

NO: R078

COUNCIL DATE: April 26, 2021

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council** DATE: **April 19, 2021**
FROM: **General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture** FILE: **7800-01**
SUBJECT: **Recommendation for Indigenous Public Art Projects in Library Facilities**

RECOMMENDATION

The Parks, Recreation and Culture Department recommends that Council:

1. Receive this report for information; and
2. Authorize staff to contract Joan Williams, Leslie Wells, Brandon Gabriel, Anthony Gabriel and Rain Pierre to complete the designs for Public Art at the Clayton Library and Community Centre, Cloverdale Library, Fleetwood Library and Semiahmoo Library as generally described in this report and attached as Appendix "I".

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to provide information on the Indigenous Public Art Projects in Library Facilities and to obtain Council approval to proceed with implementing the design for public art at the Clayton Library and Community Centre, Cloverdale Library, Fleetwood Library, and Semiahmoo Library.

BACKGROUND

The Public Art Master Plan has guided research into strategies for the creative enhancement of civic facilities and infrastructure. Strategies for cost effective introduction of public art at existing facilities has included the commissioning of creative designs to be fabricated in vinyl film.

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.

DISCUSSION

Call Process

Public art staff determined multiple sites for creative enhancement in consultation with stakeholders from Surrey Libraries: the wall above the pre-teen section at Fleetwood Library, a reading “nook” in Cloverdale Library, the wall above the information desk for Semiahmoo Library, and the children’s section and the child-minding room at the Clayton Library and Community Centre.

The process for commissioning and selecting preliminary designs by artists was guided by recommendations from the Chiefs from Kwantlen, Katzie and Semiahmoo First Nations. In December of 2020, 10 artists were prequalified to be invited to create design proposals:

- Brandon Gabriel (Kwantlen);
- Drew Atkins (Kwantlen);
- Leslie Wells (Semiahmoo);
- Rain Pierre (Katzie);
- Atheana Picha (Kwantlen);
- Joan Williams (Semiahmoo);
- Phyllis Atkins (Kwantlen);
- Roxanne Charles (Semiahmoo);
- Tony Gabriel (Kwantlen); and
- Elinor Atkins (Kwantlen)

Selection Process

On January 18, 2021, staff convened a selection panel to review all of the artists’ concept designs. Selection panel members included Elders from Semiahmoo First Nation, Kwantlen First Nation, Katzie First Nation, and Parks, Recreation & Culture staff. The selection panel unanimously voted to recommend the following five designs (one for each location). A copy of the artwork is attached as Appendix “I”.

- Rain Pierre, for the children’s corner, Clayton Library;
- Anthony Gabriel, for the child-minding room, Clayton Community Centre;
- Joan Williams, Cloverdale Library;
- Brandon Gabriel, Fleetwood Library; and
- Leslie Wells, Semiahmoo Library.

About the Artists and Artworks

Rain Pierre

Rain Pierre (sláməx^w), creator of Rain Awakens, is an artist from Katzie First Nation. In 2016, he shifted from a career in civil engineering to pursue art and to follow a path more aligned with his spirit. He makes artworks in a variety of mediums and has partnered with the school districts of Surrey, Maple Ridge, and Pitt Meadows to inspire young students.

Pierre's design for the children's corner, entitled "Bear with It", was created to show the phases and energy of the moon and sun. Pierre says, "The sun beaming on the children using this room will give them energy to learn and study. Each morning...we are given an opportunity to create a new day with love and inspiration." The mother bear and her cubs represent family and unity.

Anthony Gabriel

Anthony Gabriel is from the Kwantlen First Nation territory and specializes in hand-craft- engraved silver and gold jewellery.

Gabriel's design for the child-minding room windows is all about luck. It depicts dragonflies, a frog, and a heron, all in their natural element, and all bringing luck to the Centre.

Joan Williams

Joan Williams is a member of Semiahmoo First Nation. She has been interested in art since she was a child and studied at the Art Institute of Vancouver. Her body of work is focussed on weaving, drawing, and digital art.

Williams' design for Cloverdale Library is based on traditional weaving patterns done on blankets. The top row represents trees and sky, the middle section depicts flowers in a field, and the bottom, wavy section represents water. The artwork is a mix of contemporary and traditional techniques.

Brandon Gabriel

Brandon Gabriel is an artist of the Kwantlen First Nation and the youngest grandson of Chief Marilyn Gabriel. He studied at Kwantlen Polytechnic University, focussing on anthropology, and continued at Emily Carr University to complete a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Visual Arts. His art has been exhibited internationally and his other commissions have included the design for the 2010 BC Summer Games medal, a sculpture for the Stave Dam in Mission, a sculpture for the Surrey School District, and four buffalo hide drums in the City of Surrey public art collection, *Four Seasons*, which can be found in the Chuck Bailey Recreation Centre.

Gabriel's design for the Fleetwood Library wall, entitled *The Time When the Salmon Return* focusses on traditional Coast Salish styles and motifs. When creating the mural, Gabriel asked himself, "What is the most Salish thing about being Salish?" The answer for Gabriel was: salmon. He says, "Salmon are the central cultural, spiritual, economic, and artistic element in Coast Salish culture. Without this creature that has provided sustenance for our people, we wouldn't have a culture. One cannot exist without the other." Gabriel's design hearkens to archetypal representations of salmon but has a more modern and graphic ideation. He says, "I kept picturing a salmon returning from its journey into the Fraser River, changing colours, and making its way to the spawning grounds. The design represents both culture and creature in motion, and the forward movement of both at the same time."

Leslie Wells

Leslie Wells is an artist of the Semiahmoo First Nation. He has apprenticed with Haida artist Robert Davidson and creates carvings, paintings, jewellery, and prints. He has completed several public art commissions, including a totem pole in White Rock and a carving in the City of Surrey

public art collection: Under the Double Eagle and Elder Moon, which consists of two cedar disks carved by Wells with his fellow artist and brother, Leonard Wells. His work is often described as having a “quiet spirituality”, a quality expressed in his design for the Surrey Arts Centre program room windows.

Leslie Wells Design for Semiahmoo library, entitled “Wolf Spirit” depicts a man surrounded by his spirit guides – two wolves. The wolves, Wells says, are a hunter’s helpers, as “they will chase the deer right to your door.”

FUNDING

Funding for the implementation of multiple creative enhancements of civic infrastructure city-wide draws from the public art fund reserved for this purpose, established using part of the public art budget associated with the construction of the Operations Centre. \$203,661 currently remains available for new initiatives.

Matching funding for these five proposed creative enhancement projects will draw from the private development public art reserve funds, to create the budget required to implement the designs. The cost to implement these projects will be \$60,000 and includes artist fees, fabrication, installation and lifetime maintenance.

Subject to Council approval of the recommendations of this report, staff will proceed to complete the process to finalize the designs 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;
- Neighbourhoods & Urban Design DO 8: The built environment enhances quality of life, happiness and well-being;
- Neighbourhoods & Urban Design DO 15: All new buildings, public places and outdoor spaces are welcoming, safe and universally accessible;
- 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 and Culture Department recommends Council authorize staff to undertake contracts with Brandon Gabriel, Joan Williams and Leslie Wells to complete the designs for Public Art at the Clayton Library, Cloverdale Library, Fleetwood Library, and Semiahmoo Library as generally described in this report.

Laurie Cavan
General Manager
Parks, Recreation and Culture

Appendix "I" – Concept Designs

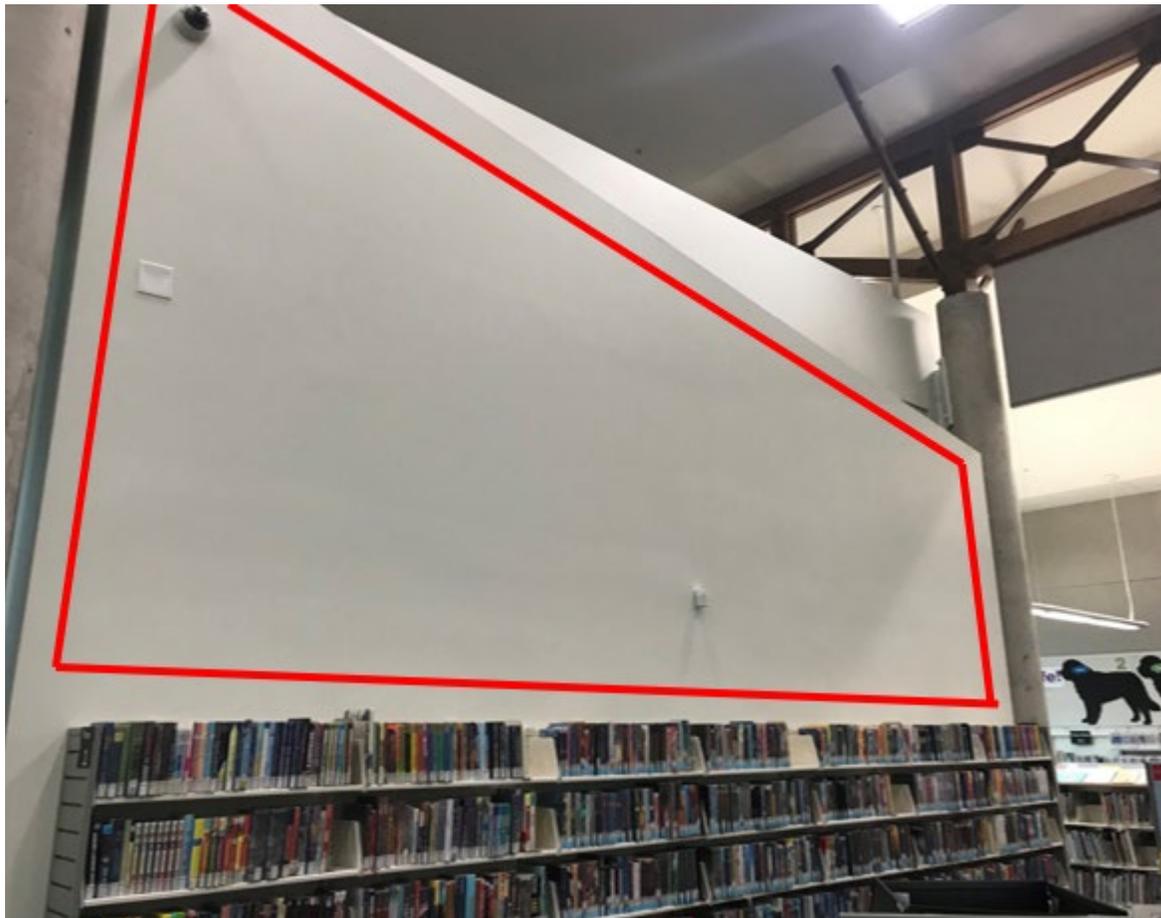
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CONCEPT DESIGNS

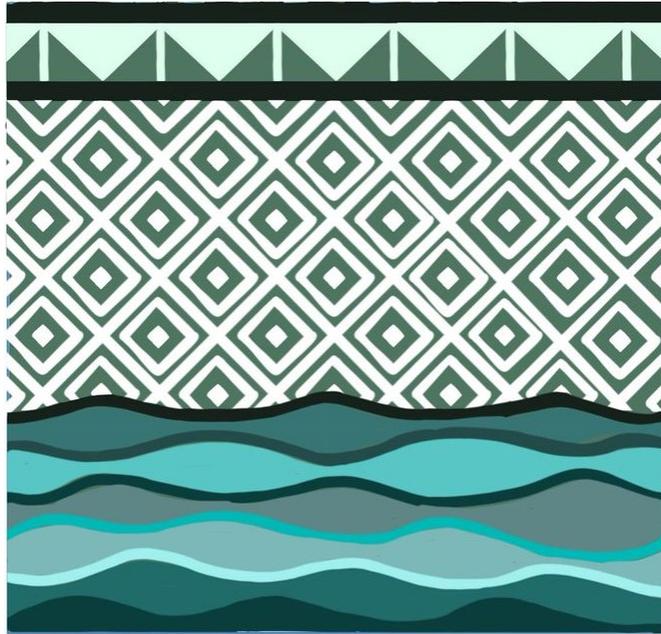
Concept Drawings by Brandon Gabriel for Fleetwood Library



Location of Public Art



Concept Drawings by Joan Williams for Cloverdale Library



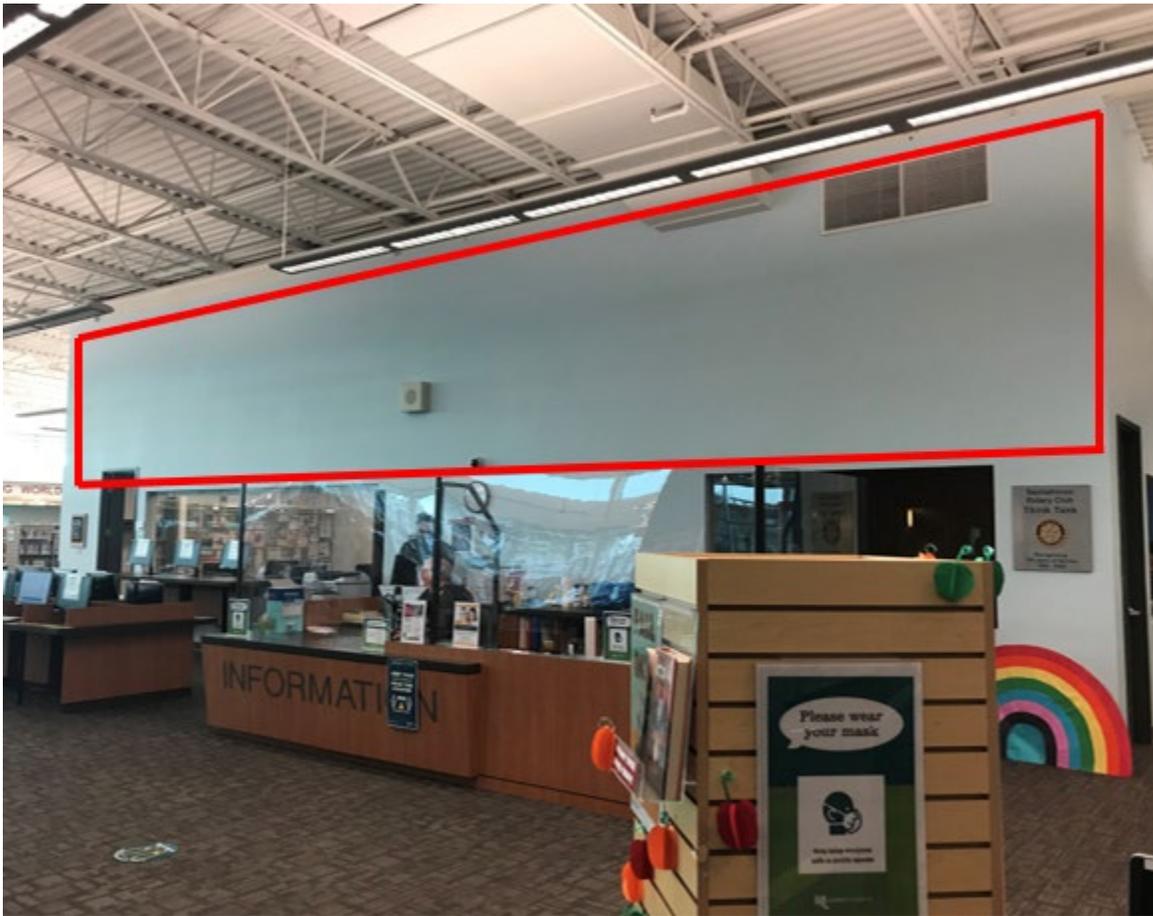
Location of Public Art



Concept Drawings by Leslie Wells for Semiahmoo Library



Location of Public Art



Concept Drawings by Rain Pierre for Children's Corner in Clayton Library



Location of Public Art



Concept Drawings by Anthony Gabriel for Child-Minding Room
in Clayton Community Centre



Location of Public Art

