

# Rail Bridge Artwork

## Proposal



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# Project Overview



On October 19, 2020, Councilor Usman contacted Unionville High School's Visual Art Department to discuss possible beautification options for the two rail bridges located at Hwy. 48 and 14th Ave. The CN quote for a new paint job for the bridges was considered high. If monies are spent to beautify the existing structure it was thought an artwork could be created for the same or lower cost that both beautifies and reflects the community and Markham's values.

This presentation outlines our initial research into the feasibility and possible directions for such a project.

Visual Arts Students from Unionville High School have a recognized history of producing beautiful community artworks. The artistry of the students are present in various locations through Markham. [Click here to learn about our program.](#)

# Current Advertising Space

- Bridges' advertising space is leased from CN to RCC Media
- Fabrication and installation cost via RCC Media is \$3,000 per banner
- Rental of North facing rail bridge is \$3,000 to \$ 5,000 per month
- South facing rail bridge advertising spaces are leased from RCC Media to the city of Markham

# Materials - Option 1: Temporary Vinyl Wrap

Vinyl wrap design adhered to concrete walls using [3M rough surface / concrete vinyl](#)

Duration: Approximately one to two years.



Vinyl wrap on wood hoarding substrate created by UHS students.



Vinyl wrap on wooden frame created by UHS students

# Materials - Option 2: Vinyl Wrap on Metal Substrate

Vinyl wrap design adhered to metal substrate.

Metal substrate would be connected to concrete wall.

Metal substrate can be cut into any shape with matching vinyl wrap overlay.

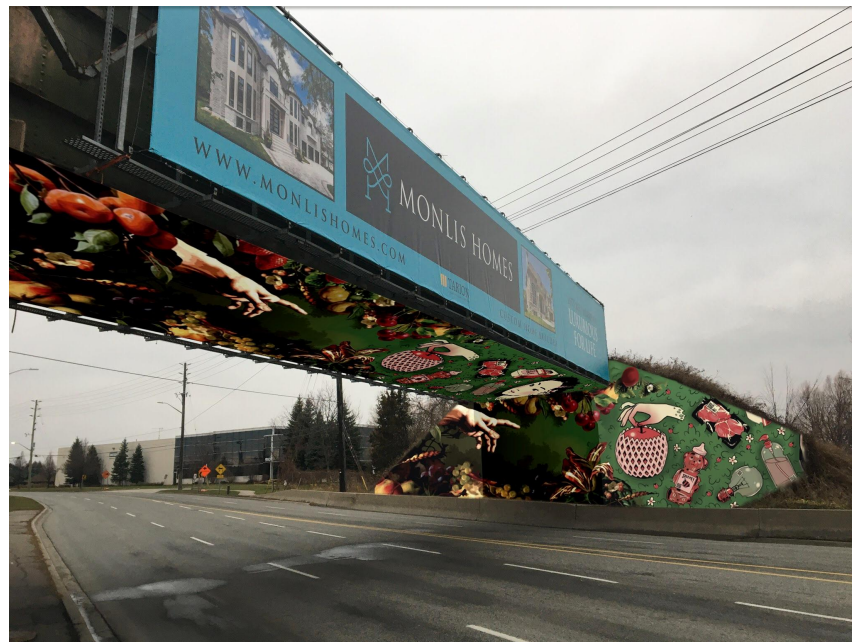
Duration: Five years +



Vinyl graphic wraps on metal traffic boxes by UHS students

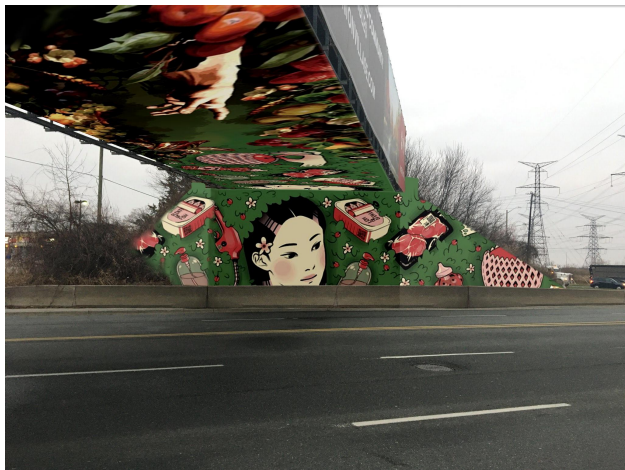


# Materials - Option 2: Vinyl Wrap on Metal Substrate



Vinyl wrap sample on metal substrate. Artistry, created by UHS students, to illustrate material concept.

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# Materials - Option 3 - Light Boxes



Light boxes of various sizes and shape, ranging in depth from 2" to 12" can be fixed to the concrete walls.

RGB LED lights can be inserted into each box and programmed.

Laser cut metal shapes can be inserted within each light box creating dynamic designs illustrating the illusion of space and depth.



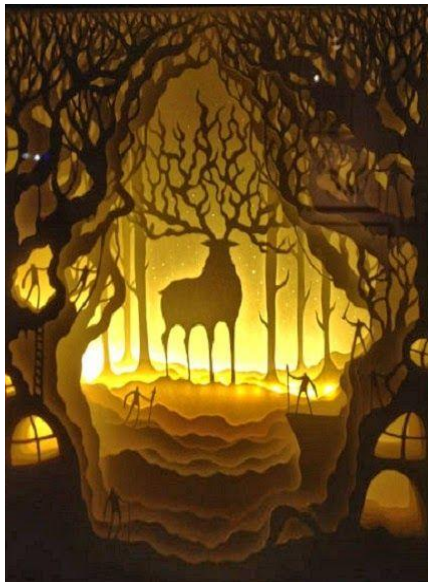
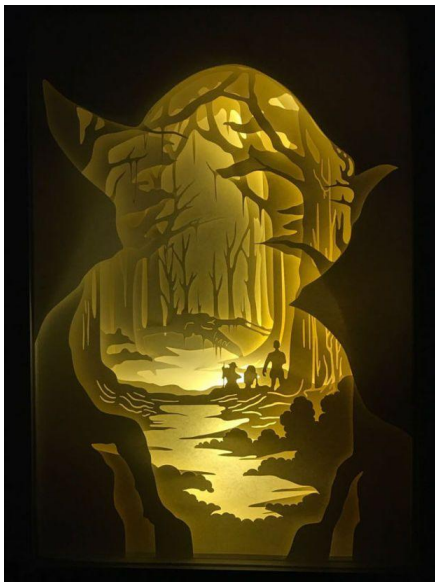
Inserts can include vinyl wraps of various transparency and or etched plexiglass. Anything can be inserted into these forms.

Light boxes can be fixed to the underside of the bridge for a surround effect.

Duration: Permanent

# Materials - Option 3: Examples

These examples of shadow boxes are of paper cutouts, but illustrate the proposed concept.



RGB LED lights provide a variety of colours and moods. Colours can be changed according to season as well as celebrate or commemorate an event.

# Materials - Option 3: Light Box with Metal Inserts



Light box sample with metal inserts. Artistry, created by UHS students, to illustrate material concept.

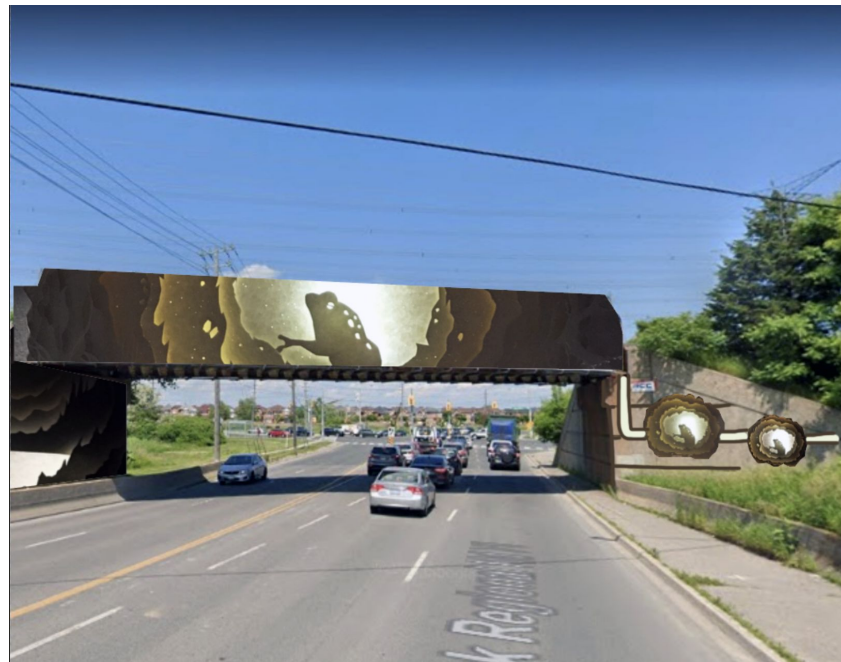


# Materials - Option 3: Light Box with Metal Inserts



Light box sample with metal inserts. Artistry, created by UHS students, to illustrate material concept.

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Light box sample with metal inserts. Artistry, created by UHS students, to illustrate material concept.



# Materials - Option 4: Etched Plexiglass or Tempered Glass



An example of etched clear plexiglass designs with LED lit edge.

# Materials - Option 4: Etched Plexiglass or Tempered Glass



Etched plexiglass or tempered glass sample.  
Artistry, created by UHS students, to illustrate  
material concept.

# Materials - Option 4: Etched Plexiglass or Tempered Glass



Etched plexiglass or tempered glass sample. Artistry, created by UHS students, to illustrate material concept.



Etched glass can be edge lit using RGB LEDs creating a variety of colour



# Materials - Option 5: Mural Painting

Similar to the Henderson Bridge mural by James Ruddle, a mural painter or team of muralists would paint directly on the concrete, provided the walls have not been coated with anti-graffiti sealant. Although students can design the mural they will not be allowed to participate in its painting due to health and safety restrictions. The Henderson Bridge commission was approximately \$20,000 and required one week of painting.



# Proposed Process - Community Engagement

Visual Art students from UHS (nearest public arts school) and Middlefield Collegiate Institute (nearest public high school) will participate in the design process working with their teachers, Shane Clodd and Sandra Liau, and a diverse group of professional guest artists.

Artists representing Ward 7's demographic would be hired to work virtually with students to ensure the community and the city of Markham's values are reflected within the artwork's narrative and corresponding visuals. The ethnicity of the guest artists and teachers would be as follows: Indigenous (Shawnee, Lakota, Potawatomi, Ojibwe and Algonquin) Anishinaabe, Black / Trans / LGBTQ +, European, East Asian and South Asian.



# Proposed Process - Community Engagement

Suggested Community Artist Team:

[Syrus Marcus Wade](#) (Black / Trans, Artist, Social Advocate & Educator)

[Donald Chretien](#) (Anishinaabe Artists & Educator)

[Philip Cote](#) (Anishinaabe Artist)

[Ann Yu-Kyung Choi](#) (East Asian) Published Author & Educator

# Proposed Process - Alignment to Markham's Values

## City of Markham's Key Values

**Mission Statement:** “Markham is Canada’s most diverse community, with a rich cultural heritage, outstanding community planning services, and vibrant local environment.”

**Accessibility and Diversity:** “Everyone is welcome at the City of Markham! That’s why we’re committed to being an accessible and diverse city.”

**Economic Development:** “Markham is at the center of the 2nd largest tech cluster in Canada. Markham is York Region’s innovation hub and a key player in Ontario’s innovation corridor. Markham drives technology, innovation and talent.”

**Descriptors:** Sustainability, Innovation, Technology, Diversity, Accessibility, Inclusivity, Talent, Community, Vibrance, and Livability

# Proposed Process - Alignment to Public Art Policy

**Public Art:** In the City Council-approved Markham Public Art Master Plan 2020-2024, Public Art is defined as an original work in any medium that meets all the following criteria:

Created by one or more Professional Artists; is relevant to its site and context; has been planned and executed with the specific intention of being sited or staged in a public space.

Each public art project will meet at least two of the following objectives:

- 1) Inspire people to live in, work in, visit and invest in Markham
- 2) Celebrate the diverse cultures and heritage in Markham from multiple points of view
- 3) Connect residents to Markham's built and natural environment.

# Themes

## Possible Themes:

**Potential** (where individual and collective potential is achieved)

- The power of self-expression and collaboration
- The importance of a supporting and nurturing environment/community

**Community Transformation** (change makers)

- Diversity, increased advocacy/recognition of minority groups, a high importance placed on equity and equality

**Connections** (human and technological)

- Increased connectedness during a time of separation
- A transformation in the digital/tech world

**Light and Energy** (power and passion)

- A dynamic, inspirational artwork that uplift spirits and convey a relevant message unique to Markham's community

**Identity and Culture** (the individual & collective)

- Personal and collective values, beliefs, heritage, language, lived experiences, etc, and its effects on the community (and vice versa)

# Conclusion - Project's Objectives

## Alignment with Public Art Criteria:

### 1) Inspire people to live in, work in, visit and invest in Markham

**How:** Similar to the Chicago “BEAN” and the Toronto sign, the artwork will be an identifiable landmark and gateway feature unique to Markham. Artwork becomes a symbol visually displaying our collective values that serve as an affirmation and a vision of a future Markham. Technologies used within the artwork (possible lights and sensors) in addition to the artwork’s design and fabrication processes highlight Markham as a high tech capital. Designed by high school students, the work highlights our region’s amazing public education system.

### 2) Celebrate the diverse cultures and heritage in Markham from multiple points of view

**How:** Develop and implement an authentic co-creation process representative of individuals who call Markham home. Celebrate our human collective capital (intellectual, creative, lived experiences and cultural) harnessed and focused through a lens of diversity and equity.

### 3) Connect residents to Markham’s built and natural environment.

**How:** Beautify the existing structure. The finished rail bridge artwork would bring a sense of energy and beauty to this corner of Markham. The transformation of old into new.



# Conclusion - Statement

The rail bridge artwork will channel and celebrate energy and life engaging people both locally and abroad. Similar to the Chicago Bean or the Toronto sign, the artwork will be a gateway landmark, an identifiable feature representing Markham. A symbol embodying our values as a community of students, leaders, learners, and innovators, it will serve as an affirmation of Markham's vision of limitless potential.

Using a diversity and equity lens, an authentic co-creation process will be applied. Underrepresented voices will be heard and understood by leveraging our human collective capital. Technologies such as RGB LED lighting, cutting edge design, and fabrication processes highlight Markham's tech capital status.

The artwork embodies Markham's vibrancy as represented through an inclusive process, depicted in the brilliant artistry of our young innovative and talented artists. Markham's maturation in synthesizing the best ideas and practices that the world has to offer is rendered as a magical experience.

# Thank You