

Public Art Policy

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1. Purpose

To provide a policy that supports the development, planning, acquisition, maintenance, de-accessioning, and integration of a diverse range of permanent, temporary, and ephemeral artworks in public places which contribute to the social, cultural, environmental, and economic value of the Shoalhaven region.

2. Statement

Shoalhaven City Council recognises that public art is as diverse as the people and landscape of the region in which it is presented. Public Art is inspired and informed by a multitude of environments – the cultural, physical, political, emotional, and spiritual. Shoalhaven City Council is committed to establishing a standard of excellence that underpins the implementation of public art throughout the region. This Policy refers to art that is distinctly separate from the Shoalhaven City Council Art Collection.

2.1. Scope

For the purposes of this policy, public art typically refers to contemporary artwork occurring in public spaces, in both public and private developments, away from the confines of traditional galleries and museums. Public arts can be comprised of diverse art forms and materials to produce both permanent, temporary, and ephemeral works that enrich the City's public spaces, assist in the creation of a 'sense of place' and are created by highly experienced public artists, young and emerging artists and artists working in a community setting.

A best practice approach, particularly in integrated public art, involves close collaboration between artists, professionals or designers who work in the built environment, key project stakeholders and community. Examples of integrated public art might include street furniture (chairs, tables, gates etc), playground equipment, bike racks, signage, lighting, pavements as well as components in buildings, bridges, and major asset developments.

The *Public Art Policy* outlines strategies and procedures relevant to the achievement of public art projects and cover areas such as maintenance, conservation, archiving and de-accessioning of works.

2.2. Background

The development of public space portrays interactions within and between communities. As a contributing element in the shaping of public space, public art signifies its local and regional identity - revealing aspects of community history, character, and aspirations. Public art provides opportunity to forge an environment of inclusiveness through careful selection, maintenance, and appropriateness to the context of place.

Shoalhaven City Council seeks to build a strong vital arts and heritage culture that acknowledges, promotes, and reflects the diversity of its people through the exchange of ideas and responsible urban planning that enhances the quality of public space for residents, ratepayers, and visitors.

3. Provisions

To achieve this commitment, and in partnership with stakeholders and relevant agencies, Shoalhaven City Council will put into practice the following specifications:

3.1. Key Principles for Public Art Approval

Evaluation and implementation of all public artworks will be based on the following criteria:

- Standards of excellence and innovation
- Appropriateness of the work relative to purpose and context of its site
- Consistency with current planning, heritage and environmental policies and plans of management
- Consideration of public safety; the public's access to and use of the public domain
- Consideration of sustainability and maintenance requirements
- Evidence of funding source and satisfactory budget including an allocation for ongoing maintenance if appropriate
- Evidence of formal agreement between Council and artist/s specific to the acquisition being undertaken
- Non-duplication of monuments commemorating the same or similar events

3.2. Approval Process for Public Art

New Public Art Projects can be developed and approved through the following means:

- Commissioning by Shoalhaven City Council of a specific artist for a project
- Purchase by Shoalhaven City Council of a suitable work
- Loan of a work by an artist / collector to Shoalhaven City Council for a specific time period
- Gift or donation to Shoalhaven City Council by an artist or collector
- Application to Shoalhaven City Council by an artist or group for the development and installation of a new work.

Where an application, loan, gift or donation is made to Shoalhaven City Council approval for the Public Art project will require:

- Application made to council in writing, describing the project or work, and demonstrating how it meets the Key Principles for Public Art (3.1)
- If a development approval is deemed to be required, this must be submitted prior to any further approval processes being undertaken
- Details of the proposal must be advertised publicly, and response sought from interested citizens
- Comment should be sought from the Manager – Arts and Culture; the Shoalhaven Arts Board; relevant Directors as appropriate, Council's Insurance Officer and Council's WHS Unit Manager.
- The Manager – Arts and Culture will be responsible for informing the applicant of the outcome of their application but will not be responsible for justifying the decision.

4. De-accessioning of Public Art

Where a work has been severely damaged, has lost the original intent or relevance, has reached its agreed lifespan or Council is redeveloping the site, Council has the right to de-accession the work.

De-accessioning of a work can only be undertaken following an assessment and documented review process which considers:

- The historical, cultural, and artistic value of the work
- The origins and acquisition status of the work
- Options and cost to repair or restore the work
- Opportunities to relocate or rehome the work at an alternate Council site.

Where the decision is made to de-accession a permanent public artwork, Council shall undertake the following process:

- The work shall firstly be offered for return to the artist / donor or next of kin
- The work shall then be offered to another council, cultural institution or community group
- Only if no other option is available shall the work be sold and the proceeds from the sale shall be added to the Art Collection Reserve

5. Public Art Collection Responsibility

The Public Art Collection is administered by Council's designated arts unit, in consultation with other Council departments as appropriate.

All items of public art shall be placed on the public art data base, administered by the Arts & Culture Department, and insured in accordance with Council's asset management plans and catalogued with details including title, image, size, and medium, artist, and provenance, date of purchase, value, storage place and description.

6. Funding

The following sources of funding should be considered and pursued as appropriate:

- Council's annual capital works and operational budgets.
- Donations and sponsorships from the private sector.
- State and Federal Government funding.
- Public funding for projects and "in kind" support from the community and commercial sector.

7. Implementation

The City Lifestyles Directorate is allocated overall responsibility for the administration and implementation of this policy.

Internal departments tasked with responsibilities relating to public art will jointly implement the Public Art Policy to maximise opportunities, coordinate efforts, ensure efficiencies and reduce costs.

8. Review

To be reviewed within 1 year of the election of a new Council.