



Report: PDL-CUL-15-16

Region of Waterloo

Planning, Development and Legislative Services

Cultural Services

To: Chair Lorentz and Members of the Community Services Committee

Date: October 6, 2015

File Code: R-07-02

Subject: **Public Art for the ION LRT Corridor – Upcoming Community Consultation**

Recommendation:

For Information.

Summary:

Regional Council approved an approach to the incorporation of permanent place-making public art at selected ION Rapid Transit Stops, in Cambridge, Kitchener and Waterloo, through Report No. PDL-CUL-15-11, dated May 26, 2015.

This report describes the intended process for engaging the community in planning for the seven public artworks that are to be commissioned for the following ION LRT stops: Conestoga, Research & Technology, Grand River Hospital, Kitchener Market, Mill, Block Line, and Fairway. The process for commissioning public artwork at the Cambridge Centre transit terminal is underway and has its own public consultation process, as does the public artwork proposed for the Ainslie Street transit terminal.

The public art community engagement process for the LRT portion of the ION will take place this fall. Through their input, community members will be helping to shape the form and theme of the artworks that will be created for the ION LRT stops where they live, work and play.

The objectives of the community consultation are to determine community members' vision for public art, define key characteristics at the local scale that may be celebrated through ION public art, and build excitement for this upcoming project. Community input will be sought online and through two interactive workshops being held in late October (Saturday October 24 at Rockway Centre in Kitchener and Tuesday October 27 at the Waterloo Memorial Recreation Complex), facilitated by Urban Strategies Inc. Information on the opportunities to provide input will be broadly communicated to the general public as well as to a diverse range of stakeholders.

Following the public consultation, the anticipated project timeline is the spring of 2016 – Call to Artists which reflects the input received from the community consultations, summer of 2016 – development of options for individual art pieces with community input, fall of 2016 – Artworks recommended to Council and 2017 – Artworks created and installed.

Report:

An approach to incorporating permanent placemaking public art at selected ION Rapid Transit Stops was approved by Regional Council on May 26, 2015, Report No. PDL-CUL-15-11. As outlined in the earlier report, the ION public art project includes artworks at seven selection ION LRT stops (Conestoga, Research & Technology, Grand River Hospital, Kitchener Market, Mill, Block Line, and Fairway), as well as the artworks which are being planned for the Cambridge Centre and Ainslie Street transit terminals. The commissioning process for public artwork at the Cambridge Centre transit terminal is underway and has its own consultation process, as does the artwork proposed for the Ainslie Street transit terminal.

This report describes the intended community consultation process for the seven ION artworks in Kitchener and Waterloo. Undertaking an enhanced artwork selection process was recommended in recognition that the commissioning of seven public art projects at one time is a significant project and a key opportunity for community building. It is expected that involving community stakeholders early and often in the art selection process will 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.

The consultation process is being undertaken by Regional Cultural Heritage staff, supported by a small consulting assignment with Urban Strategies Inc. Melanie Hare, from Urban Strategies Inc., who will be facilitating the community consultation, led the Region's Community Building Strategy and is currently working with the City of Waterloo on their station area planning.

To date, with the direction of the Region's Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC) and Urban Strategies Inc., staff have refined a community consultation process, and are now ready to proceed. The planned consultation process includes opportunities to provide input both in person and online. Two hands-on interactive workshops are planned for late October:

- Saturday October 24, 3 to 5 p.m., Rockway Centre
- Tuesday October 27, 7 to 9 p.m., Waterloo Memorial Recreation Centre

Both workshops will provide identical opportunities to participate, but are varied in time and location to encourage as much participation as possible. In addition, an online survey will be available on the Region's website at www.regionofwaterloo.ca/publicart.

The objectives of the community workshops are to determine community members' vision for public art, define key characteristics at the local scale that may be celebrated through ION public art, and build excitement for this upcoming project. Sample discussion questions

include, What kinds of public artwork appeal to you? What is it about their form, function, aesthetics, message, etc. that appeals to you? Who are the key audiences for the ION public art? What function(s) could the art play? What is important and unique about the proposed artwork locations? A community mapping exercise will be used to collectively identify key themes and community attributes. Through their input, community members will be helping to shape the form and theme of the artworks that will be created for the ION LRT stops where they live, work and play.

The Community input will be compiled and distributed with the call to artists to help them to understand what community aspects could be reflected at each stop. Input will also be provided to the jury to assist with refining the site specific artwork selection criteria.

Information on the opportunities for public input will be widely circulated as hard copy posters in public locations (community and recreation centres, libraries, galleries, businesses, etc.), through electronic mailing lists and events postings, and through social and traditional media. The diverse group of stakeholders include local residents and property owners, neighbourhood associations, local businesses (R&T Park, malls, market vendors, etc.), neighbouring institutions (hospital, schools, places of worship, etc.), artists, arts and culture organizations (advisory committees, artist collectives, CEI, multicultural groups, First Nations organizations, etc.), and transit users.

Following public consultation, the anticipated timeline is the spring of 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.

Area Municipal Consultation/Coordination

Regional Cultural heritage staff work in partnership with Area Municipal staff in the promotion of Public Art projects and programs throughout the Region, and have 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 community consultation the ION LRT Public Art Project is covered by the 2015 Cultural Heritage operating budget.

In May 2015, Council approved a suggested budget for public artwork for the ION project estimated at \$50,000 to \$80,000 per artwork, which assuming that there would be public art installed at seven ION stops, an overall budget for the project of \$350,000 - \$560,000.

The ION Rapid Transit Project plans to contribute \$210,000 (\$30,000 per artwork, the usual contribution from infrastructure projects) 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. 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. The proposed artworks and actual expenditures would be recommended to Regional Council for approval.

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.

Attachments:

Nil.

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