

Shire of Mundaring

POLICY

PUBLIC ART

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PURPOSE

To provide a mechanism through which the Shire of Mundaring acquires and conserves an inventory of quality, idiosyncratic and memorable public artworks, integrated into appropriate local settings.

BACKGROUND

Shire of Mundaring recognises that public art is a highly visible and easily understood indicator of a community's wealth of creativity. Public Art plays a vital role in the development and articulation of cultural diversity, openness and the richness of lifestyle enjoyed by the community.

The role of public artworks, throughout history and in contemporary life, has been to contribute to the heritage, identity, character and cultural life of a community. Public art may commemorate events of local, state or national significance as well as demonstrate the range of artistic expression and standard of excellence at work in society.

The Public Art within the Shire contributes to the heritage and style of the Shire, supporting and expressing the community's aspirations and talents. This provides an important element in promoting the Shire as a creative and vibrant place, encouraging tourism growth and overall economic prosperity.

POLICY

The purpose of the Public Art Policy is to establish a framework for Council's commitment to the appropriate management of both new and existing public art. Public Art in Shire of Mundaring will be commissioned and maintained through principles of best practice in line with the adopted Public Art Policy.

Definition

In its broadest sense, Public Art is considered to be two and three dimensional art forms or artistic activities that are displayed in a public place. Public artworks can have one or more of the following characteristics:

1. **Functional:** where the primary purpose of the art or design element is utilitarian, such as seating, lighting, furniture, bollards, signage, rubbish bin surrounds, window treatments, reception areas, door handles and carpets;
2. **Decorative:** where the primary purpose is to aesthetically enhance an environment or structure such as incorporated imagery or sculpture, paving elements and lighting;
3. **Iconic:** a stand-alone or significant work, where the artist's approach is largely independent of other considerations – 'art-for-art's-sake', including sculpture, water features, lighting or multimedia. These works are often site-specific;
4. **Integrated:** works that are fully incorporated within the design of the built or natural environment. Integrated works may include floor and window design, lighting, landscaping and associated elements;
5. **Site-specific:** designed specifically for, and responsive to, a particular site through scale, material, form and concept; and
6. **Interpretive:** where the primary purpose is to describe, educate and comment on issues, events or situations. Examples include signage, pavement inlays, sculpture, seating, landscaping, murals and text based work.

Public art includes principles and processes as well as art objects and therefore includes the creative concepts, ideas and designs of professional artists and designers working with public spaces.

Objectives

The objectives of the Public Art Policy are to ensure :

1. The encouragement and support of local artists;
2. The promotion of our unique cultural and artistic landscape;
3. A strategic approach to commissioning of public art;
4. Achievement of high artistic and conceptual standards;
5. Commissioning of public art that reflects the diversity of artistic practice and cultural richness of the Shire;
6. Commissioning of public art that supports the continued cultural development activities of the Shire;
7. Effective ongoing management of public art commissions; and
8. Public art is considered an important element in the branding, promotion and economic development of the area.

Public Art Goals

Clearly articulating the Shire's goals for its public art program is critical to achieving high quality outcomes for the community. This policy has five overarching goals that provide the strategic context and direction for all public art planning:

1. Achieving high quality: the public art outcomes, as well as the Shire's processes, procedures, relationships and partnerships;
2. Being innovative: the Shire's approaches are innovative to attract the best people and ideas;
3. Creating richness: the Shire's public art includes a diversity of art types and is an expression of the local community's diversity, including its natural and cultural heritage, histories and places;
4. Generating surprise: public artworks may have the ability to surprise, delight, challenge and stimulate; and
5. Enhancing the reputation of the Shire of Mundaring as an attractive place to live and work as a distinctive, memorable destination.

The significance of public art extends beyond the most obvious gains of providing visual enhancement to an area and extending cultural provision. Public art can be employed to fulfil a wide range of Council objectives within areas of social, educational, economic, environmental and cultural policy.