Wilhelmina Godfrey
Untitled (Windows)



Wilhelmina Godfrey
Subterranean Rock



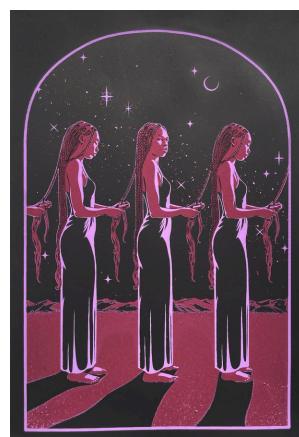
Linda Hall
Trains, Grains, and Steamers – Buffalo Harbor, Circa 1900



Iris M. Kirkwood
I Don't Like Apples



Monet Alyssa Garrett (Kifner)
Mind (Soul)



Monet Alyssa Garrett (Kifner)
Body



Monet Alyssa Garrett (Kifner)
Spirit

2025 ERIE COUNTY PUBLIC ART COLLECTION



Bethany Krull
Oasis



Andy Krzystek
475-486nm



Andy Krzystek
600-610nm.



Julian Montague
Yellow Jacket



Scott Olmstead
Shattered



Lou Rera
The Year: 2020



Kelly Schnurr
Distorted Perspective No. 2



Katherine Sehr
Untitled (Sepia)



Adam Swift
Queen City's Crown



Andrea Wenglowskyj
Car Wash (Main & Ferry)

LOOKING AHEAD 2026 PUBLIC ART PROJECTS

2026 Major Works

Upon approval of the 2026 Erie County Art in Public Places Master Plan, the AIPP Committee will release a Call for Artists open exclusively to artists residing in Erie County with an additional focus and priority for artists who are racially and ethnically diverse.

The Call for Artists will invite proposals of public art projects for up to two locations throughout Erie County, offering artists a unique opportunity to showcase their creativity and engage with the community through public art. The Call for Artists will outline eligibility criteria, thematic guidelines, and submission requirements.

This initiative reflects Erie County's commitment to supporting local artists and enriching public spaces through meaningful, accessible art experiences.

2026 Major Works Schedule and Milestones

Date	Action
March 2026	Call for Artists Opens
Mid March 2026	Virtual Information Session for Artists
April 2026	Call for Artists Closes
Mid April 2026	Selection Committee reviews submissions, makes recommendations
Early May 2026	2 nd Selection Committee reviews submissions, makes recommendations
May 2026	AIPP General Committee passes resolution to approve recommendations, submits resolution to the Legislature for contract authorization for selected artists
June 2026	Upon approval from Legislature, Erie County contracts with selected artists
Summer-Winter 2026	Fabrication and Installation

**AIPP Timeline, Schedule, & Milestones are subject to change*

LOOKING AHEAD 2026 PUBLIC ART PROJECTS

2026 Major Works

Erie County's AIPP Committee is partnering with **The Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens** and **Erie County's Department of Parks, Forestry and Recreation** to implement public art projects at the following locations:

BUFFALO AND ERIE COUNTY BOTANICAL GARDENS

Address: 2655 South Park Ave. | Buffalo, NY 14218

Background: Installing a public art project at this location will further enhance the planned expansion and renovations of the Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens that are currently underway. The purpose of these renovations is to create fully accessible and inclusive spaces while improving comfort and functionality to meet the growing demand for field trips and private events. The proposed public art project will complement these efforts and work to support the Gardens' mission of delivering immersive and memorable visits. At the same time, this collaboration provides a unique opportunity to emphasize the connection between art and nature at one of the County's most visited cultural assets.

2026 Major Works CONT.

ISLE VIEW PARK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SUBMERSE NY

Address: 796 Niagara St. | Tonawanda, NY 14150

Background: This location provides a synergistic opportunity between the AIPP Committee, Erie County Department of Environment and Planning, Division of Environmental Compliance Services (ECS) and Erie County Parks, Recreation and Forestry Department. Fueled by a \$10,000 grant from the Submerse NY Initiative, the project will leverage AIPP's proven expertise in sourcing public art alongside ECS's educational outreach focused on environmental challenges related to flooding, watershed dynamics, and seiches along the publicly accessible Shoreline Trail at Isle View Park. Together, these efforts position public art to serve as a catalyst for awareness, resilience, and dialogue, merging creativity with sustainability to inspire a community-wide conversation about our shared environmental future.

Erie County Resiliency Art Committee, comprised of Submerse NY members, is composed of environmental professionals and community stakeholders. The selected theme will serve as a foundation for artists to explore the intersection of art, science, and community resilience. The organizations represented on this committee are:

- Black Rock Riverside Alliance and Erie County Management Council
- Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper
- Community Outreach Specialist at Roswell Park and Green Together WNY Coalition
- Erie County Department of Environment and Planning – Art in Public Places Committee
- Erie County Department of Environment and Planning – ECS Division
- Erie County Department of Environment and Planning – Planning Division and Arts & Cultural Funding
- NYS Water Resources Institute through Cornell University
- Niagara River Greenway
- Erie County Department of Parks, Recreation, & Forestry
- RERUN

LOOKING AHEAD 2026 PUBLIC ART PROJECTS

2026 Small Works Acquisition Program

As part of the 2026 Art in Public Places Master Plan, Erie County will launch a Call for Art in summer 2026, inviting Erie County residents to submit original artwork for consideration in the Small Works Acquisition Program.

Selected pieces will be acquired and installed in various county-owned buildings, where they will be accessible to the public and contribute to a welcoming, vibrant, and culturally enriched environment. This initiative supports local artists while enhancing public spaces through diverse and meaningful artistic expression.

Submission Details and Further Information:

Artists will be able to access the complete guidelines, including technical specifications, submission instructions, and FAQs, at erie.gov/publicart. All updates, deadlines, and notifications regarding the Call for Artists will also be posted on this website. We encourage all local artists to participate and look forward to seeing the creative works that will enhance the public spaces of Erie County for the enjoyment of all residents and visitors.

2026 Small Works Acquisition Program Schedule and Milestones

Date	Action
Late July 2026	Call for Art Opens
August 2026	Call for Art Closes
August - September 2026	Selection Committee reviews submissions, makes recommendations. AIPP General Committee passes resolution to approve recommendations
September 2026	Submit resolution to the Legislature for contract authorization for selected artists
October 2026	Upon approval from Legislature, Erie County contracts with selected artists
Fall 2026	Installation of Small Works

**AIPP Timeline, Schedule, & Milestones are subject to change*

LOOKING AHEAD 2026 PUBLIC ART PROJECTS

Public Art Stewardship and Preservation

The Committee will explore the option of forming a sub-committee, or an equivalent working group, dedicated to the conservation, restoration, and inventory of artwork owned by Erie County. This group would focus on developing best practices and recommendations to support the long-term care and management of the County's public art collection.

2026 PUBLIC HEARING

Date: Tuesday, January 27, 2026

Time: 4 PM - 5PM

Location: Burchfield Penney Art Center

The public hearing will provide the community with the opportunity to review the draft 2026 Master Public Art Plan and provide feedback to the AIPP committee. The public hearing was publicized in the Buffalo News, The Criterion, and Erie County's social media.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Erie County Art in Public Places Committee would like to thank the following organizations for their diverse contributions to the development of this Plan, including offering their facilities for meeting space.

Preservation Buffalo Niagara

Eat Off Art

WNY Artist Group

Buffalo AKG Art Museum

Erie County Department of Public Works

Erie County Department of Parks, Recreation, & Forestry

Submerge NY

A special thank you to New York State Senator April Baskin, who, while serving as an Erie County Legislator, led the effort to pass the Erie County Public Art Law, which made this initiative possible.

DEPARTMENT SUPPORT STAFF

Colette Balisteri

Assistant Project Coordinator

Department of Environment and Planning

Monica Boutin, MUP

Senior Project Coordinator

Department of Environment and Planning

Thomas E. Baines, Esq.

Deputy Commissioner of Planning & Economic Development

Department of Environment and Planning

Dr. Cynetra Ferguson

Small Business Resource Coordinator

Department of Environment and Planning

Tracy Cichocki

Deputy Commissioner Buildings & Grounds

Department of Public Works

Joanna Panasiewicz

Chief Environmental Compliance Specialist

Department of Environment and Planning