

Public Art Policy

(2003)

Wellington City Council

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Section 1 – Setting the Scene

1.1 Introduction

Wellington has some fantastic and diverse examples of public art, from sculptures to murals, fountains to mosaics, monuments to statues, and the integration of art into the urban fabric of the city in order to enrich and enhance the physical attractiveness of the city.

Our rich heritage of public art works are an integral part of what makes Wellington a beautiful, dynamic and enjoyable city to live in, and will continue to be an important component of Wellington's future as a Creative City.

The Public Art Policy aims to ensure that public art continues to make our urban environment visually beautiful, and reflects both Wellington's heritage and contemporary cultural diversity.

1.2 Definition of Public Art

For the purposes of this Policy, public art is defined broadly to include all art forms, permanent or temporary, which are located in, part of, or associated with a public space, environment or facility that is highly accessible to members of the public. Without limiting the definition of public art, the following spheres of public art are included:

- Permanent art works created for (often specific) public places
- The collaboration of artists, architects, and landscape, urban and roading/traffic designers to create unique physical environments or features which integrate art into the urban fabric of Wellington City
- Art works produced by or through the involvement of the community (where they result in art in public places). Community public art has a specific, stand-alone section in the policy.
- Temporary art exhibits/performances/exhibitions/events/installations in public places.

Examples include sculptures, murals, functional art (e.g. designed public seating, paving, and manhole covers), forms of landscaping, sound and light works, water or glass features.

This policy will apply to public art that is created, facilitated, owned or maintained by Wellington City Council.

The Public Art Policy will not cover:

- Heritage Buildings or the Council's Heritage Art Collection
- Indoor art works covered by the Furnishing Art Collection Policy (2001)
- Privately owned works (except where they are located in public places)

- Street performance and busking (street performance is covered by the Street Performance Policy)
- Community Arts programmes (except where they result in art installations in public places)
- Contemporary advertising/billboards.

1.3 How this Policy relates to Council's Strategic Direction

The Public Art Policy relates to the city's vision Creative Wellington – Innovation Capital, in particular to retain and attract creative people to our, in order to help our economy grow by:

- Celebrating our diversity, culture, heritage, innovation and creativity
- Fostering technological, economic, cultural and artistic creativity and innovation

The Public Art Policy also relates to the following strategic outcomes sought by Council:

Outcome 1.3: Memorable City

Wellington is a memorable, beautiful city, celebrating its distinctive landmarks, defining features and heritage.

Outcome 3: Culture and Arts

3.1 Arts and Cultural Capital

Wellington is New Zealand's arts and cultural capital where the arts infrastructure is strong and supportive of the performance, exhibition and development of the arts.

3.3 Art in Public Places

Art enriches the natural environment of Wellington's central city and suburbs.

3.4 Maori Art

The arts of mana whenua and nga iwi o nga hau e wha are valued, promoted and enhanced.

3.5 Quality of Life

The city provides lifelong opportunities for access to the arts, thereby enhancing the quality of life of residents.

3.6 Diversity of Arts

The city values and celebrates the arts of a wide diversity of cultures.

Outcome 4: City Economy

4.1 Ideal Location

Wellington is known throughout the Pacific Basin as an ideal location for business people and their families

4.3 Premier Centre

Wellington's central city is the premier and most rapidly growing retail, entertainment, service and knowledge centre for the region.

4.5 Destination of Choice

Wellington is a growing destination of choice for international and domestic visitors

1.4 Objectives of the Public Art Policy

The primary objective of Public Art Policy is to increase the *amount, quality and diversity* of public art in Wellington city.

The Policy also has secondary objectives, which are to:

- Excite the imagination of the community and increase its understanding, enjoyment and involvement in public art
- Reinforce the unique identity of Wellington as an Arts Capital
- Integrate public art into the infrastructure and natural environments of the city in order to enhance public spaces
- Acknowledge the cultural diversity of contemporary Wellington, and the Māori and Pakeha heritage of historical Wellington
- Raise awareness of public art and promote opportunities for increasing the amount of art that is accessible to the public either visually or physically in Wellington City.

Section 2 – How these objectives will be met

2.1 Art and Urban Design

A key feature of public art is the integration of art into the urban fabric of the city in order to enrich and enhance the physical and cultural dimensions of the city. Public art can transform and enliven public spaces, contributing several benefits, from the purely aesthetic, to economic and social benefits such as tourism, links with our city's heritage, and an appreciation of different cultures.

Wellington City has several examples of integrating art into urban design in the development or re-development of public spaces, including the Civic Centre and Te Aro Park. Such integration can also result in functional art, such as the City to Sea Bridge linking the Civic Centre to the Waterfront. This integration reflects Wellington's position as New Zealand's arts and cultural capital, its belief that art enriches its natural environment, and its quest to provide lifelong opportunities for access to the arts, enhancing the quality of life of its residents.

To ensure that artistic design becomes an ever-increasing component of Wellington's urban fabric, the potential for integrating art (including functional art) into the design of public spaces will be an active consideration in all Council development projects in Wellington city (not just in the CBD). Appropriate development projects will incorporate artistic design costs into overall development budgets.

2.2 The Wellington Sculpture Trust

Much of the public art in Wellington over the last 20 years has resulted from a partnership between the Wellington Sculpture Trust (WST) and the Wellington City Council. The WST has an established process for funding and commissioning works of public art, and works with the Council to establish locations, clarify issues of suitability and maintenance requirements, and to organise transfer of ownership to the Council.

The relationship between the Wellington Sculpture Trust and Council works well. This suggests that much of the acquisition of sculpture in Wellington should remain within the ambit of that relationship.

The relationship between the WST and Council has resulted in a significant boost in the number of public art works in Wellington City in recent years, aided in large part by generous funding from the Griffin Trust and Meridian Energy. Examples include the Meridian Energy Wind Sculpture series, the Lambton Quay Sculpture project, and the Sculpture Walk in the Botanic Gardens.

The Public Art Policy endorses this relationship to continue to provide Wellington City with quality public sculpture.

2.3 Guidelines for Acquisition, Commissioning or Accepting Gifts of Public Art

Where Council wishes to commission a work of public art, or perhaps run design competitions for public art, it will work with the Wellington Sculpture Trust, utilising the already established processes of the Trust to commission works.

From time to time the Council is also offered works of art for display in public places, on both a temporary or permanent basis, sometimes without recognising the ongoing liability that the Council may be entering into, for example in terms of maintenance, repair or public safety issues. In considering commissioning or accepting gifts of public art, the Council will make decisions based on the following guidelines¹:

Meeting the objectives of the Public Art Policy	Primary consideration should be given to the objectives of <i>quality and diversity</i> . Diversity should be taken to mean diversity of culture and of type of art (for example sculpture versus functional art; 'European art' versus 'indigenous art'; temporary versus permanent). Consideration should also be given to the secondary objectives of the Policy.
Cost of Maintenance & Installation	The costs of maintenance over a 10 year period should be estimated and assessed, along with an indication of the expected life of the artwork. Maintenance and installation costs should be reasonable in relation to the value of the art work, and affordable within operational maintenance and installation budgets.
Safety	Public art is, more often than not, physically accessible to the public. Art works therefore need to be both physically robust and safe to members of the public. Issues of safety are of primary concern.
Artistic Merit & Quality of the Work.	Art works will and should be the subject of debate as to their artistic merits. Bearing in mind the primary objective of gaining <i>quality and diverse</i> public art, regard should be had to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ the anticipated public response and interaction▪ accessibility to the public▪ the degree to which it reflects Wellington's heritage and/or contemporary culture▪ expert judgement as to the merits of the art work▪ the degree to which its artistic merits will be sufficiently enduring to justify the costs associated with its adoption.
Materials	Council may draft and publish more prescriptive guidelines for the types of materials that should be used in the construction of public art, bearing in mind issues of durability, maintenance, public safety and location.
Involving Council's Treaty Partners	In making decisions about accepting, locating or commissioning public works of art, the Council will consult with its Treaty Partners as appropriate.
Consultation with Communities	Where possible, decisions regarding public art works should involve consultation with the relevant local community.
Special Reason	Sometimes an offer of a gifted public art work will come from an individual or organisation where the relationship with Council requires broader relationship issues and sensitivities to be considered and consulted on in weighing up whether to accept a gifted public art work.

¹ This section on guidelines does not apply to community public art: a separate section of this policy sets out Council's role in respect of community public art.

Gifts of public art works should only be accepted if they can be properly utilised and made publicly accessible. The Public Art Policy does not envisage placing public art works in storage against the possibility that they be useful some time in the future, although temporary storage (e.g. waiting for a specific site to become available) will be permitted.

Location decisions should include consideration of the sensibility of the art work in relation to the suggested site and cityscape, and be positioned to maximise exposure to the intended public. Consideration will obviously also be given to any potential impact on existing uses of the public space (e.g. pedestrian access, traffic flow, utility infrastructure etc).

2.4 Guidelines for Deaccessioning or Relocating Public Art Works

From time to time decisions need to be made about either removing or relocating public art works from Council's collection, for a range of reasons including artistic relevance, public safety, changes to the design and use of the public space occupied by the art work, and the possibility that a new and better site has become available for an art work.

Decisions on deaccessioning will be made by Council, taking the following into account:

- the primary objective of the policy is to increase the amount, quality and diversity of public art in Wellington
- wherever possible, decisions must involve consultation with the artist(s) (or the family of the artist(s) if necessary) and other relevant people or organisations involved in its establishment
- that an emphasis of the Public Art Policy is on raising awareness of public art and promoting opportunities for the public to access public art and, as such, the storing of public art works is generally to be discouraged
- whether an art work continues to be relevant to its location
- whether the work forms part of a 'collection', such as the Meridian Energy Wind Sculpture series
- the popularity of the art work with the Wellington public
- if an art work needs to be moved, consideration should be given to whether an another site can be located
- if an artwork needs to be moved or altered in any way, consideration should be given to the moral rights of an artist under the Copyright Act 1994.

Options for deaccessioning include:

- re-location to another appropriate site
- selling or gifting the art work back to the artist
- donating to a community group or facility, or organisation that operates for public benefit
- open sale or auction

- other removal as appropriate

Decisions on the above options will need to be made on a case by case basis, based on criteria that include:

- resale value
- sensibilities around how Council came to own the art work
- condition of the work

2.5 Temporary Art in Public Places

An increased emphasis will to be given to promoting temporary public art works, which enliven our environment, raise awareness and engender debate about public art. The new Council Public Art Group, formed to implement aspects of this Policy, will have a role in actively promoting temporary public art works. A list of possible sites where artists could locate public art works will be developed, and a process established for artists seeking to create a temporary exhibition/art work.

The proposed establishment of a new Public Art Fund in 2004/05² may present opportunities for promoting temporary public art works, possibly with a focus on regular exhibitions and/or based around events such as major festivals.

2.6 Community Art in Public Places

Community public art aims to assist communities towards self celebration and self definition, through the expression of a sense of identity and the creation of community consciousness. It encourages active participation from community members whilst also developing audiences. Wellington's community public art predominantly takes the form of public murals and aerosol art. Current examples are the murals on the James Smiths, Lombard and Marion Street car parks and the Balaena Bay mural.

Wellington City Council provides a Community Arts Development Coordinator who works with the community to support and develop community-based quality arts programmes and activities, including community-based public art. The Community Arts Advisor also works with schools to encourage participation from children and young people in community art. The Public Art Policy continues to support the provision of community art through Council's Community Arts Development Coordinator.

² See section 2.7: Funding.

2.7 Funding

Funding for public art will come from a variety of sources, including:

- Council grants, operational and capital funding
- Sponsorship
- Private funding.

Funding is set aside each year by the Council for the maintenance of its public art works.

The Council also works with various organisations, such as the Wellington Sculpture Trust, to fund and promote public art, and funds a Community Arts Development Coordinator who works with the community to produce community-based public art.

Consideration will be given in future to establishing a specific Public Art Fund through Council's annual budgeting processes. Such a budget would be used to cover costs such as installations for gifted works, commissioning works, and running regular public art work competitions in Wellington.

2.8 Maintenance and Asset Management

The Council is responsible for maintaining its public arts to a reasonable and safe standard. An Asset Management Plan for Public Art, already in progress, will be completed and regularly updated as required to represent a complete register of public art works that Council has responsibility for, and will provide a conservation management plan that details the condition and maintenance requirements of each work.

2.9 Monitoring

The Council will monitor the performance of the Public Art Policy and report annually against the following measures to the Economy and Arts Committee:

- The total number of art works in the public domain
- The number of new artworks installed in public places each year
- The number of art works in the public domain with Māori design themes and features
- Level of compliance with the Public Art Asset Management Plan for those works covered by this Policy
- The amount of funding devoted to public art in Wellington
- The proportion of Council development projects that integrated art work into urban design

- The diversity of cultures represented by the artists that either gift works or who are commissioned to produce public art that will be owned by Wellington City Council
- Feedback on public art works from the Resident Satisfaction Survey
- Feedback on public art works from Positively Wellington Tourism surveys of tourists.