



# Community Workshop Report

## West LRT Public Art

June 14, 2014 – 9:00 a.m.-noon



## **INTRODUCTION**

The City of Calgary has initiated the public art process to commission public art for installation along the West LRT transit line in southwest Calgary.

The GOAL of the public art process is:

*to heighten the pedestrian and rider experience along the corridor, engaging walkers and riders at various points throughout their journey, or while they wait on the platforms, making the experience of being in, and moving through the corridor a stimulating and interesting one.*

As the first step in the public engagement program, a Community Workshop was held on June 14, 2014. Invitations were sent to the City's contact list of people who had signed up for West LRT information during earlier processes, bold signs were placed at all six West LRT Stations and a few other strategic community locations, information was posted on the public art web page, and messages were sent out on the City's social media network. About 40 people attended the workshop from communities adjacent to the West LRT Line and beyond. (See a list of represented communities on page 7)

This report provides an outline of the purpose of the Workshop, a high level summary of the information shared in the presentations, and a summary of the information that was generated by participants at the Workshop.

## **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

In the workshop introduction, the facilitator outlined the overall goal of the public engagement for this West LRT public art process is to:

- Work with citizens and key stakeholders to understand the issues, concerns and aspirations around public art for the West LRT, and will ensure the input is incorporated to the maximum extent possible.
- Advise how consultation affected the decisions made.

## **WORKSHOP – PURPOSE**

The overall purpose of the Community Workshop was to collect input on three key elements of the West LRT Public Art:

- the GOAL for West LRT Public Art
- participants' expectations for the West LRT Public Art
- the incorporation of the Centre Street Lions

The information gathered during the Workshop will be used to develop the Guiding Principles for artists, and will be included in the RFP (Request for Proposal) to be issued during the summer 2014. The Guiding Principles will be used by the Public Art Selection Jury who will be selecting the artist, and all of the input collected will be given to the chosen artist, to assist in their process to develop the public art concepts for West LRT.

**PRESENTATION (Robin Murphy)**

The first presentation by Robin Murphy focused on three areas, namely:

- City of Calgary Public Art Process – the public art policy was initially approved in 2004 and recently updated; approximately 40 public art pieces have been installed over the 10 year period
- WLRT Public Art Project – budget is \$3 million and will cover - artist selection, art production & installations, artist costs, public engagement and project administration; in 2013 Council directed administration to incorporate the original Centre Street Lions into the public art process for West LRT
- Engaging citizens - The Public Art Program is committed to engaging citizens and key stakeholders throughout the West LRT public art process; this is the first time an event such as this has been undertaken in a public art process and we are anticipating a good dialogue

**PRESENTATION (Quyen Hoang)**

In the second presentation, Quyen Hoang provided an overview of the Centre Street Lions, including:

- Centre Street Lions were sculpted in 1916 and placed on the four corners of the Centre Street Bridge in 1917, where they remained until 1999; the Centre Street Bridge and the Lions were designated a Municipal Historic Resource in 1992 and the Lions were accessioned into the Civic Art Collection in 1993; the State of the Lions today – there are three remaining original Lions each in varying states of decay; one has been restored and sits in the front plaza of the Municipal Bldg
- Challenges associated with the Lions - there are limited locations along West LRT that could accommodate a Lion (due to their size); it is not known whether or not any of the Lions could withstand restoration work; should a Lion be placed on West LRT it will require a permanent cover for safety and protection from the elements

Following the presentations, there was a brief question and answer session with the aim of providing clarification before the discussions began. (See page 10 for list of questions and their respective answers.)

## SUMMARY OF PARTICIPANT INPUT

Participants were asked to provide input on three focus questions. Table facilitators captured the input and discussion at each table, and the complete list of comments can be found in the *What Was Said Report* ([www.calgary.ca/publicart](http://www.calgary.ca/publicart))

1. *Considering the GOAL for West LRT Public Art, what would make your experience more enjoyable and interesting?*

*To heighten the pedestrian and rider experience along the corridor, engaging walkers and riders at various points throughout their journey, or while they wait on platforms, making the experience of being in, and moving through the corridor a stimulating and interesting one*

2. *What thoughts, comments or suggestions do you have about the incorporation of the Centre Street Lions?*
3. *What are your expectations for the West LRT Public Art? What would make it successful in your mind?*

The facilitator reviewed all of the input collected at the Workshop, and as part of this Summary Report is providing an overview of the most frequently mentioned comments. The list is not prioritized, and simply represents the items most frequently mentioned in the Workshop discussions.

Questions 1 and 3 resulted in many similar recurring comments around peoples' expectations for West LRT public art, including (in no order of priority):

- the art should be engaging, stimulating and memorable – something that would bring people to the area to see it, something that is unique to West LRT and not something that has already been done for other LRT lines
- the art should be inviting, multi-sensory and experiential, and reflect motion and movement
- the history and make-up of the surrounding communities should be taken into consideration – the art should be reflective of West Calgary
- the art should fit the location and the size of the space, and should have a unifying theme, or should provide a continuous experience along the length of the line, while each Station reflecting the individuality of its community
- Colour and light are important elements to consider

- the art should be timeless, made of different materials, and be durable taking our four seasons into account
- the art should be visible from the train and should consider the everyday users of the system
- several people said there should be opportunities for local and Canadian artists, as well as trades people
- some people cited examples of cities where interesting public art can be found, such as New York, Portland and Barcelona

Question 2: Overall, there were participants from each of the tables who did not favour incorporating the Lions into West LRT public art, making that the most often mentioned comment for Question 2. The recurring sentiment was that the Lions didn't really fit the context of West LRT and people would prefer something new, and relevant to the area. A few people were in favour of re-interpretation, and some had concerns that restoration would take a significant part of the budget.

- several people said the Lions are not relevant for West LRT – they don't fit the goal or the context – and a few people stated unequivocally "No Lions for West LRT"
- some people had concerns that the cost of restoration will take a significant part of the budget
- some people definitely favoured re-interpretation, or incorporating a piece of a Lion, if the result was a contemporary approach, with one person saying that re-interpretation should be left to the chosen artist

## **CONCLUSION**

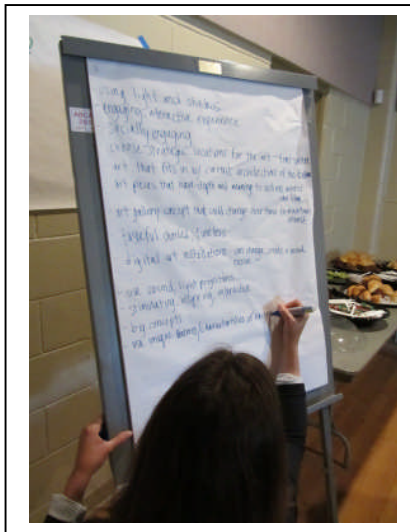
Overwhelmingly the Workshop Evaluations were very positive, with all respondents saying the Workshop was a good use of their time. Of the 40 participants, 30 people filled out an evaluation form, representing a 75% return. (A summary of the evaluations received can be found on page 9.) Many respondents included additional comments, and in those comments indicated their pleasure with being engaged on the public art process.

Members of the public art program were very pleased with the number of people who attended the Workshop and found it extremely beneficial to hear directly from a wide range of community members during the course of the discussions. The Workshop discussions provided an abundance of meaningful input that will be reviewed and considered in advance of developing the Request for Proposals for artists for this project.

### **HOW THE INPUT WILL BE USED**

The Public Art Program will use the input collected at the Workshop to develop the Guiding Principles that will be included in the RFP (Request for Proposal) that will be issued to the arts community.

The Guiding Principles will be shared with the Public Art Selection Jury to assist them in choosing the artist and all the comments collected at the Workshop will be shared with the chosen artist as he or she begins working on the process to develop concepts for West LRT.



## **WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS**

### **CITY OF CALGARY REPRESENTATIVES**

#### PUBLIC ART PROGRAM

Robin Murphy  
Quyen Hoang  
Stacey Dyck  
Michelle McDonald

#### WORKSHOP FACILITATOR

Gale Simpson

#### TABLE FACILITATORS

Adrienne Beattie  
Jessica Bell  
Deric Herek  
Elana Krol  
Serena Mackie  
Jo Moss  
Amber Retallack  
Adis Samardzic  
Lara Tierney  
Julie Yepishina-Geller

#### WARD COUNCILORS

Richard Pootmans – Ward 6  
Evan Woolley – Ward 8

### **COMMUNITIES REPRESENTED**

Aspen  
Beltline  
Bragg Creek  
Glendale  
Meadowlark Park  
Scarboro  
Shaganappi  
Silver Springs  
Spruce Cliff  
Strathcona  
Sunalta  
Westgate  
Wildwood  
Windsor Park  
  
Other – not defined

## PRESENTATION QUESTIONS &amp; ANSWERS

<b>Q</b>	Is the mold that was used to refurbish one Lion still available?
<b>A</b>	<i>No.</i>
<b>Q</b>	If the Lions are in such bad shape, why use them?
<b>A</b>	<i>They are historically significant artifacts and there is a desire to use them in some way – either restoration, rehabilitation or reinterpretation</i>
<b>Q</b>	What was the cost to refurbish the one Lion?
<b>A</b>	<i>The total project in 1999 – 2000 was \$450,000 for the 4 cast new lions and the restoration of one lion placed at City Hall</i>
<b>Q</b>	Are you looking to have them located to one site?
<b>A</b>	<i>Not necessarily – there isn't a place on West LRT where you could fit more than one lion</i>
<b>Q</b>	Why do you want to use them?
<b>A</b>	<i>They are historically significant assets and Council saw a fit with West LRT because both are Transportation projects. It was seen as an opportunity to consider them because of that connection and that both the Centre Street Bridge and West LRT were seen as gateways to the city</i>
<b>Q</b>	Is Westbrook the largest site?
<b>A</b>	<i>No, Sunalta and 69<sup>th</sup> street are large sites as well</i>
<b>Q</b>	What is the size of each Lion?
<b>A</b>	<i>They measure 12' long, 8' high and 5' wide</i>
<b>Q</b>	Was the adopt-a-Lion program a success?
<b>A</b>	<i>No it was not</i>
<b>Q</b>	What is the budget for West LRT?
<b>A</b>	<i>\$3million dollars overall budget</i>
<b>Q</b>	Can we use one or two Lions at the same location?
<b>A</b>	<i>Unlikely as the sites available can only accommodate one lion</i>



## WORKSHOP EVALUATION RESULTS

Responses: 30 / 40 attendees = 75%

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1) The information provided in the presentations was appropriate to set the stage for dialogue.	11	17	2	-	-
2) I had a good opportunity to provide my input.	12	18	-	-	-
3) The small table conversations provided the opportunity for me to hear the opinions of others.	14	15	1	-	-
4) The facilitator at my table made sure everyone had an opportunity to speak and share their thoughts.	19	11	-	-	-
5) The location and time of the Workshop was good for me.	14	15	1	-	-
6) This workshop helped me to have a better understanding of the public art process.	9	20	1	-	-
7) This workshop was a good use of my time.	13	17	-	-	-

## OTHER COMMENTS:

- Wonderful to engage the community BEFORE the artist is chosen
- Venue – no bike racks! Food: excellent!
- Too much time on Lions. The workshop was rather entertaining!
- Local artist \* Fun \* Informative
- Very pleased to have the opportunity to participate in this engagement. I am curious to see if the input will be truly utilized in the project. (Based on comments today if the Lions are used as primary inspiration, I would be disappointed and feel the process would have failed; I hope there is further engagement opportunities and local artists & fabrication only for this project
- Thanks for hosting and the opportunity to participate
- Better clarification of why the Centre Street Bridge Lions were being involved would have helped with setting the stage. Instead there was too much focus on costs of restoring the Lions. It is distracting and should have been cut off. The strong feelings expressed really clouded and ate up valuable time. You should have given the Heritage person time for a formal comment to help us understand the why
- All the stakeholders should be involved after the RFP also; we don't want to be surprised

- A really good info session about the history, direction and goal of the art program, especially regards to the Lions and WLRT; had a good discussion with people in the industry and various people in the community
- Gave me a good idea of where everyone was coming from and their views
- The process of public engagement works to get a guideline of ideas. However, starting with a mandate or a given direction would help to not water down overall themes; you will never please everybody. Art is bold.; Me = pro lions. Do not kill the idea based on the views of this forum.
- Loved the history of the Lions presentation; This workshop was a wonderful experience
- Really good, informative, well organized