

Public art contributes to Downtown's appeal

Opening day of the Brampton Farmers Market in June provided the perfect occasion for unveiling two new pieces of public art in Downtown Brampton – a wall mural and a tree sculpture.

A simple definition of public art is 'art that is in the public realm'. Public art is often considered to be an integral part of urban revitalization strategies, as it can help to create an attractive and positive identity for a community, serve to beautify derelict buildings, stir controversy or stimulate the imagination. If done well, it can also attract customers and visitors to a commercial area.

As a strong believer in the value of public art, the Brampton Downtown Development Corporation (BDDC) is a member of the City's Public Art Mural Committee and the sponsor of the first tree sculpture in a new program being launched by the City of Brampton.

The festivities at the Farmers Market on June 19th included the official unveiling of the first public art mural in the downtown, located across from the The Rose Theatre next to the Belvedere Condominium. The mural, designed by artist Michael Ciupka, has an entertainment theme and is a collage of a guitar player, a dancer, theatre masks

and a harp. The 8 foot high by 23 foot wide piece wraps around the Rose Theatre stairwell.

The City's next mural project is slated for the large expanse of wall on the side of the Nelson Square Parking Garage facing George Street North.

The BDDC helped to kick-start the tree sculpture program in the downtown by sponsoring a sculpture by well known carver Robbin Wenzoski. The artist fired up his chain saw in Ken Whillans Square on June 19th and worked for several hours to carve a 6 foot high log into a beautiful bouquet of roses. The BDDC requested the historical theme to reflect the historical significance of the floral industry to Brampton.

There are approximately 20 City-owned dead tree stumps in the downtown area which present a great opportunity for the tree sculpture public art program.

Downtown resident, artist and retired architect, Bob Posliff, deserves a lot of credit for championing both the mural and the tree sculpting programs. Bob brought forward proposals to the City last year, which captured the interest and support of City Council and staff, who are now leading the charge.

Trade Talks - August 2010