

TO: CITY MANAGER **DATE:** 1998 MARCH 05
FROM: DIRECTOR PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURAL SERVICES
SUBJECT: BURNABY ART GALLERY ASSOCIATION REQUEST: 1997 NOVEMBER 27
PURPOSE: To provide information to Council on Parks and Recreation Commission's response to the requests of the Burnaby Art Gallery Association.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT this report be received for information purposes.

REPORT

At its meeting of 1998 March 04, the Parks and Recreation Commission received the attached staff report on the above subject and adopted the three recommendations contained therein.



KATE FRIARS
DIRECTOR PARKS, RECREATION
AND CULTURAL SERVICES

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Attachment
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SUBJECT: BURNABY ART GALLERY ASSOCIATION REQUEST: 1997 NOVEMBER 27

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT the requests of the Burnaby Art Gallery Association be responded to as outlined in this report.
2. THAT a copy of this report be forwarded to Council for information.
3. THAT a copy of this report be sent to all members of the Burnaby Art Gallery Association Board of Trustees.

REPORT

At a special membership meeting of the Burnaby Art Gallery Association (BAGA) held on 1997 November 27, an eight point proposal was prepared for the consideration of the City of Burnaby (Attachment #1). It was advanced informally by the President of the Association to City staff.

In response, the BAGA President was asked to prepare an approved business plan providing details of the need of the Association for financial assistance and access to facilities. Reminders were given in writing on 1998 January 02 and again at a meeting of 1998 February 17. The business plan was to be presented at a meeting on 1998 March 02, but the BAGA President requested a further postponement.

While a significant amount of time has been allowed for the Association to prepare some business information upon which staff could prepare an analysis for a City response for the consideration of Commission, the information is not available and it is apparent that relevant decisions can no longer be delayed.

Therefore, the following recommended actions in response to the numbered Burnaby Art Gallery Association requests are now proposed:

1. "That the Association continues to own and steward the permanent collection."

Response: The membership of the BAGA has not yet responded to the City's request to have the public art collection transferred to the City in good faith and unconditionally. The BAGA has established a "stewardship committee", created to provide volunteer support to the collection.

The City has fully qualified professional staff in place to properly care for, interpret and extend the collection with the support of the new Visual Arts Advisory Board. The majority of works in the collection are in safe storage in environmentally-controlled storage facilities at the Burnaby Village Museum.

It is recommended that City staff meet with the stewardship committee to begin discussing the collection and to establish a working relationship that properly manages this valuable public cultural asset, and that the members of the BAGA Board of Trustees be asked accordingly to facilitate these meetings.

2. "That the Association works towards the development of a new gallery in Burnaby to provide excellent facilities for storing and exhibiting the collection."

Response: The City welcomes any public support for improvements to our cultural facilities and reiterates its interest in cooperating with associations, individuals and other groups to that end. Still, there is no evidence that creating a separate facility for the collection alone is a priority. A fully serviced gallery facility will be the subject of future facility development planning work.

3. "That the Association continues to operate the Art Rental Program."

Response: The BAGA's art rental program is a service provided under the auspices of this independent non-profit society and the association is free to continue this or any other program if it wishes.

The City has responded to requests from artists and volunteers and will operate a new art rental program under its new City management structure. This new City of Burnaby Art Rental Program will be launched in April 1998.

4. "That the Association donates the Gallery Library to the City."

Response: The collection of exhibition catalogues that constitutes the gallery library illustrates an interesting history of the gallery and are a welcomed gift as resource material. It makes sense to transfer all documents to the City with the permanent collection.

It is recommended that the donation be accepted.

5. "That the City allow the Association, free of charge, to utilize the existing BAGA Art Rental presentation and storage space and provides the office space adjacent to the Art Rental space for its own use. Further, that the City provides, free of charge, archive storage space, environmentally controlled space for the storage of the permanent collection, access to meeting and activity space."

Response: The City of Burnaby Visual Arts Program as endorsed by the VAAB, will require full use of the Ceperley Mansion. It is anticipated that the staff will move into the office and programming space July 10, 1998 at the latest. Should the BAGA present a business plan detailing their requirements, staff will work with the Association to seek an alternative City property at low or no cost for their activities.

6. "That the Association continues to operate as a legally constituted entity under the Societies Act, administered and governed by a board elected by its membership."

Response: The City has no interest in interrupting the right of a duly constituted non-profit association to exist. As is the case with many community groups in good standing, any City support to the Association would be considered on the merits of future requests with proper business plans.

7. "That the City considers the provision of an annual operating grant to the Association."

Response: In the absence of any demonstrated need, an operating grant to the Burnaby Art Gallery Association is not recommended.

New funds for the visual arts, if available, would be used to enhance the new City of Burnaby visual arts programs and services.

8. "That the City provides on a continual basis one of its positions on the new Visual Arts Advisory Board to the Association."

Response: The members of the BAGA have already been given a special invitation to put forward their names for consideration on the VAAB. There were no respondents.

The Visual Arts Advisory Board is not a governing board. Formal designated members are not required. The VAAB recognize the opportunity for ongoing dialogue on visual art issues in the community and look forward to meetings on an as need basis.

CONCLUSION:

The new Visual Arts Advisory Board has held its second meeting and is pursuing an ambitious agenda which requires the full support of the City and the community. After a lengthy period of consultation with the Burnaby Art Gallery Association, it is apparent that there has not been a smooth transition from the former administration to the new one due to the lack of cooperation of some members of the BAGA.

Still, many volunteers have come forward to support the new program, evidence of the commitment of many to the values of a responsive community-oriented visual arts program in Burnaby. Continuity of support to artists and audiences in our community has been interrupted, but the new visual arts program and City of Burnaby Art Gallery is becoming a vital reality.

It is therefore recommended that approval be granted for the above responses to the Burnaby Art Gallery Association proposal.

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Attach.

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Proposal to the City of Burnaby for a partnership with the Burnaby Art Gallery Association

In our continued endeavours to develop, for presentation to the Association's membership, viable options which will ensure, further to the City's withdrawal of funding, the survival of the Association; the following model is proposed:

- **that the Association continues to own and steward the permanent collection.**

The City plan proposes keeping the collection in storage for three years. There is no accommodation in the activity structure proposed by the City which would allow for research and development of the Collection during this period. Curatorial staff and time would ultimately be needed.

The potential for ownership of the Collection by the City could be explored once the City has demonstrated as an institution that it has the ability, resources and guiding principles in place to steward the Collection and that it receives the required designation by the Cultural Properties Review Board.

The Association would raise funds to develop a database, promote the touring potential for the Collection, and work towards research and publication related specifically to the Collection. This would allow time for the Association to develop a new role contributing to the visual arts in Burnaby as a sort of 'Art Bank' and to develop a meaningful and thriving relationship with the City. Stewardship would include raising funds for curatorial research and registration and maintaining a Stewardship Committee of artists, art professionals, donors and local representatives who consider acquisitions and the future of the Collection.

The Association could enter into an agreement for use of the Collection by the City. The City in turn would allow the Preparator and conservation staff to work with the Association staff on maintenance and use of the Collection.

- **that the Association works towards the development of a new gallery in Burnaby to provide excellent facilities for storing and exhibiting the Collection.**

The Association through its network of volunteers, artists, art professionals, business partners and local representatives could be a major partner with the City in this enterprise.

- **that the Association continues to operate the Art Rental program**

This program essentially predates the operation of the Gallery. The net proceeds, after payments to individual artists, from the program would continue to be used for the acquisition and maintenance of works of art for the permanent collection.

- **that the Association donates the Gallery Library to the City**

The Association has developed an extensive collection of art publications including representative materials of all past exhibitions held at the Gallery since its inception.

- **that the City allows the Association, free of charge, to utilize the existing Art Rental presentation and storage space and provides the office space adjacent to the Art Rental space for its own use. Further, that the City provides, free of charge, archive storage space, environmentally controlled space for the storage of the permanent collection, access to meeting and activity space.**

Keys and free access to all of these spaces would be provided at all times.

Assuming an agreement is reached with the City; the Association would allow the City to continue using the Ceperly Mansion beyond January 1, 1998. However, in order to allow the Association time to complete its year end requirements and reorganization noexhibitions would be held at the Gallery until April 1998. All office furnishings, equipment, tools and art supplies would be made available to the City for its use. The City would assume any and all rental and maintenance contracts. The telephone and voice mail system acquired this year could be purchased by the City.

- that the Association continues to operate as a legally constituted entity under the Societies Act, administered and governed by a board elected by its membership.

The Association would continue to develop collection tours and publications, encourage exhibitions off-site, work with the City on programming and fundraising support, support promising artists in Burnaby through exhibition and mentorship opportunities, develop international and cross-cultural exchange opportunities through exhibitions, residencies and workshops.

- that the City considers the provision of an annual operating grant to the Association

The Association's requirements need to be determined as the weeks unfold but it is expected that an annual sum of \$20,000 - 30,000 would be appropriate.

- that the City provides on a continual basis one of its positions on the new Arts Advisory Board to the Association.

The Association would be represented by the President or his/her designate.

