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City of Kelowna

## MEMORANDUM

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**DATE:** December 8, 2004  
**FILE:** 7800  
**TO:** City Manager  
**FROM:** Manager, Cultural Services Division  
**RE:** Public Art Project – Ben Lee Park

**REPORT PREPARED BY: LORNA GUNN, MANAGER, CULTURAL  
SERVICES DIVISION**

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### **RECOMMENDATION:**

**THAT** City Council approve the recommendation of the Public Art Committee to award to Craig Sibley of Vancouver the commission for the design and installation of "*Security in Community*" (an earthwork sculpture) in Ben Lee Park.

**AND THAT** the Mayor and Clerk be authorized to sign a contract with Craig Sibley for an amount not to exceed \$40,000 (funded from the Public Art Reserve) for the design and installation of the artwork.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The City of Kelowna Public Art Committee held a competition in early 2004 to design a public art installation in Ben Lee Park. The intent of the competition was to solicit a design which would add a public art component to a park well-used by seniors, young families and teens. Artists were invited to consider the civic and multicultural contributions of the Park's namesake, Ben Lee, and the park site's previous history as an orchard.

Fourteen submissions were received. 3 submissions were received from Okanagan artists, 8 from artists residing elsewhere in BC, 2 from artists in Alberta, and 1 from an artist in the US. A shortlist of four finalists was invited to provide maquettes (scale models) of their proposed work. Three maquettes were received and reviewed by the Committee in July/August, 2004 – these maquettes were by artists from Vancouver, Penticton and Calgary. By consensus, the Public Art Committee agreed that Craig Sibley's earthwork project "*Security in Community*" would be recommended to Council.

Mr. Ben Lee and 7 representatives from the Friends of Ben Lee Park were invited to view the maquettes and provide their input at a meeting in late September, 2004, and they have provided their support for the Public Art Committee's recommendation. Staff from the City's Parks Department have also reviewed the maquettes and have provided their input regarding design and installation of the project recommended by the Public Art Committee.

*"Security in Community"* is proposed by Craig Sibley of Vancouver. It is an earthwork consisting of a sculpted, grass-covered berm or mound encircling a small inner sanctuary. The inner sanctuary consists of a pathway leading to a small, Asian-inspired wooden bridge. The bridge spans a dry creek bed which "flows" through the berm. Each decking plank on the bridge will have engraved into it one word: these words are: "Community", "Acceptance", "Unity", "Fortitude", "Security", "Refuge", "Peace", "Imagination", "Recreation", "Sanctuary", "Foundation", "Learning" and "Play." The entire perimeter of the berm will be planted with flowering hawthorne trees which pay respect to the site's history and provide shade and a sense of enclosure and protection.

This will be the first earthwork to be included in the City's public art collection. The idea of sculpting the earth has been part of contemporary art practice world wide for approximately 50 years. Some of the most famous works involving manipulation of the landscape are by artists Robert Smithson (*"Spiral Jetty"* at Great Salt Lake, Utah) and UK environmental artist Andy Goldsworthy.

Craig Sibley is keen to engage with the public as the work proceeds on the project, and he will be on site to explain the work throughout the construction process. In particular, he will welcome groups of school age children to the site so that they can learn more about Ben Lee, the park's agricultural past, and the notion of public art.

Work will commence and the installation will be completed in the early spring of 2005.

Craig Sibley is a 1995 graduate of Okanagan University College's Bachelor of Fine Arts degree program, and was a resident of Kelowna from 1985 – 1995. During Craig's time in Kelowna, he was actively involved in the arts community; he opened and operated a small gallery in downtown Kelowna from 1992-1994, was involved with the Alternator Gallery for Contemporary Art and also worked to bring an exhibition of Haida artist Bill Reid's work to Kelowna in 1995.

Evaluation criteria (from the brief) were:

- i) the submission includes all elements required in section (c) of this brief (Artist's statement, resume, budget, drawings etc.) and complies with the specifications required by this competition;
- ii) creative merit of the proposed artwork, both conceptually and visually;
- iii) ability of the artwork to engage the public imagination;
- iv) a meaningful relationship between the artwork and the site, in other words, the artwork relates to the streetscape design;

- v) appropriate scale and material composition of the artwork relative to the site;
- vi) permanence of the artwork, including structural and surface integrity, ability to withstand damage and avoid vandalism, endurance in a public environment, and ease of maintenance and repair;
- vii) suitability of the artwork to a public venue, including theme, content and safety of design;
- viii) suitability of the artist to the project, including quality of previous work, demonstrated ability of the artist to meet project schedules and budget, professionalism, and ability to interpret the project as outlined in the Competition Brief;
- ix) feasibility of the project budget.

As before, all models will be on display in the lobby of City Hall for several weeks following Council's decision.

A one page summary of the Public Art Committee's mandate and selection process is also provided with this memo (on the following page) as additional background information.

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**Lorna Gunn**  
**Cultural Services Division Manager**

Approved for inclusion

David Graham  
Director of Parks and Leisure Services

LG/sk

## **CITY OF KELOWNA PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE SELECTION PROCESS**

The Public Art Committee consists of 9 individual Kelowna residents. They are appointed by resolution of City Council. The appointments are based on the applicant's knowledge of, and genuine interest in art, art practices and civic enhancement. All committee members serve as volunteers.

Current members of the Public Art Committee are:

Don McIntosh (Chairperson)  
Judy Burns (Vice-Chairperson)  
Paul Skutshek  
Larry Foster  
Gordon Hartley  
Dona Moore  
Peter Werner  
Susan Belton  
Barbara Rhodes

The Committee is mandated (in part) by its Terms of Reference to determine suitable public areas and buildings for public art installations, conduct competitions for the commissioning of public art works, and make recommendations to Council regarding the awarding of a public art commission. In all instances, the final decision regarding any public art commission rests with Council.

Consultations with the public, other interested parties, and with City staff from various departments such as Civic Properties and Parks are frequently a part of the Committee's considerations.

The public art competition process can be summarized as follows:

1. The committee defines the project and determines the budget.
2. A competition brief is prepared and reviewed by staff and the Committee.
3. The competition is advertised and included in the City's normal tendering process.
4. Submissions meeting applicable criteria are reviewed by the committee and, if relevant, by other City staff and interested parties.
5. A shortlist of submissions is prepared.
6. Shortlisted artists are invited to provide further information as needed and/or prepare maquettes (scale models) of their work.
7. The maquettes are reviewed and a final selection is made.
8. A report summarizing the Committee's recommended selection is presented to Council.
9. Upon Council approval, a contract is prepared between the City and the artist including provision for payment, progress timelines and other legal considerations.
10. Cultural Services staff monitor completion of the project and ensure that proper photo documentation of the installation process is completed.
11. Upon completion, Cultural Services staff work with the Mayor's office staff to plan for a public dedication ceremony.

A typical competition process will require 6 months' time between preparation of the brief and signing of the contract. Generally another 3-4 months is then required for completion and installation of the work. Larger, more complex projects will require more time for completion.