

Public Art on TH&B Crossing Bridge: Proposal

Public Art Sub-Committee: Tuesday May 24, 2022

Background:

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 protect 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 public art.

In recent years TH&B Crossing Bridge has been subjected to extensive vandalism. The unwanted graffiti that can be seen on the bridge is in some cases inappropriate and does not align with the values of the City.



Figure 1: TH&B Crossing Bridge.



Figure 2: Example of graffiti on TH&B Crossing Bridge panel (Summer 2021)



Figure 3: Example of graffiti on TH&B Crossing Bridge panel (Summer 2021).

Areas of the City with public art installations or murals are less likely to be tagged by graffiti. 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.

As of April 2022, City of Brantford 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 if required.



Figure 4: Panels on TH&B Crossing Bridge that have been painted a solid colour (April 2022).

Panel Dimensions:

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.



Figure 4: TH&B Panel Dimensions (7-8ft by 4.4ft).

Proposal:

There are 112 panels available for community members to submit their designs for review. Selected candidates will be able to paint their assigned panel or panels during late summer 2022, weather permitting.

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 Art Policy and Signs By-Law (Schedule C: Murals Guideline). Panels will be allocated on a first come, first served basis, if approved.

All submissions will be screened, assessed, and carefully selected by a team comprised of staff from the City's Public Works and Economic Development and Tourism Departments based on approved themes. Selected artists must be available to paint their panel onsite. While the submission campaign and selection process is underway, staff will review the interior bridge panels and paint over any new graffiti in preparation for the artwork. Upon approving submissions, staff will prepare a schedule for painting to ensure supplies are available to the

artists. Staff will also monitor the progress of the painting to ensure they follow the designs as submitted.

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 staff will closely monitor the bridge to help curb vandalism or graffiti, reaching out to artists if any touch-ups or alterations to their work are required. Participants will also be encouraged to look after the appearance of their artwork (extra paint will be stored for touch-ups). If an artist cannot be reached, then staff will make touch-ups/alterations as needed. Every effort will be made to retain the original imagery, but there is no way to guarantee longevity. All provincial COVID-19 guidelines that are in place at the time of the panel painting will be followed.

Proposed Timeline:

- May 24, 2022 - Public Art Subcommittee meeting project proposal.
- June 21, 2022 - Brantford Cultural Advisory Committee meeting project proposal.
- July 5, 2022 – Committee of the Whole – Operations.
- July 26, 2022 - City Council.
- August 2022 - Begin media campaign.
- August 2022 - Treat and paint over existing panels as required.
- August-September 2022 - Selected artists paint their panels (schedule TBD).

Estimated Costs:

Item	Budget	Notes
Pre-painting of bridge panels.	\$2,500.	Solid colour for panels requiring touch up prior to artist painting.
Artist paint and supplies.	\$10,000.	Oil based paint for artists in primary colours, black, white. Estimated approximately 30 cans of paint needed.
Communications.	\$2,000.	Community-wide promotion to encourage submissions.
Annual Maintenance (for a period of 5 years).	\$1,000.	Exact maintenance costs depending on extent of vandalism and weathering.
Total estimated cost.	\$19,500.	Depending on the extent of pre-treatment required and the type of paint purchased, costs may vary.

Funding Sources

This project will be funded through the Public Works Minor Capital account. The Public Works Commission will provide the funding for the costs required to remediate future graffiti damage.

Recommendation:

Should the Public Art Subcommittee approve this project, they would then provide a recommendation to the Brantford Cultural Advisory Committee that this project proceed. Upon approval by City Council, the project will be promoted to the community and submissions will be accepted for review. No funding is being requested from the Public Art Reserve or the Tourism Division's Public Art maintenance operating budget.