



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Public Works and Transportation Committee

Date: April 8, 2014

From: John Irving, P.Eng. MPA
Director, Engineering

File: 11-7000-09-20-100/Vol
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Jane Fernyhough
Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services

Re: **Manhole Cover Art Contest and Program**

Staff Recommendation

That the implementation of the public art contest and program for integrating artwork on sanitary sewer and storm drainage manhole covers, as outlined in the report from the Director, Engineering, and Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services dated April 8, 2014, be endorsed.

John Irving, P.Eng. MPA
Director, Engineering
(604-276-4140)

Jane Fernyhough
Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services
(604-276-4288)

Att. 1

REPORT CONCURRENCE	
CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER 	
REVIEWED BY STAFF REPORT / AGENDA REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE	INITIALS:
APPROVED BY CAO 	

Staff Report

Origin

On July 27, 2010, Council endorsed the Public Art Program Policy 8703, which identifies strategies to fully integrate artwork into the planning, design and construction of civic works.

On October 11, 2011, Council endorsed the City Centre Public Art Plan identifying and prioritizing public art opportunities in the City Centre. Integrating public art into infrastructure design, including manhole covers, was identified as an immediate priority.

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with information regarding the Manhole Cover Art Contest and the community outreach opportunities to engage a large cross section of the community of all ages and local artists with a wide range of expertise.

This initiative is in line with Council Term Goal 9.1 Arts and Culture:

Build culturally rich public spaces across Richmond through a commitment to strong urban design, investment in public art and place making.

Analysis

Background

There are over 50,000 storm water and sanitary sewer manhole covers throughout the City, many in highly visible public locations on sidewalks and pedestrian street crossings. The current manhole covers are utilitarian in design, however, manhole covers with a custom design can be purchased at the same price as the standard covers. The City purchases approximately 150 replacement manhole covers each year, which is an opportunity to place decorative manhole covers in strategic locations. By incorporating art into the design of manhole covers there is an opportunity to make these cast iron lids beautiful, informative and unique.

Terms of Reference – Integrated Art on Manhole Covers Art Contest

The public art Terms of Reference for the Manhole Cover Art Contest (Attachment 1) describes the project description, art opportunity, entry requirements, and selection process.

Artist Selection Process

Following the administrative procedures for artist selection for civic public art projects, a five person selection panel will convene to review the artist submissions. It is intended for two artist designs to be recommended for the new manhole covers (one storm water and one sanitary), plus honourable mentions for short listed artists. In addition to the two designs recommended for incorporation into the covers, a second category for children aged 12 years and under will be reviewed by the selection panel with two contest winners (not for fabrication) and honourable mentions to be identified.

Community Engagement

City staff working across departmental sections, including Engineering, Public Works, Environmental Programs, Arts, Culture & Heritage Services, Production, and Corporate Communications, will be instrumental in developing a successful community engagement process for the art contest. City staff have also identified points of contact with arts education programs, including the Richmond School Board and Kwantlen Polytechnic University, to engage school children, emerging artists and designers.

Proposed themes for the artwork contest will reference Richmond's cultural heritage, community identity, and ecological history. The educational messaging of the contest will be to highlight and raise awareness of the importance of keeping our waters clean and the environmental concerns in safely disposing of liquids.

Key civic, arts and cultural events in the spring and summer of 2014 will provide platforms to engage artists of all ages and to educate the public about the important role our storm water and sanitary sewer infrastructure play:

- Project WET, Water Education Team Program, Public Works – May 20 - 22, 2014
- Public Works Open House – May 24, 2014
- Doors Open – June 7-8, 2014
- Culture Days – September 27-28, 2014

The competition will close in early October 2014, followed by a display of all entries online for public feedback and voting for the People's Choice selection. Following the selection panel review of the submissions in Fall 2014, the two recommended artworks will be presented for Council endorsement in early 2015 followed by a public unveiling of all the winners and honourable mentions, including the children's category.

The communications plan to promote the program will include posters, local newspapers, social media, and the City of Richmond website. Additionally, City staff will work with a contract communications designer to create a contest website that will be linked to the City's website. This will allow the public to conveniently submit their designs and application forms and will assist City staff in building audiences.

Social media vehicles will be a focus for the Manhole Cover Art Contest to build community engagement and raise awareness of both public art and the sewerage systems in the City. A public vote using social media will recognize the People's Choice artists to receive honourable mentions.

Implementation

Staff and the selected artists will work with the current fabricator and supplier of sanitary and storm water manhole covers, Westview Sales Limited, to translate the two winning artist designs into production molds for fabrication. Westview Sales Limited will sponsor the additional costs for creating two unique molds, coordination and labour. There will be no additional costs for the decorative manhole covers above existing purchasing programs.

The focus of the initial program will be to place manhole covers in high visibility locations in the pedestrian oriented Neighbourhood Service Centres and the developing City Centre, either in new locations or replacing existing covers. In the event that existing covers are replaced, they will be recycled and used in other less visible locations around the City.

Staff are currently developing a Steveston Village Public Art Plan, and while the manhole covers to be selected through this contest may be suitable for Steveston, it would be more appropriate to develop a specific manhole cover project unique to Steveston in the future, based on the strategic directions developed in consultation with the Steveston community. Staff will report back to Council in early 2015 on the Steveston Village Public Art Plan.


Financial Impact

The total project budget is \$16,000. This will include selection panel honorariums, website management services, promotional campaign and coordination, artist fees, and material expenses for civic community engagement events. Engineering has allocated \$11,000 for this project from existing funds. The Public Art Program will provide the remaining \$5,000 from the approved 2014 Capital Budget for public art programs

Conclusion

The Manhole Cover Art Contest represents an opportunity to engage a large cross section of artists of all ages and creative practices. Incorporating art into functional objects is an affordable, high-impact method of integrating the arts into everyday life and making art accessible to the public.

The manhole cover project builds on other programs for successfully integrating art with civic infrastructure, such as drainage pumps stations and the district energy utility, and is a low cost opportunity to continue this practice. Integration of public art with manhole covers is consistent with the vision and strategic direction of the Richmond Arts Strategy, to broaden the diversity of arts experiences and opportunities, and supports the Council Term Goal to build culturally rich public spaces across Richmond through a commitment to strong urban design, investment in public art and place making.


Lloyd Bie
Manager, Engineering Planning
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per Eric Fiss
Public Art Planner
(604-247-4612)

LB:ey

Att. 1: Outline Terms of Reference Document



**City of
Richmond**

Public Art
Community Services Department
Arts Services

**Terms of Reference – Manhole Cover Art Contest
(Text Copy Version for Production Services to produce public artist call brochure)**

Introduction (front page) – “Cover Stories”

Thousands of manhole covers are located throughout the city but they tend to get lost in the urban landscape mix. This is your chance to help turn these ordinary cast-iron lids into works of art. Put your pencil to paper and create a design that could be showcased on Richmond's streets for a lifetime.



Figure 1. - Existing Richmond Sanitary and Storm Manhole Covers



Figure 2. Susan Point, Vancouver. (2004)



Figure 3. Artist: Anne Knight, Seattle (1975)

[Insert relevant organization branding logos, including City of Richmond and Richmond Public Art]

Facts about Richmond's Sewer Systems

In Richmond, there are two separate sewer systems: sanitary and storm. Sanitary sewers direct waste water from sinks and washrooms to a treatment plant. Storm sewers prevent flooding by directing water from streets, sidewalks and outdoor spaces to drainage systems that go directly to the Fraser River or the ocean. As storm water is not treated, it is important that only clean rain water enter storm drains. Harmful chemicals found in soapy water from car washing and pesticides from lawns can harm the ecosystems connected to the storm drainage system.

Context and Themes for the Artwork

The artwork should reference our cultural heritage in Richmond. You might think about all the pivotal moments in Richmond's history that have shaped our cultural, social and political identities. These may include important historical figures or a key historical event. The artwork may tell a story or have an educational message. Think about how your design can help to establish a sense of place, remembrance and pride for years to come.

[Insert Richmond archive images of Musqueam First Nations, Chinese and Japanese historical figures, Samuel Brighthouse, Lulu Sweet, fishing industry, farming industry, horse racing, transportation heritage, ecological heritage, Fraser River] Reference Richmond City Archives for further information.]

Eligibility

The manhole cover art contest is open to anyone who lives in Metro Vancouver. You don't have to be a professional artist to participate in the contest, just have a great imagination.

How to Apply

- Submission deadline is Friday October 3, 2014
- All designs must use the provided templates and be submitted on-line by following the step by step application process at **[Insert website link]**.
- Please do not submit more than two designs per person.
- All submissions must be submitted through the on-line process.

Design Considerations

Designs should be clear and easily transferable to create the mould for the casting process. The selected artists will be required to work with the fabricator to finalize the design before fabrication. The design should have textural elements to prevent pedestrians and bicycles from slipping on the covers. Your design may include some text. Designs should be in black and white and be contained within the dedicated circle area of the attached templates.

Selection Process and Artwork Exhibition

Artist submissions will be uploaded to the City of Richmond Facebook page and will be eligible for selection by the community at large for the on-line People's Choice voting and award.

A five-person jury made up of artists, community representatives and art professionals will review all submissions anonymously. Two designs will be selected to be integrated onto our manhole covers. The two selected artists will each receive \$2,000. People's Choice and Short-Listed honorable mentions will also be given.

*Special honorable mentions will be presented to school children under the age of 12 years old.

- Short-listed Artists will be announced in November 2014
- Winners and honourable mentions will be announced in January 2015
- Exhibition of Finalists in February 2015
- Installation in July 2015

Questions? Contact: publicart@richmond.ca

Legal Terms and Conditions

Consequences of submission and the acceptance of designs: The City and the selection panel is not obliged to accept any submissions and it may reject all submissions. By submitting a design, each artist will be deemed to: (1) agree with the City that the City will not be responsible for any costs, losses, damages or liabilities incurred by him or her as a result of or arising out of this call for designs; and (2) consent to the display of his or her design at the public exhibition referred to in this call for designs. Employees of the City of Richmond and family members are not eligible to submit designs and; (3) artwork must be original and made by the artist submitting the contest entry. Absolutely no mechanical reproductions of original works are permitted; and (4) artist retains sole copyright to his/her artwork. The City of Richmond will have unlimited reproduction rights to all contest submissions; and (5) Submissions will not be returned to the artist.

22.25" diameter cover
1" cored hole
1" type
18.75" diameter artwork
area (inside circle)

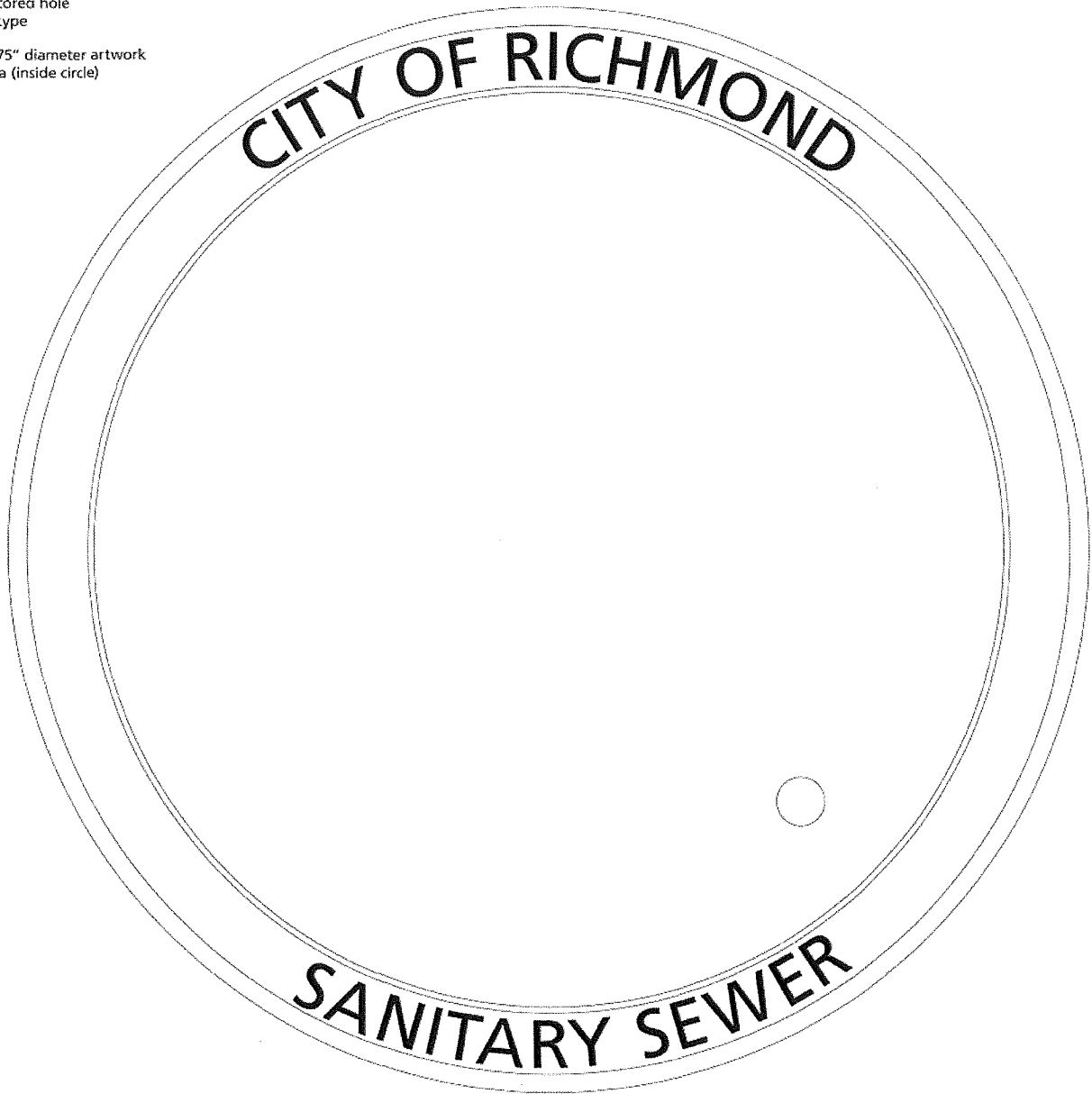


Figure 4. Artist Template

22.25" diameter cover
1" cored hole
1" type
18.75" diameter artwork
area (inside circle)



Figure 5. Artist Template