



REPORT

TO: Mayor Lawlor and Members of Council

FROM: Glodeane Brown, Public Art Coordinator
Catherine McLeod, Manager of Culture and Equity, Diversity
and Inclusion

DATE: October 12, 2023

REPORT NO.: BEC-2023-007

SUBJECT: Library and Cultural Centre Plaza Indigenous Public Art Project

RECOMMENDATION:

That Report No. BEC-2023-007, dated October 12, 2023, regarding the Library and Cultural Centre Plaza Indigenous Public Art Project, be received;

AND FURTHER THAT, having already approved phase 1 funding of a single project through the 2022 Budget, Council approve phase 2 funding for the Public Art – Library and Cultural Centre Courtyard capital project (project 4000-10-2101), in order to enable the project's completion;

AND FURTHER THAT, phase 2 funding, in the amount of \$97,800, come from the existing Public Art Reserve, reducing the balance to zero.

AND FURTHER THAT Council direct staff to review the funding mechanism for the Public Art Program as part of the Public Art Policy Review and report back to Council on recommended approaches.

KEY POINTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- This is a one-integrated project, with two phases of funding.
- Phase 1 funding of this single project was approved through the 2022 capital budget process.

- Phase 2 funding of this project was reviewed through the 2023 capital budget process, and it was requested that staff report back to Council with options to roll out the project.
- Approval of phase 2 funding is required to implement the project, and sufficient funds are available in the Public Art Reserve.
- There is no tax impact and no additional funding is being sought.
- The project cannot proceed without approval of phase 2 funding.
- The Town is committed to advancing Truth and Reconciliation (TR).
- The Library & Cultural Centre Plaza Indigenous Public Art Project is part of the Town's broader Truth and Reconciliation (TR) initiatives.
- This project follows typical municipal practices and will engage Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous peoples, provide fair compensation to Indigenous arts professionals, and engage the community in public discourse and programming.
- Significant work has already taken place to advance this project.
- The Public Art Reserve is intended for public art projects and can be used as a funding source for this project.
- Public art was incorporated as part of the redevelopment phase of the Library and Cultural Centre Plaza.
- Initial consultation on this project has taken place with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.
- The Public Art Advisory Board (PAAB) developed and approved this project between 2019 – 2022.
- Additional background information on this project is included in Appendix 1 (attached).

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:

1. Context and History

The Library and Cultural Centre Plaza was identified as a key site for public art in the Public Art Master Plan. The Public Art Advisory Board (PAAB), made up of community stakeholders and Town staff, identified the plaza as an appropriate site for Indigenous public art since the Library & Cultural Centre is an important site for Indigenous programming facilitated through Cultural Services and the Halton Hills Public Library. The Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation flag has also been permanently raised at this location.

The installation of permanent public art at the highly visible and well-used Library and Cultural Centre Plaza presents opportunities for the advancement of Truth and Reconciliation, relationship-building, public engagement and education, and artistic expression. The intention of the public art piece is to create an opportunity for an Indigenous artist to create a contemporary artwork.

As part of Truth and Reconciliation efforts, the Library & Cultural Centre Plaza Indigenous Public Art will engage Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous peoples in project development, provide fair compensation to Indigenous arts professionals, engage the community (including the local Indigenous population) in public discussion, and result in a highly visible piece of contemporary Indigenous artwork demonstrating the continued development and advancement of Indigenous cultural and artistic practices. The Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation (MCFN) were informed of this project as were additional stakeholders in the process of developing the project. This project has been communicated publicly since 2021.

The Public Art Advisory Board supports the implementation of the Public Art Master Plan in coordination with Town staff and consultants, as needed. The previous PAAB (March 2018-February 2021) proposed the project idea in 2019/2020. The current PAAB (March 2021-Feb 2023) developed the project scope, scale, budget and concept.

2. Project Funding

The Public Art Reserve is the primary source of funding for Public Art projects. The reserve is funded through a contribution from the operating budget to maintain a minimum reserve balance of \$100,000 on an as-needed basis. As capital projects are approved, the reserve funding is transferred to the capital project to complete public art installations. This then requires operating funding to replenish the reserve, up to the \$100,000 minimum.

Due to the current structure of the Public Art Reserve, this single project was designed with two phases of funding and was described as ultimately being a single \$200,000 project. The two phases of funding were put in place to accumulate the required funding. A budget of \$92,000 (phase 1 funding) was approved through the 2022 budget and is available in a capital project.

A budget of \$97,800 (phase 2 funding) results in a total project budget of \$189,800. This represents about a \$10,000 reduction in the original project. Phase 2 funding will be derived from existing funds in the Public Art Reserve.

Phase 2 funding does not impact the operating budget.

Phase 2 funding is required to complete the project. Without Phase 2 funding, the project cannot proceed.

During 2023 Budget discussions related to this project, Council discussed, among other things, community engagement, project timing, scale, installation options, history, work completed thus far, the connection between phases 1 and 2, project budget, risks of delay or deferral, moving phase 2 funding to 2024, potential for sponsorship and alternative funding models, and the structure and function of the Public Art Reserve. Via the 2023 Budget, Council did not approve phase 2 funding, with the discussion suggesting that phase 2 funding be potentially requested at a later date. Council

approved staff direction asking staff to return with a report recommending potential options for the roll-out of the project.

Since then, Town staff have explored potential options, reviewed the project parameters and other municipal Indigenous public art projects, including a similar project recently launched by the Town of Whitby – among several other municipalities. This included considering options for adjustments to project scope, scale, processes and funding. Through this process, staff confirmed that best practices and processes for Indigenous public art are being implemented. In addition, the project's budget has been reduced by approximately \$10,000, while still allowing for the procurement of an impactful and permanent piece of public art and the implementation of the best possible processes.

Based on this review, and in light of the objectives, benefits, past approvals, communications, and the long-standing history of this project, and the fact that there is no operating budget impact, staff recommend proceeding with phase 2 funding. Doing so will allow for the project as originally intended in terms of benefits and objectives to be completed - while recognizing that since the original project was envisioned, construction, material and other costs have increased significantly and will impact the project's scale.

The existing \$97,800 currently in the Public Art Reserve was always intended to be used to complete the Library and Cultural Centre Plaza Indigenous Public Art Project. Transfer of these funds from the reserve to the capital project budget does not impact the current operating budget.

3. Project Elements

As shown in Figure 1, this is a single and integrated project with numerous elements. Therefore, the total project budget incorporates much more than the physical public art structure itself. It includes:

- Compensation for Indigenous curator(s) and artist(s);
- Commissioning process;
- Consultant fees (e.g. engineer, architect, conservator, etc.);
- Fabrication;
- Transportation;
- Installation;
- Public consultation;
- Development and delivery of community programming in the Cultural Centre Plaza;
- Marketing; and
- Documentation.

Figure 1: Integrated Project with Multiple Elements

INDIGENOUS PUBLIC ART BUDGET



4. Progress and Community Engagement

Significant work has already been undertaken on the project, including the development of the project brief and budget, initial consultation with Recreation & Parks and Halton Hills Public Library staff, coordination with Purchasing staff, review of best practices for Indigenous Public Art Projects, communication with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, and research and development of the Indigenous Public Art Curator Call.

In addition, communications and public consultation are planned to take place throughout the project. This public art project will be developed in consultation with Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, the Public Art Advisory Board, and key stakeholders with a focus on relationship-building, transparency, creative expression, and reconciliation.

For additional project detail please refer to Appendix 1 (attached).

5. Public Art Reserve Review

To ensure the optimal performance of the Public Art Reserve and to address its current limitations, it is recommended that staff review funding mechanisms for the Public Art Program and report back to Council with recommendations as part of a future Public Art Policy Review. This will ensure that public art continues to amplify local community benefits, including through community engagement, professional development and mentorship for local artists, tourism opportunities, and leveraging the local arts and culture sector which contributes to the creative economy and quality of life in Halton Hills.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This report aligns to the Town's Strategic plan recognizing the value to foster a healthy community that provides a clean environment and range of economic and social opportunities to ensure a superior quality of life in our community.

This report also identifies shaping growth as one of the Town's Strategic priorities.

RELATIONSHIP TO CLIMATE CHANGE:

This report is administrative in nature and does not directly impact or address climate change and the Town's Net Zero target.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Public Engagement will be required; consultation with Communications staff to follow.

Public Consultation took place during the development of the Public Art Master Plan (which identified the plaza as a key location for public art) and the redevelopment phase of the Library and Cultural Centre Plaza. The Public Art Advisory Board developed and supports the project. Further public engagement will take place during the project and will be key to its success.

INTERNAL CONSULTATION:

In preparation for this report, staff from Purchasing and Finance were consulted.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

This report will be funded through an existing approved budget source.

Phase 1 funding for the Library & Cultural Centre Indigenous Public Art project (4000-10-2101) was approved through the 2022 capital budget. Phase 2 funding is required to move forward with the project. This requires a funding transfer from the existing Public Art Reserve of \$97,800 resulting in the total budget for this single project being \$189,800. Phase 2 funding uses existing funds and has no tax impact. The Public Art Reserve will have a zero-balance following this transfer.

Reviewed and approved by,

Moya Jane Leighton, Director of Finance & Town Treasurer

Damian Szybalski, Commissioner of Business, Environment & Culture

John Linhardt, Commissioner of Planning & Development and Acting Chief
Administrative Officer