



Date: May 30, 2005

TO: Board Members - Parks and Recreation
FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Storyscapes - Public Art Selection

RECOMMENDATION

*That the Board approve the installation of **People Amongst People**, a public art work by Susan Point, at three entrances to the Brockton totem area with all arrangements to the satisfaction of the General Manager.*

POLICY

In 1988, the Park Board adopted the Acceptance Guidelines for Long Term Gifts of Public Art.

In 1997 the Board approved Site Review Guidelines and a process to more formally consider donations of public art and memorials

BACKGROUND

Storyscapes is a community-based Aboriginal storytelling project sponsored by the City of Vancouver. The project gives Aboriginal people the opportunity and means to express their stories of Vancouver, and provides space and recognition for the people, places, histories, contributions and artistic vitality of the Aboriginal community in Vancouver.

City Council has provided support for public art and film components. Supported by a public art consultant and Social Planning staff, an Advisory Committee was appointed composed of two representatives from each of the Musqueam, the Squamish and the Tsleil Waututh Nations as well as two urban aboriginal representatives. A process for informing the three band councils was also started.

The committee has forwarded *Transformation* as the central theme for the Storyscapes artworks. It incorporates past, present and future, timeless ideas in traditional myths, places of contact and change, and contemporary situations.

Several sites were considered and the Brockton Point Totem area in Stanley Park was identified as a priority. This site is suitable in that this project addresses a long acknowledged concern to include representation of local Coast Salish work.

DISCUSSION

The artwork will mark three entrances to the existing totem site in Stanley Park and will serve as welcoming feature to celebrate the First Nations peoples whose traditional territories include Vancouver (see Appendix A). The artwork will be a tribute to cooperation between the three local nations.

The Brockton Point area is designed to showcase the First Nations of B.C. The proposed work fits the nature and intent of the totem area and addresses a long-standing curatorial ambition to see Coast Salish culture represented here.

A preliminary meeting was held with artists from the three local Salish Nations in the fall of 2004 and research was carried out to identify artists and gauge interest. A call for Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-waututh artists to submit their portfolios went out through Band publications and by email and posting on the Public Art web site in December 2004. A selection panel of five people was formed, including one person from each of the three Nations and two other art experts. Eleven applications were received and the panel chose three artists/teams from the portfolios presented anonymously. These three were commissioned by the Public Art Program to develop ideas and maquettes for the site.

The Band Councils were informed at each stage of the process and the proposals and maquettes have been exhibited at the three Band offices for public comment. Parks staff reviewed the proposals and provided technical comments. The panel met on May 13, 2005, and unanimously selected the piece to be recommended for the commission.

Because the selection process was intensive in respect to consultation with the local First Nations and as this project is in accord with the established site plan, the Park Board's standard consultation processes were not deemed necessary.

The work selected is called *People Amongst the People* and is by artist Susan Point. The design is for three gateways framing the entrances to the totem area (see Appendix B). In shape, each portal will reflect the style of the existing buildings using two house posts with cross-beam on a shed-like angle. The portals are made of wood with different designs applied. One cross beam will feature three carved welcoming faces representing the three Salish peoples. Other images include eagles, Salish weaving, landscape motifs, whales and herring. In their entirety the portals represent the Salish tradition of welcome. The design also reflects the traditional and the modern in Salish art and design and complements the existing display of totem poles.

Susan Point is experienced and well-respected in the public art realm, having completed commissions at UBC and the Vancouver International Airport, as well as Seattle, Toronto and recently at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, DC.

The work will be completed over the next three months and is slated for installation in the fall of 2005. The ongoing maintenance of the work is being funded through the City.

SUMMARY

People Amongst the People will address the long-identified gap in the Brockton Totem area and represent all three local First Nations. The work will provide an elegant enhancement to the site.

Prepared by:

Stanley District
Board of Parks & Recreation
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SG