

NO: R052

COUNCIL DATE: March 8, 2021

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council**

DATE: **February 26, 2021**

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

FILE: **7800-01**

SUBJECT: **Recommendation for 2021 Public Art Street Banners**

RECOMMENDATION

The Parks, Recreation & Culture Department and the Finance Departments recommend that Council:

1. Receive this report for information; and
2. Authorize staff to contract the artist Nicoletta Baumeister to complete the design for the 2021 Public Art Street Banners to be installed near cultural venues across Surrey, as generally described in this report and as attached in Appendix "I".

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to provide information on the Public Art Street Banner Program and to obtain Council approval for staff to contract Nicoletta Baumeister to complete the design for the 2021 public art banners. These banners are to be installed on approximately 125 street poles near significant cultural destinations in Surrey.

BACKGROUND

Every year the Public Art Program commissions a unique design to be featured on approximately 125 street poles near significant cultural destinations in the City, such as the Surrey Arts Centre, Newton Cultural Centre, Chuck Bailey Recreation Centre (Urban Screen venue), South Surrey Recreation and Arts Centre, as well as the City Centre Library.

Public art street banners provide an opportunity for artists to share their creativity with the community, while also beautifying the City. The opportunity alternates annually between an open call to all artists, or a direct invitation to a significant artist recommended by the Surrey Art Gallery. Artists of significance commissioned in the past have included internationally known Canadian artists Robert Davidson, Gordon Smith, and Susan Point. The intention of the public art street banners is to enhance the experience of the streetscape for drivers, cyclists, transit riders and pedestrians. Fabrication and installation of the banners is coordinated as part of the City's Town Centre Street Banner Program.

DISCUSSION

Parks, Recreation & Culture Committee Review

On November 25, 2020, the Parks, Recreation & Culture Committee received a presentation on Surrey artist Nicoletta Baumeister's concept drawings for the design commission of the City's 2021 Public Art Street Banners. The Parks, Recreation & Culture Committee supported the recommendation to commission Nicolette Baumeister for the design. The Committee also recommended that the theme for the 2021 Public Art Street Banners draw from two of UNESCO's themes. UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) declared 2021 as the international year of 'Peace and Trust', as well as the year of 'Fruits and Vegetables'. With the support of the Committee, staff invited the artist to prepare three concept proposals, inspired by these themes for consideration.

Selection Process

Artist Nicoletta Baumeister created three concept concepts for consideration for the 2021 Public Art Street Banners. On January 6, 2021, staff convened a virtual selection panel process to review the artists concept designs. Selection Panel Members included staff from the Parks, Recreation and Culture Department. The selection panel unanimously voted to recommend one of Baumeister's designs for the 2021 Public Art Street Banner. A copy of the design, *Seed/Flower/Fruit/Vegetable* is attached as Appendix "I".:

About the Artist and Artwork

Nicoletta Baumeister lives in South Surrey and has exhibited throughout the Lower Mainland. She completed a Diploma of Fine Arts from Langara College, a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, and a specialization in goldsmithing in Pforzheim, Germany. Baumeister's art practice encompasses realism and, more recently, abstract work. Her current work explores themes related to how we perceive reality, and how the act of viewing changes the object being viewed.

The recommended design, *Seed/Flower/Fruit/Vegetable*, responds to both of UNESCO'S themes in 2021: the Year of Peace and Trust and the Year of Fruit and Vegetables. Baumeister borrowed a motif of overlapping circles called the "Seed of Life" or "Flower of Life", an ancient, Egyptian geometric design. The structure of all fruits and vegetables, including their seeds and flowers, are to be found in this design. Moreover, the design represents commonality and communication: the building blocks of trust.

Baumeister writes *"The history of mankind confirms that a major, if not sole, root cause of discord and war, is the struggle for resources...Peace can only exist if we seek it not only with our fellow humans, but also with the environment from which all resources come."* For Baumeister, peace relies on the state of our immediate and existential interconnectivity with land, water, and air. She says, *"The state of peacefulness contains Safety, Openness, Calm, Balance, Rhythm, Growth, Creativity, Joy."*

FUNDING

The 2021 Public Art Street Banners are funded as part of the Civic Street Banner Program, within the Community Enhancement budget. The annual budget for the Civic Street Banner Program is \$125,000. This includes materials (design, printing, replacement) and labour (installation, removal, maintenance) and provides banners at 870 locations across the City. Types of banners include: Town Centre Identity Banners, Surrey Gateway Banners, Public Art Banners and Community Group Banners. Of these approximately 125 would feature the public art design.

The cost to implement the public art street banner design is \$2,500.

Subject to Council approval of the recommendations of this report, the artist will proceed to finalize the digital file of their design as needed for fabrication.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

This initiative supports the objectives of the City's Sustainability Charter 2.0. In particular, this work relates to Sustainability Charter 2.0 themes of Built Environment & Neighbourhoods, Education & Culture and Economic Prosperity & Livelihoods. Specifically, this project supports the following Desired Outcomes ("DO") and Strategic Directions ("SD"):

- Neighbourhoods & Urban Design DO 1: Surrey is comprised of distinct, diverse and compact town centres with an engaging public realm;
- Arts and Heritage DO 7: An enviable and vibrant arts and heritage sector contributes to Surrey's citizen engagement, enrichment, economy, community livability and civic pride;
- Arts and Heritage DO 11: Public art is visible in diverse forms throughout the community and brings art into the daily lives of Surrey residents";
- Arts and Heritage SD 9: Support the development of local artists of all ages and through all stages; and
- Innovation SD 10: Support the development of growth of key sectors including health technology, clean technology, advanced manufacturing, agri-innovation and the creative economy.

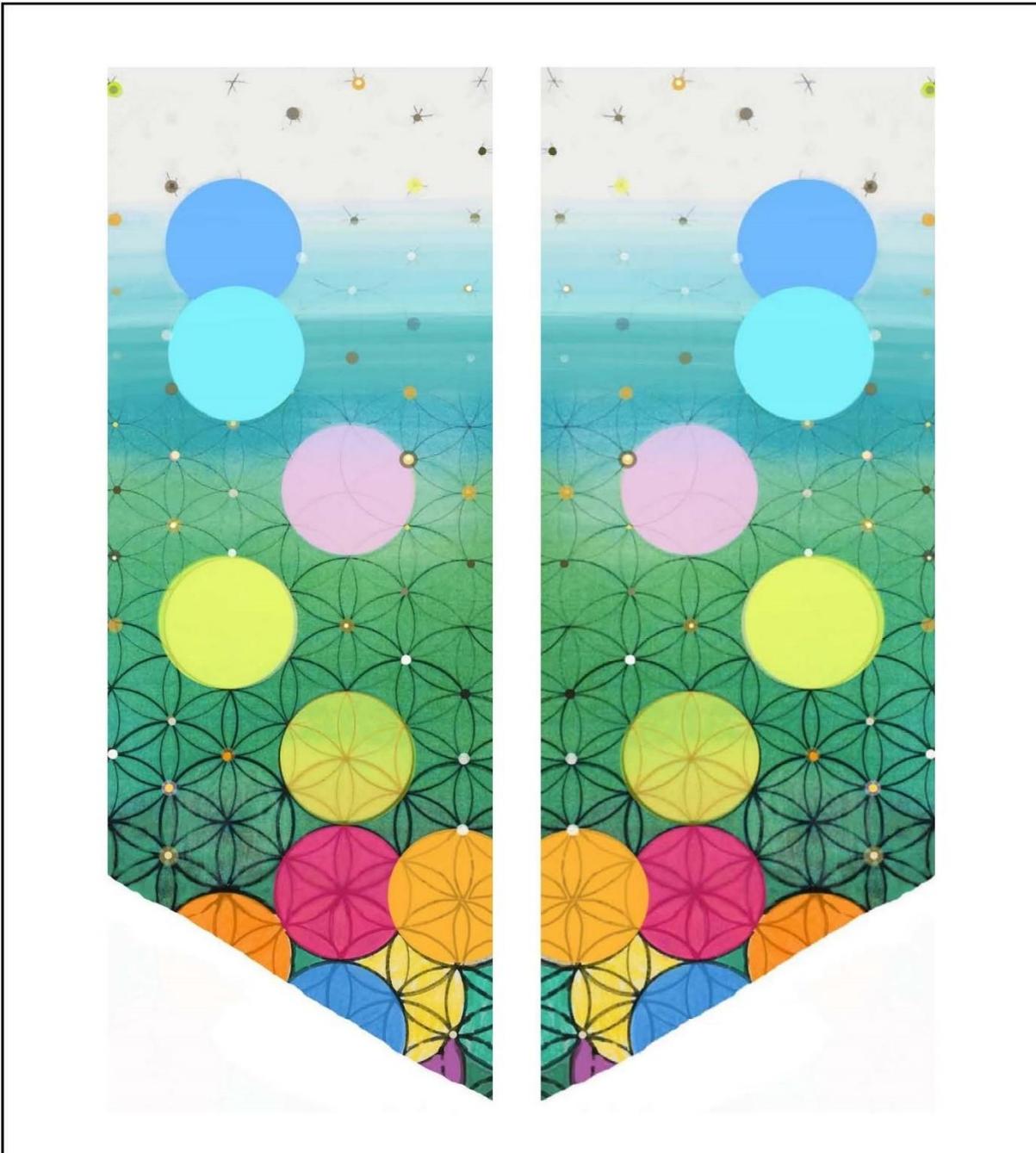
CONCLUSION

The Parks, Recreation & Culture Department recommends that Council authorize staff to undertake a contract with Nicoletta Baumeister to complete the design for the 2021 Public Art Street Banners.

Laurie Cavan
General Manager
Parks, Recreation & Culture

Appendix "I": Recommended Design by Nicoletta Baumeister for 2021 Public Art Street Banners

**Recommended Design by Nicoletta Baumeister
for 2021 Public Art Street Banners**



This design by artist Nicoletta Baumeister, *Seed/Flower/Fruit/Vegetable*, responds to both 2021 UNESCO themes: the Year of Peace and Trust and the Year of Fruit and Vegetables. Baumeister borrowed a motif of overlapping circles called the “Seed of Life” or “Flower of Life”, an ancient, Egyptian geometric design. The structure of all fruits and vegetables, including their seeds and flowers, are to be found in this design. Moreover, the design represents commonality and communication: the building blocks of trust.