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**SUBJECT UPDATE TO THE TEMPORARY PUBLIC ART PROGRAM &
DEVELOPMENT OF THE URBAN DESIGN ROSTER**

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To provide information to Council about operational changes taking place to the Temporary Public Art Program and to outline a pilot program called the Urban Design Roster.

Recommendation

That the Finance & Audit Committee recommend that Council consider an increase of \$25,000 to the public art budget during the 2022-2026 financial plan deliberations to support the Urban Design Roster initiative.

BACKGROUND

COMMUNITY PLAN FOR PUBLIC ART

In 2010, City Council adopted the Community Plan for Public Art (Attachment A), which contains a roadmap for the advancement of public art in civic spaces in Nanaimo. Section 3.5 MUNICIPAL PUBLIC ART PROGRAM outlines specific targets for the advancement of public art on behalf of the municipality.

“3.5.1 MUNICIPAL PUBLIC ART FUNDING

The Municipal Program will consist of the following financial recommendations:

- *Establish a Public Art Program Statutory Reserve fund to hold all funds for implementing the Public Art Program.*
- *Provide an annual allocation of \$50,000 to the Public Art Statutory Reserve Fund as a key part of financing for the ongoing public art program.*
- *Contribute an additional \$10,000 per every year for the next 5 years to be placed in the Public Art Statutory Reserve to ensure that public art program funding is relevant to ongoing financial environment cost increases, and potential partnership opportunities.*
- *Parks, Recreation & Culture Department capital projects in excess of \$250,000 will allocate 1% of the project funds to integration of public art in Nanaimo.*
- *Encourage other departments to allocate 1% of capital works budgets for above-ground projects (e.g. building, street and park construction) in excess of \$250,000 towards the purchase or commission and maintenance of public art to be integrated into or displayed in that building or construction.”*

City Staff and the Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission were directed to propose an annual civic public art budget for Council review during the annual operating budget

deliberations. The Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission no longer exists, and in the absence of this Commission, Staff propose annual civic public art budgets for Council review.

TEMPORARY PUBLIC ART PROGRAM

Since 2010, Nanaimo has held an annual Call for Artists, asking for temporary artworks to be shown in City parks and other public spaces. Formerly a partnership with the Nanaimo Art Gallery, in 2013 the program underwent an update to be solely run by the City. The program follows a public sculpture exhibition format, offering honorariums to artists for the display of their work. Sculpture and landscape installations have been included for yearlong displays on an annual basis at two compensation levels, \$1,000 and \$4,000, which has not changed since 2013.

Following a review of the program, the following key revisions and updates are being made:

- Change from temporary sculpture exhibition to temporary work commission, with two new works created annually that are intended to last between 2 to 5 years.
- Change to a commissioning-style approach that offers a longer lead-time for projects with more input from City Staff to support the development of the work. The change will allow a consideration of site context, broadens the scope to more areas of the City, and is responsive to different kinds of work.
- Reduce the number of works and increase compensation to reflect industry standards in pay for public art.
- Create a two-step shortlist process, so that viable projects can be adapted and developed in dialogue with the City Staff and the Art in Public Spaces Working Group, currently in development.

Review of all applications will include the new Art in Public Spaces Working Group, and may also involve consultation with Snuneymuxw leadership. The full details of the new program Guidelines and Submission Procedures are attached for review (Attachment B).

The proposed changes to the Temporary Public Art Program are operational in nature, and will have no impact on the overall program budget. Currently in the 2021-2025 Financial plan, \$50,000 per year is budgeted for Public Art. This is broken down as \$30,000 for temporary art and \$20,000 for opportunities arising during the year.

URBAN DESIGN ROSTER – Pilot

The OCP 3.5 Arts, Culture and Recreation states that “*Cultural development is considered to be of great importance to the quality of community life and for its economic and social benefits. It requests that the city be committed to integrating cultural development into city planning.*”

This is a proposed new program, developed to complement the Temporary Public Art Program, and to respond to ongoing opportunities to integrate art and design in the City together with various City departments. The purpose of this program is to create a list of artists and designers through a Call for Artists who are interested and capable of undertaking small-scale urban design projects with the City of Nanaimo. The program aims to benefit the community as a whole by integrating creative urban design into existing and new infrastructure with a process that can be adaptive to short timelines, and emerging as well as ongoing needs.

The Urban Design Roster is essentially a “long list” of artists who submit design portfolios with examples of their work that can be consulted by any City department on an as-needed basis when a design opportunity arises. The roster does not guarantee that an artist will be selected; rather it acts as a way to connect City teams to capable artists and designers over a period of two years. After two years, a new call will be issued at which time artists may renew their interest in being contacted by the City for opportunities, and new artists can submit their portfolios to be added. Examples of how the Urban Design Roster could work as a resource for potential projects might include:

- Small scale murals for park washroom buildings
- Decorative designs to use on park infrastructure like splash pads or playground surfacing
- Surface designs on traffic barriers, or to line active transportation pathways
- Anti-graffiti utility wraps for hydro and traffic boxes

The Urban Design Roster does not replace Calls to Artists for targeted infrastructure projects, or Public Art opportunities. Instead, it recognizes the desire on the part of both the City and Nanaimo’s arts community to connect and develop enhancements to public space in small but meaningful ways. The full details of the proposed program are attached for review (Attachment C).

An intended long-term benefit of the program is to build working relationships between Culture & Events and other City departments so that opportunities for urban art and design may be realized in tandem with the planning of civic infrastructure.

DISCUSSION

The Community Plan for Public Art (2010) recommends regular evaluation and refinement of programs that realize public art in Nanaimo. Section 4.1.7 addresses the need for ongoing program monitoring and evaluation, calling for an annual review of the Public Art Program “*goals, policies, procedures, and administrative resources, and recommend changes as required.*”

Together, the Temporary Public Art Program and Urban Design Roster aim to build on the City of Nanaimo’s enthusiasm for art in public spaces. By updating the Temporary Public Art Program to bring it in line with best practices in the sector, the program will better serve the needs of the community, and will offer meaningful opportunities to artists that are appropriately compensated.

The Urban Design Roster maintains up-to-date compensation frameworks for art in public spaces using national minimum wage standards set by CARFAC (Canada Artists Representation) and through research into best practices in Canadian Municipalities Public Art Programs through BC Public Art Network and the Creative Cities Network. Compensation for artists accounts for concept design, copyright or licencing, and public display, as well as other professional duties and services performed by artists in the creation of works of art.

While newly formalized as a program, the Urban Design Roster builds on existing practices at the City, such as painted objects like traffic control boxes and washroom murals in public parks. As a process, it expands City opportunities to more of Nanaimo’s artists, and follows the success of examples in many other municipalities in British Columbia, across Canada and in

North America. It is expected that the outcome will bring a diverse range of artistic practices into contact with the City to be considered for ongoing opportunities.

The timing of this program comes in a year when changes to the Temporary Public Art Program afford a chance to create broad awareness to updates in Public Art programs. Outreach to artists will inform them of this new opportunity to engage with the City and contribute to public space. |

NEXT STEPS

The next steps in the process will unfold in 2021. Draft programs attached will incorporate feedback from the Art in Public Spaces Working Group, and launch with public information sessions in time for new projects to be selected, and contracting to begin in Fall 2021. |

OPTIONS

1. That the Finance & Audit Committee recommend that Council consider an increase of \$25,000 to the public art budget during the 2022-2026 financial plan deliberations to support the Urban Design Roster initiative.
 - The advantages of this option: Funding for this program will support the realization of small-scale urban design initiatives across the City, and will provide professional opportunities for the Arts & Culture sector that also enhance civic infrastructure and contribute to pride of place.
 - The disadvantages of this option: Undertaking the program will require Staff time.
 - Financial Implications: If the decision is made to include this increase in the 2022-2026 Financial Plan, \$25,000 will be added to each year with funding from general taxation. This would put upwards pressure on the property tax increase unless funding can be found within the current budgets.

2. That the Finance & Audit Committee receive the report for information, but do not recommend considering an increase of \$25,000 to the public art budget during the 2022-2026 budget deliberations.
 - The advantages of this option: Staff will delay the implementation of urban design projects and activities, reducing Culture & Events Staff time spent on this project.
 - The disadvantages of this option: Fewer opportunities for artists to be integrated into civic planning processes, which does not align with the goals of the Official Community Plan.
 - Financial Implications: None.

3. That the Finance & Audit Committee provide alternative direction.

SUMMARY POINTS

- Proposed changes have been drafted for the Temporary Public Art Program.
- Proposed creation of a new opportunity for artists called the Urban Design Roster.

- Both programs are proposed to launch in 2021, in tandem with a newly appointed Art in Public Spaces Working Group.

ATTACHMENTS:

ATTACHMENT A: Community Plan for Public Art

ATTACHMENT B: DRAFT Call for Artists – Temporary Public Art Program 2021

ATTACHMENT C: DRAFT Call for Artists and Designs – Urban Design Roster 2021-2022

ATTACHMENT D: Presentation regarding the update to the Temporary Public Art and proposed Urban Design Roster

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