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## CITY OF KELOWNA

### MEMORANDUM

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**Date:** September 24, 2007  
**File No.:** 7800-01  
**To:** City Manager  
**From:** Sandra Kochan, Public Art Coordinator, Cultural Services Division  
**Subject:** 2007 Public Art Committee Report

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#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

THAT City Council receive the 2007 report of the Public Art Committee dated September 24, 2007 for information.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

##### **ACTIVITIES IN THE LAST YEAR:**

The last year has been an eventful and rewarding one for the volunteer Public Art Committee as it continues to fulfill its mandate 'to work with the community to humanize and animate the urban environment, increase the livability and artistic richness of the community, and stimulate the growth of arts and arts-related businesses through the provision of public art.'

The Public Art Program had its inception in 1997 and since that time, 23 works of art have been acquired or commissioned for the City's public art collection, ranging from ornamental tree grates which are being seen on more streets each year, to monumental works such as 'Escape to Stella Polaris' at the Kelowna International Airport.

The Committee membership has changed since the appointments in late 2005, with the departure of Barbara Rhodes, Gayle Liman, Deborah Proskow, Jodey Castricano, and long-time member and former Chairman Don McIntosh.

Currently, there are nine Committee members:

- Judy Burns, Chairperson
- Elizabeth Balderston, Vice-Chairperson
- Sarah Campbell
- Francisco Argudin Carreón
- Larry Foster
- Gordon Hartley
- Kirsti Jarrett
- George Kroker
- Mary Lund

The total membership authorized by the Committee's Terms of Reference is 11 and we expect to have the two vacancies filled toward the end of this year.

The Committee meets monthly. Staff support is provided by a contracted part-time Public Art Coordinator with assistance from personnel from Civic Properties, Parks and Planning as required.

Public art initiatives undertaken in the last year include:

a) *The publication of our **second annual Public Art guide**.*

10,000 copies of this colourful and informative guide were printed in 2007 and are in wide distribution through tourism infocentres, downtown and Cultural District kiosks, and many arts, culture and heritage venues.

b) *A comprehensive **conservation assessment and maintenance report** for 28 works of art owned by the City.*

The assessment work was performed under contract by Tracy Satin, the professional conservator at the Okanagan Heritage Museum. This report provides important information about the condition of the works in the collection, with recommendations for repair and maintenance. This information guides our maintenance staff, and also provides valuable context for insurance review by the City's Risk Manager. Based on the information in the report, significant repairs are being arranged for two works of art, *Sentinel* and *Renaissance of a Tree*.

c) *A **planning matrix**.*

Developed in collaboration with the Parks Division, which identifies public art opportunities in existing and future parks throughout the city.

d) *Ongoing **liaison with planning staff and the private sector** regarding opportunities for public art in association with new commercial developments.*

We are encouraged by the increasing interest shown by the development community in incorporating public art into their projects and will continue to share information and link them to various resources, including public art consultants who can work directly with the developer to facilitate public art projects. A working group including representatives of the development community and the Public Art Committee has discussed a number of possible incentives for the provision of public art in private sector developments, including the establishment of an annual award and an information package which could be made available through the planning office.

e) *A commissioned series of 7 sculptures entitled '**Growth**' by Ottawa artist Karl Ciesluk, installed at the end of August, 2007 in 3 different locations along the Brandt's Creek Linear Pathway, between Yates and Kane Roads in Glenmore.*

These sculptures carved from single large boulders and decorated with a variety of techniques and materials, are both beautiful and functional, and are placed at heights and locations along the trail which will encourage people to use them as resting spots. They bring to mind both seed pods and fruit, which responds both to the natural setting and to the area's agricultural past. This was a \$40,000 commission, developed and selected with the support and



involvement of the Glenmore Valley Community Association and the Parks Division. A dedication date is still being sought for either November, 2007 or spring, 2008.

- f) *A \$60,000 commission to local sculptor Geert Maas for a community public art project entitled **'Spirit of Kelowna'** consisting of 104 cast bronze medallions which will be installed on a new feature wall in the City Hall foyer.*

This project was jointly funded by the City's Public Art Reserve and donated proceeds from the Okanagan Mountain Park Fire Recovery Society. The medallions were created by Kelowna residents between May and September, 2007 in a series of 10 three-day workshops led by Geert Maas in his studio. Each participant responded to the challenge of creating a medallion which expressed Kelowna's community spirit. The diversity of ideas represented in the medallions is as diverse as the people who made them. The process of taking an idea and transforming it into a clay model, plaster mold, wax positive and the final cast bronze piece was a tough task to complete in only 3 days and the dedication and passion of everyone involved in the project was truly heartwarming. Many participants have told staff and the artist that the experience of being part of this project was something they will treasure for a long time.

- g) *A \$30,000 competition, jointly funded by BC Housing and the Public Art Reserve Fund, for public art features around the entranceway, on the front façade and on the back patio wall of the **Cardington Apartments** project.*

This competition is in its final selection stage and a recommendation from the selection panel for a project award will be coming forward to council in the next few weeks. The theme expressed in this competition is 'Icons of Inspiration' and artists have been asked to provide proposals for public art features which enhance not only the aesthetic and public appeal of the building, but also promote a sense of motivation, pride and belonging for residents. Staff and representatives of the Public Art Committee have been working collaboratively on the selection process with the John Howard Society, community representatives, the project manager and the project architect. The Public Art Committee is looking forward to initiating further public art projects which will directly involve residents of the building once it is completed and occupied.

- h) *The launch of our **Community Public Art program**.*

This program provides matching funding of up to \$10,000 from the Public Art Reserve to Kelowna-based non-profit organizations who are proposing projects which involve an artist working directly with the community in the creation of public art. 2007 marked the first year of this program. The two inaugural projects are:

- a. **The Big Picture Mural Project** – funding of \$7,500 was allocated to the Kelowna Community Policing Association, administered via the Graffiti Eradication and Prevention Program, for the creation of an aerosol art mural on the rear wall of a commercial building facing the schoolyard at Springvalley Middle School. This particular wall was selected by Colleen Cornock the Graffiti Eradication coordinator because it was a consistent target for tagging and other undesirable activities. The wall is approximately 50 metres wide and 8 metres high. Artist Scott Tobin sought suggestions from students at the school for the mural concept, and students also assisted with the painting of the wall. The businesses in the area have taken an active interest in the project. Matching funding was provided through Central Okanagan Foundation for Youth and Block Watch, and in kind support from ICI Paints, WINN Rentals, Dan's Tire Shop, School District 23 and the Regional District. An official

dedication ceremony involving the school, local businesses and donors is scheduled for October 3.

- b. **Mosaic Benches at Martin Avenue Park** – funding of \$2,500 was allocated to the North End Residents' Association (NERA) for a project led by artist Holliby Ross and NERA director Meredith Ferner. A series of community workshops, including one at the Drop In Centre, were held in June and July 2007 affording residents an opportunity to paint a small self-portrait or message on a ceramic tile. More than 150 tiles were created. These tiles will be embedded in three custom-made concrete benches which will be installed, with accompanying trees, in the Martin Avenue park adjacent to the Boys and Girls Club. Matching funding and in kind donations have been provided by Tolko Industries, Opus, Sunrype, Urban Harvest and OK Builders. An official dedication ceremony is tentatively scheduled for mid-November.

### **FUTURE ACTIVITIES:**

The Public Art Committee is looking forward to another busy and productive year in 2008. Projects which have already been identified are:

- a) The second intake of applications for our Community Public Art program. These grants will likely generate two to three projects in 2008;
- b) Stuart Park – a major public art project for Stuart Park was initiated in 2003 and has been 'on hold' awaiting further progress in the planning process. As planning for this park proceeds, we will be seeking to re-engage with the artist and complete this important commission, valued at a total of \$150,000, funded jointly through the park's capital budget and the Public Art Reserve.
- c) Mission Aquatic Centre – in consultation with Civic Properties staff and the project team, a number of public art opportunities have been identified for the exterior and interior of this landmark facility. The first site for public art activity will be long exterior wall of the facility facing Gordon Drive. Further projects will be undertaken in 2009 and subsequent years depending on budget availability.
- d) Old Mill Creek Bridge at Pandosy – in consultation with Parks and Transportation staff, the bridge deck surface, which will eventually be surrounded by plantings and a small green space, has been prepared as a location for a public art installation.
- e) Streetscaping Elements – ongoing discussions with Planning and the Parks Division have identified a need for more artist-designed streetscaping elements which can be inventoried and used as needs arise. These elements may include benches, bike racks, pavers, enhancement for light standards and other amenities. An example already in place is the decorative tree grates which were funded through the Public Art Fund in 2002 and continue to be added to more streets as they are improved.
- f) William R. Bennett Bridge – a competition will be launched for a significant public art feature on the east exit of the bridge, and in consultation with the province and the project team, we are also exploring funding partnerships to have public art features added to the bridge itself.
- g) Parkinson Recreation Centre Pedestrian Overpass – in consultation with Transportation and the designers of this structure, a number of public art opportunities will be identified, including the potential for a community-based project.



- h) Rutland Town Centre – with the continuing work of the Rutland Town Centre Task Force, the advent of the Business Improvement Area and the plans for both public and private sector development, a number of public art opportunities are being discussed.

Opportunities in addition to this list will undoubtedly arise, and a contingency reserve is planned so that we have sufficient budget to respond. Reserves are also set aside each year to fund multi-year or large-scale projects.

## **CONCLUSION:**

The successes of the last year for the Public Art Program would not have been possible without the assistance and partnership of many individuals and organizations, both within the City, and in the community at large. The Public Art Committee is actively working to build a positive, inclusive and dynamic public art program and extends its thanks and appreciation to Council for its continuing support.

## **EXISTING POLICY:**

The Public Art Committee submits these recommendations pursuant to its Terms of Reference, Arts & Cultural Policy 274 and Chapter 15 of the Official Community Plan.

An update to the Public Art Committee's Terms of Reference to refresh the wording and bring it into conformance with current practice is recommended by staff and will be brought forward to Council at a later date, along with a recommendation for approval of a Donations Policy which will guide Council and staff regarding procedures to respond to offered donations of art to the City.

## **FINANCIAL/BUDGETARY CONSIDERATIONS:**

**Maintenance:** Currently, maintenance requirements for the public art collection are funded from the 1% allocation. These requirements include regular condition assessments and reports, annual scheduled maintenance and emergency repairs (usually major) arising from damage and vandalism. As the public art collection ages and more pieces are added to the collection, maintenance costs will continue to increase while the availability of funds for new public art will accordingly decrease.

**Other operating costs:** Costs for public relations activities such as workshops, the successful annual public art brochure, redesign and maintenance of the public art website pages and human resources are also currently funded, in whole or in part, from the 1% allocation.

The capacity of the public art program to:

- a) respond to new public art opportunities being presented by other City departments (Planning, Parks, Transportation) who do not have art budgets attached to their projects; and
- b) meet its objectives for a diverse, community responsive, city-wide public art collection; and
- c) engage in financial partnerships with the private sector for the provision of public art; and
- d) respond to new ideas and strategies which will arise through the 10 year Master Plan for Recreation, Parks and Culture

will continue to be compromised if the maintenance and operating costs are not addressed.

A number of possible options for addressing these costs can be explored, with minimal impact on taxation, including:

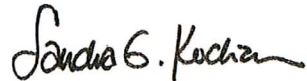
- a phased approach to shifting operational costs into the Cultural Services budget;

- a phased approach to shifting maintenance costs and responsibility into the Civic Properties budget;
- increasing the public art allocation to its maximum 1% each year;
- consideration of a standard percent-for-public-art allocation in all civic capital projects; and
- further consultations with the development community about how incentives for the provision of public art can be implemented.

Considerations that were not applicable to this report:

**INTERNAL CIRCULATION TO  
LEGAL/STATUTORY AUTHORITY  
LEGAL/STATUTORY PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS  
PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS  
TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS  
EXTERNAL AGENCY/PUBLIC COMMENTS  
ALTERNATE RECOMMENDATION**

Submitted by:



*S Kochan, Public Art Coordinator*

Approved for Inclusion:

