

NO: R117

COUNCIL DATE: May 28, 2018

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **May 23, 2018**

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

FILE: **8000-30**

SUBJECT: **Recommendation for Surrey Nature Centre Public Indigenous Art Project**

RECOMMENDATION

The Parks, Recreation & Culture Department recommend that Council:

1. Receive this report for information; and
2. Authorize staff to undertake contracts and implement Wes Antone's public art design for the creative enhancement of the Surrey Nature Centre as generally described in this report.

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with background information regarding a public art design proposal by an artist from Kwantlen First Nation and obtain Council approval for staff to implement the artwork for the creative enhancement of the Surrey Nature Centre with vinyl glazing.

BACKGROUND

The Public Art Master Plan has guided research into strategies for the creative enhancement of civic facilities and infrastructure. The resulting report describes cost effective precedents for accomplishing this goal, such as designs applied to the glazing of existing builds using vinyl films.

The *All Our Relations Social Innovation Strategy* report, Phase 2 of the Surrey Urban Aboriginal Social Innovation Project, recommends the City *Indigenize public spaces* (Goal #10). The creative enhancement of civic facilities and infrastructure provides an opportunity to fulfill both the objectives of the Public Art Master Plan, and Goal #10 of this report.

Eight sites for creative enhancement by Indigenous artists were identified in consultation with stakeholders from Surrey Libraries, Parks, Recreation & Culture Department, and the Engineering Department. The Chiefs from Kwantlen, Katzie and Semiahmoo First Nations, then invited eight artists to create design proposals for one or more sites. These artists are:

- Brandon Gabriel (Kwantlen)
- Drew Atkins (Kwantlen)
- Leslie Wells (Semiahmoo)
- Trenton Pierre (Katzie)
- Phyllis Atkins (Kwantlen)
- Roxanne Charles (Semiahmoo)
- Anthony Gabriel (Kwantlen)
- Wes Antone (Kwantlen)

On December 4, 2017, staff welcomed Elders from each Nation to review and provide recommendations on the proposed designs. Elders participating in the Selection Panel were:

- Barbara Calder (Semiahmoo)
- Hazel Gludo (Kwantlen)
- Verna Davies (Kwantlen)
- Cookie Schwartz (Katzie)
- Charles Moody (Katzie)
- Diana Evans (Katzie)
- Helen Johnson (Katzie)
- Leslie Bailey (Katzie)
- Harry Pierre (Katzie)

Following the Elders' recommendations, which matched each artist and their design concept to a specific site, the City then invited each artist to develop their concepts into final designs. Five of the final designs by these artists, which were approved by Council in December 2017 and April 2018 have now either been installed or are now in fabrication:

1. Brandon Gabriel's design will be installed on the Guildford Public Library windows;
2. Drew Atkins' design has been installed on the Surrey Arts Centre courtyard windows;
3. Leslie Wells' design will be installed on the Surrey Arts Centre program room window.
4. Phyllis Atkin's design will be realized as a creative enhancement to the façade of a concrete barrier to be constructed by Engineering as part of Bear Creek Bridge; and
5. Anthony Gabriel's design are featured on the 2018 City of Surrey public art street banners;

The artist Wes Antone of the Kwantlen First Nations was recommended by the Elders to create an artwork for the Surrey Nature Centre.

DISCUSSION

In April 2018, Wes Antone completed his final designs for review by the Public Art Advisory Committee.

Public Art Advisory Committee Endorsement

At its meeting on May 3, 2018 the Public Art Advisory Committee received a presentation on Wes Antone's final designs, and in turn voted unanimously to recommend that the General Manager, Parks, Recreation & Culture prepare a report to Council recommending Wes Antone be commissioned to realize his proposed designs for the Surrey Nature Centre.

About the Artist and Artwork

Wes Antone is a Kwantlen First Nation member and has been carving for over 35 years. He is a self-taught artist and works from his home on the Kwantlen reserve in Fort Langley, BC. Antone has sold his pieces all over the world and specializes in mask design. His traditional name is X.ex.elles, which means 'likes to draw'.

The design Antone has proposed for the Surrey Nature Centre is entitled *snəwəyəl: Nature's Gods (Nature's Teachers)* and consists of eleven designs for the doors and windows of the Centre - a wolf, cranes, chickadees, woodpeckers, a lynx, hummingbirds, frogs, owls, and a moon. The designs will be rendered in white, opaque line, with the rest of the window remaining clear. (Appendix "I").

For the Kwantlen, gods and teachers are the same thing. The rough translation of *snəwəyəl* is "sacred teachings", but really there is no *hənqəminəm* word for teaching, as it is European concept. For the Kwantlen, the lessons we need to learn are simply there in the world around us. Antone wants visitors, particular the many children who frequent the Centre, to learn the lessons that the Kwantlen associate with each figure. As such, an Elder of the nation is providing a didactic that will reveal the lessons the animals can teach us, as well as the *hənqəminəm* translations of the animal names. (Appendix "I").

Next Steps

Upon approval by Council, Surrey staff will engage a professional designer, fabricator, and installer to translate the artist's final design into digital files suitable for printing on vinyl, and fabricate vinyl prints to be adhered to the windows. Completion of the project is expected before the end of summer 2018.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The recommendation of this report complies with the City's *Public Art Policy*. The implementation of the public art project is guided by the Public Art Master Plan.

The recommendation of an artwork by an Indigenous artist complies with the Surrey Indigenous Leadership Committee's Surrey Urban Aboriginal Social Innovation Project, entitled *All Our Relations, A Social Innovation Strategy*. Increasing First Nations art in public spaces supports the following recommendations in the document:

- Goal #10: Indigenize Public Spaces: Partner with the City of Surrey to increase Indigenous art in City Hall, city-owned buildings and public spaces.
- Goal #38: Combat negative stereotypes and discrimination in the City: Create opportunities for visual representations of reconciliation.

FUNDING

Funding for the implementation of these city-wide creative enhancements of civic infrastructure draws from a public art fund of \$200,000 reserved for this purpose. The fund was established following the recommendations of the Public Art Policy, through public art contributions of 1.25% of the total construction costs of the Surrey Operations Centre. The public art fund also funded the permanent sculpture installed at the facility.

Total cost to implement this initiative will be approximately \$10,000 including design fees paid to the artist, consultation time, test prints, fabrication and installation.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

This initiative will assist in meeting the following Desired Outcomes (DO) contained within the City's Sustainability Charter 2.0 Sub-themes of "Neighbourhoods and Urban Design":

- DO 1: "Surrey is compromised with distinct, diverse and compact town centres with an engaging public realm";
- DO 8: "The built environment enhances quality of life, happiness and well-being"; and
- DO 15: "All new buildings, public places and outdoor spaces are welcoming, safe and universally accessible".

The initiative supports the Community Theme of "Education and Culture" identified in the City's Sustainability Charter 2.0:

- DO 7: "An enviable and vibrant arts and heritage sector contributes to Surrey's citizen engagement, enrichment, economy, community livability and civic pride"; and
- DO 10: "Surrey celebrates, protects and promotes its natural and built heritage sites".

The initiative supports the Community Theme of "Inclusion" identified in the City's Sustainability Charter 2.0:

- DO 7: "Surrey's Urban Aboriginal community is thriving with high educational outcomes, meaningful employment and opportunities for cultural connections".

CONCLUSION

Based on the above discussion, it is recommended that Council authorize staff to undertake contracts and implement Wes Antone's public art design for the creative enhancement of the Surrey Nature Centre as generally described in this report.

Laurie Cavan
General Manager
Parks, Recreation & Culture

Appendix "I" – Wes Antone's final design for the creative enhancement of the Surrey Nature Centre windows with a vinyl glazing

Wes Antone's Designs for the Surrey Nature Centre's Windows

Note: the designs will be printed in white, all black areas will be transparent



From right to left and top to bottom: Chickadees, crane, hummingbird, frogs, female woodpecker, lynx, moon, crane with fish, male woodpecker, wolf, owls.

The Images will appear on these windows and doors (as chosen in collaboration with the Surrey Nature Centre) and will be evident when viewed from the inside and outside.



The vinyl glazing will be installed on five coloured, square windows, and six sets of double doors.