

LATE DISTRIBUTION FOR COUNCIL - JULY 21, 2009

A19



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: July 6, 2009
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Meeting Date: July 21, 2009

TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: Managing Director of Cultural Services
SUBJECT: Public Art Maintenance

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council authorize the repair and restoration of the public artworks *Brush With Illumination* and *Working Landscape* at an estimated combined cost of up to \$90,000, with the source of funds to be the Public Art Maintenance Reserve.
- B. THAT the Managing Director of Cultural Services in consultation with the Director of Legal Services be authorized to enter contracts or purchase agreements as needed to repair the artworks in A, above.

GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager of Community Services RECOMMENDS A and B.

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager RECOMMENDS approval of the foregoing.

COUNCIL POLICY

The Public Art Program for Civic and Private Development was adopted in 1990. In 2008, Council a series of Program revisions, including a recommendation that staff complete and report back on a collection management policy and guidelines, including public art

maintenance, in six months. That report back has been delayed pending the availability of staff and completion of an ambitious public art program being prepared for 2010.

The City has an ethical and often a legal responsibility to maintain artworks commissioned for, or donated to, civic lands.

PURPOSE

This report requests Council authority to make repairs and improvements to the public artworks *Brush With Illumination* and *Working Landscape* at an estimated combined cost of up to \$90,000, with the source of funds to be the Public Art Maintenance Reserve.

BACKGROUND

The Public Art Maintenance Reserve was established in 1994 as an interest-bearing reserve dedicated to the conservation of artworks commissioned by or donated to the City. Since 1994, artworks sited on civic lands, whether commissioned by the City or donated by others, provide a minimum of 10 percent of the commission budget or assessed value to the Reserve. The maintenance of artworks which have contributed to the Reserve is paid from that source.

DISCUSSION

City artwork commission contracts oblige the City to maintain artworks, reasonably, to the degree necessary to preserve artwork function and artistic integrity. Artwork maintenance is currently provided in three ways:

- Engineering Services, through its inspection services and graffiti management program, routinely inspects and removes graffiti from public art works located on City streets, right of way, and buildings.
- A contractor to the public art program coordinates cleaning, conservation, and minor repair services, as needed, when consultation with the artist or the artwork fabricator is required but the work is of limited scope and within his capacity to perform.
- Major repairs and conservation measures are assessed by the maintenance contractor, in consultation with the artist when possible, and contracted out to fabricators and specialists to restore and maintain the integrity of the work.

In June, 2008, Council approved a recommendation that staff develop and report back on a collection management policy and guidelines, including a comprehensive approach to the conservation of our growing public art collection. We have delayed that report in deference to an ambitious program of public art being developed for 2010, and will report back after the Games.

Brush with Illumination: Up to \$50,000

Buster Simpson's *Brush With Illumination* was commissioned by Concord Pacific and installed in False Creek in 1996. The work is an interactive kinetic sculpture that has its own website, operated from a computer and camera located at the Dedicated Fire Protection System pump station in David Lam Park. The artwork is due for a major refit and many parts need to be replaced and/or upgraded. The artist has designed modifications to the structure and its

programming which will improve its performance and interactivity. The artwork's False Creek location necessitates using a boat and small barge to access the structure and make the repairs, which are best performed in summer due to low tides. Staff want to complete the repairs and improvements for the enjoyment of adjacent live-site crowds during 2010. Costs for the various new parts, fabricators, and programming are estimated at close to \$50,000. We request authority to spend up to that amount on these improvements and repairs.

Working Landscape: Up to \$40,000

Daniel Laskarin's *Working Landscape* was installed on a street-level plaza on top of a City Parkade at 901 West Hastings in 1998. Recognizing the plaza as a social space, the artist designed four turntables of differing size, three of which were mechanized to rotate once fully in, respectively, one, eight, and forty hours. These times approximate the lunch hour, the work day, and the work week. The original project budget was insufficient to mechanize the fourth turntable, which was intended to rotate every 20 minutes. Since its installation, thousands of office workers have taken coffee or a sandwich to a bench on one of the turntables, and rotated slowly through the time allotted to their break from work.

In 2005, a substantial residential development was approved for a site just east and south of the plaza. Because the new building will increase shadowing on the plaza and lessen its amenity, the developer agreed, among other conditions of development, to upgrade the materials and function of the *Working Landscape* artwork, and mechanize its fourth turntable. Accordingly, \$500,000 was deposited in the public art maintenance reserve for this purpose.

To date, approximately \$30,000 has been spent upgrading the existing drive mechanisms. A new mechanism for the fourth turntable, plus new decking, plant material, and more comfortable benches will complete the upgrades. The \$40,000 requested here will complete this phase of the work.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Public Art Maintenance Reserve currently holds \$1.035 million. Council approval of the allocations recommended above would leave a balance of \$945,000.

There are no implications for the Operating Budget in this request.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Maintaining artworks in the public realm is no less important than maintaining any other City asset, and is a legal responsibility. Keeping civic assets in good repair contributes to citizen ownership and pride in the public realm.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

This work will be performed by contractors under the supervision of the Public Art Program Manager.

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