

Recommendation 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 in Q2 2018 with recommendations on a new process for this policy, including best practices for: fully engaging the public and their feedback; mechanisms for the prioritization and allocation of tax dollars during economic downturns; accommodating concept submissions from artists that foster and enhance local, regional, national and culturally appropriate artists; briefing Council and communicating to the public on the selection of successful candidates for public art.

In 2018 March Council approved a Progress Report investigating how the Public Art Program might be improved. An Executive Steering Committee had been formed to reimagine public art as a One City program with a clarified approach to finance, governance, engagement, selection and communication. Suggestions from several business units had been made to improve processes to meet the challenges noted by Council. Local artists and members of the Public Art Board, past and present, had also participated in facilitated conversations about the current process which formed the basis of a larger engagement with Calgarians. Outreach to other public art programs across Canada had also provided comparative information.

Following the March report, Administration undertook public engagement and research. 7,400 responses were received from the online engagement and Calgarians told us that the most important purposes of public art were to: “enhance the beauty of my community”, “create meaning or connection to my community”, “spark conversation (or be) thought provoking”, “tell the story of our history” and be “a source of community pride”.

Through the engagement process Calgarians made it clear that they want to be involved in the public art process, to have their values, voices and ideas heard and reflected in public art but also, simply to know more about or be aware of projects and how and why they came to be. It was evident that Calgarians are enthusiastic about art and want to see all kinds of art in many different locations. This was confirmed by a telephone survey of 500 representative Calgarians and by the 1,000 people who were engaged through the citizens' review panel.

Calgarians also said they think it is important to have a public art program that is financially accountable and they want to see it support local artists. They want a program that is open, flexible and inclusive when considering citizen input. It is also clear that they want to see increased and better communication and opportunities to be engaged.

In keeping with The City’s usual process of program review, all of the information gathered was then provided to a consultant for external review and recommendations based on best practice, informed by interviews with members of Council, staff and members of the Public Art Board. The consultant’s draft report was then reviewed by peers in municipal public art programs in Seattle, Vancouver, Ottawa and St. Albert. The result provided examples of best practice in public art finance, governance, engagement, selection and communication.

All of the information collected indicates that while Calgary's public art program has received accolades and awards from those in the field, Calgarians are not well informed about it. Instead of being understood as a coherent program, public art has been seen as a series of one-off

Recommendation on Amendments to the Corporate Public Art Policy

projects. Therefore, the recommendations point to a single capital program with a four year plan, endorsed by Council, governed by an Interdepartmental Team with the expert advice of citizens appointed by Council. It should have a variety of entry points for artists and multiple opportunities for engagement for Calgarians who want to be involved. Ongoing, effective communications should ensure that The City is consistently keeping citizens and Council apprised of the story of the art being created for our public places.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION:

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

1. Pool the per cent for public art from all eligible capital projects and create a capital program for public art to enable flexibility and improved reporting.
2. Develop a parallel procurement strategy better suited to encourage applications from local, national and culturally appropriate artists.
3. Form an Interdepartmental Public Art Committee, tied in to Infrastructure Calgary's priorities, to develop a Public Art Strategy with a four year Action Plan.
4. Work with the Public Art Board to refine its Mandate and Terms of Reference as a Public Art Advisory Committee, in keeping with best practice in other cities, in time for the 2018 Organization Day.
5. Implement a suite of engagement strategies to enable public input at key decision-making stages of public art projects.
6. Dedicate Communications resources to maintain a dynamic website and social media to ensure ongoing, timely, information for the public.
7. Report back to Council with an update on progress toward implementation no later than Q4 2018, at which time if progress is satisfactory, the suspension of the Public Art Policy should be lifted.

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 and again in Q2, 2018 with recommendations on a new process including the following:

- 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 suspension of the Corporate Public Art Policy should be lifted.
- g) Report back on the outcomes/progress of the 2014 Notice of Motion

Recommendation on Amendments to the Corporate Public Art Policy

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 many art projects that had been tendered and contracted in accordance with current Council approved policy and process, and would, therefore, continue to completion.

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

BACKGROUND

Cities around the world have invested in art in public places 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 a variety of artworks from permanent sculptures to artist-designed banners and murals, manhole covers, drinking fountains, bike racks, benches and painted utility boxes in every ward of the city.

In 2011 the Celebration of the Bow “Sources/ River of Light”, an art project of UEP, was the first of Calgary’s Public Art projects to win recognition in Americans for the Arts’ Public Art Year in Review. That award was followed by others from Americans for the Arts in 2014 and 2015, and from the Creative City Network of Canada for different projects in 2015, 2016 and 2017. All told, 15 projects created by different artists for UEP, Transportation, Parks and Recreation have won accolades since the policy was adopted.

In Calgary, 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. 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 caused a loss of confidence in the public art program.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

The City’s public art is funded through one per cent of eligible capital project costs for City capital budgets over \$1 million, and 0.5 per cent of the portion of a project that is over \$50 million, with the allocation from each capital project capped at \$4 million. Ineligible costs include land purchase, rolling stock, portable equipment (furniture, computers, etc.), and maintenance (M) budgets. As a result, the Public Art Program is a cross-corporate program involving all the business units with capital projects. Accordingly, the Executive Steering Committee for this review determined that Public Art Program must be re-imagined as an integrated, corporate wide program, in keeping with the principles of One City.

At Council’s direction, the Committee considered the public art process and concluded that most of the gaps in process identified by Council could be grouped into the following five priority

Recommendation on Amendments to the Corporate Public Art Policy

areas for improvement: Governance, Finance, Engagement, Selection and Communications.

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

The Committee then undertook to understand each area by first seeking internal expertise and information before engaging with the public and finally having initial ideas reviewed by external experts in the field of public art.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

To gain an understanding of the public's opinions on public art and The City's processes, the Engage and Research units at The City conducted public outreach from 2018 January -April. This included two in-person sessions, two online surveys and a telephone survey of 500 representative Calgarians (Attachments 4 and 5). Through this outreach The City learned that Calgarians are enthusiastic and interested about public art, but want to see a public art program that is focused primarily on local artists (74%), financially accountable (85%), and open, flexible and inclusive when considering citizen input (79%).

When asked about how well citizens understand the public art process at The City, the engagement and research results collectively demonstrate there is confusion. The telephone survey results show only 32% of Calgarians surveyed understand the process used for selecting public art in Calgary. Similar results were reflected in the online engagement and sessions with local artists and former selection panel members who have been involved in recent years.

Despite their lack of understanding of the process for developing art for Calgary's public places, when asked what kind of art they would like to see and where public art would have the most positive impact, the majority of Calgarians wanted to see a diversity of art and they want to see it all over the city. The results from the telephone survey showed a desire for sculptures/object-based works (84%), works using natural elements (81%) and interactive art (73%). Respondents felt art should be located everywhere from downtown (88%) and gathering places (86%) to parks and natural spaces (77%) and at transit locations (65%). Those participating in the online engagement agreed with these results, choosing as their top three sites: downtown, places where people walk and community hubs (like recreation centres). In terms of art forms, they selected as their top choices: murals, functional art and art that uses natural elements.

This broad range of interests provides The City with an understanding of how diverse citizens' preferences are and how a one-size approach to public art should not be the vision for Calgary.

External Consultant and Peer Review

To complete the program review the Executive Steering Committee contracted external expert Helena Grdadolnik to provide an objective review of the program and processes in comparison

Recommendation on Amendments to the Corporate Public Art Policy

to industry best practice. The consultant's own recommendations were then reviewed by peers working with municipalities that are known for their public art programs (Vancouver, St. Albert, Ottawa and Seattle). The results of that review influenced the consultant's final recommendations as captured in the External Review (Attachment 3).

The knowledge gained through engagement and research, the consultant's analysis of Calgary's program and a review of best practices including a peer review process, affirmed the Executive Steering Committee's recommendations for specific change in five areas: governance, finance, engagement, selection and communication.

Governance

The need to strengthen and clarify the policy's governance by creating an interdepartmental public art team, chaired by the Public Art Program was identified by the external consultant and confirmed by the peer reviewers. Made up of representatives of the various departments that have capital projects which are eligible for public art, this group would advise on strategies and project plans and help to develop a four year plan which would connect to Infrastructure Calgary to ensure alignment with The City's priorities. A further recommendation of both the consultant and the peer reviewers is to reconfigure the Public Art Board as a Public Art Advisory Committee of citizens advising administration and reporting to Council on a regular basis. This approach has been endorsed by the Public Art Board. (Attachment 6.)

Finance

In recent years, several municipal public art programs have been able to shift their percent for art funds into a single capital program. This practice provides transparency, allowing for forward planning and better responsiveness to strategic priorities and project opportunities. Centralizing the budget for public art by pooling the funds into one capital program aligns with the One Calgary process and provides the opportunity to strategically align investment decisions. Recognizing that funding restrictions may apply, and further investigation is required, the goal would be to pool funds into a single program where possible.

Engagement

More than half of the citizens participating in the telephone survey believe that the public should be involved at all stages of the public art process. Peer review and the consultant's research confirmed that it is best practice to engage early and often throughout the process. Providing citizens opportunities for input and feedback allows them to help inform the end result and strengthens their connection to the process and the work. The Engage Resource Unit has suggested a variety of different engagement strategies can be employed to suit the specific needs of each public art project.

Selection

Both the external consultant and the peer review process have confirmed Calgary's use of a different selection panel of citizens for each project is best practice for selecting public art (artist and concepts). The feedback from engagement can be fed into the selection panel's considerations. However, it has been noted that other cities provide alternate approaches to procuring art which could enhance Calgary's ability to fully support a diversity of practitioners and the needs of emerging artists as well as indigenous and culturally appropriate artists. Supply Management has offered to engage with the artistic community to build a new

Recommendation on Amendments to the Corporate Public Art Policy

procurement process that comes from a mutual place of knowledge, understanding and requirements.

Communications

An ongoing, robust communications strategy is critical to the success of public art, by ensuring that citizens and Councillors alike are kept informed of projects as they develop. CMLC has proven this successfully. Peer reviewers noted that public art communications requires a corporate commitment, and should be a priority. Communications has developed a communications framework with Goals and Guiding Principles which will be the foundation to deliver public art communication that is informed and timely

Attachment 2 provides further rationale for these recommendations.

Strategic Alignment

Investment in public art aligns with the goals of many of The City's guiding documents.

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.

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.

The Indigenous Policy Framework and White Goose Flying both call on public art to work with indigenous artists to provide opportunities to help with reconciliation. The City has committed to working with Indigenous People of Calgary, including Traditional Knowledge Keepers and artists to support public artworks and practices which incorporate Indigenous content within projects, programs and plans.

The Cultural Plan speaks to the role of public art in place-making, community building and attracting tourism, addressing the inclusion of public art in activating culturally vibrant neighbourhoods and districts as one of the 10 priority actions.

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

Recommendation on Amendments to the Corporate Public Art Policy

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 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.

This aligns with the interest in public art demonstrated by the communities taking part in This is My Neighbourhood, a community building initiative led by Calgary Neighbourhoods.

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.

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.

Recommendation on Amendments to the Corporate Public Art Policy

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget:

The adoption of these recommendations may have implications for the budget required to support effective communications and engagement. Funds will be required to support dedicated Communications staff and resources as well as to support multiple opportunities for public engagement. All budget for these operational costs will be drawn from the pooled capital for public art.

Current and Future Capital Budget:

The implication of these recommendations is that in future, the percent designated for Public Art on eligible capital projects will be identified as one Public Art Capital Program, and the total will be pooled for more efficient management and reporting.

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

There is a risk that the Public Art Program will not be able to achieve the overall objectives of the policy if the current process of delivering one-off art projects in locations dictated by other infrastructure continues. The recommendations enable the development of a city-shaping approach that can create a distinctive sense of place and better serve artists and community.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Pooling public art funds into a single capital program will enable better allocation of budgets and improve tracking and reporting. This also aligns with the approach being taken by Infrastructure Calgary to determine capital priorities for One Calgary.
2. Maintaining the Executive Steering Committee and establishing an Interdepartmental Public Art Committee will enable the development of a Public Art Strategy that fits the schedules and priorities of One Calgary.
3. Refining the Mandate and Terms of Reference of the Public Art Board into an Advisory Committee with specific responsibilities will strengthen its role and align with best practice in municipal public art programs.
4. The best way to foster and enhance local, regional, national and culturally appropriate artists is to replace the City's standard procurement process and design, in consultation

**Community Services Report to
SPC on Community and Protective Services
2018 June 06**

**ISC: UNRESTRICTED
CPS2018-0359
Page 9 of 9**

Recommendation on Amendments to the Corporate Public Art Policy

with artists, a parallel process that maintains appropriate accountability, as other cities have done.

5. Implementing a variety of different engagement strategies at key decision-making points will meet the expressed desire of Calgarians to have opportunities to be involved at numerous stages of the development of an art project.
6. In response to the public's request for more, consistent, timely information about public art, dedicated Communications resources are required.
7. Report back no later than Q4 will be around implementation of the recommended changes.

ATTACHMENT(S)

Attachment 1: Previous Council Direction

Attachment 2: Background to the Recommendations

Attachment 3: External Review

Attachment 4: Calgary Public Art Process Review Survey

Attachment 5: What we Heard – Stakeholder Engagement Summary Report

Attachment 6: Letter from the Public Art Board