

DATE OF MEETING MARCH 22, 2021

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**SUBJECT ART IN PUBLIC SPACES WORKING GROUP – DRAFT
GUIDELINES & PROCESS**

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To propose a process to form an Art in Public Spaces Working Group and Guidelines for their work.

Recommendation

That Council endorse the Art in Public Spaces Working Group Guidelines and Call for Applications and direct Staff to proceed.

BACKGROUND

The City's *Community Plan for Public Art* was adopted in May 2010. The plan began as a legacy project under the Cultural Capital of Canada Program and was developed through a community process involving artists, arts managers, neighbourhood representatives and members of the public. It identifies Nanaimo's vision for public art, and goals and priorities for implementing public art projects. The plan also includes guidelines and tool kits for artists and decision-makers, so that projects are developed in a way that is inclusive, fair and creative.

When the plan was adopted, the City's structure included three Council-appointed bodies to participate in public art processes: a Public Art Review Panel; the Cultural Committee; and the Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission. These bodies held various roles and responsibilities and would advise Staff and make recommendations for final approval to Council. Due to shifts in governance structures, the Commission and Committee no longer exist. Review Panels have been formed on an ad hoc basis.

At the 2020-OCT-05 Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting, Council endorsed the creation of an Art in Public Spaces Working Group to be facilitated by Culture & Events Staff:

"It was moved and seconded that the Governance Priority Committee recommend that Council endorse the creation of an Art in Public Spaces Working Group to be facilitated by Culture & Events Staff. The motion carried unanimously."

The purpose of the Working Group is to provide strategic and technical advice, and expertise to Staff to advance the City's public art programs. The Working Group will formalize a mechanism for community consultation and will contribute to a cohesive trajectory for the City's public art program, informing and following projects from start to finish, and creating the conditions for deeper community engagement, consistency and accountability.

DISCUSSION

Draft guidelines for the Art in Public Spaces Working Group (Attachment A) are informed by precedent, such as the Cultural Managers Working Group, which was facilitated by the Culture & Heritage Department between 2014 and 2017 to gather insight and expertise on implementation of the Culture Plan from professionals in the field. The draft guidelines are also informed by a review of public art practices at Canadian municipalities. Research involved a review of a 2020 public art governance survey commissioned by the City of Markham which included respondents from 28 municipalities; review of policy documents related to Victoria's Art in Public Places Committee; meetings with City Staff from Victoria and the current Chair of their Art in Public Places Committee; and a meeting with Staff from the City of Ottawa. Based on this learning, the draft guidelines proposed in this Report describe the purpose of the five-member Working Group and outline specific duties, as well as membership criteria and terms of service.

The purpose of the Art in Public Spaces Working Group is:

- to collaborate to advance priorities articulated in City plans and policies, including the *Community Plan for Public Art (2010)*, and *A Cultural Plan for a Creative Nanaimo 2014-2020 (2014)*, and subsequent updates to these plans by providing input grounded in best practice, on future policy development;
- to provide both strategic and technical advice as required, and act as a resource on matters relating to art in public spaces;
- to champion the role of artists and creative practitioners as professionals and promote processes and policies that support the livelihood and well-being of the creative economy;
- to promote awareness and understanding of the public value of art in the City and its potential roles in the public realm; and
- to contribute community-based knowledge related to equity, diversity and accessibility priorities.

To achieve these aims the Working Group will:

- advise on public art issues and relevant trends and provide input on the update of programs, plans and policies;
- advise and consult on specific matters related to public art, including but not limited to collection management, conservation, interpretation and knowledge creation, donations and sponsorships, private sector projects, community art projects, and other issues;
- review Calls to Artists, Requests for Proposals, and other competition processes and provide feedback; and
- serve on the selection panel for specific art projects and make recommendations to advance to Council for final approval and suggest additional panel members when specific expertise is required.

An open Call for Applications (Attachment B) will be circulated to invite applications for Working Group membership. To be eligible, applicants must have demonstrated experience and/or training in aspects of visual art; and represent a variety of professions with expertise in the realm of public art, including artists, arts administrators, educators, curators, Indigenous knowledge keepers, architects, design professionals, landscape architects. Based on applications from the community, Staff will recommend individuals with diverse and relevant

experience to participate as volunteers on the Working Group for a two-year term. Recommendations on membership will be brought to Council for approval.

OPTIONS

1. That the Governance Priorities Committee recommend that Council endorse the Art in Public Spaces Working Group Guidelines and Call for Applications and direct Staff to proceed.
 - Advantages: Creating a mechanism for community input and outside expertise on the City's public art programs.
 - Disadvantages: Staff time will be required.
 - Financial Implications: None.

2. That the Governance Priorities Committee recommend that Council provide alternate direction on an alternate structure to support the public art program.
 - Advantages: Alternate structures may offer different solutions for supporting community outreach and support for the realization of public art.
 - Disadvantages: Time will be required to research and report on alternate structures for Council's consideration.
 - Financial Implications: None.

3. That the Governance Priorities Committee make no decision at this time and maintain the status quo.
 - Advantages: No investment of Staff time.
 - Disadvantages: No formalized, consistent process in place to engage community on matters related to public art.
 - Financial Implications: None.

SUMMARY POINTS

- At the 2020-OCT-05 Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting, Council endorsed the creation of an Art in Public Spaces Working Group to be facilitated by Culture & Events Staff. The purpose of the Working Group is to provide strategic and technical advice, and expertise to Staff to advance the City's public art programs.
- Based on the endorsement by Council of an Art in Public Spaces Working Group, draft guidelines (Attachment A) and a proposed Call for Applications (Attachment B) have been created for consideration and approval.
- The proposed Art in Public Spaces Working Group will consist of five individuals selected through an application process, who can contribute expertise and insights with regard to public art on a voluntary basis.

ATTACHMENTS:

ATTACHMENT A – DRAFT Guidelines – Art in Public Spaces Working Group

ATTACHMENT B – DRAFT Call for Applications – Art in Public Spaces Working Group

Submitted by:

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Concurrence by:

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