

PUBLIC ART POLICY

Reference Number	723319
Responsible Business Unit	Community Services
Responsible Officer	General Manager Community Development
Legislation	
Relevant Delegations	
Related Policies Management Guidelines Frameworks	Public Art Strategy 2019 – 2024 Public Art Guidelines (Draft) Public Art Advisory Subcommittee Terms of Reference 12 June 2018
Link to Strategic Plan	Goal 2 - Great People and Lifestyle 2.2 – Arts and Culture has a Stage
Council Meeting Reference	Item 64.1
Date Adopted	13 February 2023
Review Date	April 2027 <i>(reviewed once during a Council term)</i>
Previous Revisions	Item 117.1 - 12 June 2018

POLICY STATEMENT

Through its commitment to public art, the Rural City of Murray Bridge aims to develop and promote the region as a dynamic, regional leader and a progressive centre of culture, tourism, commerce and industry. A considered public art program that presents high quality public art will draw people to the city by stimulating and enlivening community spirit, increasing awareness of the city's Ngarrindjeri significance, its historical richness, its multicultural nature and its environmental assets.

OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure a strategic approach to develop a public art program that undertakes the commissioning, acquisition and maintenance of quality permanent and temporary public art that will enhance the cultural life of the Rural City of Murray Bridge and bring diversity and vibrancy to the public realm;
- Provide prescriptive criteria and conditions for the evaluation, selection, development, approval, management and maintenance of public art in the Rural City of Murray Bridge; and
- Integrate quality public art into the region's natural and built environments by embedding provisions for public art in the scoping and design process at the inception of significant capital projects.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all existing public art under the care and control of the Rural City of Murray Bridge and to all future public art procurements, including community public art projects and public art donations located within the Council's public realm.

SOCIALISATION OF THIS PUBLIC ART POLICY

Following approval, the policy will be made available to all staff via the intranet and to the general public via the Council's website.

DEFINITIONS

Public art – includes new, commissioned, temporary or permanent artworks created by professional artists; integrated art, generated in the concept planning for new capital developments or refurbishments; temporary works generated by the Council or community with

professional artists; and other outdoor cultural objects, including memorials, which engage professional artists.

Professional artist – an emerging, mid-career, or established arts practitioner with a clear and relevant track record in the arts, who is accepted by their peers and the arts industry as professional.

Quality – considered to be of a high artistic standard, with a strong, relevant conceptual underpinning; reflecting the highest standards of research, production and presentation; is original, innovative, robust and aesthetically appealing.

Memorial – an artwork or structure that specifically serves to preserve or reignite the memory of a deceased person/s or a significant milestone or past event. It may be instigated by a third party, unrelated to the Rural City of Murray Bridge. If the Memorial engages a professional artist, it may be considered to be commemorative public art.

Community – may refer to the broader public users of a space or a more specific section of the community such as local First Nations, or a local school population.

Decommission – the process of permanently removing a public artwork from the public realm.

Relocation – the process of removing a public artwork from its original or current site and reinstalling it at a different site.

PRINCIPLES

The Rural City of Murray Bridge will aspire to:

- Demonstrate sector leadership in the development, commissioning and acquisition of public art works.
- Develop awareness within the Council and the community of the value of art in public places.
- Fund the commissioning or acquisition of public art.
- Integrate public art where appropriate into the Council's infrastructure development projects in order to enhance community spaces and pedestrian streetscape experience;
- Encourage the use of collaborative arrangements between artists and other design fabrication professionals such as urban designers, engineers, architects and landscape architects in the commissioning and creation of public art;
- Provide opportunities for local professional artists to develop their practice.
- Adopt transparent industry best practice methods of commissioning and de-commissioning public art, as outlined in the Arts SA document "*Public Art, making it happen: commissioning guidelines for local councils*", and "*What is Public Art? Public Art and Design Checklist*". Please see: [Resources and publications | Department of the Premier and Cabinet \(dpc.sa.gov.au\)](#); and
- Include all public artworks approved by the Council to its Assets Register with regular maintenance of the asset scheduled accordingly.
- Enable a collaborative, community-focused approach to Public Art by implementing systems to support this whilst adhering to the other principles detailed in this policy.

FUNDING PUBLIC ART

The Council commits an annual allocation, of up to \$180,000 to the RCMB Public Art Fund, increasing by CPI annually, to be administered according to the criteria detailed in this policy. This budget to be comprised of:

\$90,000 for a Public Art Officer to be a key project annually, for the term of the Public Art Strategy; and

Up to \$90,000 to be committed to the delivery of actions of the Public Art Strategy. Allocations are to be included in Councils Long Term Financial Plan. These funds will be a combination of Key and Capital projects to be determined each year as consistent with the agreed annual Public Art work plan.

Given the nature of this work, project timelines and forward planning, any unspent budget in the Public Art Fund will be carried forward.

Project funding may be allocated within large capital developments where the artwork is considered integral to the development. This funding will be additional to the Public Art Fund however the development of the work will meet the criteria for public art contained in this policy and be delivered in collaboration with the Arts Development Team.

Specific, larger scale one off projects may be proposed from time to time (e.g. Silo Art). These projects will be subject to the annual budget bid process and will be additional to the Public Art Fund.

AQUIRING PUBLIC ART

The Council recognises the following methods for acquiring public artworks:

- *Direct acquisition* of an existing work that meets the criteria detailed in this policy ;
- *Direct Engagement* of an artist/artist team to create a new work responding to a Project Brief. This approach may be appropriate where a particular artwork or the work of a particular artist is required;
- *Limited competition*, where the commissioner selects and invites a number of artists/artist teams to submit proposals in response to a Project Brief. This may be appropriate if the artist/artist team is required to work in collaboration with a consultant, such as an architect or urban designer;
- *Open competition*, where the commissioner makes a public call for Expressions of Interest from artists/artist teams to provide a response to a Project Brief.
- *Donations/gifts* from an artist, another donor or a commissioning body other than Council.

THE PROJECT MODELS include:

- *Consultative*: where consultation with relevant community members informs the project. The extent of community consultation can vary as can the degree to which it influences the outcome. The process informs the resulting work of art;
- *Participatory*: where members of a community actively participate in the design and fabrication of public artworks. Generally such projects are guided by an experienced community artist.

DESCRIPTIONS OF PUBLIC ARTWORK include:

- *Iconic*: a standalone work that is significantly substantial in scale, intent and statement;
- *Functional*: where the primary purpose of the art or design is utilitarian such as seating, lighting, furniture, bollards, signage, rubbish bin surrounds, window treatments, reception areas, door handles and carpets;
- *Decorative*: the primary purpose is to aesthetically enhance an environment or structure such as murals on public buildings, pavement elements, and lighting. They must also be functional, iconic, integrated or site specific;
- *Integrated*: Works that are fully incorporated into the design of the built or natural environment such as paving, lighting, street furniture and landscaping. Integrated works may also be decorative and/or functional;
- *Site specific*: works that respond to a specific site and context through scale, material, form and concept. This could apply to all listed categories;
- *Interpretive*: where the primary purpose is to provide information about or educate and comment on a place, issues, events or situations. They may be functional, decorative, iconic and site-specific. Examples include signage, pavement inlays, sculptures, seating, landscaping, murals, text based work;
- *Commemorative*: where the primary purpose is to acknowledge a significant event, activity, milestone or person/people important to the local community and its visitors. Commemorative artworks may be sculptures, murals, pavement details and gardens. Memorials can be considered to be a commemorative public art when they engage professional artists in the design, development and fabrication of the work.

- *Temporary/Ephemeral*: where the work is not intended to be permanent. A piece or event may be momentary or remain for a fixed time. Wide ranging outcomes are possible and include performance, text street arts events, installations and multi-media; and
- *Community Art*: where the process and outcome are driven by Community and Cultural Development (CACD) principles; and artwork is created by members of the community, either working with an artist or wholly motivated by a community group. The involvement of a professional artist is recommended, particularly if work is intended to be permanent, but not always necessary.

DECISION MAKING

The Council's approach to the commissioning, acquisition and maintenance of public artworks will be informed by professional advice from the RCMB Arts Development team and the Public Art Advisory Subcommittee, as well as and the Community Advisory Committee. The final decision will remain with Council for all major projects. The implementation of public art commissions and acquisitions will be collaboratively supported by other Council staff, including Assets & Infrastructure, Development & Regulation and Procurement.

ROLE OF THE PUBLIC ART ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEE (PAAS)

The PAAS is a subcommittee of the CAC and will include specialist appointees on a project-by-project basis.

The role of the PAAS is to support the Council in the quality commissioning, installation, lifecycle management and deaccessioning of public art across the RCMB region, in accordance with the PAAS Terms of Reference.

The PAAS consists of:

- Two CAC members, at least one of whom is not an Elected Member
- RCMB Team Leader Arts Development
- RCMB Coordinator Open Space
- One Ngarrindjeri community member – selected by the Ngarrindjeri Aboriginal Corporation (NAC)
- One Country Arts South Australia delegate or 1 representative of a major external stakeholder (i.e. sponsor who contributes a minimum 30% of the total project cost), where applicable

For major commissions, one or more of the following specialist advisors may be invited onto the PAAS:

- Professional public art Artist/s
- Professional public art Consultant
- RCMB Development & Regulation representative/s
- Other RCMB Assets & Infrastructure representative/s
- Other experts as required

ROLE OF THE COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)

The CAC will review all major public art recommendation put forward by PAAS, in accordance with the prescribed criteria of the Public Art Policy.

FINAL APPROVAL FOR PUBLIC ART PROJECTS

Recommendations and endorsements for the implementation of public art projects will be submitted to Council by the CAC. Final approval of these projects will remain with Council. For the avoidance of doubt, the process will be:

Public Art Advisory Subcommittee (if convened) ➡ Community Advisory Committee ➡ Council

CRITERIA FOR PUBLIC ART PROJECTS

Public art proposals must demonstrate the following:

- Artistic excellence
- A high standard of quality and innovation;
- Relevance and appropriateness of the work to the context of the proposed site;
- Consideration for public access throughout day, night and diverse weather conditions;
- Adequately addressed safety, maintenance and conservation issues;
- Evidence of funding source and satisfactory budget, including an allocation for ongoing maintenance;
- Consistency with current planning, heritage and environmental policies and plans; and
- Non-duplication of existing public artworks or monuments commemorating the same or similar events.

The following are considered to be highly desirable attributes for public art in the Council area:

- Projects that engage a professional artists;
- Projects that propose the use of priority sites, including the CBD, the city's gateways, the Murray River (and its banks and public recreation areas);
- Projects that link thematically with the region;
- Projects that offer mentoring opportunities for local artists to work alongside a professional artist;
- Projects that link with community members, local business and industry.

A Development Application may need be lodged to the Rural City of Murray Bridge for any proposed public art and applicants are advised to contact the RCMB Development & Regulation team to assess this. Final approval of proposals is contingent on the successful completion of this process.

LIFE EXPECTANCY OF PUBLIC ART

A temporary, ephemeral public artwork may remain in public view for up to two years. Planning contingencies for the de-installation of a temporary artwork must be included in the initial Concept Design.

As a minimum, the life expectancy of a permanent public artwork is generally ten years. However, many public artworks may exceed this, depending on the level of investment in the project and the context in which it was undertaken or commissioned.

Any specific maintenance requirements will be identified at the time of design.

Required maintenance will be performed in consultation with the artist and in accordance with any maintenance documentation provided at the time of commissioning.

DECOMMISSIONING AND RELOCATING

If an artwork has been commissioned as a permanent piece then all reasonable effort should be made to avoid permanent removal within the contractually-agreed lifespan of the artwork, which in most cases will be a minimum of ten of its installation. However, public artworks may reach a point where they are no longer able to stay in the public realm, for example due to unexpected weathering or irreparable damage.

The assessment of recommendation for decommissioning or relocation any permanent public artwork will be based on the following:

- Artistic relevance;

- The existence of damage or deterioration that has reached a point that it is not possible or not cost effective to repair. The expertise of an arts conservator will be sought in these instances;
- Consideration of ongoing maintenance costs in relation to the value and age of the artwork;
- Major change to the site resulting in the artwork no longer being able to remain in the designated area. In this instance, all avenues will be explored to relocate the artwork to a more suitable location;
- Outside changes impacting on the integrity of the work and the artist's Moral Rights;
- The contractually-agreed life span of the artwork has expired; and
- The artwork has become unsafe or is affected by changes in health and safety regulations.

Should a public artwork be recommended for de-commissioning or relocation, the PAAS will submit a proposal to CAC for consideration by Council, detailing the reasons and justification.

The Council, through RCMB Arts Development team, will make reasonable attempt to consult with the artist prior to de-commissioning or relocation of the public artwork.

Where possible, it is important to be sensitive to the views of the general public and to any community groups who were involved in the original commission and to any other culturally sensitive matters with regard to the work.

The Council will be sensitive to take all reasonable actions to adhere to the Moral Rights and Copyright of the artist/s.