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Date June 21, 2022 **Report No.** 2022-426

To Chair and Members
Brantford Cultural Advisory Committee

From Kara Davey
Arts & Culture Development Officer

1.0 Type of Report

Consent Item ☐
Item For Consideration ☒

2.0 Topic TH&B Crossing Bridge Public Art Proposal

3.0 Recommendation

- A. THAT Report 2022-426 regarding the TH&B Public Art Proposal BE RECEIVED; and
- B. THAT the TH&B Public Art Proposal Project BE APPROVED by the Brantford Cultural Advisory Committee.

4.0 Executive Summary

At their meeting on May 24, 2022, the Public Art Subcommittee discussed the TH&B Crossing Bridge Public Art Proposal (Appendix A), as proposed and presented by the Policy and Program Support Analyst and the Manager of Business Support and Sustainability from the Public Works Commission.

The Public Art Subcommittee is in support of this project, which seeks to both beautify the city and combat the vandalism and graffiti that is an ongoing issue at the TH&B Crossing Bridge.

There are 112 panels available for community members to paint and community members will be invited to submit their designs for review. A team comprised of staff from the Public Works Commission and Economic Development and Tourism Department will screen, assess and carefully select submissions for painting by community members. All submissions will be subject to the City's Public Art Policy and Sign By-law, and submissions must be relevant to Brantford's history, culture, people, events or locations. The panels will be available to paint in late Summer 2022 and maintained by the Public Works Commission in partnership with the chosen applicants.

5.0 Purpose and Overview

The purpose of this report is to inform the Brantford Cultural Advisory Committee of the recommendations made by the Public Art Subcommittee regarding the new Public Art proposal discussed at the Public Art Subcommittee meeting held on May 24, 2022.

6.0 Background

The City of Brantford approved the Public Arts Policy (CORPORATE-035) in January 2010. Council's responsibilities under the approved Policy include authorizing expenditures from the Public Art Reserve Fund, as well as receiving recommendations concerning the acquisition, loan, or deaccession of Public Art.

The Economic Development and Tourism Department assumed the annual maintenance and restoration, as well as coordination of new acquisitions, of the City's Public Art Collection following the approval of the Public Arts Policy in 2010.

The proposed project will not be withdrawing from the Public Art Reserve as it will be fully funded by the Public Works Minor Capital budget (WK1906).

6.1 TH&B Crossing Bridge

In recent years, TH&B Crossing Bridge has been subjected to extensive vandalism. The unwanted graffiti that can be seen on the bridge is inappropriate in some cases and does not align with the values of the City. Areas of the City with Public Art installations or murals have proven to be less likely to be tagged by graffiti.

6.1.1 Other Measures to Address Graffiti

In December 2020, Public Works and Communications and Community Engagement staff worked together to initiate an effective new method to curb instances of graffiti on City-owned traffic boxes that, unfortunately, are a major target for graffiti throughout the City.

In 2021, in an effort to curb the incidents of graffiti in the City of Brantford, City Council approved amendments to Chapter 556 – Public Nuisance, making it an offence to apply or place graffiti.

In March 2022, City staff prepared a report to Council providing an update on measures to address graffiti (2022-171). This report stated that, to date, Chapter 497 has been successfully used to respond to seven graffiti related complaints. In addition, the City has become increasingly responsive to graffiti.

Ongoing efforts to address and deter graffiti aligns with other corporate initiatives, such as:

- building relationships with the Police and utility companies to identify problem areas and strategies on the removal of graffiti;
- reaching out to private residents and companies on how the City can assist in removing the graffiti; and
- developing an education campaign targeted to businesses to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities to remove graffiti from the exterior of their buildings as per the City's Lot Maintenance and Waste by-law, Chapter 492.

7.0 Corporate Policy Context

7.1 Council Priorities 2021-2022

- Desired Outcome #1: All neighbourhoods in the City are safe, vibrant, attractive and inclusive.
- Desired Outcome #9: Dedicated, sustainable spaces are provided for heritage, arts and culture.

7.2 Economic Development Strategy (2016)

Recommended Action 7.2.2: Continue to update public infrastructure and beautify public amenities (sidewalks, streetscape, signage, public art, etc.) to ensure the continued revitalization of Brantford's downtown

7.3 Municipal Cultural Plan (2014)

Goal 3: Provide and develop space for cultural activities

- Strategic Action 3B: Continue implementing the Public Art Policy, including development procedures for the temporary display of artwork.
- Strategic Action 3C: Encourage local developers and civic construction projects to include public art in order to enhance pride of place and develop a distinct sense of place and community.

7.4 Public Arts Policy (CORPORATE-035)

The City of Brantford recognizes the value of art in public places that reflects the diversity of our community, provides unique attractions for citizens and visitors, and strengthens community pride. Public Art celebrates our culture, history, people, events and locations while enhancing our economic vibrancy.

7.5 Sign By-law - Murals (By-law 51-2018)

This project aligns with the primary objectives, as well as the themes and quality related to murals within the Sign By-law (51-2018). The primary objectives of the murals guidelines are:

- to encourage the erection of murals that depict scenes relating to the natural and cultural history of Brantford and outlying area and which enhance the streetscape; and
- to ensure that murals are properly constructed and maintained.

The Theme and Quality section of the By-law outlines that:

- The mural shall depict images relating to the natural and cultural history of Brantford and outlying area;

- The mural shall be visually attractive and;
- The mural shall complement the streetscape.

7.6 Public Nuisance (By-law Chapter 556)

- This by-law defines a public nuisance, and includes enforcement measures for those found to be in contravention.
- “Graffiti” means an unauthorized and deliberate defacement of property and includes markings, of one or more letters, symbol, marks, designs or drawings placed on any structure, place or thing without the consent of the property owner, excluding all signs as permitted in the Outdoor Sign By-law.

8.0 Input From Other Sources

This report was prepared in consultation with the Public Art Subcommittee and the Public Works Commission.

9.0 Analysis

In an effort to combat the unwanted graffiti around Brantford’s trail network, the City is proposing a pilot project to bring the community together to repaint and deter unwanted graffiti on the TH&B Crossing Bridge. This project will bring together local organizations, community groups and individual artists to revitalize this important connection in Brantford’s trail network, specifically through community-focused Public Art.

This pilot project attempts to curb or combat the extensive vandalism that TH&B Crossing Bridge has been subjected to over the last several years. The graffiti exhibited on the bridge is frequently inappropriate and does not reflect the values of the City. If successful in its efforts to combat vandalism, this pilot project can be used as potential strategy for other parts of the City and trail network that experience vandalism.

In April 2022, City staff had the inner panels of the bridge painted to cover the extensive graffiti. Prior to the proposed Public Art Project taking place, City staff will ensure that the panels are touched up again if required.

There are 112 panels available for community members to paint and community members will be invited to submit their designs for review. Pending City Council

approval, the City's Communications and Community Engagement Department will launch a Public Art Submission Campaign (including social media, flyers, digital signs, etc.) to promote the project and encourage submissions. Individuals, community groups and local organizations may submit up to 5 panel designs each. Designs that integrate a number of panels into a larger cohesive piece will be given priority. Submissions must be relevant to Brantford's history, culture, people, events or locations. All submissions will be subject to the City's Public Arts Policy and Signs By-Law and will be screened, assessed and carefully selected by a team comprised of staff from the City's Public Works Commission and Economic Development and Tourism Department.

The 112 panels that make up TH&B Crossing Bridge vary in size. The height of each panel is 4.4 feet. The width varies through the length of the bridge, some panels are 7 feet wide and others are closer to 8 feet wide. Selected artists must be available to paint their panel onsite. The City will provide painting supplies including paint brushes, mixing cups, and primary paint colours to the selected artists. For the next five years following completion of the painting, Parks and Facilities Services staff will closely monitor the bridge to help curb vandalism or graffiti, reaching out to artists if any touch-ups or alterations of their work are required. Participants will also be encouraged to look after the appearance of their artwork.

The eventual plan for TH&B Crossing Bridge is for it to be removed at the end of its service life, based on the recommendations from the Three Grand River Crossings Environmental Assessment. This public art project along with repairs to the deck will provide a rehabilitated appearance for the Bridge until such time as it is removed.

10.0 Financial Implications

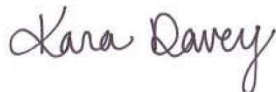
There are no current or ongoing financial implications to the TH&B Bridge Public Art Proposal from the Public Art Reserve or implications on staff time in the Economic Development and Tourism Department to monitor and remediate graffiti. City staff will be funding the project through the Public Works Minor Capital budget (WK1906). The Public Works Commission will also provide the funding for the costs required to remediate future graffiti damage.

The total budget for the TH&B Public Art Proposal project is outlined in Appendix A. This project will cost \$19,500 in total, including the pre-painting of bridge panels, artist paint and supplies, communications and the annual maintenance of the artwork for a period of five years.

11.0 Conclusion

The City of Brantford is proud of its history and vision for the future and our Public Art Collection reflects some of our community's most important people, places and stories.

The TH&B Crossing Bridge is a highly visible asset in the City's downtown core and the proposed design will satisfy both needs to beautify our city as well as protect it from future acts of vandalism.



Kara Davey, MBA
Arts & Culture Development Officer

Attachment:

Appendix A – THB Public Art Proposal

In adopting this report, is a by-law or agreement required? If so, it should be referenced in the recommendation section.

By-law required	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no
Agreement(s) or other documents to be signed by Mayor and/or City Clerk	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no
Is the necessary by-law or agreement being sent concurrently to Council?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no