

NO: R025

COUNCIL DATE: February 12, 2024

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## REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **February 7, 2024**

FROM: **General Manager, Parks, Recreation & Culture**

FILE: **0550 - 01**

SUBJECT: **Recommended Public Art for Latimer Park**

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## RECOMMENDATION

The Parks, Recreation & Culture Department recommends that Council:

1. Receive this report for information; and
2. Authorize staff to contract Anja Novkovic to complete a public artwork at Latimer Park, as generally described in this report and attached as Appendix "I".

## INTENT

The purpose of this report is to obtain Council approval to proceed with the implementation of Anja Novkovic's artwork design at Latimer Park.

## BACKGROUND

Latimer Park is located in the Campbell Heights area of Surrey. It was acquired by the City in 1965. Prior to its acquisition it was an active gravel quarry that has since flooded leading to the creation of Latimer Lake. Since then, the park has been enjoyed by a variety of users. Latimer Park has seen many changes both in its use as well as in the surrounding neighborhood since its creation.

A new washroom facility has been constructed at the park and was identified as an opportunity for a public artwork (See Appendix "II"). Similar projects were completed in recent years at Forsyth Park, Maple Green Park and Chimney Heights Park. The washroom facility will be enhanced by a creative gate panel, replacing the standard washroom gate. The panel will be fabricated out of metal that has been cut and powder coated.

## DISCUSSION

The artist and design were determined through an open artist call and community selection process. Public Art staff developed an artist call about the revitalizing power of nature. The artist call was distributed through City of Surrey media outlets and other online channels.

On January 13, 2024, staff convened a community selection panel to review all the artists' concept designs proposed for Latimer Park. Selection panelists were comprised of three Surrey residents, including one local artist.

The selection panel reviewed 48 design proposals. After a process of deliberation, the selection panel voted unanimously to recommend one design by Anja Novkovic (See Appendix "I").

### **About The Artist & Artwork**

Anja Novkovic is a Croatian-Canadian artist/geographer based in Greater Vancouver. Her illustrative, design, and sculptural work focuses on human connections with place, both natural and built; her 2023 exhibit, "SEEDS", blurred the boundary between Mediterranean plants and the human body. Anja's "Ode to the Garden City Lands" illustrations have been featured in the City of Richmond's Public Art Program as posters (2021) and art wraps (2023-present). In 2020, she won the COHDS Award of Distinction in Oral History for her illustrated maps of a Montreal alleyway in "Alley Atlas".

This artwork is inspired by the red huckleberry. Surrey's native berries are one of its oldest natural treasures, and the humble red huckleberry is also one of its most inspiring. This plant is extremely difficult to domesticate. Its tartly sweet, antioxidant-packed berries are desirable for the human diet and not easily replanted because of the sensitivity of its root system. So, when encountered in Surrey's natural environment, one can be sure it is growing where it is meant to. Gazing upon its bell-shaped flowers or crimson fruits, it reminds us that embracing our sensitivities means maintaining our liberation; resisting places that don't nurture us means thriving in places that do.

### **FUNDING**

Funding for this public art project draws from 1.25% of civic monies from the expansion of the washroom facility and is augmented by public art reserve funds for South Surrey. Total public art costs for the project are \$17,000 including artist fees, design development, fabrication and on-going maintenance.

### **CONCLUSION**

The Parks, Recreation & Culture Department recommends Council authorize staff to proceed to engage Anja Novkovic to implement a public artwork at the Latimer Park Washroom, as generally described in this report.

Laurie Cavan  
General Manager,  
Parks, Recreation & Culture

Appendix: "I" – Recommended public artwork by Anja Novkovic  
Appendix: "II" – Proposed Artwork Location: Latimer Park Washroom

Recommended public artwork by Anja Novkovic





Latimer Park Washroom – Site Map & Photo

