



MISSION: To advocate and promote arts and culture in the Wichita community through advocacy, education and outreach.

August 15, 2023

Sculpture WalkAbout

The Sculpture WalkAbout (SWA) was conceived as an annual juried competition to showcase work by local and regional sculptors on pedestals located throughout Downtown and Old Town Wichita. The project was launched in 2008 to advance cultural awareness of the arts in our community and enhance the city's aesthetic appeal for residents and visitors alike.

The project flourished initially, helmed by the Arts Council's SWA committee and funded through generous donations and sponsorship. The sculptures became popular emblems of a revitalized Old Town and Downtown, where you still can't venture very far without seeing a mural or piece of art. Unfortunately, in recent years, the SWA committee has not been able to secure the funding needed to keep the program competitive and sustainable. It has been increasingly difficult to attract new artists to submit work to SWA and the program has relied on the generosity of long-standing participants like Rollin Karg and Conrad Snider to keep the pedestals filled.

The [Wichita Eagle recently published an article about the ending of the Sculpture WalkAbout](#) that has led to some public confusion. The artwork that is displayed as part of SWA does not belong to the Arts Council, or to the City of Wichita. It is on loan from the individual artists, who receive a stipend for its use. The sculptures are all available for sale. The City has not reduced funding for the SWA project or for the Arts Council. In fact, because the Arts Council is currently unable to fund SWA, the City's Division of Arts and Cultural Services has agreed to research alternate programming options for the pedestals. The Arts Council will continue to explore ways to bring more artwork to Wichitans.

The Arts Council is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that works to strengthen art venues and promote cultural arts within the community. In 1966, the Arts Council was formed, originally called The Wichita Fine Arts Council, to support the arts and make them more accessible to Wichita citizens. Today the Arts Council is operated by a 25-member Board of Directors.