

# **City of Port Phillip Public Art Guidelines**



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Vexta, 2016  
St Kilda Police Station

# Introduction

## Public art in the City of Port Phillip

Public artworks enrich Port Phillip's public spaces and contribute to the City's reputation as a vibrant and creative place. Through our public artworks we encourage discovery, contemplation, debate, participation, imagination and recognition of our local history, culture and society. Public art is among the most visible and accessible symbols of our civic and community culture.

Council has a long history of supporting public art. It recognises that public art opportunities support the livelihood of artists. There are now more than fifty civic public artworks in the Port Phillip City Collection with a value of over \$900,000, and numerous private artworks across the municipality. Together they represent a substantial cross section of ideas and trends in public art.

These Guidelines outline the principles and objectives to further develop public art and integrate it into Council's public realm planning, and in programs that support arts and cultural activity. This document maps a direction for the development of public art in the City of Port Phillip within a context of Council's existing policies and plans.

In 1994 the *St Kilda Public Art Strategy* heralded the formal development of a civic public art collection.

This was followed by the *Urban Art Strategy 2002*, which was founded on extensive research, including community engagement and benchmarking. This document resulted in the introduction of a statutory planning requirement for an inclusion of urban art on larger private developments (0.5% of the total cost of developments over \$2 million) which continues to greatly enhance art in the City.

The *City of Port Phillip Public Art Guidelines 2017* acknowledges the legacy of these former documents in guiding public art in the City of Port Phillip. It also strategically consolidates the development and management of the Council's public art collection.

These Guidelines recommend allocation of Council funds including from major civic building projects, bolstered with state and federal grants to ensure integration of innovative public art in construction of new streetscapes, foreshores and buildings.

The City of Port Phillip continues its strong commitment to public art projects which is reflected in its current and future civic projects. The success of projects informed by guidelines that advocate for integrated artworks, and an approach that envisages artists as valued contributors on multidisciplinary architectural design teams, is now being realised.

These Guidelines will be reviewed in 2022.

## Guiding Principles

The City of Port Phillip's public art program contributes to positioning the City as a pre-eminent creative centre through commissioning, interpretation, maintenance and promotion of contemporary public art of the highest quality.

### Principles

1. Provide best practice planning that will incorporate provision for public art from the earliest stages of public realm planning, design and resourcing. Seek community input to ensure public artworks meet community expectations of vibrant local villages.
2. Support artists through the commissioning of permanent and temporary public art projects. The unique skills of the artists who contribute to the City of Port Phillip will be recognised and valued.
3. Support engaging, vibrant villages through permanent and temporary public art projects. Public art is an important contributor to the range of engaging and welcoming community places throughout the municipality.
4. Support best practice public art management and maintenance. Public artworks and public art collections will be maintained and promoted through strategies that are constantly reassessed according to industry best practice.
5. Public art will reflect a responsive design approach, which embodies the identity of place, the values of the community, and the innovation and creativity of artists and designers.
6. Public art will demonstrate appropriate aesthetic appeal, functionality and utility in design development, resulting in a dynamic reciprocity between art and site.



Alex Goad, *Tethya*, 2015  
Artist concept  
Fitzroy Street, St Kilda

# Public Art in the City of Port Phillip

## Organisational Context

Public art is increasingly regarded as a significant contributor to successful place-making, open space planning and urban design. Factors influencing changing attitudes to public art in the local government and the City of Port Phillip contexts over the past decade have been:

- Increased enthusiasm for the benefits of public art in public realm activation, public safety, wellbeing, graffiti management and social engagement
- New definitions of public art and new opportunities for community engagement in public art
- Formalisation of public art practice as a creative endeavour in the public realm and therefore intrinsic to Council's management of open space, assets, place-making and urban design planning
- Greater incorporation of public art into the professional fields of design and architecture, urban planning and community development
- Alterations to planning legislation, building codes, asset, risk and project management practices which influence how places are developed and used
- Implementation of revised Council documents which express Council's commitment to arts and cultural practice, public art and our community
- City of Port Phillip's development as an inner city council with high profile neighbourhoods and high visitation rates. Benchmarking against our municipal neighbours has informed the direction of our public art activity
- Increased general awareness of the 'power and purpose' of public art to connect communities and improve the experience of place
- Greater emphasis on the role public art plays in exploring and disseminating Indigenous stories

There are a number of Council documents that inform these Guidelines and create a context for the development of public art in the City. These Guidelines sit within a broader social, cultural and planning framework across the City of Port Phillip.

# Creating Public Art

The *Public Art Guidelines* align to Council's vision and processes and strengthens Council's role in providing and facilitating public art in the City.

The Guidelines maximise opportunities for the City of Port Phillip to increase the use of its places for temporary and permanent installations, for storytelling, delivering a cultural or social message, pure embellishment, or creating functional elements that increase social use of space and contribute to the creation of vibrant villages and opportunities for social interaction.

The City of Port Phillip's *Public Art Commissioning Guidelines 2017* outline the processes for the selection of artists for specific public art commissions.

## Public Art Funding

### **Organisational support**

Council supports public art through integration of works in public realm civic projects, through programming and activation of temporary/ephemeral projects, street art graffiti management programs and ongoing annual maintenance of existing public art in the Port Phillip City Collection.

Regular contributions towards art in public places brings Council into line with the requirements Council places on private developers, and with many other municipalities that maintain annual public art budget allocations.

### **Developer Public Art Fund**

The Port Phillip Planning Scheme specifies an Urban Art Contribution requirement, as defined by a condition on planning permits for all building projects valued at over \$2 million. The condition requires the inclusion of approved public/urban artworks located so as to address and benefit the streetscape.

Council will develop a secondary option for developer contribution through the direct funding model. This contribution and/or funds from the Developer Public Art Contribution (subject to the constraints of the Planning Scheme) will be strategically allocated to civic developments and to other open space recreation areas and Council priority projects. One of the objectives of this funding will be to include more extensive community engagement in developing artworks, thereby contributing to community connectedness, wellbeing, and an opportunity for excellence in arts practice in the City of Port Phillip.

### **External funding**

Where possible, Council will access state and federal grants and partnerships to implement public art projects that can be permanent or temporary.

## Urban Design

Major planning projects such as Fishermans Bend urban renewal area represent unique opportunities to incorporate public artworks. Such opportunities require consideration of public art at the earliest opportunity and within capital works project budgets in order to achieve the best possible outcomes.



Cameron Robbins, *Solar System* (detail), 2008  
Foreshore

## Community Engagement

Funding for public artworks is occasionally available through funded community engagement programs where the artwork and/or the process of designing or producing the artwork are the catalysts for engagement with communities within the City of Port Phillip.

## Street Art

Street art projects provide a relatively quick and low cost visual art treatment that can be used to counter unsightly graffiti (such as tagging) or to improve the perception of safety where community spaces have become neglected. Street art is sometimes seen as a desirable treatment for private land owners and businesses to either reduce unwanted graffiti or for commercial/marketing purposes.

Street art is considered in two ways:

1. As an artistic creation with an aesthetic intent/outcome
2. As a preventative solution to illegal graffiti and tagging

Opportunities available in this area include assisting in connecting street artists with building owners seeking street art, an anti-graffiti street art program focusing on graffiti hotspots, and a street art program which supports the work of street artists.

## Temporary and Ephemeral Public Art

Temporary and ephemeral public art engages the City and the broader community with diverse public art experiences which elevates Council as a key player in public art projects in Victoria. Council seeks opportunities for temporary/ephemeral projects through partnerships with arts groups and universities, and collaborations across Council team and departments.

## Port Phillip City Collection public art acquisition

Public artwork commissioned by, or donated to, the City of Port Phillip will be considered for inclusion in the Port Phillip City Collection in accordance with the public art collection acquisition principles outlined in the Port Phillip City Collection Policy.



William Eicholtz, *Record Requiem*, 2014  
Emerald Hill Library & Heritage Centre forecourt

# Objectives

The following objectives are based on the six principles within these Guidelines and underpin all actions relating to the development and delivery of public art projects and programs.

OBJECTIVE	PRINCIPLES ADDRESSED
<b>1. PLACE AND DIVERSITY</b>	
1.1 To continuously create and develop a diverse range of public art opportunities and locations	1 3 5 6
1.2 To increase the number of temporary and ephemeral public art opportunities	1 3 4 5 6
1.3 To ensure greater representation given to the traditional owners of the land, indigenous artists and indigenous culture	2 3 5
<b>2. ACCESS &amp; ENGAGEMENT</b>	
2.1 To maximise the capacity for the community to engage and interact with Port Phillip's public art through programs, promotion and accessible information	4
<b>3. PROCESSES AND PRACTICE</b>	
3.1 To better integrate public art projects with Council's place-making projects and processes	1 2 3 4 5 6
3.2 To continuously evaluate and adapt processes to ensure that commissioning and project management processes address the ways in which public art is made	2 4
3.3 To manage Council commissioned public art according to the Port Phillip City Collection Policy	4
3.4 To continue with a 'cross council' approach to developing public art relevant to civic places and precincts to support public art decision making	1 3
3.5 To factor maintenance of public art into the commissioning process	1 4
<b>4. FUNDING</b>	
4.1 To establish sustainable civic public art funding options	1 2
4.2 To maximise outcomes and community/public realm benefits derived from developer contributions to public art	1 3 5 6
4.3 To explore alternative funding sources	1



# Glossary

## **Artist**

An artist can be a person:

- Who has specialist training within their field—not necessarily in academic institutions—and is involved in the creation of art as their profession
- With high level interpretive, conceptualising and creative skills that result in the creation of artwork
- Who has demonstrated professional standing through exhibitions and commissions, and is considered an artist by his or her peers

## **Community**

- A group of people who share a common interest and for a whole variety of reasons have a sense of unity
- Those things which bond a group of people arise out of a shared belief, a political commitment, a common cultural background or a concern for the environment
- A “community” may live in the same area, work together or participate in the same sporting or cultural group
- A community may be comprised of a diverse group of people or one that shares similar characteristics
- In essence, a sense of community grows out of recognition of a common unity and the acceptance of difference

## **Community Art**

- Community art is a process through which artists and communities work together to express and/or articulate a collective vision in a creative and imaginative way
- Community art can be defined as work resulting from a high degree of community consultation and/or participation
- Community art may be created by a professional artist in consultation with members of the community
- Community art may be the result of practical art making by members of the community under the supervision of a community artist
- Community development is the primary aim of a community art process
- Care and attention is paid to collective decision making processes
- Issues of ownership and control over the development and outcomes of a community art project are important, as is the encouragement of a broad range of people
- Community art projects utilise the art form that is best suited to the desired outcome. Oral history, writing, visual arts, theatre, circus skills, dance, music and mask making are just some of the many art forms available to the community

## **Contemporary Art**

Any artwork created today which is innovative for its time, comments on, or otherwise engages with issues relevant to its time, or uses materials and processes that are at the forefront of arts practice within their particular field at the time can be classed as contemporary art

## **Design Advisors**

A group of practitioners working collaboratively often including artists, architects, landscape, industrial and/or other designers

## **Events**

- This category may include one off or scheduled events in parks or other public spaces, such as outdoor exhibitions
- The events may be part of a festival or an artist residency program

## **Integrated Art**

- Integrated artwork can be defined as artwork created by an artist that has been conceived especially for a site or building and forms part of the built environment

- Integrated artworks can be commissioned as part of Council's capital works programs, such as streetscapes, parks or building projects
- Integrated artwork is most likely permanent and non-transferable and may include functional streetscape or park elements
- The artist usually develops integrated artwork concepts in collaboration with the project architect, landscape architect or urban designer

### ***Permanent Public Artworks***

Artwork in this category might include:

- Signature works, landmarks or art in public places
- These terms relate to the fact that such works tend to be commissioned as set pieces of art in their own right
- These artworks are often major commissions with significant budgets and therefore require a transparent and accountable commissioning process to ensure the best artists are considered and that due process occurs
- The anticipated lifespan of a permanent art work is identified in the development stages of the work

### ***Public Art***

Public art is any permanent or temporary art object, installation or activity in the public realm excluding galleries, museums and public collecting institutions. In general public art is sited on public land and has been purchased or is owned by a public authority.

This can include a wide range of art forms, such as:

- Permanent 2D or 3D visual art, craft or design element
- New media works, such as projection and digital artwork
- Temporary works, such as installation
- Ephemeral artworks, such as environmental artwork

### ***Public Realm***

The public realm can be defined as including—but not limited to—streets, squares, parks and spaces that are within buildings that are accessible to the general public and in the ownership of—or under the control of—public authorities.

Spaces accessible to the public but in private ownership, such as shopping centres, corporate office buildings and residential development, can be perceived as part of the public realm.

### ***Street Art***

- Street art is created legally and with the permission of building owners/occupiers if that site is privately owned and through the permission of Council if the site is council owned
- There is as yet no simple definition of street art, whereas traditional graffiti artists have primarily used free-hand aerosol paints to produce their works with tagging and text-based subject, street art encompasses many other media, techniques and subject matter
- Street artists will often work in studios, hold gallery exhibitions or work in other creative areas: they are not anti-art—they simply enjoy the freedom of working in public

### ***Temporary/Ephemeral***

- Temporary artworks are specifically designed to last for days, weeks or months
- The term ephemeral artwork might be used to describe projects such as projection or lighting works where there is no physical object created. It might also be applied to physical works in non-permanent materials