

**FINANCE AND CIVIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

*HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR  
AND COUNCILLORS*

**SUBJECT: BURNABY ART GALLERY SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS PROJECT**

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. THAT Council approve the use of Gaming Reserve Funds in the amount of \$315,000 (inclusive of GST) for the 3 year special exhibitions project.
2. THAT an expenditure of \$105,000 (inclusive of GST) be allocated for 2009 and scheduled for 2010 and 2011.

**REPORT**

The Finance and Civic Development Committee, at its meeting held on 2009 February 26, received and adopted the *attached* report seeking Council's approval to secure resources for a three year pilot project for special exhibitions at the Burnaby Art Gallery

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor D. Johnston  
Chair

Councillor N. Volkow  
Vice Chair

Councillor C. Jordan  
Member

Copy: City Manager Director Parks, Recr. & Cult. Services Director Finance
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**TO:** CHAIR AND MEMBERS  
FINANCE AND CIVIC DEVELOPMENT  
COMMITTEE

**DATE:** 2009 February 11

**FROM:** DIRECTOR PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES

**SUBJECT:** **BURNABY ART GALLERY SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS PROJECT**

**PURPOSE:** To secure resources for a three year pilot project for special exhibitions at the Burnaby Art Gallery.

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1. **THAT** Finance and Civic Development Committee request Council approval for the use of Gaming Reserve Funds in the amount of \$315,000 (inclusive of GST) for the 3 year special exhibitions project.
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### **REPORT**

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Burnaby Art Gallery (BAG) is a dynamic cultural resource within the City's cultural precinct at Deer Lake Park. Within its mandate, the gallery presents a contemporary and historical visual arts program by local, regional, national and international artists; facilitates the development of emerging artists; provides diverse art education programming; acquires culturally significant works on paper; and cares for and manages the City of Burnaby Permanent Art Collection.

The City of Burnaby Permanent Art Collection administered by the BAG is the third largest collection of art within British Columbia. Investment in the collection's care, storage, presentation and accessibility has increased in the past five years allowing for increased visibility, inquiry and research.

Originally established by a non-profit society in 1967, the Burnaby Art Gallery became part of the Cultural Services Division when the City assumed direct management of the gallery in 1998. The gallery has engaged an advisory committee to provide advice on programs, collections and services.

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Through its exhibitions, fine art and educational programs and special events, the gallery has engaged residents and visitors of all ages. Since 2004 the gallery attendance has risen 8.3%, fine art programs by 16%, and school programs by 30%. While serving local and area needs and interests, the gallery is part of a large changing community and reflects various constituencies.

## **GALLERY ROLE**

The role of the gallery includes providing leadership and direction in the community for the visual arts while being responsive to the changing community. It also provides access to the collection for exhibition, research and touring in the region and across Canada, thereby expanding the audience and enhancing accessibility. Presenting a diversified permanent collection program remains a priority for the gallery. The exhibitions are dedicated to presenting and interpreting the works of contemporary and historical artists. With interpretative programs, publications and the involvement of guest curators, scholarly excellence is encouraged, while diverse audiences are engaged to experience the efforts of visual artists to express themselves and exhibit their works.

## **CURATORIAL OBJECTIVES**

The Burnaby Art Gallery has established a well-balanced exhibition calendar 2 to 3 years in advance that references the diversity of the visual arts community and their related audiences. This strategy includes the following objectives:

- Provide opportunities and access to contemporary and historical Canadian art for diversified audiences
- Present and interpret works from the permanent collection based on contemporary themes
- Engage guest curators to advance ideas and theories behind contemporary art works
- Involve emerging, mid-career and senior artists in exhibition development
- Provide and foster opportunities for visual artists to develop their practise

The success of the past program leads to the next phase of development and practice which required a review of current and future resources.

## **GALLERY RESOURCES**

As a section of the Cultural Services Division, the gallery has a core curatorial program representing about \$50,000 annually. For the planned exhibition series, the Director/Curator regularly seeks additional resources from provincial and federal government departments and agencies, corporate sponsors and institutional partners. Individual donations and contributions offer periodic assistance. As the requirements for each exhibition vary significantly and as the time it takes to research, develop, resource and execute the shows may span years, the work load and resources required vary considerably.

In addition, artists and collection owners more frequently offer works of art as gifts to the collection, multiplying the possibilities for exhibitions. It is important that public access to the expanding collection be addressed in fiscal planning as well.

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**SPECIAL PROJECT: THREE YEAR THEMED EXHIBITION PROJECT**

To provide for an expanded exhibition program over the next three years, a themed exhibition project has been considered and developed for each of the next three years.

**2009: Phase 1: Visioning Community: Roles of an Artist**

The central theme to the 2009 exhibition project will be based on the multiplicity of roles that artists play within his/her community. Through a diversified program involving emerging, local, regional, national and international artists, the gallery has prepared a series of exhibition projects that engage viewers on the function of the artists in their communities and the communities that they exhibit in. The roles explored include collaborator, recycler, mentor, visionary, chronicler and activist. In this project the gallery envisions the artists as challenging the preconceived ideas and myths that surround the historical and contemporary artist related to the objectives of their work in the community art museum context.

The first phase will include seven gallery exhibitions (and the World Police and Fire Games special project “I-dent” pending approval), as well as outreach exhibits at the libraries. For the Phase One program resources will be assigned as follows:

1. Exhibition Curatorial costs: (exhibit preparation, mattes, frames, installation, shipping, artist fees, essays, travel, transportation, etc.)	\$ 39,000
2. Promotion/ Publication: (advertising, brochures, publications, posters, photography, design, etc.)	56,800
3. Special Events:	4,200
Total	<hr/> \$100,000 =====

It is proposed that Gaming funds be assigned for this special curatorial project for 2009.

**2010: Phase 2: Presenting Local Expressions: The World at Home**

For 2010, exhibitions would explore the relationship between global issues in the context of the local artists and their communities. Resonance is central to the theme where artists related to issues such as the environment, global warming, war, globalization and nationalism.

The community would be engaged in this process through creating community group dialogues, fine art and school programs, publications and presentations. By employing blogs and related social media, the gallery would expand the local discussion to a broader community base as well.

Detailed exhibition plans and budgets are under development.

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**2011: Phase 3: Collaborative Networks: Art, Artists and the Museum**

The special curatorial projects in this phase center on “collaboration” and the various ways the term is used, explored and made manifest in the works of artists, art museum exhibitions, publications and programs. Through involving local, regional and national artists and solo exhibitions, the gallery will interpret and share the experiences of artists working in collaborations with other artists and their communities and how they create artwork relevant to their practise as well as those of the collaborators. Through this project the gallery intends to forge new relationships and connections with diverse communities, art practises and artists and in turn relay the discoveries to the community.

Detailed exhibition plans and budgets are under development.

**CONCLUSION**

City Council established the Gaming Reserve fund to be used for arts and cultural projects, as well as for heritage, environment and public safety. Gaming Reserve funding has been approved for special projects in the past such as the “From the Heart” DVD and educational kit production. In reviewing the application of the intention of the Gaming Reserve fund to the way in which arts and culture are practiced in Burnaby, it is apparent that special projects are a priority and that the consideration of supporting distinct arts projects is worthwhile. Special visual art exhibitions cannot be accommodated in the base operating budget of the gallery and special resources have been and are currently sought from outside sources for these purposes.

This three year project would assign Gaming Reserve funds to project accounts only. The themed approach will provide for a rich diversity of exhibitions and activities that exploit the collection more fully, engage local and other artists, and enhance the community dialogue on a variety of current issues and interests.

It is therefore recommended that Finance and Civic Development Committee request Council approval of a three year project of \$315,000 (inclusive of GST) allocated in 2009, 2010, and 2011 at \$105,000 (inclusive of GST) annually. It is further recommended that a review of the special project be conducted at project’s completion.



Dave Ellenwood  
DIRECTOR PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES

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Director Finance