

NO: R252

COUNCIL DATE: November 21, 2016

REGULAR COUNCIL

TO: **Mayor & Council** DATE **November 15, 2016**
FROM: **General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture** FILE: **2240-20/PA**
SUBJECT: **Design for 2017 Public Art Street Banners**

RECOMMENDATION

The Parks, Recreation and Culture Department recommends that Council:

1. Receive this report as information; and
2. Authorize staff to contract the annual commission of a new design with artist Sandeep Johal for the City's 2017 public art street banners, as generally described in this report.

INTENT

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with background information on the City's Public Art Street Banner Program, and to obtain Council approval to contract an artist to undertake this public art project.

BACKGROUND

Every year the Public art Program commissions a unique design to be featured on approximately 100 street poles near significant cultural destinations in the City, such as the Surrey Arts Centre, Newton Cultural Centre, Chuck Bailey Recreation Centre (Urban Screen venue), South Surrey Recreation and Arts Centre, as well as the City Centre Library.

These public art street banners offer an opportunity for artists who work in two dimensions to share their creativity with our community. Artists selected in the past have included esteemed artists Robert Davidson and Gordon Smith, with the 2016 design created by Coast Salish artist Susan Point as well as emerging artists. The intention of the public art street banners is to enhance the experience of the streetscape for drivers, cyclists, transit riders and pedestrians. This annual commission of a new design is supported by the Public Art Advisory Committee, and guided by the Public Art Policy and associated procedures. Fabrication and installation of the banners is coordinated with the City's Town Centre Street Banner Program.

2017 Banner Theme: "Canada, Our Home"

Designed to beautify streetscapes, Surrey's public art banner design for 2017 is intended to contribute to our community's celebration of Canada's 150th anniversary and foster pride in a country rich in history, culture, and diversity.

Celebrating Canada and its people, the call to artists invited proposals that were inspired by Canada's geography, accomplishments, and shared stories about Canada. Artists were asked to create designs that answered the questions: What makes our country proud, our community unique, and our people outstanding? What does it mean to be Canadian?

A selection panel was convened and charged with recommending one design. Members of this selection panel include:

Voting Members:

Phyllis Atkins	Artist
Shira Standfield	City Beautification Planner
Dr. Celeste Snowber	Artist, Professor of Art Education, SFU, PAAC Committee member

Non-Voting Panel Members/Advisors:

Liane Davison	Visual and Community Art Manager
Rhys Edwards	Curatorial Research, Surrey Art Gallery

DISCUSSION

On October 28 the selection panel reviewed 18 proposed designs, and voted unanimously to recommend that the Public Art Advisory Committee support the "Birds and Flowers" design by Sandeep Johal to become the public art street banner design for 2017. (Appendix "I")

On November 4, the Public Art Advisory Committee received the recommendation of the selection panel, and unanimously recommended that Council support the banner design "Birds and Flowers" design by Sandeep Johal.

Description of the Artwork

The artwork design represents the official bird and flower of each Canadian province and territory. The collective design aims to reflect both the beauty of Canada's natural heritage, and symbolize the values of the people who live here.

For the artist, the birds became a symbol not only of their residency in Canada but also their participation in the act of migration. Like the birds, the journey of migration has also brought thousands of people to Canada's shores, and is inclusive of the First Nations people to the early settlers to immigrants and refugees. The flowers also represent nature and people. They are the fruit of seeds, which have taken root and grown in Canada. These flowers are also intended to represent the hardiness of Canada's people who have set down roots and worked hard to build better lives for themselves and their families. Brought together, this range of distinct and beautiful bird and flower species also represents the diversity found among the people who call Canada home.

The artist's initial concept design will be modified by the artist to create pairings of banners that conform to the dimensions required for Surrey's street banner specifications. Information on the "Birds and Flowers" artwork, as well as the artist's statement about the design will be included in the information available on the City's website.

About the Artist:

Sandeep Johal is an emerging visual artist based in Metro Vancouver. Her art practice includes drawing, painting, and printmaking as well as working with the public in community engagement projects. Her work is grounded in principles of symmetry and geometry, and is a combination of bold, colourful graphics and intricate line work. Ms. Johal's pattern-work is heavily influenced by South Asian textile design and motifs, particularly the mandala form.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The public art banners will assist in meeting the following desired outcomes contained within the Charter Sub-themes of Neighbourhoods and Urban Design:

- DO 8: The built environment enhances quality of life, happiness and well-being; and

The public art banners support the Community Theme of "Education and Culture" identified in the City's Sustainability Charter:

- DO7: An enviable and vibrant arts and heritage sector contributes to Surrey's citizen engagement, enrichment, economy, community livability and civic pride.

CONCLUSION

Based on community input from the selection panel members and the Public Art Advisory Committee, the Parks, Recreation and Culture Department recommends that Council support the 2017 public art street banner design proposed by Sandeep Johal, and authorize staff to proceed with implementing this public art project.

Laurie Cavan
General Manager
Parks, Recreation and Culture

Appendix "1" Recommended Design for the Surrey's 2017 Public Art Street Banners

Appendix “I”

Recommended Design for Surrey’s 2017 Public Art Street Banners



Artist’s Statement about Proposed Design

Charley Harper, the American modernist wildlife artist, inspired my Street Banner Design. His bold, colourful art from the 60’s and 70’s is full of joy, wonder, and optimism, not unlike the optimism Canadians must have felt in the late 60’s as they celebrated Canada’s 100th birthday and looked towards a brighter future together. I chose to depict the official birds and flowers of each province and territory for many reasons. First, most bird species migrate and those journeys are challenging. They do it simply for survival. These birds represent the journey that has brought thousands of people to Canada’s shores, from the First Nations people to the early settlers to immigrants and refugees, like my parents who immigrated to Canada from India in the early 70s. Second, flowers come from seeds, which take root and grow. These flowers represent the heartiness of Canada’s people who have laid down roots and worked hard to build better lives for themselves and their families, my parents included. Third, bird and flower species are very diverse just as Canada’s people are. Canada truly is a multicultural country that strives to support people from all cultures and communities. And it’s interesting to note that our commitment to inclusiveness became policy in 1971 under Pierre Trudeau whose son now holds his position in office almost 50 years later. Canada has evolved and changed a lot in the past 50 years and I feel that Canadians have a renewed sense of optimism for our future as we celebrate 150 years.