

## Public Art Policy

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Directorate:	Community Services		
Responsible Officer:	Manager, Community Arts, Culture and Library Services		
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### 1. Purpose

This policy has been developed to provide guidance regarding the commissioning, acquisition, maintenance and disposal of new permanent and temporary public artworks within the City of Greater Dandenong. Council's Arts and Cultural Heritage Strategy 2016 provides the broad framework and rationale for the inclusion of public art as part of the city's public realm and this policy supports the direction of the Strategy document. The vision for arts within Greater Dandenong is:

"The City of Greater Dandenong will be recognised as a creative and vibrant city, rich in arts and cultural heritage."

### 2. Background

The City of Greater Dandenong values the impact of creativity on the fabric of our city and recognises that arts and culture is intrinsically linked to the city's identity. Council is committed to making arts and culture an everyday experience for its citizens and visitors. Public art that is integrated into the city's public spaces and places is one of the most effective ways to make this happen.

Council recognises that investment in public art adds both aesthetic and commercial value to the municipality, enticing tourists, residents, tenants and investors through its capacity to share stories, build community and create memories. While the value of an individual artwork may appreciate over time, broader benefits are found in the enhanced visibility, awareness and foot-traffic in the area. Public art can express community values, enhance our environment, transform a landscape, heighten our awareness, or question our assumptions. Placed in public sites, art is a powerful form of collective community expression.

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The City of Greater Dandenong has a long-standing commitment to public art and has a diverse and dynamic collection with more than 60 public art installations across the municipality. The city's public art features permanent, temporary and ephemeral artworks that invite locals and visitors to engage with and reinterpret their environment in new and challenging ways.

The public art program provides artists with the opportunity to professionally develop in their practice and creates pathways to further their careers in the arts sector.

Council's Arts and Cultural Heritage Strategy notes the following strategic objectives and priorities for public art:

- Support the role of multiple platforms of public art in creating local identity, community strengthening and building a vibrant city.
- Increase community awareness, knowledge and engagement with public art.
- Continue to celebrate local stories throughout the city.
- Identify opportunities to incorporate creative arts and cultural heritage elements into public buildings, master plans and infrastructure projects.
- Proactively pursue opportunities for local artists to contribute to the design and development of minor works and capital improvement projects.
- Advocate for the inclusion of creative elements in all major State and Federal Government funded capital projects in Greater Dandenong.

### 3. Scope

The Public Art Policy sets out Council's strategic direction and parameters for public art in the city.

The Public Art Policy provides a rationale for commissioning or acquisition of works by purchase, donation, on loan or transfer. It includes facilitating privately commissioned works that have public benefit; articulates the process for considering public art as part of civic developments; and informs renewal plans for civic asset management.

The policy does not apply to commemorative memorials, plaques, unauthorised artwork or the City's interpretive signage and is relevant to Council staff, individual artists, community groups, art organisations, residents and developers involved in the commissioning, acquisition, maintenance and disposal of new permanent and temporary public artworks within the City of Greater Dandenong.

### 4. Human Rights and Responsibilities Charter – Compatibility Statement

All matters relevant to the Victorian Human Rights Charter have been considered in the development of this policy and are consistent with the standards set by the Charter

## 5. References

- Imagine 2030 Community Plan
- Community Wellbeing Plan 2017-21
- Arts and Cultural Heritage Strategy 2016
- Asset Management Strategy 2015-2022

## 6. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the term 'public art' is defined as art specifically created to be experienced in the public domain regardless whether it is situated on private or public land or whether it has been commissioned with public or private funds.

Public art can be permanent or temporary, in open space or within buildings or part of functional infrastructure. It can take on any art-form e.g. literary, visual, acoustic, interactive or multi-disciplinary. Public art includes the conceptual contribution of an artist to the design of public spaces and facilities that may be located in or part of a public space or facility provided for public benefit. Public art for the purposes of this policy may be considered as permanent, integrated or temporary.

### **Permanent Public Art**

Permanent public art is designed and built to last over a long term of between 10 – 20 years or longer. The materials will respond to the site conditions and expected longevity of the artworks. Permanent public art will ideally be site specific and designed for a particular location where it should explore or enhance local narratives. In some cases it may be appropriate to directly acquire an existing public art work where this is relevant.

### **Temporary Public Art**

Temporary public art is commissioned to energise a site in the short term or may be for the purpose of engaging the audience at festivals, community celebrations or events. Temporary public art may be a musical performance, a spoken performance, a digital artwork or a visual artwork installed for a defined period of time. The commission of temporary public art provides opportunities for emerging, local and established artists. Temporary public art can make a valuable contribution to the cultural life of the city.

### **Integrated Public Art**

Artists can contribute to the design of street furniture, landscapes, urban design and place making within the public domain. Integrated public art provides the opportunity to celebrate the specific local characteristics and narratives of a neighbourhood or precinct. Integrating creative elements through the involvement of artists in the design phase of public infrastructure for the public domain ensures the distinctiveness of local places is reflected and the built form outcomes are meaningful and unique.

## 7. Council Policy

Council is committed to the provision of unique and high quality artwork within the public domain.

Council has high profile, well utilised and publicly accessible open spaces that include parks, reserves, squares and activity centres. Many of these sites are suitable for permanent art and temporary public art projects.

Council is the owner of important civic infrastructure such as town halls, libraries, community hubs and leisure centres. Public art within these settings create opportunities for the city to express its creative aspirations.

Council has the capacity to leverage public art outcomes as part of private developments. The inclusion of public art outcomes in developments can significantly improve public amenity and dividends to the community.

Through appropriate public and private partnerships, public art can respond to the essential character of a place and contribute to activity centre revitalisation and other strategic priorities.

### **Council support for Public Art within new or upgraded infrastructure**

To ensure a high level of amenity to residents, the City of Greater Dandenong makes a significant investment each year towards capital infrastructure improvements, including community facilities and sports pavilions. Council further invests in other forms of public infrastructure including roads, bridges, footpaths, bike paths, parks, open space landscapes, streetscapes, off-street car parks and other assets.

Best practice recognises qualified public art practitioners as key contributors to project teams responsible for building and infrastructure projects. The City of Greater Dandenong has successfully applied this approach with major streetscape and civic projects.

Opportunities to include public artists within design teams will be considered from the earliest planning stages of appropriate funded capital work projects. Public art practitioners within project teams will be supported to consider diverse art forms, practices and styles in response to each unique infrastructure project, site and context. The public art outcomes will be costed and maintained within the overall context of the asset.

### **Selection of Public Art**

Council is advised on matters relating to public art by the Arts Advisory Board. Any proposal for the development of a public art opportunity and the final selection of a public artwork will be informed by the Arts Advisory Board's advice to Council. The Board may draw on expert input from industry specialists to inform their advice. Community engagement with public art will be determined by the Community Engagement Policy and Community Engagement Framework.

### **Public Art on property not owned by Council**

The City of Greater Dandenong values the opportunity to partner with private property owners, community, commercial and other levels of government to achieve public art outcomes. Strategically important spaces throughout the municipality that interface with the public domain can provide valuable opportunities for public art. The City will provide support and advice to, or if possible work with developers interested in increasing their community dividend through public art.

### **Acquisition, donation, loan or transfer of artwork**

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Any public art which is offered to the City as a transfer, donation or the acquisition of a public art work outside of a site specific commissioning process will be assessed for its suitability and conformance with this policy.

Council will refer these requests to the Arts Advisory Board to assess potential acquisitions against the aims of this policy. This Board will have Councillor representation as determined through the annual statutory meeting each year.

As a principle, the acquisition of any new public art work will be considered after taking into account the work's artistic merit, context, lifecycle costs and suitability. In some cases, advice from professional public art advisors or conservators may be sought.

## **Maintenance of Public Art**

Council will appropriately maintain all permanent and temporary public art within the city. The works will be recorded in Council's Asset Register. Asset Management plans will inform the periodic assessment of the condition of public art works and associated maintenance activities will be undertaken by Council to ensure the integrity of the public art work is upheld.

## **Commissioning of Public Art**

Public art commissions require a range of information to be nominated within the artist's brief and confirmed in the artist's agreement, such as specified life span and estimated lifecycle costs (operational and maintenance). Where possible, the Arts Advisory Board will have a role in the selection of the artwork and making recommendations to Council.

The selection criteria and assessment process will be determined based on the type and location of project.

## **Disposal of Public Art**

There is recognition that there may be reasons to review the location or retention of public art assets. Disposal or de-accessioning of public art can be considered in the following circumstances:

- The public art work site or part of the site is to be redeveloped, demolished or sold and it is not possible to incorporate the public art work into the redevelopment without compromising the integrity of the public art work or incurring excessive costs.
- The public art work requires a high level of maintenance and/or conservation, rendering excessive asset management expenses.
- The public art work poses serious risk and repair or remedy is impractical, not feasible or will undermine the integrity of the public art work.
- Continued display of the public art work undermines the artist's original intention.
- Significant and/or substantial changes in the pattern of use, community, character or design of the environment where the public art work is located necessitates a re-evaluation of the public art relationship to the site.
- The Asset Management plan indicates that the determined lifespan of the art work has been reached.

Proposals for de-accessioning or removal of any permanent artwork will be prepared by relevant officers and experts (where necessary) for consideration by the Arts Advisory Board and a

recommendation made to Council. Temporary and permanent artworks will be removed at the end of their contracted/agreed lifespan.

## **Re-locating of Public Art**

Changes in the city's physical landscape may create reasons for reviewing the location of a public artwork. Where such changes occur, the possible relocation of a permanent or temporary public artwork should be considered before disposal is considered.

In situations where the relocation of public art is required, Council will:

- Seek the artist's advice in the first instance to consider whether the context and original intent of the artwork would be altered by the re-location.
- Refer the proposal to the Arts Advisory Board to seek views and a recommendation to Council.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

**The responsibilities that arise under this policy are:**

**Directors of Community/Engineering Services/City Planning, Design and Amenity/CEO:** are responsible for the inclusion of new public art within capital infrastructure developments.

**Managers:** are responsible for monitoring staff under their supervision to ensure that they understand and comply with this policy and the requirements within it.

**Arts and Cultural Development staff:** are responsible for referral of new public artworks to the Arts Advisory Board along with relevant information to assist informed recommendations.

**Activities Centre's Revitalisation staff:** are responsible for referral of new temporary public artworks to nominated representatives of the Arts Advisory Board along with relevant information to assist informed recommendations.

**Arts Advisory Board:** is comprised of external independent members with a variety of skills and backgrounds, Councillor/s and Senior Council officer/s. It will provide advice to Council regarding cultural venues, public art and cultural development matters.

**Engineering Services staff:** are responsible for the development of Asset Management plans, Asset Renewal plans and maintenance of public art assets in conjunction with relevant officers and conservator experts where appropriate.

**All Staff:** are responsible for compliance with the policy and the requirements within it.

## **8. Related Documents**

- Public Art Strategy 2009 (to be superseded by this policy)
- Public Art Framework 2009 (to be superseded by this policy)
- Arts and Cultural Heritage Strategy 2016
- Place making Framework 2015
- Asset Management Strategy 2015-2022
- Public Art Register
- Community Engagement Policy



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- Community Engagement Framework
- Community Development Framework
- Greater Dandenong Tourism Strategy and Action Plan 2014-2018
- Activity Centres Transformed Program
- Activity Centres Interpretive Signage Framework
- Activity Centres Historic Narratives
- Arts Advisory board Terms of Reference