



Report: PDL-CUL-15-11

Region of Waterloo
Planning, Development and Legislative Services
Cultural Services

To: Chair Lorentz and Members of the Community Services Committee

Date: May 26, 2015 **File Code:** R-07-02

Subject: Public Art in the ION Rapid Transit Corridor

Recommendation:

That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo endorse the proposed approach for incorporating permanent place-making public art at selected ION Rapid Transit Stops, in Cambridge, Kitchener and Waterloo, including an enhanced community engagement process, as outlined in Report PDL-CUL-15-11, dated May 26, 2015.

Summary:

The Region of Waterloo, in collaboration with Area Municipalities and the Creative Enterprise Initiative (CEI), has begun planning for the incorporation of public art in the ION Rapid Transit Corridor. This work is being divided into two related undertakings: encouraging public art in the broader Central Transit Corridor (CTC); and the inclusion of art and culture in the ION infrastructure project.

Research and discussions are underway on potential options for a long-term approach to promoting and funding public art in the CTC. This work will result in a public art strategy or guideline that would outline a collaborative corridor-wide approach to public art within the CTC.

With respect to the ION infrastructure project, the Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC) has developed a potential approach to incorporating permanent, place-making public art into the LRT portion of the ION project. Based on the number of pieces to be commissioned at one time, and the desire for the process to be a means of community building, the Committee supports the selection of site specific public art for seven prioritized LRT station stops, using an enhanced public art community engagement and artist selection process.

If the proposed approach outlined in this report is endorsed by Regional Council, a consultant would be engaged to further refine the process and facilitate the public consultation. The anticipated timeline is, the fall of 2015 - consultant facilitated community workshops, preceded by an information report to Council, spring 2016 – Call to Artists containing stakeholder input, summer 2016 – development of options for individual art pieces with community input, fall 2016 – Artworks recommended to Council and 2017 – Artworks created and installed.

Along the aBRT portion of the ION Project, two locations for public art have been identified at the Cambridge Centre Terminal and the Ainslie Street Terminal. These are independent projects which will follow the Region's public art commissioning process. The Hespeler Road Grade Separation banner project also provides an opportunity for public art along the route.

In addition to commissioning public artworks, Cultural Services staff will work with Rapid Transit staff, Area Municipal staff, and community stakeholders on several additional arts and culture related initiatives, including design-related site improvement projects at specific ION stops, review of anchor wall designs and organization of construction milestone celebrations, cultural animation and temporary public art along the ION route.

Report:

Public Art provides many social, cultural and economic benefits. Artworks can be stimulus for place-making, allow for community collaboration, provide opportunities for artistic expression, foster community-identity, encourage a sense of ownership and responsibility for the artwork and public infrastructure and enrich economic development efforts.

In planning for the ION Rapid Transit Project, the Region undertook a Community Building Strategy (CBS), with the aim of assisting with shaping the Region's growth and development in the Central Transit Corridor (CTC). This planning document outlined eight community building opportunities, one of which was "Creating a Great Place to Live". As part of creating a great place to live, the CBS recommended that the Region, in consultation with Area Municipal and community partners, develop a Public Art Strategy for the CTC.

To date, through the work of the Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC), and in consultation with the Cities of Cambridge, Kitchener and Waterloo, and the Creative Enterprise Initiative (CEI), the Region has begun planning for the incorporation of public art in the ION Rapid Transit Corridor.

This work is being divided into two related undertakings, encouraging public art in the broader CTC and the inclusion of art and culture in the ION infrastructure project.

Public Art in the CTC

In collaboration with Area Municipalities and the CEI, the Region has initiated an inventory of existing and potential public artworks in the CTC, and begun research and discussions on options for a long-term approach to promoting and funding public art in the CTC. This work
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It is expected that public art would also be incorporated as part of the Region's King Central Transit Hub project and at several additional high priority locations (i.e. Northfield Drive, University of Waterloo and Seagram Drive stops) through partnerships with Area Municipalities and adjacent property owners. Public art at the remaining eight LRT stops is a lower priority due to physical space restrictions and/or the prevalence of existing and potential public artworks in the area.

Along the aBRT portion of the route, two public art installations are planned. The commissioning of public art for the Cambridge Center Terminal is underway, and future public art at the Ainslie Street Terminal is being planned for in consultation with the City of Cambridge, and in conjunction with other public artworks being planned nearby. The Hespeler Road Grade Separation banner project also provides an opportunity for public art along the route.

Enhanced Public Art Commissioning Process

In recognition that the commissioning of seven public art projects at one time for the ION LRT stops is a significant project and a key opportunity for community building, PAAC has recommended an enhanced artwork selection process. The intent is to provide for greater community involvement in establishing themes and shaping the designs. In the adapted process, each of the seven ION artworks would have a location specific theme defined using input from community stakeholders. This approach would promote a strong connection to the local community, encourage a sense of ownership for both the art and the ION infrastructure, and provide an opportunity for community-based place-making.

An independent consultant would be contracted to undertake a facilitated community input process, with the results used to inform the Stage 1 Call for Artists proposals. Artists' submissions would be required to include a summary of the artists' related skills and experience, including experience working with community stakeholders, as well as a description of a range of site specific artwork concepts that reflect the community's input.

A jury selected by Regional Council would then match an artist with each ION stop, and during Stage 2 of the artwork selection process, the artists would work to refine two or three alternative artwork designs, with community input as agreed upon by the artist and key stakeholders. This approach of commissioning individual artworks from multiple artists who would each work with stakeholder input, would add variety in terms of materials, approaches, and expressions. Artists would present a minimum of two refined designs to the jury, who would select one artwork for each ION stop for final recommendation to Council.

If the proposed approach outlined above is endorsed by Regional Council, a consultant would be engaged to further refine the process and facilitate the public consultation. Information on the upcoming opportunity for community engagement on the public art project would be broadly communicated to the public.

The anticipated timeline is the fall of 2015 - consultant facilitated community workshops, preceded by an information report to Council, spring 2016 – Call to Artists containing stakeholder input, summer 2016 – development of options for individual art pieces with community input, fall 2016 – artworks recommended to Council and 2017 – Artworks created and installed.

In addition to commissioning public artworks, Cultural Services staff will work with Rapid Transit staff, Area Municipal staff and community stakeholders on several additional arts and culture related initiatives including design-related site improvement projects at specific ION stops, review of anchor wall designs and organization of construction milestone celebrations, cultural animation and temporary public art.

Area Municipal Consultation/Coordination

The Region works in partnership with Area Municipal staff in the promotion of Public Art Projects and Programs throughout the Region, and has met with Kitchener, Waterloo and Cambridge staff and Arts and Culture Advisory Committee to discuss public art in the CTC.

Corporate Strategic Plan:

This public art project supports Focus Area 2 and the specific action of “promote and enhance arts, culture and heritage”.

Financial Implications:

The cost of the initial consulting for the ION LRT Public Art Project would be covered by the existing cultural services budget.

The suggested budget for public artwork for the ION project is being estimated at \$50,000 to \$80,000 per artwork. Assuming that there would be public art installed at seven ION stops, the budget for the project would be \$350,000 - \$560,000.

As approved by Regional Council during the budget process in 2003 and 2008, major Regional capital projects contribute \$30,000 towards a public artwork, which is then topped up through the Public Art Reserve Fund. The ION Rapid Transit Project would contribute \$210,000 from the project’s capital budget that would go towards funding the seven public artworks recommended for incorporation into the infrastructure project.

The Public Art Reserve Fund has an additional \$224,000 that could be made available for the commissioning the ION related artworks. At the beginning of 2015, \$486,000 was held in the Public Art Reserve Fund. Of these funds, \$106,000 is earmarked for the Cambridge Centre and Former County Courthouse public art projects, \$105,000 for other anticipated but not yet approved artworks at Regional facilities and \$51,000 for the ongoing maintenance of the public art collection and the Region’s art rental program.

The combined contributions from the ION project's capital budget and the Public Art Reserve Fund are sufficient to cover the cost of the proposed public art project.

Other Department Consultations/Concurrence:

Cultural Services staff is working closely with Rapid Transit, Transit Planning and Community Planning staff on all aspects of this Public Art project. The future opportunity for public consultation on the ION public art project was introduced at the ION anchor wall public consultation centres as outlined in Report TES-RTS-15-05, Public Consultation Centres for ION Stop Anchor Wall Designs.

Attachments:

Attachment 1 - Assessment of ION LRT Stops for the Potential Inclusion of Public Art

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Approved By: Rob Horne, Commissioner, Planning, Development and Legislative Services

Attachment 1 - Assessment of ION LRT Stops for the Potential Inclusion of Public Art

ION LRT Stops	Good Location for Place-making / Community Building	Limited Existing Public Art Nearby	Limited Potential for Adjacent Public Art	Physical Space Available at ION Stop	Public Art Recommended
Conestoga Mall	√	√	√	√	√
Northfield Drive	√	√			
R&T Park	√	√		√	√
University of Waterloo	√	√			
Seagram Drive		√			
Willis Way					
Waterloo Town Square					
Allen Street	√	√	√		
Grand River Hospital	√	√	√	√	√
Transit Hub	√	√		√	√ (Planned)
Gaukel Street					
Benton Street			√		
Young Street					
Frederick Street			√		
Cedar Street	√	√	√	√	√
Borden Avenue	√	√	√		
Mill Street	√	√	√	√	√
Blockline Road	√	√	√	√	√
Fairview Park Mall	√	√	√	√	√

- Notes:
- ION stops noted as good locations for place-making/community building include stops where the introduction of public art would have a significant impact on the location’s sense of place and/or provide a community landmark.
 - The location of existing public artworks and the potential for additional public artworks planned in partnership with and/or by others adjacent to the ION route were considered in making these recommendations.
 - Physical space available for public art at ION stops includes adjacent landscaped areas, retaining walls, and/or platform areas beyond the standard ION stop footprint.
 - Public art installations in Cambridge are planned, and so are excluded from this chart.