

The Indigenous Hub, 425 Cherry Street – Anishnawbe Health Toronto - Public Art Plan

Date: August 18, 2021

To: Toronto East York Community Council

From: City Planning Division Acting Director, Urban Design

Wards: Ward 13

Planning Application Number: 19 215798 STE 13 SA

SUMMARY

The purpose of this staff report is to seek City Council approval of the Indigenous Hub, 425 Cherry Street, Anishnawbe Health Toronto - Public Art Plan. The Plan, which is included as Attachment 1 of this report, outlines the method by which the owner will commission public art along the privately-owned area of the site.

The Public Art Plan provides a framework and description of the commissioning of public art including: introduction and background; site context; public art background; curatorial vision; objectives; public art location opportunities and options; project team; procurement process; the jury – voting & non-voting; budget; project schedule and maintenance obligation.

The attached plan meets the objectives of the City's Percent for Public Art Guidelines and is supported by the Toronto Public Art Commission.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Planning Division recommends that:

1. City Council approve The Indigenous Hub, 425 Cherry Street, Anishnawbe Health Toronto Public Art Plan as attached (Attachment 1) to the report dated August 18, 2021 from the Acting Director, Urban Design.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The recommendation in this report has no financial impact.

PROPOSAL

The Indigenous Hub, otherwise known as Block 10 of the West Don Lands Precinct Plan, is a 0.97 hectare block bounded by Front Street East to the north, Cooperage Street to the east, Mill Street to the south, and Cherry Street to the west. The site is located in close proximity to the Distillery District, Corktown, and the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood.

Anishnawbe Health Toronto (AHT) is the primary land owner of the development block, and the lands were conveyed by the Province for the purpose of creating the Indigenous Hub. The Anishnawbe Health Toronto's Indigenous Community Health Centre (AHT ICHC) is the centre piece of the Indigenous Hub and will result in the consolidation of AHT's programs and services from the current three sites across Toronto to their new facility in the West Don Lands.

The Indigenous Hub is a mixed-use development which includes: the four-storey AHT ICHC, Miziwe Biik's five-storey training facility and Indigenous childcare centre, the restored three-storey Canary Building (Heritage Listed), a 13-storey mixed-use condominium and an 11-storey rental apartment building. Overall, the Indigenous Hub will include 206 condo dwelling units, 237 rental dwelling units, 1,082 square metres of retail, 1,934 square metres of office, and 6,284 square metres of institutional space.

The Indigenous Hub also features a number of open spaces including: a publically accessible plaza at the southwest corner of the block (the "Southwest Plaza"); a pedestrian mews between the Canary Building and the Miziwe Biik building; and outdoor amenity space located on the roofs of the rental and condo buildings. The Anishnawbe Health Toronto ICHC will also include 10,400 square feet of outdoor space to accommodate public and private ceremonies and traditional practices that includes a sweat lodge and Ceremonial Healing Gardens.

The development provides an opportunity for public art within or adjacent to the Southwest Plaza, which is envisioned as a cultural gateway and gathering space for the Indigenous Hub. An Indigenous artist will be selected to create an artwork that is reflective of Indigenous culture. The public art plan proposes multiple options for the location of the public art, including the following: Option 1, Plaza Circle; Option 2, the Plaza; Option 3, 2nd Floor Rental Tower Panel and the Option 4, Utility wall and ledge. All four locations are located within or adjacent to the Southwest Plaza. The importance of selecting an Indigenous artist is at the forefront of this Public Art Plan and to that end an Indigenous Public Art Curator was hired to work with Waterfront Toronto in collaboration with the City to produce the Public Art Plan for this site.

The development review process, in collaboration with AHT, has resulted in a commitment to public art on this landmark site.

APPLICATION BACKGROUND

The West Don Lands Precinct Plan was endorsed by Toronto City Council in 2005. The Precinct Plan provides the framework for future development in the West Don Lands which was further refined by the Block Plan and Design Guidelines, the Public Realm Master Plan, the Public Art Strategy, and through a zoning by-law to implement the precinct vision.

For more information:

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2010/te/bqrd/backgroundfile-33146.pdf>

In September 2019, a Site Plan application for the Indigenous Hub (Block 10) was submitted consisting of two sub-phases. Phase A applies to the AHT ICHC, while Phase B applies to the remainder of the Block 10 lands (the Miziwe Biik building, the Canary Building, the mixed-use condo and the rental apartment building). Site Plan approval was issued for Phase A in June 2021 and the Minor Variance application for the entire development block was approved in October 2020 (A0478/20TEY).

Toronto Official Plan

Public art was secured when this application was reviewed against the policies of the City of Toronto Official Plan as follows:

Chapter 3 - Building a Successful City

Section 3.1.4 Public Art

Policy 1. e) encouraging the inclusion of public art in all significant private sector developments across the City.

The City of Toronto Official Plan can be found here: <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/planning-development/official-plan-guidelines/official-plan/>.

COMMENTS

The proposed public art will be prominently located on this site, whether the art is integrated into the landscape plaza or on the frontages of the building façade. The art will be visually and publically accessible along the plaza entrance and the landscaped plaza.

The proposed public art will be highly visible on this site and the locations are supported by City Planning staff and the Toronto Public Art Commission.

An artist will be selected through the following two stage competition process:

Stage 1: open request for qualifications (RFQ). The RFQ will focus on inviting professional Indigenous artists. The Curator and Waterfront Toronto will coordinate an evaluation committee to review the long list of applications and determine a short-list of approximately four (4) artists.

Stage 2: Request for Proposals (RFP)

The RFP will be sent to the short listed artists to prepare detailed concepts. Input will be provided by a technical advisory committee. The winning artist will be selected by the independent evaluation committee comprised of majority of art experts, and in particular Indigenous art, culture and histories.

The five (5) person jury composition will be drawn from the list of potential jury members provided in the Public Art Plan. The jury will consist of four (4) Indigenous community members with a majority of art experts, and one (1) representative of the owner team. The selection process, with a majority of art experts, is in keeping with the City's Percent for Public Art Guidelines.

In accordance with City policy, City Planning continues to encourage applicants to seek artistic excellence and expertise with broad representation from the art community in the selection of artists and jury members, including representation from the Indigenous community and equity seeking groups.

The estimated budget allocation for the art, administration and maintenance is described in the Public Art Plan which is in compliance with the City's Percent for Public Art Guidelines.

This proposal is supported by City Planning staff. It was presented to the Toronto Public Art Commission at its meeting on May 19, 2021, where it gained support.

Conclusion

The Indigenous Hub, 425 Cherry Street, Anishnawbe Health Toronto – Public Art Plan is in compliance with the City's objectives for the provision of public art associated with the development.

This on-site program is in accordance with the City Planning Percent for Public Art Program, and is supported by the Toronto Public Art Commission. Upon City Council's approval, the owner will commence with the artist selection process as scheduled in the attached plan.

CONTACT

Lara Tarlo, Senior Urban Designer, Tel. 416-338-1132, Lara.Tarlo@toronto.ca

SIGNATURE

Emilia Floro, Acting Director Urban Design
City Planning Division

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Public Art Plan