



REPORT FOR ACTION

StreetARToronto Road Mural Pilot Program

Date: April 24, 2018
To: Public Works and Infrastructure Committee
From: General Manager, Transportation Services
Wards: All

SUMMARY

City Council requested the General Manager undertake a pilot program in 2016 to examine the implications of the installation of road murals by local residents painted on the asphalt road surface of city streets. The two-year pilot program is now complete. A total of eight road murals were painted over the two-year period, four in each year, all in mid-block locations on low volume, local streets, during street events with permitted road closure as approved by Council.

All eight murals were designed and installed by local community groups at no cost to the City following a review by Transportation Services staff to ensure there were not any road safety concerns. As anticipated the life span of road murals was relatively short (6 - 12 months) given their exposure to rain, snow and salt as well as vehicle traffic. As a result ongoing maintenance is not required. Transportation Services staff attended all eight sites to conduct traffic safety reviews before and after the mural installations and observed that the murals did not have an impact, positive or negative, on road safety.

This report concludes that the pilot program was successful and recommends that the program be implemented on an ongoing basis through an application based process as part of the StreetARToronto suite of programs and that the Transportation Services Division be authorized to provide support materials (paint, brushes, rollers, etc.) of up to \$500 and an artist honorarium of \$500 per project to facilitate these installations, to a maximum of 10 projects per year.

In addition, staff will explore the strategic use of paint on road surfaces to identify various elements, such as bump-outs, which may help improve road safety.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager, Transportation Services recommends that:

1. City Council direct that The Road Mural Pilot Program be implemented on an ongoing basis as part of the StreetARToronto suite of programs through an application based process to facilitate the implementation of mid-block road murals on low volume, local streets, during street events with permitted road closure and authorize the General Manager, Transportation Services to provide support materials (paint, brushes, rollers, etc.) of up to \$500 and an artist honorarium of \$500 per project, to a maximum of 10 projects per year.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Funding for this initiative is available within the 2018 Operating Budget for Transportation Services, as part of the StART Support Program.

The Acting Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact statement.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting of February 3, 4 and 5, 2016, City Council adopted "Options for Permitting Street or Intersection Murals on Local Streets" initiating a pilot project for the installation of up to four mid-block street murals painted directly on the asphalt road surface on low volume, local streets during street events with permitted road closures in 2016.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2016.PW10.1>

At its meeting of May 24, 25 and 26, 2017, City Council extended the StreetARToronto Road Murals Pilot Project into 2017 for up to four mid-block street murals on low volume, local streets during street events with permitted road closures, and directed staff to provide material costs and artist honorariums through the StreetARToronto program.

<http://app.toronto.ca/tmmis/viewAgendaItemHistory.do?item=2017.LS19.2>

COMMENTS

Road murals are community or citizen led projects, where local roads are painted with community art. Several North American municipalities permit road murals to be painted as part of a larger event such as a street party or festival when the roadway is closed to

vehicular traffic. Many of these mural installations are local neighbourhood activities focused on community engagement and temporary place-making. Some cities, such as Seattle, are now effectively painting sections of road surfaces to improve road safety by clearly delineating and drawing attention to specific road elements, e.g. bump-outs.

This pilot program was promoted through a notice sent to Councillors' offices and via the StreetARToronto website. Community groups, resident associations, business owner groups and similar organizations interested in installing a road mural as part of a proposed street closure event (e.g. annual community street festival, yard sale, etc.) submitted applications describing the proposed project to Transportation Services.

To assist community groups in completing their applications a two-phase process was adopted. Phase I was an Expression of Interest ("REOI") that staff could review to determine general compliance with the eligibility requirements before potential applicants proceeded to more detailed project planning. Phase II involved the development of the theme and design for the mural and community consultation to confirm the support of local residents for the project. Transportation Services staff reviewed each proposed location for suitability and road safety concerns and provided advice to the applicants. The community group or organization submitting the application assumed responsibility for the design, installation and maintenance of the murals. Throughout the two years of the pilot, eight road murals were installed (four in each year) in various locations across the City.

2016 Road Mural Projects

In 2016, there were seven (7) Request for Expression of Interest responses from community organizations wishing to install a road mural through the StreetARToronto Road Murals Pilot Project. All 7 projects were eligible to proceed to implementation based on satisfying traffic safety and operations concerns. In total, the 4 applicants listed below completed Phase II of the process and were approved for implementation:

Applicant Organization	Ward	Approved Location	Accompanying Street Event
Regal Heights Residents Association	17	Lauder Avenue between Clovis John Brooks Lane and Regal Road	Lauder Avenue Street Party
Kensington United	20	Baldwin Avenue between Spadina Avenue & Kensington Avenue	Kensington Market Pedestrian Sundays
The Pocket Community Association	30	Condor Avenue at Baird Avenue	The Pocket Street Party

Applicant Organization	Ward	Approved Location	Accompanying Street Event
Hiawatha Family Group	32	Hiawatha Road between Gerrard Street East & Dundas Street East	Hiawatha Road Street Party

2017 Road Mural Projects

In 2017, there were eight (8) Request for Expression of Interest responses received, which were all permitted to move on to the full application phase. In total, 4 complete applications were received and approved with the details noted below:

Applicant Organization	Ward	Approved Location	Accompanying Street Event
Fairbanks Village BIA	15	Shortt St between Eglinton Ave W and Green P Parking Lot	Films on Shortt Street
The STEPS Initiative and Friends of the Beltline	15	Salinas Court, South of Roselawn, prior to Cul de Sac	Walter Saunders Park Community Event
Weston-Pelham Park Neighbourhood Action Partnership	17	Pelham Avenue between Laughton Ave & Uxbridge Ave	Weston-Pelham Park Neighbourhood Party
Bloordale CIA Bloordale BIA	18	Emerson Ave, between Bloor St W & Paton Rd	Bloordale Community Clean-Up, Brush-Up and Get Down Event

Traffic Safety Reviews

In approving this pilot program Council directed Transportation Services Division staff to conduct traffic safety reviews before and after installation of the road murals and granted staff the authority to remove any installations found to diminish road safety.

Staff attended all eight project locations and before, during and after the mural installations and observed that the murals did not have an impact, positive or negative, on road safety. Although the murals retained their visibility for a relatively short time, generally 6 - 12 months. Depending on weather and traffic conditions, all installations were considered successful based on community engagement and temporary place-making. Residents of all ages were involved as participants and/or enthusiastic spectators.

Conclusion

The Road Mural Pilot Program conducted in 2016 and 2017 successfully achieved the community engagement and temporary place-making objectives at all eight locations. Based on before and after observations by Transportation Services staff, and given the relatively short life span in terms of visibility to motorists, the road murals did not have an impact, positive or negative, on road safety.

Proposed Way Forward

Following the successful Pilot Program, staff recommend that the program be implemented on an ongoing basis through an application based process as part of the StreetARToronto suite of programs whereby applicants will be provided with support materials (paint, brushes, rollers, etc.) of up to \$500 and an artist honorarium of \$500 per project, up to 10 locations per year.

In addition, staff will explore the strategic use of paint on road surfaces to identify various elements, such as bump-outs, which may help improve road safety.

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SIGNATURE

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