

STAFF REPORT TO COUNCIL

1100 Patricia Blvd. | Prince George, BC, Canada V2L 3V9 | www.princegeorge.ca

DATE: March 2, 2022

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCIL

NAME AND TITLE: Walter Babicz, City Manager

SUBJECT: Terry Fox Statue – Festival/Discovery Place Trust Allocation

ATTACHMENT(S): None

RECOMMENDATION(S):

1. That Council AUTHORIZES Administration to utilize the Festival/Discovery Place Trust Fund for the purposes of repairing/refurbishing the Terry Fox Statue prior to its relocation to the site of the new downtown pool, as described in the report dated March 2, 2022 from the City Manager, titled “Terry Fox-Statue – Festival/Discovery Place Trust Allocation”.
2. That Council AUTHORIZES Administration to utilize any remaining amounts in the Festival/Discovery Place Trust Fund for the purposes of repairing and/or refurbishing City owned public art in the downtown.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to provide City Council with information regarding the relocation of the Terry Fox statue to the new Downtown Pool. In addition, Administration is seeking Council authorization to utilize the Festival/Discovery Place Trust Fund to undertake necessary repairs/refurbishment activities in relation to the statue and other, City owned public art in the downtown.

BACKGROUND:

In 2005, members of the local Terry Fox Run Committee (“the Committee”) collaborated with the City to engage BC artist Nathan Scott to create a fiberglass statue with a bronze-like patina to commemorate Terry Fox and his Marathon of Hope. The life size statue was installed at ground level in Community Foundation Park, and became an instant favourite amongst residents. Unfortunately, it was vandalized which prompted the Committee to raise funds to cast a new fiberglass piece and place it on a high plinth, surrounded by vegetation with thorns. That installation has remained in place since 2007.

In October of 2021, Council approved the relocation of the Terry Fox statue to the new downtown pool. Staff inspected the statue and discovered that the fiberglass artwork was showing its age. Spider cracks have appeared and small chunks of the right leg and shoe are damaged/missing.

Staff contacted the original artist, Nathan Scott, about repair and refurbishment options. He indicated that the statue *“could be ground out and reworked, but its strength will never be the same. The fiberglass cloth used in the internal part of the casting has been compromised and is most likely ripped and with now-open cracks, water can get in there and the effects of freeze-thaw*

have really compromised the structural integrity of the fiberglass and the steel embedded and encased in the layers of fiberglass used in the construction.” He further indicated that making repairs to the current structure unnoticeable, is not a realistic expectation.

Instead, Mr. Scott has recommend that the City of Prince George consider recasting the statue in bronze. It is one of the most durable materials for statues and has been used successful on a similar commemorative monument in Victoria, BC. Casting the statue in bronze may also allow the public art piece to be located at ground level, allowing for personal interaction and photo opportunities. The cost to bronze cast the statue is estimated to be \$24,250. This is an unbudgeted expense. As such, Administration is seeking Council approval to access the Festival/Discovery Place Trust fund (Public Art Trust) for the purposes of refurbishing the Terry Fox statue.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

In 1986, the City hosted the BC Festival of the Arts and a legacy fund was developed and initially earmarked for Discovery Place, a proposed arts facility that was eventually rejected by referendum. Council went on to approve an allocation from the legacy fund to enable development of a public art project in front of the Two Rivers Art Gallery, known as the Crest Pole.

In June of 2014 report, Council directed Administration “*to reallocate the remaining funds from the Festival/Discovery Place Trust fund (Public Art Trust) to public art in downtown Prince George*”. As of December 2021, the Trust fund totaled \$35,373.

Given the date of the resolution, and Council’s direction to Administration to review the Public Art Policy, Council is asked to authorize utilization of the Festival/Discovery Place Trust Fund for the purposes of repairing/refurbishing the Terry Fox Statue prior to its relocation to the site of the new downtown pool. In addition, Administration is seeking Council authorization to utilize any remaining amounts in the Festival/Discovery Place Trust Fund for the purposes of repairing and/or refurbishing City owned public art in the downtown.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

City Council’s 2022-2024 Strategic Plan supports the continued implementation of the 2020-2025 Economic Development Strategy. Objective 5.1 of the strategy states “Continue the revitalization of Prince George, improving its urban offerings and public spaces”. Public art helps to define and create a sense of place and place making. Artwork like the Terry Fox statue can help beautify a space and promote a positive civic identity.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

On October 18, 2021, City Council unanimously approved the relocation of the Terry Fox statue to the new downtown swimming pool. This offers an opportunity to repair, refurbish or replace the damaged fiberglass statue. Re-casting the artwork in bronze, at an estimated cost of \$24,250 provides the opportunity to create a more durable and interactive piece for the public to enjoy. Administration is seeking Council authorization to access the Festival/Discovery Place Trust Fund for the purposes of repairing/refurbishing the Terry Fox Statue prior to its relocation to the site of the new downtown pool. In addition, Administration is seeking Council authorization to utilize any remaining amounts in the Festival/Discovery Place Trust Fund for the purposes of repairing and/or refurbishing City owned public art in the downtown.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Walter Babicz, City Manager

PREPARED BY: Chris Bone, Senior Manager – Strategic Initiatives & Partnerships
Doug Hofstede, Coordinator – Strategic Initiatives & Partnerships

Meeting Date: 14/03/2022