

Public Art Policy - City of Charlottetown

Approved by the Arts Advisory Board
Oct 8, 2015 amended Oct 19, 2015 as per M. Sandiford

A Vision for Public Art in Charlottetown

The City of Charlottetown believes that Public Art plays a crucial role in providing points of interest and contemplation, and a unique sense of place. The City believes Public Art should mirror the distinctiveness and authenticity inherent in Charlottetown, making our city culturally richer, reflecting our creativity and diversity, and inspiring citizens and visitors alike. The City places a high value on works that are vibrant and engaging; balance both the historic and contemporary nature of the City; and contribute to a deeper understanding of this place we call home.

Scope

The document is intended to cover all public art for installation on City owned property.

Definitions

“Public Art” means art in any media that has been planned and executed with the intention of being staged in the physical public domain, usually outside and accessible to all. Public art is significant within the art world, amongst curators, commissioning bodies and practitioners of public art, to whom it signifies a working practice of site specificity, community involvement and collaboration. Public art mediums can include, but are not limited to: sculpture, installation, paintings, drawings, prints, photography, multimedia projects, performances, murals, mosaics, land art/earth works, or projects which incorporate design, architecture, or landscape architecture. Public art may include any art which is exhibited in a public space including publicly accessible buildings.

“City” means the City of Charlottetown, its elected officials as represented by City Council, or appointed staff.

“Vision” means the City’s stated vision for it’s public art.

“AAB” or “Arts Advisory Board” means the volunteer Board struck by the City to direct the City’s actions regarding arts and culture.

“Peer Review” means the process of selecting proposals of the highest merit through a panel of individuals selected for their knowledge of the art form, public art, and community engagement.

“Professional Artist” means someone who is recognized as a professional by his or her peers (artists working in the same artistic tradition), is committed to devoting more time to artistic activity (if possible financially), has produced an independent body of work, and has a history of public presentation.

“Criteria for approval” are final criteria against which all public art proposals are assessed by the AAB and are comprised of the following:

1. The proposal is in keeping with the City’s Vision
2. The proposed work meets the criteria of the call
3. The proposal, if required to be, is historically accurate
4. The proposed work will not contravene Canada’s Obscenity Laws
5. The proposal is compatible with the City’s overall visual and auditory environment
6. The proposal is feasible in time, budget, and site constraints

In all cases, public art projects overseen by the AAB, the City’s partners, and organizations wishing to erect or install public art, should favour, in this order:

1. Artists based on Prince Edward Island
2. Off-Island artists who propose work created in collaboration with Island artists
3. Artists based in Canada
4. All other artists

Principles

Public Art

Art in the public domain should be encouraged, properly maintained, and promoted.

Maintaining and Enhancing Quality of Life

Culture is a measure of the vitality, quality of life, and health of a society: strong communities have strong cultures. Cultural heritage and artistic activities play a significant role in sustaining and enhancing the social, economic, educational, and intellectual life of each citizen.

Nurturing Creativity and Excellence

Creativity is a source of well-being. However, it needs a nurturing environment. Creativity and excellence can flourish in an environment supported by appropriate infrastructure and facilities, where opportunities exist to acquire the necessary knowledge and competencies, where creativity can be freely expressed, where the pursuit of a career in a chosen discipline is encouraged, and where excellence is rewarded. There are positive connections between creative communities and healthy societies.

Encouraging Artistic Diversity

A wide variety of art forms should be recognized and encouraged as contributing to a full and vibrant arts life in Charlottetown. Both contemporary and traditional art forms are recognized and valued, and creative risk-taking is encouraged.

Encouraging Cultural Diversity

Participation in cultural activity amongst all citizens should be recognized, respected and encouraged. The many different ethnic and linguistic cultures (aboriginal community, francophone community, and minority ethnocultural communities, for example) in Charlottetown are encouraged to celebrate and promote their distinct cultures and art forms, and to maintain the meaning and history behind their cultures and art. The sharing of these art forms will help increase understanding and acceptance of cultural diversity. The City will encourage its commitment to reflecting Canada's two official languages.

Encouraging Accessibility and Participation

Arts and culture should be open to all, and easily accessed and enjoyed by all. Participation in, and appreciation of, the arts in Charlottetown residents and

visitors — regardless of where they live, work, play, and socialize — should be encouraged.

Peer Review

Peer review, with a minimum of 50% professional artists on a panel, is acknowledged as the preferred way for all selections of artists and art works for presentations/installation in the public realm.

Equity

The City should strive towards equity in opportunities for public art projects without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

Roles of the Arts Advisory Board

The City's Arts Advisory Board (AAB) will serve as the advisory body that considers all public work to be installed on City of Charlottetown property. Chief among the responsibilities of the Board, within the scope of the AAB, are:

1. Develop, when requested to do so by Mayor or Council, calls for public art that fulfils the vision.
2. Review, assess, and recommend for approval all calls for public art prior to public release, and all unsolicited public art proposals and submissions.
 - I. No Selection: In its review of proposed works of public art the AAB may make no selection in which case the selection process, with advice or amendments from the AAB, may be reopened.
3. Review, assess, and recommend for approval selections of peer review panels regardless of who initiated the call.
4. Work with partner organizations and agencies to ensure the City's vision for public art is clear, shared, and met.

Role 1. City directed call for public art

In this model, the AAB is directed by the City to create and implement a call for public art.

Before proceeding the AAB must receive from the City the proposed location, theme, budget, and type of work sought.

The AAB will :

1. Obtain site approval from Planning Department.
2. Develop the call.
 1. If the call is for something that relates to a specific historic aspect or theme, the AAB should consult with experts to determine the details to be included in the call, or direct artists towards appropriate resources.
3. Publicize the call working with the City's communications staff.
4. Do a preliminary vetting of proposals based on the requirements as stated in the call.
5. Assemble a peer review panel.
6. Assess the proposals received through peer review, the panel being Chaired by a member of the AAB or AAB designated person.
7. Receive the report of the Chair and final decision of the peer review panel and verify the selection meets the vision and requirements of the call.
8. Advise the Committee responsible for Arts and Culture of the recommended selection.
9. Work with the City to ensure an agreement with the artist(s) is signed.
10. Monitor the progress and installation of the work.
11. Develop in collaboration with the City's communications officer press releases for the successful selection, then unveiling, of the work.

If the proposal has deficiencies, but has been determined to be of merit, the AAB will work with the selected artist to try and resolve the issues that prevent the AAB's approval.

If this does not result in resolution of these issues the AAB will examine each of the next highest ranking proposals, in the order ranked, against the above criteria until a proposal is found that meets these criteria.

Role 2. Partnership

In this model, the City works with a partner organization or agency to commission a new piece of public art. Responsibility for the project and its oversight is shared between the City and AAB, and the project partner(s).

Here, the City works with the partner to develop a call for proposals. The AAB will then:

1. Review the call to ensure it meets with the City's vision.
2. Assist in obtaining site approval from Planning Department.
3. Ensure the partner is implementing a system of peer review for selection. The City or a member of the AAB should sit with observer status on that panel to ensure a fair and equitable process.
4. Receive the report of the City/partner with the recommended proposal
5. Assess the recommended proposal against the criteria for approval.
6. Advise committee responsible for Arts and Culture of the selection.

If the proposal meets these criteria the AAB will:

1. Direct the City and partner to ensure an agreement with the artist(s) is signed.
2. Develop in collaboration with the City/partner and the City's communications officer press releases for the successful selection, then unveiling, of the work.

If the proposal has deficiencies, but has been determined to be of merit, the AAB will direct the City/partner to work with the selected artist to try and resolve the issues that prevented the AAB's approval.

If this does not result in resolution of these issues the AAB will direct the City/partner to examine each of the next highest ranking proposals, in the order ranked, against the above criteria until a proposal is found that meets these criteria

Role 3. Wholly independent proposal for public art on City property

Note that an individual or organization may erect any piece of art, that does not contravene Canadian law, on private property as they see fit with the requisite permits and approvals. However, **work intended to occupy a public space owned by the City must bear additional, and specific, scrutiny.**

In this model, an individual or organization that wishes to erect a piece of public art on City property approaches the City or AAB seeking approval.

Here, the City works with the organization to ensure site suitability, and that all permits are sought and obtained prior to the AAB's involvement. The AAB may provide support by way of articulating the City's vision, sharing the AAB's Criteria for Approval, and providing sources for historical accuracy, if needed.

The AAB will then:

1. Review the call or proposal to ensure it meets with the City's vision and criteria for approval.
2. Ensure the organization has approval from the Planning Department.
3. If the project is subject to a call:
 - I. Ensure the organization is implementing a system of peer review for selection. The City or a member of the AAB, or AAB designate should sit with observer status on that panel to ensure a fair and equitable process.
 - II. Receive the report of the organization with the recommended proposal.

If the proposal meets these criteria the AAB will:

1. Make recommendation to the City to move ahead with the proposal.
2. Direct the organization to ensure an agreement with the artist(s) is signed.
3. Monitor the progress and installation of the work.
4. Develop in collaboration with the organization and the City's communications officer press releases for the successful selection, then unveiling, of the work.

If the proposal has deficiencies, but has been determined to be of merit, the AAB will direct the organization to work with the selected artist to try and resolve the issues that prevent the AAB's approval.

If this does not result in resolution of these issues the AAB will suggest the organization examine and propose each of the next highest ranking proposals, in the order ranked, against the above criteria until a proposal is found that meets these criteria.

MURALS and HERITAGE PROPERTIES

Murals on private property and heritage/private properties are outside the stated scope of this document.

Review

The AAB will review this policy every two years or as needed.

History