

## **Progress Report on Amendments to the Corporate Public Art Policy**

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

In 2004 Council implemented the Public Art Policy “to pursue the integration of public art into the cultural fabric of Calgary, recognizing public art as a vital ingredient in Calgary’s ongoing development as a great city.” In 2017 September, Council directed Administration to report back with a progress update in Q1 2018 on recommendations on a new process for this policy.

Council’s interest and commitment to further evolve the Public Art program included direction to Administration to Report back on the status of direction outlined in NOM2013-34. The update on the implementation of recommendations contained in NOM2013-34 are contained in Attachment 2. Council further directed Administration to investigate best practices for: fully engaging the public and their feedback; accommodating concept submissions from artists that foster and enhance local, regional, national and culturally appropriate artists; researching mechanisms for allocating tax dollars during economic downturns; and briefing Council and communicating to the public on the selection of successful candidates for public art projects.

Administration has been investigating each of the questions posed by Council and this report summarizes that progress. Administration will bring the final recommendations to Council in 2018 June.

### **ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:**

That the SPC on Community and Protective Services recommend that Council:

1. Approve the following exceptions from the suspension of further Requests for Proposal (RFP) regarding new public art design as of 2018 April 1:
  - a) the following annual programs that are in demand from communities across Calgary and provide jobs for artists through the summer months:
    - Painted Utility Boxes
    - Street Art for Youth (a mural program)
    - Artists Working in Community (in collaboration with This is My Neighbourhood)
  - b) the re-siting of the Centre Street Bridge Lion to Rotary Park, as previously directed by Council and is anticipated by the community (Attachment 4).

### **PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY**

On 2017 September 13, Council approved NM2017-32, Amendments to the Corporate Public Art Policy, directing Administration to report back with a progress update in Q1 2018 on recommendations on a new process.

NM2017-32 also directed Administration to “immediately suspend further Requests for Proposal (RFP) regarding new public art design as of September 15, 2017”.

Attachment 1 provides a detailed listing of Previous Council Direction since 2004.

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### **BACKGROUND**

Cities around the world have invested in art in the public realm as a means of creating a special sense of place for their citizens and tourists alike. In Calgary, since the adoption of the Corporate Public Art Policy in 2004, that investment has resulted in 54 permanent sculptures being installed, as well as artist-designed banners and murals, manhole covers, drinking fountains, bike racks, benches and 170 painted utility boxes in every ward of the city.

In 2014 an independent citizen survey conducted for The City by Ipsos Reid found that 87% of Calgarians believe that it's important to have public art in Calgary and 81% agree that Calgary's public art contributes to making our city a great place to live and visit. Furthermore, 83% of those surveyed supported a public art program that is inclusive when considering citizen input.

Since 2014, an average of 3500 citizens a year have participated in community engagements related to infrastructure projects that include public art in Transportation, UEP and Community Services. As the selection panel for each art project was increased from 5 to 7 members in 2014, over 200 citizens have served on selection panels to choose the art commissioned over the past three years.

Despite these efforts to involve citizens, and to engage artists, there is clearly room for improvement, as recent public controversy has caused a loss of confidence in the public art program. This is an important community program and Administration is committed to a thorough review of the program in order to ensure its success for the Calgary community. At Council's direction, Administration is considering the following specific improvements to the public art process:

- a) Best practices around fully engaging the public with the public policies, practices and The Public Art Policy Management Framework.
- b) Mechanisms for the prioritization and allocation of tax dollars for art funding during economic downturns and Council engagement.
- c) How to accommodate concept submissions from artists that foster and enhance local, regional, national, and culturally appropriate artists.
- d) How Council can be briefed on short-listed submissions by the Public Art Board, and how, in turn, the public can be engaged for their feedback.
- e) Who will make the selection of a successful candidate and how it will be communicated back to the public and to Council.
- f) When and how the freezing of the Corporate Public Art Policy should be lifted.
- g) Report back on the outcomes/progress of the 2014 Notice of Motion

Council also directed Administration to suspend all new public art projects scheduled for RFP until Q2, 2018. At the same time, Council recognized that there were a number of art projects that had been tendered and contracted in accordance with current Council approved policy and process, and would, therefore, continue to completion.

### **INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS**

#### **Improvements to the Public Art Process**

The City of Calgary's public art is funded through 1 per cent of total capital project costs for City of Calgary capital budgets over \$1 million, and 0.5 per cent of the portion of a project that is

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over \$50 million. As a result, Administration recognized that the Public Art Program is a cross-corporate program involving all the Business Units that have capital projects. Accordingly, the decision was made to form an Executive Steering Committee to direct Administration's response to the Notice of Motion.

The Executive Steering Committee is comprised of the General Managers of Transportation, Utilities and Environmental Protection (UEP) and Community Services, as well as the Director of Recreation, and supported by Community Services' Finance Manager and Senior Business Advisor. Together they examined the questions posed by Council and determined that the Public Art Program must be re-imagined as an integrated, corporate wide program, in keeping with the principles of One City. Although a Public Art Master Plan was developed in 2014 to provide over-arching guidance, the fact remains that every Department has approached public art in its own way leading to a disjointed approach with varying degrees of public engagement and success.

The Executive Steering Committee concluded that most of the gaps in process identified by Council could be grouped into the following five priority areas for improvement: Governance, Finance, Engagement, Selection and Communications.

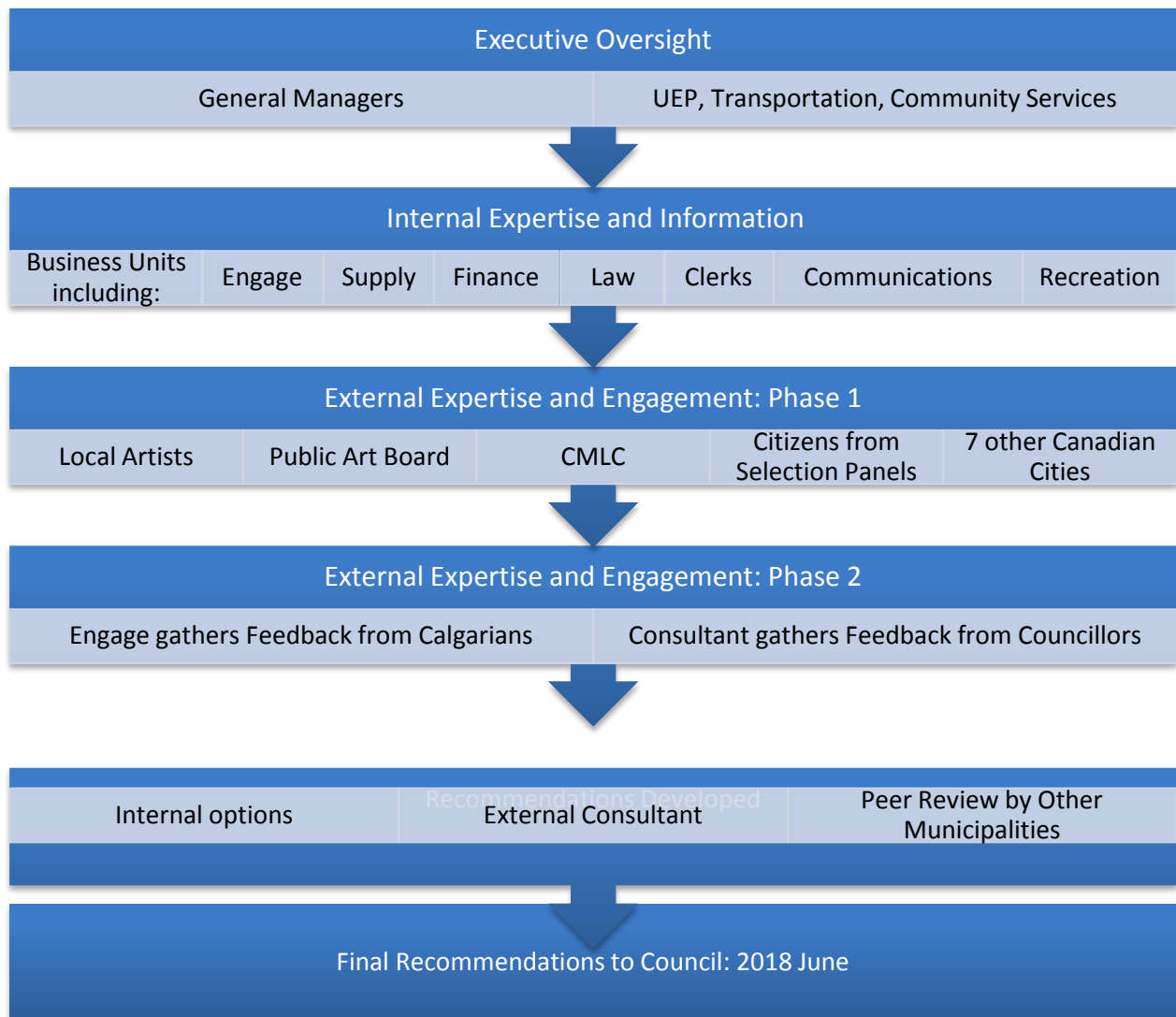
Governance	Finance	Engagement	Selection	Communicating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•One Calgary</li> <li>•Public Art Board</li> <li>•Delivery methods</li> <li>•Decision making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Funding sources</li> <li>•Infrastructure Calgary</li> <li>•Maximizing investment</li> <li>•Alternatives Approaches</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Citizens, Council and artists</li> <li>•Program requirements</li> <li>•Project requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Procurement standards</li> <li>•Citizen input</li> <li>•Legal requirements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Strategic communications</li> <li>•Integrated</li> <li>•Consistent</li> <li>•Relevant</li> <li>•Timely</li> </ul>

The Committee then determined that it should take the following approach towards gaining a thorough understanding of each area:

- Begin by requesting the internal areas responsible for aspects of the five pillars of Governance, Finance, Engagement, Selection and Communicating to bring their expertise to bear on the concerns articulated by Council;
- Ask the advice of the citizens appointed by Council to the Public Art Board;
- Request information from Calgary Municipal Land Corporation on the process and practices used to manage its public art strategy;
- Devise a strategy to engage Calgarians, including artists, in the review;
- Consult with members of Council as options are developed;
- Undertake a comparison of public art practice in other municipalities and, in keeping with The City of Calgary's approach to program reviews; and
- Seek external expertise to review the findings and provide recommendations.

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The following Process Map describes the sequencing of activities undertaken from 2017 October through to 2018 June.



The goal is to return to Council in 2018 June with a renewed approach to public art at The City of Calgary that includes: realignment of the existing 1% funding for public art, strategies to enhance community engagement, and recommendations specific to improved governance and decision-making process that will, ultimately, lead to greater knowledge and awareness of art that Calgarians and visitors will appreciate.

**Exceptions to the Suspension of RFPs.**

Administration was directed to report back on the impact of suspending RFPs for new projects and did so in 2017 November. Administration has since revisited the projects that have been suspended and believes most can continue to be postponed until Council has received the Final Report in 2018 June. However, Administration recommends that exceptions be made for the

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annual programs for local artists. Every year the Public Art Program issues RFPs for artists who would like to be involved in the following three programs:

- Artists working in Community, a program that enables artists to work directly with community members to create art for their neighbourhoods;
- Painted Utility Box program which has provided excellent graffiti abatement; and
- Street Art for Youth, which affords youth the opportunity to work with professional artists to create murals.

These programs take place over the summer months when the weather enables the artists to work outside and, therefore, the RFPs need to be issued in the spring. The other project that should not be delayed any longer is the re-siting of the Centre Street Lion at Rotary Park, a project that has been directed by Council. This project is anticipated by the community and needs to be installed in good weather.

### **Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication**

Research is underway into different models of governance, finance and engagement.

#### Governance

As a cross-corporate policy, there is a collective accountability to deliver public art through transparent processes. However, despite the roles and responsibilities laid out in the Public Art Management Framework, which is an operational guide for staff, and the Terms of Reference provided to the Public Art Board, there is a lack of clarity around decision-making. The review triggered by City Clerk's cyclical review of all Council committees is timely, providing an opportunity to revisit the mandate of the Public Art Board, as a citizen advisory committee of volunteers appointed by Council. The Public Art Board has provided a letter confirming their willingness to participate in this process (Attachment 3). As the governance of public art programs differs from one city to another, the best practice review by an external consultant, and a peer review panel provides the opportunity to explore and determine the best governance model for Calgary.

#### Finance

The current decentralized approach to funding public art has resulted in an inconsistent approach to public art across the City, which may not maximize this capital investment. As part of this review, Finance is investigating alternative approaches to funding public art. At the same time, the Intergovernmental and Corporate Strategy unit is in discussions with the province around the broader fiscal framework for funding infrastructure. The goal is a financial strategy for public art that is aligned with economic conditions and corporate priorities.

#### Engagement

The Engage Resource Unit is currently conducting a phased outreach strategy to determine the engagement expectations of citizens and of local artists. The City's current approach is project specific, limiting the ability of citizens to provide input on other aspects of the public art program. Phase 2 will involve a broader engagement of Calgarians, and will also provide an opportunity for Councillors to provide feedback to an external consultant. The goal will be to determine the best ways to provide citizens with opportunities to provide input and feedback.

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### Selection

Currently, The City uses a separate, 7 member Selection Panel of citizens to choose the successful candidate for each individual art project, this panel is different for each project. Each Selection Panel reviews submissions that have been received from artists who have responded to RFPs through The City's standard procurement process. The Panel then makes the final choice of which artist to contract and later re-convenes to approve the proposed concept. Reviewing the practice of other municipalities will provide an opportunity to determine if this is the best practice for procuring and selecting art for public spaces. With the intent of empowering more local artists to participate in creating public art in Calgary, Administration is also exploring a diversity of methods to support culturally and artistically diverse practitioners. This will require balancing The City's trade obligations, industry best practice, citizen input and artists' intellectual property rights.

### Communicating

Customer Service and Communications is considering what is required in developing a proactive, integrated communications strategy that will provide relevant, consistent information to Calgarians. CSC is exploring the use of the web, social media, marketing and media relations to most effectively inform Calgarians about the work being created by artists to enhance their experience of the city's public spaces, and to inform artists about opportunities in a timely manner. The best practice review will also provide information on communications strategies that have proven to be effective.

### Municipal Comparisons

In response to Council's direction to report on best practice, Administration is also undertaking a review of other municipal public art programs, including the following Canadian cities: Ottawa, Hamilton, Toronto, St. Albert, Edmonton, Winnipeg and Victoria.

### External Assessment

In keeping with The City of Calgary's usual practice of program review, the Executive Steering Committee has decided to contract an external expert to provide an objective review of the program in comparison to industry best practice. The consultant's own recommendations will also be reviewed by peers working in municipalities that are known for their public art programs.

Ultimately, Administration is committed to bringing to Council recommendations which resolve the issues identified by NOM2017-32, respond to Council's directives and regain citizen confidence in Calgary's public art.

### **Strategic Alignment**

The investment in public art is in alignment with the goals of many of the City of Calgary's guiding documents, from the Municipal Development Plan to Council's 2019-2022 Directives for One Calgary.

The Municipal Development Plan acknowledges that arts and culture programming, spaces, amenities and facilities play an important role in: building complete communities; adding to the cultural vitality of the city; contributing to economic development and prosperity; and fostering active and vibrant neighbourhoods.

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Using public art and other design elements to reflect our diverse cultural character and celebrate our heritage is one strategy articulated by Imagine Calgary while another is to “bring beautiful public spaces into view for the aesthetic enjoyment for all”.

The Centre City Plan speaks to creating a “lively, active and animated environment through a variety of strategies, and the incorporation of public art is recommended in every neighbourhood and all sections of the Plan.

In Step Forward: A Strategic Plan for Improving Walking in Calgary, public art is noted as a program that serves pedestrian needs, while in the City Shaping Framework for the Green Line, a suggested action is to install public art to fulfil the goal of connecting people living in communities along the line to significant cultural destinations and to each other.

In the 2018 January 31 Strategic Council Meeting, Council articulated its Council Directives for One Calgary. Seeking to be a city that continues to be a magnet for talent, under “A Prosperous City” Council directed that the growth industry of travel and tourism “needs to move to a new level with an enhanced focus on arts, culture, festivals and winter activities.”

Furthermore, the proposed One City approach to public art is in alignment with the Leadership Strategic Plan agreed to by the City Manager and Council. Specifically, this approach will meet the direction for a collaborative organizational team working together, in contrast to a silo approach, with increased integration around the delivery of an important element of the Arts and Culture Service Line.

### **Social, Environmental, Economic (External)**

#### Social

Public art provides a visually enjoyable environment and is a vital element of the culture and streetscape of cities. It facilitates public engagement and collaboration, making it a major contributor to social capital and quality of life. The enhanced spaces created by public art encourage gathering and connection that impacts the development of community hubs and social cohesion. This contributes to citizens’ aesthetic enjoyment and quality of life.

In the City Shaping work undertaken by Community Services “to leverage the investment of the Green Line LRT” which will be the largest infrastructure investment undertaken by the City of Calgary, public art is seen as a key component of building vibrant and thriving communities.

This aligns with the interest in public art demonstrated by the communities that took part in Round 1 of This is My Neighbourhood, a community building initiative led by Calgary Neighbourhoods. As a result of their interest in enhancing the quality of life in their neighbourhoods, it is the intention of Round 2 of This is My Neighbourhood to increase the number of creative initiatives.

#### Environmental

Public art generates stimulating public spaces and often works with other disciplines, such as landscape architecture, to create remarkable places that encourage contemplation, civic engagement, sustainability and stewardship of the urban environment. No negative implications to the natural environment arising out of public art projects have been identified. By contrast,

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some projects have, as a specific objective, to incorporate natural elements in the art or to demonstrate environmentally-friendly practices.

Utilities and Environmental Protection (UEP) has demonstrated the use of public art in effectively helping to educate citizens about the critical role that water plays in our environment. Watershed +, the award-winning artists-in-residency program, has provided artists and citizens with a variety of different opportunities to consider the important role that the Bow and Elbow Rivers Plans have played, and continue to play, in the life of our city.

### **Economic**

Public art in Calgary provides the opportunity for many local artists, fabricators, architects, engineers and others involved in the public art process to participate in and derive economic benefit. Calgary companies such as Heavy Industries, F&D Scene Changes and MetalFab are among those to have been sub-contracted by artists to create public art for the City and have leveraged this expertise to secure work outside of Calgary.

Public art also ensures the vibrancy of Calgary as an attractive city for people to live, work, play and visit and plays an essential role in both attracting and retaining creative thinkers and workers. Combined with indirect economic spin-offs including tourism, spending on public art contributes to Calgary's economic diversification. Council has acknowledged the important role of the arts in the economy, as have Calgary Economic Development and Tourism Calgary.

Public art is a key component of many cities' travel and tourism. In Chicago, for example, two large-scale sculptures in Millennium Park, *Cloud Gate* by Anish Kapoor and *Crown Fountain* by Jaume Plensa, have helped to generate between \$1.9 and \$2.6 billion in annual visitation. Improving the public art process at The City of Calgary can make a significant contribution to meeting the Council directive to move travel and tourism to a new level.

### **Financial Capacity**

#### ***Current and Future Operating Budget:***

Any costs associated with the public art review will be absorbed within existing budget.

#### ***Current and Future Capital Budget:***

Any changes or recommendations emerging from the public art review related to capital budgets will need to be approved by Council and incorporated into future business planning cycles.

### **Risk Assessment**

#### **Reduced Public Confidence**

There is a risk that if processes for situating and selecting public art are not seen by Calgarians to be transparent and fair the public's confidence in administration's efficient and effective use of tax dollars may be undermined.

#### **Reduced effectiveness of PA program**

There is a risk that the Public Art Program will not be able to achieve the overall objectives of creating a distinctive sense of place, as outlined in the policy.



**Community Services Report to  
SPC on Community and Protective Services  
2018 March 07**

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CPS2018-0248  
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**REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):**

Council directed that a Progress Report be brought back in Q2, 2018. This report provides an overview of the process being undertaken to inform the development of new processes for public art in Calgary. Recommendations for the future will be included in the Final Report due to Council in 2018 June.

**ATTACHMENT(S)**

Attachment 1: Previous Council Direction

Attachment 2: Updated Summary of Directives and Recommendations - 2014 Notice of Motion

Attachment 3: Letter from the Public Art Board

Attachment 4: Recommendations for Exceptions from the Suspension of RFPs, as of 2018 April