



Report to: Development Services Committee

Meeting Date: 28 October, 2019

---

**SUBJECT:** Making Our Mark: Markham's Public Art Master Plan 2020-2024  
**PREPARED BY:** Niamh O'Laoghaire, Varley Art Gallery Manager, ext. 3273

---

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. THAT the report entitled Making Our Markham: Markham's Public Art Master Plan 2020-24 be received; and
2. THAT the Making Our Markham: Markham's Public Art Master Plan 2020-24 be approved; and
3. THAT the five-year Public Art Implementation Plan be approved in principle, that Council direct the Commissioner of Development Services to incorporate the Implementation Plan into annual Business Planning, Capital and Operating Budget processes and to report progress annually to Council; and
4. THAT the title of Public Art Coordinator be changed to Public Art Curator to reflect the requirements of the role; and
5. THAT Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this report is to seek approval of the Making Our Markham: Markham's Public Art Master Plan 2020-24 (attachment one). The Master Plan is the blueprint for a Public Art Program that celebrates the cultural diversity of Markham, fosters Markham's role as a high tech capital of Canada, promotes an engaged, thriving and vibrant City, and contributes to the building of complete communities. Implementation of the Public Art Master Plan will distinguish Markham as a municipal leader in cultural development, celebration and engagement.

The seven recommendations outlined in the plan in combination with the Implementation Plan (attachment two) will direct the development and execution of a successful public art program from 2020 to 2024 including prioritizing potential sites and opportunities for new public art projects in Markham, and identifying best practices for the administration and implementation of public art projects.

---

**BACKGROUND:****Public Art Program in Markham**

In 2003, a Public Art Policy Framework for the City of Markham (then Town of Markham) was approved by Council. This led to the initiation of the Markham Public Art Program and the founding of the Markham Public Art Advisory Committee. In 2012, Markham approved a Public Art Policy to direct the integration of public art into public places and in the same year approved a Culture Plan that identified public art as a key contributor to the uniqueness and identity of Markham. In 2013, the part time contract position of Public Art Coordinator was established, reporting to the Director of Culture in the Community and Fire Services Commission. After the merger of Economic Development and Culture in 2016, the Public Art Coordinator now reports through the Manager of the Varley Art Gallery to the Director of Economic Growth, Culture and Entrepreneurship in the Development Services Commission.

**Public Art Policy 2012**

The City of Markham has two existing Public Art Policies, both approved by Council in 2012. These are Public Art Policy – Markham Municipal Projects (attachment three) and Public Art Policy – Private Sector (attachment four). Each policy encourages up to one percent of construction cost investment in public art, i.e., both for City capital projects and private developments respectively (attachment three, page 3 and attachment four, page 3)

**Public Art Acquisitions Reserve Fund**

Private land developers have been encouraged to contribute to the public art collection in Markham. Over the past five years, through the development process, the City has received cash contributions to be used exclusively for the production of public art. The current balance of the Public Art Acquisitions Reserve Fund as of October 2019 is \$2.47 million.

**Key Accomplishments**

Since 2013, five permanent, major public art works in the city have been commissioned through the public art program, with two more on the way, to be completed in 2019 and 2020. In addition, the program has facilitated community art initiatives in collaboration with the City's Public Realm section such as the Henderson Bridge mural projects, Pan Am student art project, and managed contributions by local community members.

Markham's Public Art Collection includes the following completed works:

- *Cloudflower* by Douglas Walker, 2015, Cornell Community Centre, Ward 5
- *Gambrel Journey* by kipjones, 2015, Markham Museum, Ward 4
- *Quarry* by Mary Anne Barkhouse, 2016, Carlton Road, Unionville, Ward 3
- *Monument to William Berczy* by Marlene Hilton Moore, 2016, 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Kennedy Road, Ward 6
- *Monument to Benjamin Thorne* by Les Drysdale, 2017, Thornhill Community Centre, Ward 1
- *Dr. José P. Rizal* by Ignacio (Mogi) Mogado, 2019, Luneta Gardens, Boxgrove Bypass at Rizal Avenue, Ward 7



*Monument to  
Benjamin Thorne*



*Quarry*



*Gambrel Journey*



*Monument to William Berczy*



*Cloudflower*

Markham's Public Art Collection, works in progress include:

- *Top Garden* by Guild, Aaniin Community Centre, 5665 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Ward 7
- *Living Light* by Jill Anholt, Enterprise Boulevard near Warden Avenue, Ward 3

### **Need for a Master Plan**

The public art projects accomplished to date have been achieved through a series of ad hoc opportunities. In order to position Markham as a leader in the field it is now imperative to adopt a strategic Master Plan that will address the short-term and long-term requirements of an outstanding Public Art program in Markham, identifying and prioritizing potential sites and opportunities for new public art projects within the city. This will have the additional benefits of mobilizing the \$2.47 million accumulated to date for public art and providing a specific, concrete, deliverable roadmap of how to achieve the City's goals.

In September 2018, Workshop Architecture was contracted by the City of Markham to develop a master plan that addresses and meets the short-term and medium-term requirements of the City's Public Art Program over the next five (5) years 2020-2024.

---

Workshop Architecture has produced successful, high profile and detailed public art master plans for municipalities ranging in population from 80,000 to 800,000 (Kingston, Newmarket and Mississauga). It has also created plans for areas within larger cities (Queen's Park and Eglinton Crosstown LRT in Toronto). The Markham Public Art Master Plan project lead, Helena Grdadolnik (BES, M.Arch), has 17 years of urban design and public art experience in the UK, USA and Canada. This comprises extensive knowledge of the public sector from multiple perspectives including developing and reviewing public art policies and master plans as a consultant and implementing programs as a City staff member in Mississauga and with the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) in the UK. She has also managed the delivery of projects from \$25,000 to \$2M on behalf of artists and public-sector organizations (Infrastructure Ontario and Toronto Transit Commission).

**OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:**

The brief provided to Workshop Architecture was to devise a new Public Art Master Plan 2020-2024 for the City of Markham by reviewing current program policies, procedures, and inventory, and by making recommendations that would serve to accomplish the following operational priorities:

- Formalize the Public Art Program and comprehensively integrate the City's current policies under a coordinated framework that provides strategic and programming direction to guide the future advancement of the Public Art Collection;
- Set out policy and programming directions that adopt the best practices in the field, respond to the capacity of the Public Art Program in Markham and the City's future development, and foster an innovative model of Public Art Collection;
- Assist in determining funding allocations that addresses the immediate goal of mobilizing the Public Art Acquisitions Reserve Fund and the longer-term goal of achieving financial sustainability that supports diverse methods of public art acquisition;
- Assist in developing a collaborative administrative framework that focuses on maximizing the impact of existing resources and streamlining interdepartmental project development and management;
- Institutionalize public art selection processes from consideration of site to acquisition method to governance process; and
- Advise on public consultation and transparency to ensure community members are informed, engaged and involved in the process of new commissions and with the existing Public Art Collection.

**Consultation Process**

Developing the Markham Public Art Master Plan required significant consultation on the part variously of the Workshop Architecture Consultant, the Public Art Coordinator and the Varley Art Gallery Manager. This included meetings with staff members in many departments and all three Commissions in the City of Markham including the CAO and three Commissioners, the Mayor and Councillors. External stakeholders included local developers, York University and Parks Canada personnel. The community as a whole was invited to engage through a public art workshop mounted in partnership with York

---

Region Arts Council at YSpace in downtown Markham. The Markham Public Art Advisory Committee (MPAAC) contributed its input and reviewed drafts of the plan as it progressed. MPAAC has enthusiastically endorsed both the Markham Public Art Master Plan and the Public Art Implementation Plan.

### **Seven Recommendations**

As a result of the foregoing consultations, Workshop Architecture created a plan with the following seven recommendations:

- **Recommendation 1:** Adopt updated vision, objectives and guiding principles within the City of Markham Public Art Policies, Markham Municipal Projects and Private Sector.
- **Recommendation 2:** Adopt updated definitions within the City of Markham Public Art Policies, Markham Municipal Projects and Private Sector.
- **Recommendation 3:** Adopt revisions to the City of Markham Public Art Policy—Private Sector to reduce from five to three the current options for participation in the Markham Public Art Program by eliminating Options D (a combination public/private and on/off-site contribution) and E (donation of pre-existing art work) and revising the remaining options to follow best practices.
- **Recommendation 4:** Adopt revisions to the City of Markham Public Art Policy—Municipal Projects relating to funding investments as follows:
  - a. As per the existing 2012 Public Art Policy, contribute up to 1% of the capital budget of major City capital projects to integrating Public Art into the public facility, including parks, trails, community centres, libraries, streetscapes and infrastructure (bridges, walls, waterworks, etc.);
  - b. Private development projects to participate in the Markham Public Art Program as per Recommendation 3;
  - c. Establish an annual municipal funding of at least \$250,000 for the Public Art Program;
  - d. Encourage partnerships and private donations for further investment in the City's Public Art Program, to follow the City's donation and acquisition processes.
- **Recommendation 5:** Adopt the proposed Public Art Site Selection criteria, types and sites.
- **Recommendation 6:** Adopt revisions to the City of Markham Public Art Policy—Municipal Projects relating to art acquisitions, including procurement and assessing donations and gifts.
- **Recommendation 7:** Adopt revisions to the City of Markham Public Art Policy—Municipal Projects including the governance process.

**Five –Year Implementation Plan**

The Public Art Master Plan recommends a detailed five-year period Implementation Plan (see attachment two for full details and simplified chart below). Based on internal and external consultation the Implementation Plan itemizes each of the priority locations in line with the City's development plans for the next five years balanced with prioritization of areas that do not have public art investment. The Plan also itemizes:

- the appropriate project type for each site
- the best acquisition method (e.g. direct commission, curated selection, etc.)
- the required funding
- the funding source, (reserve, operating or capital funds)
- the relevant City business unit(s) involved, and
- a production timeline.

	LOCATION	SITE CATEGORY	PROJECT TYPE	PROJECT START DATE				
				2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
1	PanAm Centre Plaza Public Art Project	Key Civic Sites, Gateways and Heritage	Large scale, multiple components, stand alone	X				
2	Main Street Unionville Streetscape	Streetscapes and Transit	Integrated artwork and pilot projects in collaboration with Public Realm	X	X			
3	Digital Art Platform, site(s) to be determined	Key Civic Sites, Gateways and Heritage	Platform for changing digital art commissions			X		
4	Across Ward Seasonal Artwork(s) in Parks and Trails	Parks and Trails, tbd.	Seasonal Artwork in 1-2 locations every 2 years		X		X	
5	Varley Art Gallery Courtyard	Key Civic Sites, Gateways and Heritage	A sculptural work commissioned in partnership with Varley Art Gallery			X		
6	Across-Ward Walking Routes	Streetscapes and Transit	Art Mentorship Program to promote 2-3 walking routes, biannually			X	X	X
7	Rouge River Trails, Markham Centre	Parks and Trails	A possible combination of longer term and seasonal artwork			X	X	X

---

The Implementation plan provides a roadmap for Markham to achieve a visionary and innovative Public Art Program and Collection.

**Conclusion**

Approval of Making Our Markham: Markham's Public Art Master Plan 2020-24 will support a renewed Vision for a thriving and vibrant City. Public Art will highlight the city's unique characteristics and create new experiences through which local residents and visitors can engage with each other and the rich surroundings in Markham. The plan will enable the City of Markham to realize exciting public art projects that will: inspire people to live in, visit and invest in Markham; celebrate the diverse cultures and heritage in Markham from multiple points of view; and connect residents to Markham's built and natural environment.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Through the development process \$2.47 million has been accumulated to date for the Public Art Acquisitions Reserve. It is appropriate to mobilize these funds for the purpose for which accumulated. In so doing, the Markham Public Art program will encourage further leveraging of private partnerships and donations. In order to proceed the Public Art Program requires annual funding in the amount of \$250,000 per annum as per Recommendation 4.c of the Master Plan. Beginning in 2020 this will be an increase of \$105,000 over the program's 2019 funding of \$145,000. The \$250,000 will cover the proposed increase in the Public Art Coordinator's remuneration of \$20,800 (from \$41,600 to \$62,400), the program administration, promotion and public education costs, along with the realization of temporary and seasonal projects as outlined in the Public Art Program Implementation Plan.

**HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS**

The Public Art Coordinator position should remain on a contract, part time basis. However, implementation of the Master Plan will require an increase in time from 20 to 25 hours per week and an increase of pay from \$40 to \$48 per hour, an increase of \$20,800 per annum for a total impact of \$62,400, as outlined above. Apart from that, no further increase is required as it is intended that the plan will be executed by drawing on the time and expertise of existing City staff from within the Economic Growth, Culture and Entrepreneurship Department and in consultation with staff across the City on a project-by-project basis. The report also recommends that the title "Public Art Coordinator" be changed to "Public Art Curator" in order to reflect the actual background, expertise and skill set required of the position.

**ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

Endorsement of the Making Our Markham: Public Art Master Plan 2020-24 is in alignment with the City's Integrated Leisure Master Plan (2010, updated 2019), Culture Plan (2012) Action 24 and 34, Public Realm Strategy (2014) Goal 5 – Creating Gateways

and Destinations and Action 5.1 and 5.3, and the City's Official Plan (2014) Section 6.1.7. The City's Official Plan, being updated in 2019, includes under its Goal 2 the following action item: "Implement the Public Art Master Plan". The Public Art Master Plan will also intersect with and support the following plans in progress: the Public Realm Gateway Plan, the Cornell Rouge National Urban Park Gateway Study and Destination Markham.

**BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:**

Development Services Commission: Economic Growth, Culture & Entrepreneurship, Engineering, Urban Planning and Design.

Community and Fire Services Commission: Operations (Parks & Forestry Division, Public Realm), Recreation Services.

Corporate Services Commission: Corporate Communications, Finance, Legal Services

**RECOMMENDED BY:**

Stephen Chait  
Director, Economic Growth  
Culture and Entrepreneurship

Arvin Prasad  
Commissioner,  
Development Services

**ATTACHMENTS:**

*One: Making Our Markham: Public Art Master Plan, 2020-24*

*Two: Markham Public Art Implementation Plan 2020-24*

*Three: Public Art Policy – Markham Municipal Projects*

*Four: Public Art Policy – Private Sector*