



COUNTY OF ERIE

MARK C. POLONCARZ

COUNTY EXECUTIVE

February 17, 2026

Erie County Legislature
92 Franklin Street, 4th Floor
Buffalo, New York 14202

RE: Approval of the 2026 Master Public Art Plan

Dear Honorable Members:

Enclosed please find a memorandum and proposed resolution from the Department of Environment and Planning submitting for approval the 2026 Master Public Art Plan.

Should your Honorable Body require further information, I encourage you to contact Deputy Commissioner of Planning and Economic Development, Zachary Evans, at the Department of Environment and Planning. Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

Sincerely yours,

Mark C. Poloncarz, Esq.
Erie County Executive

MCP/ze
Enclosure

cc: Daniel R. Castle, AICP, Commissioner

MEMORANDUM

To: Honorable Members of the Erie County Legislature
From: Department of Environment and Planning
Re: Approval of 2026 Master Public Art Plan
Date: February 17, 2026

SUMMARY

It is recommended that the Erie County Legislature approve the 2026 Master Public Art Plan for the purpose of guiding the annual process of installing or applying art to county owned facilities.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The proposed funding of not-to-exceed \$220,722.54 will come from the approved 2025 and 2026 Erie County Capital Budgets Funding is available in the Department of Environment and Planning's (Fund 410, Funds Center 16200) Capital Project A.24067 – Public Art Fund.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

Per Local Law 2024-3, the Department of Environment and Planning serves as coordinator for the Art in Public Places Committee that identified locations for artwork to be installed on county owned property. This recommendation is effectively the recommendation of the Art in Public Places Committee as prescribed in Local Law 2024-3.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In 2023, the Erie County Legislature introduced the Public Art Act of Erie County, providing a funding mechanism for public art related to certain Erie County capital construction projects. The County has allocated 1% of the cost of a building construction project, up to a maximum of \$10,000, for the acquisition, maintenance, and management of public art.

The Arts in Public Places Committee, which supports this program, is composed of five local volunteers who are experts in the fields of art, art history, architecture, or architectural history, and is responsible for commissioning, selecting, placing, and preserving works of art in various media. The Committee is tasked with preparing an Annual Master Plan to ensure a coherent acquisition program and implementation guidelines, which must be approved by the Erie County Legislature, and hold a public hearing prior to the approval of the Annual Master Plan.

Lastly, the Department of Environment and Planning is tasked with coordinating and supporting the committee and contracting with the identified artists.

CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION

In the event the proposed resolution is not passed, Erie County will not be able to carry out the initiative as prescribed in Local 2024-3. The intended outcomes of making art accessible to all Erie County residents and visitors, fostering a sense of civic pride and community connection through art may not be realized.

STEPS FOLLOWING APPROVAL

Upon approval of the resolution, the Arts in Public Places Committee will release public calls for art for the locations identified in the 2026 Master Public Art Plan, review submissions and make selections for public art installations. Subsequently, contracts will be prepared, and installation/application will begin thereafter.

A RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY:
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING

RE: Approval of the 2026 Master Public Art Plan

WHEREAS, in 2023, the Erie County Legislature introduced the Public Art Act of Erie County, providing a funding mechanism for public art related to certain Erie County capital construction projects; and

WHEREAS, the County has allocated 1% of the cost of a building construction project, up to a maximum of \$10,000, for the acquisition, maintenance, and management of public art; and

WHEREAS, the Arts in Public Places Committee, which supports this program, is composed of five (5) local volunteers (three (3) appointed by the County Executive, one (1) appointment each for the Majority and Minority Caucuses of the Legislature), who are experts in the fields of art, art history, architecture, or architectural history, and is responsible for commissioning, selecting, placing, and preserving works of art in various media; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the five (5) appointed members, the County Executive, the Chairperson of the Legislature, the Chairperson of the Legislature's Community Enrichment Committee, the Minority Leader, and the Commissioner of Public Works or their designees, serve as ex-officio non-voting members of the Committee; and

WHEREAS, the Committee prepared an Annual Master Plan in accordance with Local Law 2024-3 to ensure a coherent acquisition program and implementation guidelines, which must be approved by the Erie County Legislature; and

WHEREAS, Erie County desires to approve the Master Public Art Plan and fund the installation/application of public art on previously identified Erie County properties; and

WHEREAS, the County of Erie has allocated \$220,722.54 for the installation/application of public art in the approved 2025 and 2026 Capital Budget in account A.24067;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Erie County Legislature hereby approves the 2026 Master Public Art Plan as submitted by the Arts in Public Places Committee in accordance with Local Law 2023-4; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the source of these funds shall be available in the approved 2025 and 2026 Erie County Capital Budget within the Department of Environment and Planning's (Fund 410, Funds Center 16200) Capital Project A.24067 – Public Art Fund; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the Legislature be directed to send certified copies of this resolution to the County Executive's Office, Comptroller's Office, Department of Law, Division of Budget and Management, and Department of Environment and Planning.