Best in the West Awards 2023 – A Celebration of Excellence
Award Nomination

Entrant Name: Teri James, Executive Director

BIA Name: Downtown Langley Business Association

Title of Entry: Augmented Reality Murals – Moving Murals

Category: Programming and Partnerships

Timeframe of Project: Ongoing

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Two Sentence Brief Summary:

Moving Murals were launched in the fall of 2021 and added an augmented reality (AR) component to the existing award winning Downtown Langley Mural Walk. This AR experience leads participants to see components of the activated mural pop off the wall and come to life, including bees flying and landing on flowers, an octopus dancing and horses tossing bowls of spaghetti across a table.

Opportunity / Need:

While our award winning Downtown Langley Mural Walk experienced record attendance in 2020 during the pandemic, we recognized that as we moved through 2021 and 2022, and other local attractions began to reopen, we needed to find a way to maintain the popularity of this safe, outdoor activity.

This was important as business owners have provided consistent feedback about the customers who stop in to eat a meal, grab a drink or make a purchase while they are on the Mural Walk. They have made the effort to let us know that the Downtown Langley Mural Walk is bringing business through their doors.

We saw the opportunity to enhance our Mural Walk using augmented reality, which would refresh the experience for existing supporters while also attracting a new audience to downtown Langley.

Audience:

The primary audience for Moving Murals is the citizens of Langley City and of our neighbouring communities of Metro Vancouver and the Fraser Valley. The secondary audience is social media influencers.

Goal / Objectives:

The goals and objectives for the Moving Murals component of the Downtown Langley Mural Walk are:

- Build on the popularity of the existing Downtown Langley Mural Walk in a unique way that would draw the attention of media and influencers while maintaining or increasing annual attendance.
- Create an accurate way to measure the number of users accessing the Downtown Langley Mural Walk annually.

Implementation:

The award winning Downtown Langley Mural Walk has gained a strong following over the past 5 years, with peak attendance in 2020 during the pandemic while the Langley community and surrounding communities were looking for safe, outdoor activities to take part in. During this time, business owners provided consistent feedback about the value of the mural walk as they were noticing an increase in customers who were stopping in to support their businesses while they were enjoying

the mural walk. As we moved through the pandemic and other local attractions began to reopen in 2021, we recognized the need to ensure that the Downtown Langley Mural Walk continued to attract locals and visitors to the area.

We saw the opportunity to enhance our Mural Walk using augmented reality, which would refresh the experience for existing supporters while also attracting a new audience.

Augmented reality (AR) is an interactive experience of a real world environment where real world objects are enhanced by computer generated perceptual information. The AR component to the Downtown Langley Mural Walk leads participants to see components of the murals come to life, and some even offer the opportunity for you to place yourself inside the AR experience.

We connected with a locally based AR Motion Designer who was excited to be a part of this forward thinking, unique and creative project. We began by compiling a database of our exiting Mural Walk, including images, ease of access, and any red flags for potential safety concerns (traffic etc). We then went through the existing 27 murals with our AR Motion Designer to select seven murals (what our budget would allow based on quotes received) to be activated based on mural content, location, and ease of participant access.

Once the murals were selected, our AR Motion Designer began their work on the creative process while our team began to outline the user experience from start to finish. In order for this AR component to be successful, we needed a user-friendly process that was accessible to the end user. We designed an experience that would make the AR filters accessible through both a QR code that was affixed next to the mural, as well as through our Instagram page. Users would only require a smart phone or tablet, and an Instagram account to access the Moving Murals.

This streamlined user experience also has an added benefit for our BIA. Between our Instagram filters and our QR codes we are able to access real time analytics including the number of times the filter was opened, how many images were captured, location where an IP was registered and peak days and times that users accessed our Moving Murals. As more participants choose to access our digital Mural Walk map, rather than collect a paper copy from our office, this is now invaluable information for us to continue to gain support to grow this popular downtown Langley attraction.

We knew our biggest challenge would be explaining to the public how to access and use our Moving Murals. We overcame this challenge by working with a local videographer to create two short videos for each Moving Mural. One 'Experience Video' which focused on the user experience to build excitement and interest in the Moving Mural, and one 'Instructional Video' which focused on the simple steps a user would take to access the Moving Mural. These videos were shared on our social media, YouTube channel and website.

Links to these videos have been included in our supplementary materials for this submission.

We launched our first four Moving Murals one at a time starting in October 2021. These were extremely well received by the public. These Moving Murals included 'Save The Bees', which featured bees flying in and landing on flowers and 'Angel Wings' which let users add colourful flapping wings to a person.

We then launched our second group of murals (three additional activations) in March 2022, including 'Octopus Extraordinaire' which features a breakdancing octopus and 'Spaghetti Anyone' where horses are throwing back their heads and tossing spaghetti across a table.

Moving Murals continue to gain traction and we look forward to activating more murals in the coming months and years. To date, our Moving Mural filters have been opened over 35,000 times.

Results:

- To date (January 2023) there are 7 Moving Mural AR activations in downtown Langley
    - 4 launched in October 2021
    - 3 launched in March 2022

- Instagram Statistics:
    - Impressions 138,887
    - Opens 100,466
    - Captures 6,340

Project costs to add AR to seven murals:

Project Management	$ 3,000
Programming AR Components	$10,500
Website Costs	$ 1,500
Q/R Code Purchase and Design	$ 1,200
Videos	$ 6,500
TOTAL COST	$22,700