

## REPORT

**REPORT TO:** Chair and Members of the Community and Corporate Affairs Committee

**REPORT FROM:** Catherine McLeod, Cultural Development Coordinator

**DATE:** April 12, 2018

**REPORT NO.:** ADMIN-2018-0015

**RE:** Public Art Master Plan Consultation Update – “What We Heard” Report

### RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. ADMIN-2018-0015, dated April 12, 2018, regarding the Public Art Master Plan consultation process be received for information;

AND FURTHER THAT the “What We Heard Report” (appended to this report under separate cover) prepared by The Planning Partnership, the consultants on this project, be received for information;

AND FURTHER THAT the “What We Heard Report” be posted on the Public Art Master Plan’s “Let’s Talk Halton Hills” webpage and be used to facilitate continued public engagement related to the Public Art Master Plan.

### BACKGROUND:

Council approved the Public Art Policy in August 2016 as outlined in report COMMSERV-2016-0002. This Policy guides the development and implementation of the Town’s Public Art Program. It provides a process through which the Town will assess and acquire public art for municipally-owned public spaces and facilities, whether through purchase, commission or donation. The overarching goal of the Public Art Policy is to position Halton Hills as a vibrant and engaging place of creativity that utilizes the talents of local artists, honours the unique attributes of the community, beautifies the landscape, raises quality of life and builds the creative economy.

The Public Art Master Plan process includes a community consultation strategy. The “What We Heard” report is part of this consultation strategy. It includes opinions and ideas gathered through one-on-one interviews with key stakeholders, a focus group with the Halton Hills Cultural Roundtable, a community consultation event held in conjunction with Culture Days, and the Town’s Public Engagement Platform “Let’s Talk Halton Hills”

(474 visits). These consultations took place from June 2017 to March 2018. Consultations explored opinions on the best locations for public art, appropriate themes, the purposes of public art and the selection and management of the Public Art program.

## **COMMENTS:**

Input received for the "What We Heard" report represents a variety of opinions and perspectives expressed by those consulted for the Public Art Master Plan during this first consultation period. These perspectives will be reviewed, assessed and incorporated into the Public Art Master Plan, as appropriate. There will be additional opportunities to provide feedback on the Public Art Master Plan as the process continues. The "What We Heard Report" document summarizes ideas on public art in the community and provides some direction for areas of future work. Some of the key takeaways include:

- There is an important opportunity to promote the public art that already exists in the community.
- It is important to communicate clearly the definition of "Public Art" being used by the Town and what works will be included in the program (works on municipally-owned public spaces and facilities).
- There is appetite for a wide range of public art which includes both historic/traditional and contemporary forms and themes.
- There is strong interest in tying public art to Halton Hills' natural heritage and rural setting through works in trails and parks in addition to highly visible locations in downtown areas.
- Those consulted would like to see public art across the municipality, not just focused in one or two locations.
- The important role that public art can play in communities – in place-making, creating a sense of belonging, fostering community pride and representing community values was strongly communicated and tied to the importance of community consultation, engagement and education during the selection process.
- Public Art integration into infrastructure has significant support.
- There is recognition that the public art program needs to be incorporated into planning initiatives.
- There is a lot of interest in procuring innovative public art; 'iconic', 'distinctive', 'memorable', and 'forward thinking' were common ideas expressed.
- While ensuring that public art commission opportunities are promoted and accessible to the local arts community, there is a desire to showcase the 'best' art that can be attracted whether it is from local, national or international artists.

The Public Art Advisory Board has been formed and is working with the consultants on developing the Vision and Guiding Principles for the public art program in Halton Hills. A draft of the Public Art Master Plan's phase 1 deliverables, which include (i) an Analysis

of Public Realm Initiatives; (ii) an Inventory of existing public art in Halton Hills; and (iii) inputs from the public consultation process, has been submitted to the Board for review and feedback. It is anticipated that the draft Public Art Master Plan will be brought to the Community and Corporate Affairs Committee for review in Q2.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:**

The engagement of the public through community consultation, and the development and implementation of the resulting Public Art Master Plan supports a number of Strategic Directions and Objectives from the Strategic Plan, as well as Council's top eight strategic priorities:

### **A. Foster a Healthy Community**

- A.3 To provide a broad range of educational, recreational and cultural services that meet the needs of our residents.
- A.9 To support and enhance a variety of arts and cultural opportunities for the enjoyment of the public.

### **C. Foster a Prosperous Economy**

- C.6 To maintain and enhance our historic downtowns and vibrant commercial areas to provide for shopping, services, cultural amenities and entertainment.
- C.10 To promote opportunities for tourism that are linked to the Town's natural and cultural heritage and countryside character.

### **D. Preserve, Protect and Promote our Distinctive History**

- D.5 To foster civic pride by recognizing the contribution that built heritage and cultural heritage landscapes make to the rural and urban character of the Town.

Council's top eight priority areas of Sustainability and Communications are also supported via this action:

- 5 B Collaborate with community partners to continue to implement the Integrated Community Sustainability Strategy
- 8 A Continue to provide timely, transparent communications with residents and business owners

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

There is no financial impact associated with this report.

## **CONSULTATION:**

The “What We Heard” report is the result of consultation with key community stakeholders, the Mayor, Town Councillors, CAO and the Senior Management Team. Town staff that form the internal “Cultural Services Coordination Committee” are being engaged at key milestones of the development and implementation of the Public Art Master Plan.

## **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:**

The public was engaged through a number of methods including one-on-one interviews with key community stakeholders, a focus group with the Halton Hills Cultural Roundtable, a Community Consultation Meeting during Culture Days and online feedback through “Let’s Talk Halton Hills.” The Public Art Advisory Board which includes three community representatives, also reviewed the report and provided input.

## **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS:**

The Town is committed to implementing our Community Sustainability Strategy, Imagine Halton Hills. Doing so will lead to a higher quality of life.

The recommendation outlined in this report advances the Strategy’s implementation.

This report supports the Cultural Vibrancy, Economic Prosperity and Social Well-being pillars of Sustainability and in summary the alignment of this report with the Community Sustainability Strategy is Excellent.

## **COMMUNICATIONS:**

The “What We Heard Report” will be posted on the Public Art Master Plan’s “Let’s Talk Halton Hills” webpage.

## CONCLUSION:

The “What We Heard” report provides important community feedback that will be taken into account when developing the Public Art Master Plan. Community consultation and engagement will continue to be an important component in the development and implementation of the Public Art Master Plan. The opinions expressed in the report demonstrate interest in a wide range of public art works and themes and are encouraging for the development of a unique and robust public art program in Halton Hills.

Reviewed and Approved by,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Damian Szybalski". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D'.

Damian Szybalski, Economic Development and Corporate Policy Advisor

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brent Marshall". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'B'.

Brent Marshall, CAO