



**STAFF REPORT  
ACTION REQUIRED**

**21 Widmer Street - Public Art Plan**

<b>Date:</b>	January 24, 2011
<b>To:</b>	Toronto and East York Community Council
<b>From:</b>	Robert Freedman, Director, Urban Design
<b>Wards:</b>	Ward 20 – Trinity Spadina
<b>Reference Number:</b>	te11006

**SUMMARY**

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The purpose of this staff report is to seek City Council approval of the 21 Widmer Street - Public Art Plan. The plan has been prepared by the owner in compliance with the development approval provisions. The plan, which is included as Attachment 1 of this report, outlines the method by which the owner will commission public art in the publicly-accessible, privately-owned area of the development site.

The development is located at the south-east corner of Adelaide Street and Widmer Street. The building site is one street west of John Street and half a block north of King Street. This area is described as the Entertainment District with many established and new facilities enhancing its appeal to tourists as well as further establishing a local neighbourhood community. The Entertainment District is a neighbourhood with an established mixed-use environment. This development also contributes to the mix of uses, a residential condominium with commercial use at-grade.

The 21 Widmer Street - Public Art Plan provides a framework for a Public Art Commission including the site context, location and project description, the public art site requirements, and the allocation of budget and schedule. The attached plan meets the objectives of City Planning’s Percent for Public Art Guidelines and is supported by the Toronto Public Art Commission.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

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**The City Planning Division recommends that:**

1. City Council approves the attached 21 Widmer Street - Public Art Plan.

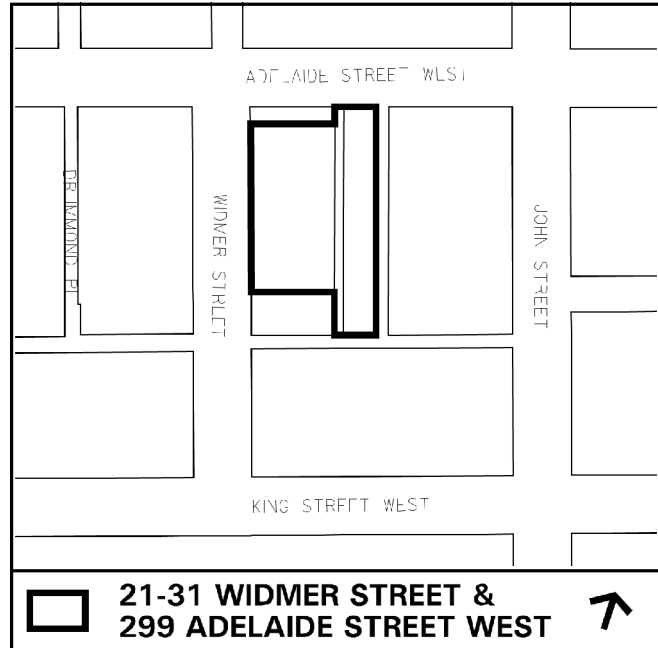
## FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

## DECISION HISTORY

City Council on September 30th, and October 1, 2009 approved a rezoning application, which included a recommendation that the public art contribution, for a value not less than one percent of the gross construction cost, costs of at least 50% of which is to be applied to art on-site.

The owner is required to produce a Public Art Plan for review by City Planning Staff and its advisory panel, the Toronto Public Art Commission. Initial meetings were held between the owner and City Planning Staff who met to discuss the public art process and to identify the public art site potentials. On December 14, 2010, the owner representatives made a presentation to the Toronto Public Art Commission at which time a recommendation was made for the approval of the 21 Widmer Street - Public Art Plan.



## ISSUE BACKGROUND

The attached Public Art Plan outlines the rationale for a direct commission. The developer has opted to invite the artist, Peter Powning to address the south-east corner. The artist will address the base of the podium chosen for its visibility to the public given its pedestrian level height. The architectural treatment of the podium is also significant so the artist will be working with the architect to insure that the integrity of the design is maintained and the art is treated as an enhancement.

## COMMENTS

The 21 Widmer Street - Public Art Plan meets the City's objectives for the provision of public art in private development for this on-site program and is in accordance with the City Planning Percent for the Public Art Program, and is supported by the Toronto Public Art Commission. Upon City Council's approval, the owner will commence work with the artist as scheduled in the attached plan.

We look forward to the results of the public art commission

**CONTACT**

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**SIGNATURE**

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Robert Freedman  
Director, Urban Design  
City Planning Division

**ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1: 21 Widmer Street - Public Art Plan

## **ATTACHMENT 1: 21 Widmer Street - Public Art Plan**

### **Public Art Plan, 21 Widmer Street, Toronto, Ontario**

**Presented to the Public Art Commission**

**December 14, 2011**

**by**

**Catherine Williams, Public Art Consultant**

**Also in attendance:**

**Niall Haggart, Daniels HR Corporation**

**Neil Pattison, Daniels HR Corporation**

### **1. Introduction**

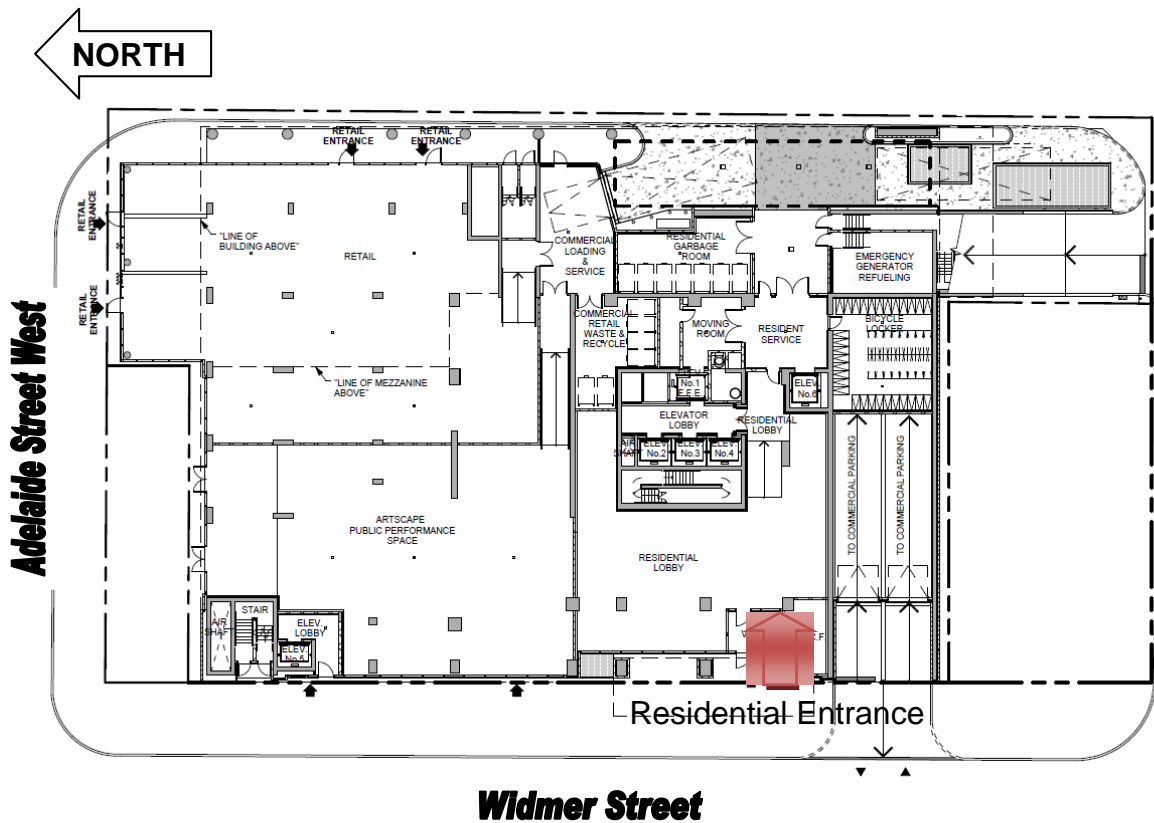
21 Widmer Street is located between Adelaide Street West and King Street West in the heart of downtown Toronto's Entertainment District. It is immediately adjacent and north of the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) Bell Lightbox and Festival Tower condominium at King and John (see **Schedule "A"**). In addition to being surrounded by nightlife, dining, live entertainment, comedy, film and professional sports the Entertainment District is a workplace and neighbourhood.

The mixed-use residential condominium building, which will be known as Cinema Tower, incorporates retail space, a community performance space and a residential lobby within a 6-storey podium. A 37-storey residential tower sits atop of the podium. The building will also house a commercial parking facility.

The developer is Daniels HR Corporation, the co-developer of the adjacent TIFF Bell Lightbox/Festival Tower building. TIFF Bell Lightbox, Cinema Tower and Festival Tower are central to a renaissance of the Toronto's Entertainment District, firmly establishing itself as a thriving and vibrant district for living, creating, working, and playing.



**Architectural Rendering Cinema Tower**



**Ground Floor Site Plan – Cinema Tower**

**2. Public Art Commitment**

In accordance with the provisions of the Section 37 Agreement, dated 18<sup>th</sup> June 2010 a public art contribution in accordance with the Percent for Public Art Program is required. At least 50% of the contribution is to be applied to the treatment of the building podium. The balance of the public art contribution is to be used within the John Street Corridor.

The estimated public art contribution applied to the building will be a minimum of \$350,000.00 from an overall contribution of \$700,000.00.

**3. Recommended Art Site**

The building incorporates above-grade parking in response to the massing of the theatre space within the TIFF Bell Lightbox. Together, these buildings provide a streetwall along Widmer Street. The screening of the 6-storey podium element was designed to give an architectural relationship to the warehouse heritage character of the area through the use of materials and colour. During the planning approval process, the developer with Urban Design staff discussed opportunities to animate the façade of the podium. It was agreed that the podium offered an opportunity for public art. While the base material for the podium complements the palette of the surrounding buildings, a public art treatment of the podium, particularly at street level, is seen as a way to animate the streetscape and create further visual interest. The opportunity to integrate art into the physical structure of the building provides an opportunity to turn the whole podium into public art.

The artist will also be encouraged to address a treatment around the residential entrance so pedestrians on Widmer Street as well as residents will get an immediate view of his concept. The artist can potentially integrate his concept with the building lobby and entrance canopy in some way.



#### **4. Public Art Commission**

At a preliminary meeting with City staff, the developers requested approval to present a sole source commission to the Public Art Commission. Given public art is to be integrated into the fabric of the podium, Daniels needed to explore design scenarios to advance the building design through the planning approval and building permit process. In this regard Peter Powning was engaged to explore concept designs so the architect, engineers and manufacturers could understand the practicalities of incorporating public art into building. Several proposals were developed, many of which took the idea of creating a unique textural form for the façade of the podium. Daniels is seeking confirmation of Mr. Powning as the artist to be part of the design development and working drawing process. Daniels wishes to continue to benefit from the artist's input to realize the full opportunity this building presents for Public Art.

#### **5. Artist**

Since 1970, Peter Powning has lived and worked as an artist in southern New Brunswick. He works in a wide range of media, usually in combinations, including glass, cast bronze, stone, ceramics and steel. In addition he produces large photographic prints of ephemeral work. He is the 2006 Sadye Bronfman Award recipient, which in 2007 became the Governor General's Bronfman Award. In addition to gallery and museum exhibitions, he has produced large public commissions in St. John, N.B, Moncton, N.B. and four in Toronto.

His work is in numerous private and corporate collections and has been exhibited widely, including: Japan, Taiwan, Australia, New Zealand, England, Scandinavia, Canada and the U.S.A.

Powning's reputation in the visual arts and public art make him a logical choice as an artist who could focus on the particular challenges of developing a concept to tell a story about the history of the site through the podium façade and advance it into a workable design that can be realized.



**Rendering of Podium Façade**

#### **6. Art Site Requirements**

The following requirements will be listed in the Terms of Reference:

- Able to be viewed, primarily, from sidewalk level
- Resistant to environmental conditions
- Mindful of public safety
- Low maintenance
- Provide a link to the warehouse heritage character of the area and/or local history of the site

## 7. Art Advisory Committee

Daniels HR Corporation is familiar with and confident in the work of Peter Powning and seeks approval to proceed with a direct commission from this artist. The Terms of Reference will stipulate that the artist develop a proposal with variations. The proposal and its variations will include schematics showing the design direction, images, preliminary materials, a statement about the concepts and preliminary budget projections. An Advisory Committee of three will provide feedback on Peter Powning's proposals and give direction towards a final design. They will be able to see how the artist arrived at his proposal and to weigh the merits of the variations he explored.

The Selection Committee will include one representative of the developer, Tom Dutton or Niall Haggart and two representatives from the art community: David Liss, Artistic Director and Curator, MOCCA and Francis Lebouthillier, Chair, Sculpture and Installation, OCAD University. Mr. Lebouthillier works in Ward 20.

## 8. Estimated Budget

The estimated budget is \$350,000, based on the Section 37 Agreement between the City of Toronto and Daniels HR Corporation, to be apportioned as follows:

Administration of commission, consultant's fees, jury fees	up to 10%	\$ 35,000
Maintenance fund	up to 7%	\$ 24,500
Art, including artist's fee, materials, fabrication, installation, consulting fees for engineering or technical advice	83%	\$ 290,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$ 350,000</b>

## 9. Preliminary Schedule

Brief Sent to Artist	April 2011
Artist's Presentation to Advisory Committee	May/June 2011
Contract/ Final Drawings	June 2011
Fabrication	Est. Summer 2013
Installation	Est. Winter 2013
Occupancy	Est. Spring 2014



Schedule "A"  
Context Plan

