



Agenda

Tom Thomson Art Gallery Advisory Committee

September 2, 2026, 2:00 p.m.

City Hall - 808 2nd Avenue East - Council Chambers

The public can attend meetings in person. Meetings will also be livestreamed on the City's Council and Committee webpage. If there are technical issues with the livestream that can't be fixed within 15 minutes, the meeting will continue, and a recording will be available later, on the webpage or by contacting the City Clerk. People who can't attend the meeting in person for Public Forum, should send their comments to the Recording Secretary one business day before the meeting. These comments will be shared with members and included in the updated agenda.

	Pages
1. CALL TO ORDER	
2. CALL FOR ADDITIONAL BUSINESS	
3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES	
4.a Minutes of the Tom Thomson Art Gallery Advisory Committee meeting held on May 6, 2026	3
5. DEPUTATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS	
There are no deputations or presentations.	
6. PUBLIC FORUM	
7. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FOR WHICH DIRECTION IS REQUIRED	
There are no correspondence items being presented for consideration.	
8. REPORTS OF CITY STAFF	
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8.b Report AG-26-004 from the Director and Chief Curator Re: Transition of Tom Thomson Art Gallery Teams to Working Groups	21
9. REPORTS OF WORKING GROUPS	
9.a Verbal Report from the Fundraising Team	26
9.b Verbal Report from the Art Collection Team	
There is no update from the Art Collection Team.	
10. MATTERS POSTPONED	
There are no matters postponed.	

11. MOTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE WAS PREVIOUSLY GIVEN

There are no motions for which notice was previously given.

12. CORRESPONDENCE PROVIDED FOR INFORMATION

12.a Correspondence from the Committee and Executive Support
Coordinator Re: Committee Vacancies and Applications

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13. DISCUSSION OF ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

14. NOTICES OF MOTION

15. ADJOURNMENT



Minutes

Tom Thomson Art Gallery Advisory Committee

May 6, 2026, 2:00 p.m.

City Hall - 808 2nd Avenue East - Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Peter Tovell
Vice Chair Lynda Montgomery
Deputy Mayor Scott Greig
Member Tiffany James
Councillor Marion Koepke
Member Katharine Lochnan
Member Kelsey Starr

STAFF PRESENT: Pam Coulter, Director of Community Services
Aidan Ware, Director and Chief Curator - Art Gallery, Culture,
Tourism
Christina McLean, Committee and Executive Support
Coordinator

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Tovell called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

2. CALL FOR ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

There was no additional business.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

- 4.a Minutes of the Tom Thomson Art Gallery Advisory Committee meeting held on February 4, 2026

"THAT the minutes of the Tom Thomson Art Gallery Advisory Committee meeting held on February 4, 2026 be received and the recommendations contained therein be approved."

Carried.

5. DEPUTATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

There were no deputations or presentations.

6. PUBLIC FORUM

There were no questions or comments from the public.

7. CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FOR WHICH DIRECTION IS REQUIRED

There were no correspondence items presented for consideration.

8. REPORTS OF CITY STAFF

- 8.a Report AG-26-002 from the Director and Chief Curator Re: May 2026 Update Report

The Director and Chief Curator provided an overview of the report.

In response to a question from Committee, Ms. Ware clarified that the OPEN card is a collaboration between the TOM, the Owen Sound and North Grey Union Public Library, the Billy Bishop Museum, and the Marine and Rail Waterfront Museum; which grants free admission to all of the institutions and is available to anyone who is eligible for a library card.

In response to a question from Committee, Ms. Ware noted that "meaningful interactions" as referenced in the report refers to the instances where a discussion or engagement takes place with the individuals who enter the facility.

In response to a question from Committee, Ms. Ware noted that the Emergence exhibition was not juried and focused on an inclusive approach to engage as many students in the process as possible.

In response to a question from Committee, Ms. Ware noted that there is not an artist's talk respecting the Forecast exhibition planned at this time.

In response to a question from Committee, Ms. Ware noted that the Operations Coordinator works with a group of volunteers to select the films for the Gallery Night at the Movies events, and that the possibility of a working group could be considered in the new year.

In response to a question from Committee, Ms. Ware noted that a series of public talks could be planned for 2027 to honour Tom Thomson's 150th birthday as well as the gallery's 60th year. She added that other possible items that could be

planned for the celebrations include featuring the recent acquisitions of Tom Thomson works or highlighting the impact of other individuals on Tom Thomson's life and legacy.

In response to a question from Committee, Ms. Ware noted that there isn't a specific date planned for celebrating the milestone year, and that instead a year-long celebration is the focus.

In response to a question from Committee, Ms. Ware noted that the extra revenue from the sales desk and gift shop relates to the increased selection of inventory that was brought in within the last year. She added that having Tourism services located at the TOM could have also influenced the amount of merchandise sold.

In response to a question from Committee, Ms. Ware noted that the line respecting collection donations reflects donations that were for specific items, such as restoration, appraisals or collections care, while the regular donations line reflects general donations to the gallery. She added that the option to make online donations is planned to be implemented in the future.

In response to a question from Committee, the Director of Community Services noted that the Tip Tap Pay station is going to be wrapped and relocated to increase convenience and visibility.

In response to a question from Committee, Ms. Ware noted that the first three months of the year tend to be slower for visitor numbers, and that none of the figures in the year-to-date budget lines as presented are unusual for this time of year.

In response to a question from Committee, Ms. Ware noted that net revenue could be included in future reports.

AG-260506-002

Moved by Vice Chair Montgomery

"THAT in consideration of Staff Report AG-26-002 respecting the May 2026 Art Gallery Update Report, the Tom Thomson Art Gallery Advisory Committee recommends that City Council receive the report for information purposes."

Carried.

9. REPORTS OF WORKING GROUPS

9.a Update Report from the Fundraising Team

Member Starr provided an overview of the fundraising team update, highlighting the wrap up of the 2026 calendar campaign and recognizing the work of the previous Fundraising Team Chair Mary Anne Alton.

9.b Update Report from the Art Collection Team

There was no update from the Art Collection Team.

10. MATTERS POSTPONED

There were no matters postponed.

11. MOTIONS FOR WHICH NOTICE WAS PREVIOUSLY GIVEN

There were no motions for which notice was previously given.

12. CORRESPONDENCE PROVIDED FOR INFORMATION

There were no correspondence items presented for information.

13. DISCUSSION OF ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

There was no additional business.

14. NOTICES OF MOTION

There were no notices of motion.

15. ADJOURNMENT

The business contained on the agenda having been completed, Chair Tovell adjourned the meeting at 2:55 p.m.

Staff Report

Report To: Tom Thomson Art Gallery Advisory Committee
Report From: Aidan Ware, Director and Chief Curator
Meeting Date: September 2, 2026
Report Code: AG-26-003
Subject: September 2026 Update Report

Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report AG-26-003 respecting the September Update Report, the Tom Thomson Art Gallery Advisory Committee recommends that City Council receive the report for information purposes.

Highlights:

- On July 11, the Gallery opened three new exhibitions including a two-part presentation of Robert Markle's work in collaboration with the Durham Art Gallery, as well as a solo exhibition by Michelle Peraza, and the second half of a two-part collection exhibition focused on the changing seasons, Forecast.
- Camp TOM: Summer Art Adventures was at full capacity with 116 registrations. It continues to be a major highlight of the Gallery's summer programming season, welcoming children ages 8–12 for 7 weeks of creative exploration.
- In August, the Gallery welcomed artist Michelle Peraza for two special workshops inspired by themes of identity, ecology, and collaborative artmaking. The first workshop took place with the Camp TOM participants and the second with the public.

Vision 2050 - Strategic Plan Alignment:

[Strategic Plan](#) Priority: Celebrating and Embracing Culture - Uplifting all aspects of the City's local culture, including Indigenous Peoples' cultural

histories and practices, the cultural histories and practices of all residents, and formal institutional arts and culture.

The Tom Thomson Art Gallery plays a vital role in advancing the City's Strategic Priority of Celebrating and Embracing Culture by serving as a dynamic hub for artistic expression, learning, and community connection. Through exhibitions, collections, and public programs, the Gallery uplifts cultural histories and contemporary practices, amplifies the diverse cultural voices of local and regional residents, and strengthens appreciation for formal institutional arts and culture. By stewarding significant Canadian artworks alongside community-driven initiatives, the Gallery fosters respect for cultural heritage, encourages dialogue across cultures and generations, and creates inclusive opportunities for residents and visitors to engage meaningfully with the arts. In doing so, the Tom Thomson Art Gallery contributes to a vibrant cultural ecosystem that reflects the City's shared values, deepens understanding, and enhances quality of life for all.

Previous Report/Authority:

N/A

Background:

This report provides an update on the Gallery's programming and operations, highlighting current and upcoming exhibition and engagement initiatives as well as operational items.

Visitor Engagement and Audience Reach

Prepared in accordance with the Gallery's Standard Operating Procedure:

Year-to-Date Attendance Summary Update –

January 1 to July 31, 2026

Facility Data

Visitors Counted Manually and Engaged by Gallery Staff: 5468

Exhibition Visitors via Laser Door Counters: 7332

Facility Visitors via Laser Door Counters: 10,618

Data was collected and reported in accordance with the Standard Operating Procedure for attendance tracking.

Visitors counted manually are those who entered the facility and had direct engagement with staff at the front desk. The Exhibition visitor data was collected from the laser door counter at the entrance to the Gallery's exhibition spaces. During busy periods, staff are frequently unable to connect with each person entering the facility, so the laser counters are helpful especially when comparing year-to-year trends.

Gallery Visitor Demographics YTD

(of those visitors* engaged by staff):

- 8% showed their OPEN Card
- 18% were first-time visitors
- 35% were from Owen Sound
- 37% were from Grey-Bruce-Simcoe
- 10% were from GTA
- 2% were from Kitchener-Waterloo/Guelph/Cambridge
- 3% were from London-Southwest ON
- 2% were from Hamilton-Niagara
- 2% were from Eastern Ontario
- 4% were from outside of the province
- 3% were from outside of the country
- 30% were seniors*
- 38% were adults*
- 25% were under 18*

*does not include 7% attending specialized programming (ages unknown)

Attendance to July 31 shows growth in manually counted visitors, and in laser counted visitors to exhibitions and the facility. Total tours and school tours, Gallery Night at the Movies, and Engagement-Outreach also reflect strong growth over previous years.

Visitor attendance continues to show strong engagement across exhibitions, public programming, and community partnerships. Attendance data is collected through both front-desk visitor engagement and laser door counters, providing a more complete picture of overall visitation, particularly during peak periods when staff are unable to interact with every visitor.

From April through July, the Gallery experienced a particularly active period of community participation. Highlights included the celebration of the Upcycle TOM project with children and families, the Magic of Children in Arts display, an artist talk by Liz Zetlin connected to *More Than Human – a year in my*

garden, participation in One World Festival, the successful launch of CAMP TOM, the opening of the summer exhibitions, and strong community engagement during Doors Open Owen Sound.

Year-to-date visitor demographics indicate continued success in welcoming a mix of local residents, regional visitors, and tourists from across Ontario, Canada, and internationally. The Gallery continues to attract first-time visitors while maintaining strong engagement with the local community. Visitors represented a broad age range, with adults, seniors, and youth all well represented, reflecting the Gallery's diverse programming and community reach.

April - July Highlights:

Upcycle TOM Project

174 children and their families celebrated the Upcycle TOM project with a reception at the end of April.

Special Projects and Community Partner Engagement

207 visitors viewed the Magic of Children in Arts display in the studio space.

50 visitors attended artist Liz Zetlin's talk in conjunction with her exhibition *More Than Human - a year in my garden*.

539 students, families and educators visited the Gallery for One World Festival day June 17.

68 children have participated in the first four weeks of CAMP TOM in July.

58 patrons visited the Gallery for the opening of its summer exhibitions.

264 people visited the Gallery during Doors Open Owen Sound.

Balancing Collection Strength and National Relevance

Exhibitions

On July 11, the Gallery opened three new exhibitions:

Markle: *Content is Just a Glimpse*

Continuing to September 12

Content is Just a Glimpse is presented simultaneously at the Durham Art Gallery as a two-part exhibition exploring the life, work, and creative circle of Robert Markle.

Following a motorcycle accident in 1970, Robert and his wife and lifelong muse, Marlene Markle, left Toronto and settled in Grey County. This exhibition traces the people who informed Markle's work—his muses, artistic peers, and creative community—while reflecting on his legacy.

Markle was an Indigenous Canadian painter, sculptor, writer, musician, and educator whose work became a defining presence in postwar Canadian art. Emerging from Toronto's experimental art scene of the 1960s and associated with the influential Isaacs Group, Markle developed a highly personal visual language centered on the figure and informed by gesture, colour, and improvisation. His work gained national attention following controversy surrounding *Eros '65*—a 1965 Toronto exhibition of art that was raided by police and sparked a broader public debate about censorship and artistic freedom in Canada.

Michelle Peraza – *Tú eres mi otro yo: Mundos, Mundo, Worlds*

Continuing to October 3, 2026

This exhibition presents new works by Peraza, a second-generation Latin American Canadian of Cuban and Costa Rican descent whose practice explores postcolonial identity, interconnection, and transformation. Developed during a two-year period of recovery following a serious car accident, the works emerge from Peraza's personal journey of healing and draw on traditional healing approaches that blend Indigenous Mesoamerican, African, and European medicinal knowledge with spiritual beliefs and ceremonial practices.

Using amate paper, medicinal plants, precious metals, hand-dyed textiles, and hand-stitched fibers, Peraza creates intricate works that speak to repair, resilience, and care. Guided by Mesoamerican worldviews and a deep reverence for celestial and earthly rhythms, she approaches artmaking as a process of re-worlding—extending personal healing into a broader consideration of how individuals, communities, and the natural world might heal, reconnect, and flourish together.

Peraza holds a B.A. from Western University, a B.F.A. from OCAD University and an M.F.A. from York University. She has completed residencies internationally and nationally, including at the Art Gallery of Ontario (Canada). She has exhibited in public and artist-run galleries including Maison de la Culture Claude-Léveillée, Niagara Artists Centre, Cambridge Art Galleries, Sur Gallery, TAP Centre for Creativity, Guelph Civic Museum, Tom

Thomson Art Gallery and upcoming at Neutral Ground. She teaches in the Faculty of Art at OCAD University.

Forecast – June to January

Continuing to June January 2, 2027

The second half of a two-part exhibition, *June to January* builds on Tom Thomson's devotion to observing seasons and weather patterns. It explores our bodily and emotional responsiveness to the atmosphere and the subtle ways we sense and adapt to weather. In addition to Thomson's work, a salon-style hanging of selections from the Gallery's collection traces the progression of the seasons in step with the exhibition running dates. Visitors are invited to tune their perceptions to the rhythms of changing skies and light. Situating us within the present, we are also compelled to consider how our awareness of familiar weather patterns—and their disruption—has evolved in a changing climate.

Education and Youth Programming as a Core Priority

July – September 2026 Initiatives:

Canada Day Community Engagement

The Gallery's Education and Engagement team joined the City of Owen Sound's Canada Day celebrations at Kelso Beach Park on June 30 and July 1, 2026, hosting a TOM pop-up tent featuring creative activities for families and visitors. The activation included temporary tattoos, colouring stations, and interactive art activities that encouraged community participation and connection. Despite the hot weather, the team created a welcoming and engaging space for attendees, helping families stay cool while celebrating together. Their enthusiasm and creativity provided a positive representation of the Gallery, strengthening the TOM's presence at community events and supporting the City's Canada Day festivities.

Summer Exhibition Opening Reception

On Saturday, July 11, 2026, the Gallery celebrated the opening of three new summer exhibitions. Bringing together contemporary and historical perspectives, the exhibitions explore themes of transformation, creativity, healing, and connection to the natural world. The opening reception provided visitors with an opportunity to experience the new exhibitions and to meet artist Michelle Peraza.

Camp TOM 2026 – Summer Art Adventures

Camp TOM: Summer Art Adventures continues to be a major highlight of the Gallery's summer programming season, welcoming children ages 8–12 for 7 weeks of creative exploration, outdoor discovery, and hands-on artmaking. With strong registration numbers and enthusiastic participation, Camp TOM continues to be one of the TOM's most successful youth engagement programs.

Final Camp TOM 2026 Numbers:

- 7 weeks of summer art camp programming
- 116 campers registered (full capacity)
- Ages 8–12

Each five-day camp week features a new theme inspired by nature, contemporary artists, and the work of Tom Thomson. Campers explore the Gallery, create in the TOM studio, experiment with a variety of materials and techniques, and develop their own creative voices through painting, printmaking, sculpture, clay, and 3D art explorations.

A highlight of Camp TOM 2026 has been the group's visits to Harrison Park, where campers connect with nature through hiking, sketching, observation, and outdoor exploration. These experiences allow campers to gather inspiration directly from the landscape and reflect on the ways artists, including Tom Thomson, have been inspired by the natural world.

The Education and Engagement team continues to provide a welcoming and engaging environment where campers build confidence, make new friendships, and experience the joy of artistic discovery.

Artist Workshops – Michelle Peraza

On August 14 and 15, the TOM welcomed artist Michelle Peraza for two special workshops inspired by themes of identity, ecology, pollinator plants, and collaborative artmaking.

August 14 – Camp TOM Artist Workshop

Camp TOM participants took part in a private workshop with Michelle, exploring storytelling, nature observation, and creative expression through hands-on art activities.

August 15 – Public Workshop: SHIMMER & Re-Worlding

Community members were invited to participate in an inclusive, mixed-age creative workshop exploring connections between identity, nature, and

collective creation. Using natural materials, tree bark paper, and Indigenous-made BEAM paints, participants created artwork inspired by local ecosystems and personal stories.

The collaborative artwork created during the workshop will be featured in the Gallery's Atrium during late August and September, allowing visitors to experience the shared creation and continue conversations around art, nature, and connection.

Upcoming Events, Programming, and Outreach

On September 18, the TOM will once again host the Cobble Beach Concours d'Elegance Welcome Reception, continuing its third year as a community partner for this prestigious event. The reception welcomes Concours guests, vehicle participants, visiting judges, and City of Owen Sound staff to the Gallery for an evening celebrating art, community, and automotive excellence. This partnership continues to strengthen the TOM's role as a cultural destination and gathering place within the region.

As the summer season continues, the TOM is preparing for a busy fall schedule of exhibitions, educational programming, community partnerships, and public engagement opportunities. School tours, workshops, and community programs remain an important part of the Gallery's commitment to connecting audiences of all ages with art and creative learning.

July–September 2026 continues to be a season of strong engagement, creativity, and connection at the TOM. From community celebrations and the opening of new exhibitions to the success of Camp TOM, upcoming artist-led workshops, and ongoing partnerships, the Gallery continues to provide meaningful opportunities for visitors of all ages to experience art, learning, and creativity.

Gallery Night at the Movies:

Gallery Night at the Movies will kick off its 29th season in September with the film THE CHRISTOPERS starring Ian McKellen.

In conjunction with the Toronto International Film Festival, The TOM's Gallery Night at the Movies film series is one of our most successful and long-running programs. As an Official Film Circuit Centre, Gallery Night at the Movies provides local filmgoers an opportunity to see films that may not otherwise be available in our region, and supports the Canadian film industry by providing filmmakers and distributors the opportunities to extend the

reach and theatrical runs of their releases into the smaller communities across the country.

With a season running September to April, Gallery Night at the Movies brings the best of Canadian, foreign and independent film to the region, featuring highlights from TIFF and the Film Festival Circuit. Our films are screened at our local Cineplex Theatre, Galaxy Cinemas in Owen Sound, offering a true cinematic experience with all the amenities. Season passes went on sale August 7 and are going well.

There are three screening times available - 1pm, 4pm & 7pm. Passes for 9 films are \$150 each, or \$135 for Supporters Circle Members, and are available for purchase at the Gallery or online.

Single movie tickets for each screening go on sale 2-3 weeks before the screening date.

Fall screening dates: September 14, October 5, October 26, November 9 and December 7; films to be announced shortly. Four dates for Winter/Spring 2027 are yet to be confirmed.

2027 – Celebrating a Milestone Year for Tom Thomson

Looking ahead, next year (2027) represents 150 years since Tom Thomson was born and it coincides with the Gallery's 60th anniversary. We continue to work with Algonquin Outfitters and Ontario Parks on plans to further celebrate this milestone year, with the concept of an open call for a mural project which will be installed at the Canoe Lake location where Thomson died. The Gallery is also working with Algonquin Outfitters to develop a unique limited line of merchandise featuring Tom Thomson and his work, including concepts for Buffs and graphic T-shirts. Here in Owen Sound, the Gallery's Curator is planning an exhibition that celebrates the intertwined lives and artistic dialogues of Tom Thomson, J.E.H. MacDonald, and Thoreau MacDonald, featuring a newly acquired piece from Thoreau MacDonald's estate that highlights the enduring resonance of their shared creative legacy. Tom Thomson and J. E. H. MacDonald had a close artistic and personal relationship that played a key role in shaping Thomson's development as a painter. They met in Toronto around 1912–1913 when both were working at the commercial design firm Grip Limited. MacDonald, who was already an established artist, quickly recognized Thomson's talent and encouraged him to pursue painting. He became both a mentor and a friend, introducing Thomson to other artists who would later form the Group of Seven. MacDonald was deeply affected by Thomson's death and later helped

preserve and promote his legacy, ensuring that Thomson's work remained foundational to the story of Canadian art.

Collections Stewardship and Conservation Progress

Work is nearing completion in Vault 5, which is being reconfigured as a dedicated collections resource space. The Gallery's reference library, accession files, and archival materials have now been consolidated into a single location, improving access and efficiency for staff while also providing a more organized space for researchers and members of the public who wish to consult these resources by appointment.

Framing of the Gallery's recently acquired Tom Thomson paintings is complete. These new frames provide improved long-term protection for the works while enhancing their presentation for future exhibitions.

Looking ahead, staff are beginning to plan a fundraising initiative in 2027 in conjunction with the celebration of Tom Thomson's 150th anniversary. The campaign will seek to raise funds to continue upgrading the frames of additional Tom Thomson paintings in the Gallery's permanent collection that remain in need of conservation-quality framing, helping to ensure their preservation for future generations.

Fundraising and Revenue Development

The Gallery has been notified that its application to the Ontario Arts Council's Ontario Arts Operating Fund was successful, maintaining the Gallery's current level of operating funding.

This year's result is particularly significant as it followed the Ontario Arts Council's major overhaul of its operating grant programs. Beginning with the 2026 funding cycle, the OAC consolidated its previous discipline-specific operating grants into a single operating fund with a standardized application and assessment framework for organizations across the province. Hundreds of organizations across Ontario were assessed through a single unified operating program for the first time, rather than within separate discipline-based streams. That structural change alone underscores the increased competitiveness of maintaining funding. Applicants were required to demonstrate organizational strength, artistic impact, community engagement, financial sustainability, accessibility, and equity through a more comprehensive and competitive review process. Maintaining the Gallery's funding level through this new province-wide process reflects continued confidence in the Gallery's artistic leadership, public impact, and

organizational capacity, while preserving a stable source of provincial operating support for future programming. On August 20, MPP Paul Vickers visited the Gallery to deliver the official news and to tour the exhibitions.

As previously noted, the Gallery was successful in achieving a four-year operating grant spanning 2026-2029 (total funding \$280,000, \$70,000/year) from the Canada Council for the Arts.

The Gallery received \$4000 from the Community Foundation Grey Bruce to support the expansion of Upcycle TOM in the community.

The Gallery was successful in receiving funding for three summer student positions from Young Canada Works totalling \$18,900. These positions were dedicated to planning and leading PD Day art camps and summer art camps.

Planning is underway for Palette to Palate 2026 and a save the date poster has been shared on social media and Artefacts. The event will celebrate regional art, food, and drink at the Gallery on Saturday, November 7. This signature fundraising event offers guests an inspired evening immersed in artwork, complemented by locally crafted food and thoughtfully paired local beverages. The experience will be further enhanced by auctions, providing attendees with the opportunity to support the Gallery while taking home some exceptional pieces and experiences.

The Fundraising Coordinator is preparing sponsorship packages to support this event, as well as other visible opportunities. Several sponsorship requests for art education programs and the studio were submitted to local businesses, but the feedback has been that this year is very difficult for them financially.

We launched the 2026 Box Art Project: A Remix, in partnership with the Durham Art Gallery. This project revives a collaborative fundraiser first presented by our two galleries in 1986. We're inviting artists to transform a simple wooden box into an original work of art. The completed boxes will be exhibited and auctioned at the Durham Art Gallery from August 22 to September 12, with proceeds supporting arts programming at both Gallery

locations. An update on the 2026/27 Calendar Campaign is contained in the attached Fundraising Team update.

Analysis and Options:

Overall, this report highlights a season of strong public engagement, ambitious programming, and continued organizational momentum. The Gallery experienced sustained growth in visitor attendance and community participation, driven by exhibitions, education initiatives, and partnerships with local organizations. Summer programming included the launch of three new exhibitions alongside successful outreach activities.

The Gallery continues to focus on long-term sustainability and stewardship and looking ahead, staff are planning major initiatives to mark Tom Thomson's 150th anniversary and the Gallery's 60th anniversary in 2027, including new exhibitions, public art partnerships, and commemorative merchandise. The Gallery has had significant funding successes, including maintaining its Ontario Arts Council operating grant through a newly consolidated and highly competitive provincial funding program, securing ongoing Canada Council support, and obtaining additional funding for youth programming and community initiatives, positioning the organization well for future programming and fundraising efforts.

Resource Alignment:

Financial Resources

A 2026 year-to-date net/gross revenue/fundraising summary is attached to this report. The Gallery remains on track with strong revenues from operating grants, the endowment fund, art camps, and donations. Most of the revenue from Gallery Night at the Movies, the annual fundraising event, the fundraising calendar, and memberships are achieved later in the fall.

Human Resources

Through a grant from the Young Canada Works program, the TOM has welcomed three summer Education and Engagement students to the team. These summer students are leading the Gallery's children's art camps through July and August.

Time and Scheduling

N/A

Technology and Infrastructure

N/A

Climate and Environmental Impacts:

There are no anticipated climate or environmental impacts.

Communication and Engagement:

This report has been posted to the City's website with the agenda in advance of the meeting.

Media advisories are issued to highlight new exhibitions and new/returning programs. The Gallery's website and social media will communicate and promote key exhibitions and programs.

Report Developed in Consultation With:

- Pamela Coulter, Director of Community Services
- Kim Skene, Operations Coordinator
- Shannon Bingeman, Curator of Exhibitions and Collections
- Heather McLeese, Curator of Public Projects and Education

Attachments:

1. Attachment 1 - 2026 Gallery Revenues by Category - Year to Date 2026-07-31

Reviewed by:

Pamela Coulter, Director of Community Services

Submission approved by:

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Aidan Ware, Director and Chief Curator at aware@thomthomson.org or 519-376-1932 ext. 5001.

Fundraising and Revenue for the Tom Thomson Art Gallery - Year to Date 2026-07-31							
Grants	Budgeted			Received		Notes	
Ontario Arts Council	\$	51,106.00			\$	51,249.00	Grant Money received
Canada Council for the Arts	\$	70,000.00			\$	70,000.00	Grant Money Received
Young Canada Works	\$	18,000.00			\$	14,179.73	First Payment of Grant Money Received (\$4726.58 to follow)
Total	\$	139,106.00			\$	135,428.73	
Revenues						Notes	
	Budgeted Gross	Budgeted Net	YTD Gross	YTD Expenses	YTD Net Revenues		
Donations	\$	30,000.00	\$	14,780.15	\$	14,780.15	
Sales Desk	\$	8,000.00	\$	3,962.78	\$	2,122.16	
Movies							This revenue total includes admissions, sponsorship and donations. Pass sales started August 7 for the 2026-27 season
	\$	45,000.00	\$	10,180.00	\$	1,167.46	
Special Events Fundraising							This revenue total includes 2027 Calendar Campaign sales and adoptions, and sponsorship. Fall campaign launches in September
	\$	75,000.00	\$	19,552.92	\$	13,719.89	
Endowment Funds	\$	8,000.00		\$	12,526.00	\$	12,526.00
							Varies from year to year.
Membership							New membership and donor giving programs were implemented last fall. Focused membership campaign in fall.
	\$	8,000.00	\$	1,335.00	\$	914.73	
Collection							This revenue total includes monetary donations linked to donated artwork, deferrals, copyright and loan revenues.
	\$	10,000.00		\$	6,740.00	\$	6,740.00
Education (includes Community Foundation Grant of \$4000 for Upcycle TOM)							This revenue total includes Community Foundation Education Project Grant, donations and tours.
	\$	6,500.00	\$	5,468.11	\$	419.19	
Studio Classes							This revenue total includes Studio Class Registrations to July 31 (Summer Camp TOM) and donations.
	\$	28,000.00	\$	19,653.00	\$	16,297.16	
Exhibition Donations and Sponsorship Revenues	\$	5,000.00		\$	6,000.00	\$	6,000.00
							This revenue total includes donations and sponsorship.
Total	\$	223,500.00	\$	100,197.96	\$	74,686.74	

Staff Report

Report To: Tom Thomson Art Gallery Advisory Committee
Report From: Aidan Ware, Director and Chief Curator
Meeting Date: September 2, 2026
Report Code: AG-26-004
Subject: Transition of Tom Thomson Art Gallery Teams to Working Groups

Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report AG-26-004 respecting the transition of Tom Thomson Art Gallery teams to working groups, the Tom Thomson Art Gallery Advisory Committee recommends that City Council:

1. Direct staff to include in the 2027 Board and Committee By-law the inclusion of a Tom Thomson Art Gallery Fundraising Working Group as outlined in the report; and
2. Direct staff to include in the 2027 Board and Committee By-law the inclusion of a Tom Thomson Art Gallery Art Collection Working Group as outlined in the report.

Highlights:

- The Fundraising and Art Collection Teams provide valuable support to the Tom Thomson Art Gallery's operations and vision.
- As part of the City's committee structure review, these Teams will be transitioned to Working Groups, as outlined in the updated Board and Committee By-law.
- Current team members will need to reapply through the City's working group roster in Fall of 2026, and the working groups will begin with the new Committee and Council term.

Vision 2050 - Strategic Plan Alignment:

[Strategic Plan](#) Priority: The recommendation contributes to core service delivery or a corporate initiative that enables service delivery for one or more strategic priorities.

Previous Report/Authority:

[Report CR-26-031](#) Re: 2027 Committee Structure and Calendar

[Report CS-26-006](#) Re: Terms of Reference for TTAG Teams

[By-law No. 2026-053](#) Board and Committee By-law (comes into effect November 16, 2026)

Background:

The current Fundraising and Art Collection teams have existed for a number of years under the Tom Thomson Art Gallery Advisory Committee, and the terms of reference were most recently updated in February 2026 to clarify roles for staff and volunteers and add reference to the City's Code of Conduct.

At the March 6, 2026 Council Meeting, City Council requested that staff include in the Board and Committee By-law a mechanism to permit the establishment of working groups, being a less formal group of Council and public members who can be appointed quickly to undertake work on a particular issue or initiative.

At the April 13, 2026 Council Meeting, Council directed staff to bring forward [Board and Committee By-law No. 2026-053](#), which outlines the definitions of a Working Group and the Working Group Roster, found on page 2 of the By-law.

Working Groups will be comprised of public members who are selected by Council from the Working Group Roster. The Working Group Roster will be an open application on the City's website, and applications will be kept on file for the term of Council. As Working Groups are created throughout the term, Council will then select individuals from the roster based on their interests and experience.

Public member applications to the Working Group Roster for the upcoming term of Council will be open beginning October 19, 2026.

Analysis and Options:

The current Fundraising and Art Collection teams will transition into working groups to align with the new Board and Committee By-law. The terms of reference for the Fundraising and Art Collection teams have been utilized in the creation of the general purpose, membership, and staff resources required for the establishment of a Working Group.

Current team members that would like to continue their role will need to apply to the working group roster that opens October 19.

The below tables outline the necessary information required for the creation of both Working Groups.

Tom Thomson Art Gallery Fundraising Working Group:

Board and Committee By-law Requirement	Description
Working Group Title	Tom Thomson Art Gallery Fundraising Working Group
Timeframe	Term of Council
Mandate	To support and execute approved fundraising activities and initiatives that enhance the capital and operating budgets of the Gallery.
Outcome	Report to the Tom Thomson Art Gallery Advisory Committee with fundraising updates and initiatives.
Membership	• One (1) member of the TTAG Advisory Committee. • Four to seven (4-7) public members selected by Council through the working group roster, based on expertise in fundraising, community connections, and experience.
Staff Resources	• Gallery Director and Chief Curator • Fundraising Coordinator • Additional Gallery staff as needed

Tom Thomson Art Gallery Art Collection Working Group:

Board and Committee By-law Requirement	Description
Working Group Title	Tom Thomson Art Gallery Art Collection Working Group
Timeframe	Term of Council
Mandate	To strategically plan and undertake activities to support collection policy development, including acquisition/deaccession, and collection planning.
Outcome	Report to the Tom Thomson Art Gallery Advisory Committee with art collection updates and initiatives.
Membership	• One (1) member of the TTAG Advisory Committee. • Three to five (3-5) public members selected by Council through the working group roster, based on expertise in art, policy, collections, or art conservation.
Staff Resources	• Gallery Director and Chief Curator • Fundraising Coordinator • Additional Gallery staff as needed

Resource Alignment:

Financial Resources

N/A.

Human Resources

Gallery staff will continue to support the Fundraising and Art Collection Working Groups as required.

Time and Scheduling

Applications to the Working Group Roster will open October 19, 2026.

Council will select public members from the roster during a Closed Session on November 30, 2026.

The current teams will continue to operate until the new working groups are established on December 1, 2026.

Technology and Infrastructure

N/A.

Climate and Environmental Impacts:

There are no anticipated climate or environmental impacts.

Communication and Engagement:

Applications for the Working Group Roster will be advertised through the City's Social Media and other communications channels once open.

Applications will take place online through an online form on the City's website.

Report Developed in Consultation With:

Clerks Division

Attachments:

None.

Reviewed by:

Pamela Coulter, Director of Community Services

Submission approved by:

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Aidan Ware, Director and Chief Curator at aware@owensound.ca or 519-376-1932 ext. 5001.

To: Tom Thomson Art Gallery Advisory Committee

From: Kelsey Starr, Fundraising Team Chair

Date: August 20, 2026

Re: Fundraising Team Update

The 2027 fundraising calendar summer campaign has officially launched, with more than 30 retail and community locations across Grey, Bruce, Simcoe, and the Huntsville area now carrying this special edition. The 2027 calendar marks an especially significant year for the Gallery, celebrating 150 years since the birth of Tom Thomson and the 60th anniversary of the Tom Thomson Art Gallery. This milestone edition provides an important opportunity to bring Thomson's work beyond the Gallery and into communities throughout the region while supporting the Gallery's ongoing programming and operations.

The calendar features works by Tom Thomson from the Gallery's permanent collection, including three recently acquired works that have undergone conservation. The inclusion of these works provides the public with an opportunity to see them in print and learn more about the Gallery's collection. The calendar therefore serves both as a successful fundraising initiative and as an important tool for collection awareness, interpretation, and promotion of the Gallery's holdings.

The Fundraising Team and Gallery staff have also strengthened the calendar's regional distribution through new partnerships with Owen Sound Transportation Company (Chi-Cheemaun ferry), Brightshores Health System

– Owen Sound, and Algonquin Outfitters in Huntsville. These partnerships expand the calendar’s reach to visitors, residents, tourists, and regional audiences while creating new opportunities to connect the Gallery’s fundraising activities with the broader tourism and community networks that support the region.

Building on the success of previous campaigns, the 2027 strategy places greater emphasis on expanding retail distribution, developing bulk sales opportunities, and establishing wholesale relationships. The team is actively pursuing additional retail and tourism locations throughout the region, with a particular focus on high-traffic destinations and businesses that align with the Gallery’s audience and the Thomson legacy.

The campaign also provides an opportunity to leverage the significance of the 150th anniversary of Thomson’s birth and the Gallery’s 60th anniversary to generate increased awareness and demand for the calendar. Staff and volunteers will continue to promote the calendar through Gallery communications, community outreach, partner networks, and direct engagement with potential retail and bulk purchasers.

With its strong regional distribution network, significant collection content, new commercial and community partnerships, and expanded sales strategy, the 2027 calendar campaign represents an important opportunity to increase fundraising revenue while extending the Gallery’s visibility and strengthening connections with communities and visitors across the region.

CARE FOR OUR COMMUNITY



We're looking for volunteers to help us make a difference! Community is not built in the comment section, Owen Sound needs your voice and ideas to serve our incredible City!

**owen
sound**
where you *want* to live

Here are just a few reasons to volunteer for a City Committee:

- Meet new people and make new friends
- Learn new skills and gain valuable experience
- Make a positive impact in your community

Apply online at OwenSound.ca/CommitteeVacancies



clerks@owensound.ca



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"Building a vibrant Owen Sound is a shared responsibility. Serving on a City Council committee is a powerful way for residents to help shape our community's future."

– Mayor Ian Boddy