

Community Services Report to  
SPC on Community and Protective Services  
2019 March 13

ISC: UNRESTRICTED  
CPS2019-0014

## **Corporate Public Art Program Review Update**

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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report provides a status update on Administration's work responding to Council direction to examine current practices of the Public Art Program (the Program) which included nine specific directions in Five Key Areas of Focus: (1) a pooled funding model, (2) parallel procurement strategies, (3) governance model, (4) communication and engagement strategies, and (5) non-government investment opportunities.

In undertaking this work, this report outlines a new strategic direction for The City of Calgary responding to gaps and barriers identified by Council, key stakeholders and the community-at-large for delivering public art in Calgary. The new strategic direction will shift to a public art delivery model based in community priorities as opposed to infrastructure priorities, which will be supported by a flexible, pooled funding model.

The proposed public art delivery model addresses Council's Five Key Areas of Focus through the following Three Foundational Pillars (Attachment 1):

1. **Accessible** in all aspects of a project or program including location, participation, application and information.
2. **Prioritizing investment** in the local creative economy.
3. **Transparency** in decision making and financial reporting.

Notwithstanding the progress made to date, until the new public art delivery model is fully developed, Administration will continue to maintain the suspension on new capital projects under the Public Art Policy throughout 2019.

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#### **ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. That the SPC on Community and Protective Services recommend that Council direct Administration to complete the transfer of previously-approved budgets to a Corporate Public Art program: capital activity 446510; and
2. Report back to Council through the SPC on Community and Protective Services no later than Q1 2020 on a public art workplan and strategy for 2020 – 2022, and review the suspension of the Public Art Policy at that time.
3. That the SPC on Community and Protective Services refer this report as an item of urgent business to the Combined Meeting of Council on 2019 March 18 to meet Council's direction to report back by the end of Q1 2019.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SPC ON COMMUNITY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES, DATED 2019 MARCH 13**

That Council:

1. Direct Administration to complete the transfer of previously-approved budgets to a Corporate Public Art program: capital activity 446510; and
2. Direct Administration to report back to Council through the SPC on Community and Protective Services no later than Q1 2020 on a public art workplan and strategy for 2020 – 2022, and review the suspension of the Public Art Policy at that time.

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

On 2018 June 25, Council approved Amendments to the following Administration Recommendations:

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 international artists;
3. As relates to the public art board:
  - engage the external consultant to work with the board on reviewing its mandate, membership, and terms of reference to reflect best practices in other cities and to return to Council prior to the 2018 Organizational Meeting.
4. Form a temporary Public Art Administration Committee inviting representative stakeholders like: artists, Members of Council, CADA and Public Art Advisory Committee to develop a Public Art Strategy, governance model and four-year Action Plan that ties to the Infrastructure Calgary's priorities.

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5. Implement a suite of engagement strategies to enable public engagement throughout all stages of public art projects;
6. Dedicate communications and engagement resources to maintain to ensure ongoing, timely, information for the public;
7. Direct Administration to work with the external consultant to engage with members of Calgary's arts community, including but not limited to, members of the Calgary Public Arts Alliance and Calgary Arts Development Authority.
8. Investigate placement, ownership, and funding approaches to partner with nongovernment sectors as a means to increase value-for-dollar and accessibility; and
9. Report back to Council with refinements based on further engagement and an update on progress toward implementation no later than Q1 2019, at which time if progress is satisfactory, the suspension of the Public Art Policy should be lifted.

Attachment 2 provides a detailed listing of Previous Council Direction since 2004.

### **BACKGROUND**

The City of Calgary has invested in public art for more than a century, building a collection of over 1300 diverse works of art. In 2004, Council enacted a *Per cent for Art* policy, allocating one per cent of the budget for all capital projects to public art. *Per cent for Art* policies are standard among North American municipalities and have existed among U.S. cities as early as 1959. Following the creation of The City of Calgary's Public Art policy, the Program was formalized with the intent to preserve Calgary's long history of providing "...the opportunity for cultural experiences that are freely accessible to all" (City Council, 2004).

In 2013, *Travelling Light* became the focus of debate due to cost, lack of public accessibility, and gaps in communication and engagement. To address these issues, a full review of the program was conducted. This review resulted in amendments to the Public Art Policy in 2014, moving the one per cent for art contribution to include a sliding scale model, with minor changes to public engagement requirements as expressed through Calls for Artists. The installation of Bowfort Towers in 2017 raised similar criticisms: cost, location, transparency of communication and public engagement. The cumulative impact has resulted in a loss of trust and credibility in the current Public Art service delivery model from citizens, Council, and the arts community.

To rebuild these relationships and earn trust, Administration is outlining a new strategic direction for the Public Art Program.

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

Administration has been focusing on the Five Key Areas of Focus from Council's 2018 June directives, and engaged and consulted with internal and external stakeholders to ensure differing perspectives were considered. Progress has occurred in each area:

#### **Five Key Areas of Focus: Achievements**

(1) *A pooled funding model – complete:* With Council's approval of Recommendation 1, Administration will meet Council's direction and create a pooled fund for The Program. The total funding eligible for a pooled public art program for 2019 – 2022 is \$3.2 million per year, over four years. This funding pool will be transferred into a public art program that will be governed

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by the Public Art Executive Steering Committee, until such time that the governance of The Program is updated. The Public Art Executive Steering Committee will update their Terms of Reference to include oversight of the public art pooled funding program.

*(2) Parallel procurement strategies – underway.* Administration investigated best practices and alternatives for potential future procurement strategies. After engaging directly with the arts community, we heard that artists want a more active role in developing the language, documents and processes in this area. Administration will continue to work directly with the artist community to reduce barriers and create an open procurement process tracking to pilot a new process for Q1 2020. This work is described further in Attachment 3.

*(3) Governance model – underway.* Council has identified that The Program requires additional oversight on processes and decision-making by creating both an internal Public Art Administrative Committee and strengthening the role of the Public Art Board. Council has also identified that Program oversight should include participation from the artist community. To fulfill Council's direction, Administration has engaged and consulted with internal and external stakeholders to begin the development of an inclusive decision-making framework. Implementation of the framework will align with Administration's return to Council in Q1 2020. Until implementation, oversight and accountability of the Program will continue to exist through the Public Art Executive Steering Committee, the Public Art Board and other external stakeholders such as the Indigenous Guiding Circle. An update on these activities is in Attachment 4.

*(4) Communications and engagement strategies – underway.* Stakeholder groups identified this as a major area for improvement arising from a variety of factors, such as a lack of resources and the accessibility of information. Administration has developed objectives that can be applied to a public art project from concept to delivery (refer to Attachment 5). Strategies should be tailored to project needs and be created based on evaluating the risks and public impact of a project. Dedicated resources have been allocated to The Program, meeting Council's direction. Administration, with key stakeholders, will monitor engagement and public participation on public art projects on an ongoing basis to validate the effectiveness of communication and engagement strategies used.

*(5) Non-government investment opportunities – underway.* Various municipalities have been reviewed to understand best practices and potential processes that could be adopted to enhance non-government investment opportunities. Through this research it has been determined that neither a national or international standard exists; municipalities have designed investment in public art according to their city's needs. Administration will continue to work cross corporately to leverage current non-government sector relationships and build a process that suits the Calgary context. An update on these activities is in Attachment 6.

**Next steps**

As previously discussed, to build a successful municipal Public Art Program significant effort must be put into rebuilding trust and confidence with the local community. To rebuild trust over the next year, Administration will continue to build a public art program strategy that involves the artist community and general public, in addition to the following activities through 2019:

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- Maintain the suspension on new capital public art projects under the Public Art Policy, until we have a new validated process.
- Operate Public Art Community Programming, to honour previous commitments and maintain a public art presence in the community.
- Continue conservation efforts and ongoing public education of the existing public art collection.

**Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication**

Since the initiation of The Program review in 2017, Administration has engaged over 9,000 people in research to improve the Public Art Program. Stakeholders included the general public, members of the local artist community, members of Calgary Arts Development and representatives from across the Corporation. Administration has continued to use this engagement research and expand upon these findings through other engagement activities including:

- Two workshops and online survey, January 2018 (over 100 participants)
- Online survey, March/April 2018 (over 7,400 participants)
- Telephone survey, April 2018 (approx. 500 participants)
- Citizen's View Panel, April/May 2018 (over 1,000 participants)
- Internal Stakeholder Engagement session on public art project practices October 2018 (20 participants)
- Four focus groups and multiple stakeholder meetings, September 2018 to February 2019 (over 50 participants)

**Strategic Alignment**

Investment in public art aligns with the goals of multiple guiding documents at The City of Calgary, including: the Municipal Development Plan (which acknowledges that arts and culture programming plays an important role in contributing to economic development and prosperity); the Indigenous Policy and White Goose Flying (which call on Administration to work with indigenous artists); the Cultural Plan (which speaks to the role of public art in place making); and the City Shaping Framework for the Green Line (which suggests public art to fulfil the goal of connecting people living in communities along the line to significant cultural destinations), amongst others.

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

Public art is a major contributor to social capital and quality of life. The enhanced spaces created by public art encourage gathering and connection, which impacts the development of community hubs and social cohesion. *Example: River of Light on the Bow River, Indefinite Arts Utility Box Partnership in Fairview, BRT Transit Shelters city wide, Bow Passage Overlook in Inglewood.*

The Program has demonstrated the effective use of public art in helping educate citizens about critical environmental issues, such as the important role that the Bow and Elbow Rivers play in the life of our city. *Example: Outflow in Parkdale Plaza, Watershed+ city wide, Manhole covers design project city wide.*

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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. *Examples:* Integrated design at 162<sup>nd</sup> & Macleod Trail, Delta Garden+The Unseen City in West Eau Claire Park, *roger that* at Tuscany LRT Station.

The Program plays an essential role in both attracting and retaining creative thinkers and workers. Combined with indirect economic spin-offs including tourism, investment in 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.

### **Financial Capacity**

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

There is no impact to the current operating budget. If changes from the current budget are required, Administration will bring forward a detailed budget to support the future public art strategy as part of future budget adjustments.

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

The adoption of these recommendations will not directly impact current and future capital budgets. Budgets for public art are dependent on infrastructure funding approvals and the application of the Public Art Policy funding provisions. Every four years Administration will need to evaluate eligible funding sources and move funds to a corporate public art program. The amount will fluctuate based on the four-year Corporate capital budget allocation.

### **Risk Assessment**

There is a risk to removing the per cent for art that has been tied directly to infrastructure projects. It may be perceived that this change may eliminate future initiatives to enhance new infrastructure. To mitigate this risk, Administration will continue to promote the strategic embedding of artists into the infrastructure design process to best meet community needs.

Rebuilding the public art program with a new strategic direction will take time and require buy in from key stakeholders. Lifting the suspension on capital public art projects before developing a solidified strategic plan while rebuilding stakeholder relationships will put the success of The Program at risk. To mitigate this Administration will prioritize working with external stakeholders to realign communications, procurement processes, and the governance model for The Program. The rebuilding of trust requires time and effort.

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#### **REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):**

1. Approving the transfer (pooling) of previously-approved budgets to the Public Art Program will (1) increase accountability for dollars spent by the Public Art Program; (2) enable better and more flexible allocation of budgets; (3) improve budget tracking and reporting.
2. To appropriately move the program from an infrastructure project focus to a community priority focus, Administration will need to dedicate significant time to working with the general public and artist community to realign the procurement process and governance model. The rebuilding of trust requires time and sincere, focused attention. For the remainder of 2019, Administration will continue to maintain the suspension on new capital public art projects; operate Community Public Art Programs; provide education and conservation on the existing public art collection; and work with key stakeholders and the general public to build a public art program that is reflective of Calgary's priorities. By Q1 2020, Administration will bring forward a workplan and strategy for 2020 – 2022.

#### **ATTACHMENT(S)**

Attachment 1: Three Foundational Pillars

Attachment 2: Previous Council Direction

Attachment 3: Parallel Procurement Strategies

Attachment 4: Governance Model

Attachment 5: Communication & Engagement Strategies

Attachment 6: Non-Government Investment

**Attachment 7: Speaking Notes from Members of the Public**