

DATE OF MEETING September 21, 2021

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SUBJECT **MURAL DE-ACCESSION – MAFFEO SUTTON PARK WASHROOM
BUILDING**

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To provide for Council's consideration the proposed de-accession of a mural from the City of Nanaimo's Public Art Collection.

Recommendation

That Council approve the de-accession of the following artworks from the City of Nanaimo Public Art collection: Dan Richey, *Underwater Fantasy* (2005).

BACKGROUND

The City of Nanaimo's *Community Plan for Public Art* was adopted by Council in May 2010. The plan began as a legacy project under the Cultural Capitals 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 toolkits for artists and decision-makers, so that projects are developed in a manner that is inclusive, fair and creative.

De-accession Policy and Procedure

At the time the plan was adopted, the City identified de-accession guidelines that direct how to consider the removal of existing artwork from the Public Art Collection. Section 3.10 states:

"De-accessioning is the process of removing existing installations of artwork from the public collection. The De-accession Guidelines (Toolkit 4) recognize that over time there may be reasons to remove artwork. Reasons for de-accessioning may include, but not be limited to, situations where artwork has been damaged beyond reasonable repair, where artwork is deemed inappropriate, or requires removal because of new developments in the direction of the public art collection. The Cultural Committee shall review any proposed de-accessioning of public art, and shall forward a recommendation to the Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission for consideration."

The plan specifies an annual review of artworks being considered for de-accessioning take place through the Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission and the Cultural Committee, with recommendations to be reviewed by Council. Since the time of plan implementation, changes have occurred, and the Culture Commission and Cultural Committees are no longer in place.

While new processes are in consideration, City Staff have reviewed the works following the principles and guidelines of the *Community Plan for Public Art* Section 3.10.

According to the Deaccession Guidelines – Toolkit 4 (Attachment A) all works in the collection are eligible for consideration for de-accession, including:

- artworks purchased or commissioned through the Public Art Program;
- gifts of artwork accepted by the City of Nanaimo in accordance with the gift acceptance policies of the Public Art Program; and
- all other artwork previously purchased by the City or received as a gift to the City.

In 2020, Culture & Events Staff renewed efforts to document and evaluate the condition of the artworks in the Public Art Inventory by conducting site visits in order to assess and schedule maintenance, and when deemed appropriate, identify artworks for de-accession. In 2020, site reviews were conducted to evaluate artworks in Maffeo Sutton Park. The following artwork has been identified for removal (Attachment B):

1. Dan Richey, *Underwater Fantasy*, 2005

DISCUSSION

The mural proposed for removal, undertaken by Dan Richey in 2005, has endured long past its expected lifespan of 5-7 years, and has suffered considerable, though anticipated, material degradation, detracting from its overall appearance and enhancement of public space. Staff have been in contact with Mr. Richey to communicate this recommendation.

The deaccessioning of the mural on this washroom facility is considered in the context of ongoing park maintenance, with newly scheduled paint that can take place on the exterior of the washroom block in 2021. The new Urban Design Roster program will provide an avenue to connect with a local artist or designer, and a fresh design treatment can be undertaken using existing funds to support the renewal of this public space.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Removal of the existing mural, remediation and the necessary repairs to damage on the building surface, as well as preparatory work and installation of a new paint treatment have been accounted for in the 2021 financial plan.

OPTIONS

1. That Council approve the de-accession of the following artworks from the City of Nanaimo Public Art collection: Dan Richey, *Underwater Fantasy* (2005).
 - The advantages of this option: Safeguarding the Public Art Collection by ensuring adequate care and maintenance.
 - The disadvantages of this option: None.
2. That Council deny the de-accession of this artwork from the City of Nanaimo Public Art collection: Dan Richey, *Underwater Fantasy* (2005).

- The advantages of this option: None.
- The disadvantages of this option: If this mural is not de-accessioned, it will require financial resources and Staff time to undertake maintenance.

SUMMARY POINTS

- As per the procedures outlined in the *Community Plan for Public Art*, work is underway to ensure the ongoing care of the City of Nanaimo's Public Art Collection, including periodic evaluation of artworks for de-accession.
- The mural on the Maffeo Sutton park washroom block by Dan Richey, called *Underwater Fantasy* (2005) has reached the end of its lifecycle and is recommended for de-accession.
- This de-accession will make way for a new opportunity to undertake an urban design mural treatment in a prominent civic space.

ATTACHMENTS:

ATTACHMENT A: Toolkit 4 – Guidelines to De-accession Public Art
ATTACHMENT B: Artwork Proposed for De-accession |

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