

# **PUBLIC ART**

## **GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPERS**

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Georges River Council acknowledges the important role that Developers play in shaping the identity of our community.

**The Public Art Guidelines for Developers are intended to assist the Developer through the process of commissioning an artist, meeting industry best practice and getting the best value from the Developer's contribution.**

These Guidelines should be read in conjunction with the Georges River Council Public Art Policy, which outlines our vision for creating a built environment that has vibrancy, originality, creativity and sense of local character.

The Developer is encouraged to review successful public art projects and decide how they wish to proceed. Benchmarking similar types of projects can help the Developer understand the project budget and parameters including timeframes for its delivery.

# INTRODUCTION

Georges River Council recognises the social, cultural, economic, and environmental benefits that flow from integrating public art into the urban fabric. Vibrant city and town centres offer a broad range of experiences and can sustain businesses and underpin the social and cultural life of our local government area (LGA).

Council has developed the **Georges River Council Public Art Policy** to ensure public art is an integral part of its own public works program, as well as those of the private development industry.

Major developments (commercial, public administration, and retail development) and mixed-use developments valued at **\$5 million or more, must include public art** as part of the development. A minimum of 1% of the total cost of the development is to be allocated to the public art budget.

New development often brings altered patterns of access and activity that blur the boundaries between public and private ownership. Whilst not always physically accessible, the facades of private buildings that frame public space, and associated landscape and design treatments, remain visibly accessible to the wider community.

Developers are encouraged to meet with Council officers during a pre-DA lodgement meeting to discuss relevant public art requirements, prior to engaging an artist and developing a Public Art Plan. Council approval of artwork concept designs is required prior to the issuing of a Construction Certificate.

**The purpose of these Guidelines is to provide concise information on Council's requirements and processes for the provision of public art within new developments and the public realm. These Guidelines also intend to give Developers information and tools to commission works of art for their development.**

These Guidelines aim to:

- assist Developers understand the process and benefits of public art in developments
- outline how public art can enhance the existing site and its surrounding context (including preserving heritage and cultural storytelling)
- highlight how public art can increase site use and support sustainable development initiatives.

**High-quality urban design and public art increase productivity and prestige for businesses. Communities experience improved city living and safer, healthier, and creative places, while Developers and investors receive a better return on investment.**

**Public art provides a point of difference for a development and creates connections with local communities. It can provide a meeting place or landmark and, more importantly, it can provide a way to engage with the people who will live, use, and benefit from the development.**



Sydney  
WATER

# CONTEXT & APPLICATION

The **Georges River Local Strategic Planning Statement (2019)** identifies public art as one of the key local planning priorities, with the need for "place-based development, quality building design and public art" to deliver liveable places (P7). The private sector is required to provide public art through conditions of consent to a Development Application. These controls include:

## 1. **Public art as a part of Development Application**

Under modified provisions in the Development Control Plan/s for the major centres of Kogarah, Hurstville, and Riverwood; all new developments having a development cost/value of more than \$5 million must develop and implement a Public Art Plan. A minimum of 1% of the total cost of the development is to be allocated to the public art budget.

## 2. **Public art as a part of the design excellence process and/or competition**

The design excellence competition process to develop/ incorporate high-quality public artworks on identified major key development sites is encouraged. Entrant teams must be multi-disciplinary design teams. Such processes as the competition strategy and brief allow for the proponent to engage a suitably qualified architect, urban designer and/or landscape architect along with other professionals such as a public art curator/consultant into the process. The result is that public art and its influence on the development/building is considered upfront as a part of the design competition.

## 3. **Public art negotiated via voluntary planning agreement with the Developer**

A Voluntary Planning Agreement (VPA) is the planning tool that allows Council and Developers to work together to deliver innovative infrastructure outcomes alongside development proposals. Under the determined agreement a Developer provides or funds public art according to the Georges River Council Public Art Policy. Contributions can be made through:

- monetary contributions towards public art
- development of a Public Art Plan and construction of public art.

## OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of the Public Art program are:

- increase the understanding and enjoyment of public art and an awareness and appreciation of the significant benefits provided by a rich and diverse artistic environment.
- promote Council as a catalyst for urban change and sustainability through incorporating contemporary arts practice into the built and natural environment.
- encourage the benefits of design excellence through 'best practice' public art processes.
- stimulate sustainable and value driven outcomes in the costing, design, fabrication and installation of 'integrated' public art, urban design, and architecture.
- collaborate to develop and promote the overall cultural well-being of the city by recognising, valuing, and promoting the role of artists.

# WHAT IS PUBLIC ART?

Public art can take the form of sculpture, mural, paving pattern, lighting, seating, building facade, fencing, water feature, engraving and mosaic. It also can be film, digital images or photographic projections, billboards, custom design floor treatments, glasswork, or sound installation.

Public art in urban environments intends to reflect and celebrate local character, promote, strengthen, and celebrate distinct identities and cultivate a sense of connection and attraction to the site and broader locality.

Broadly, public art is defined as artworks in public places or areas of private property that are open or visible to the public and designed and created by an artist/s.

In this context, **it is a requirement that the public artwork/s be located in publicly accessible areas/locations within the development.** Council favours artwork/s in publicly visible locations such as the building façade or forecourt or within accessible part of the building's foyer or lobby.

*For further definitions of public art, view the Georges River Council Public Art Policy.*



# WHAT IS A PUBLIC ART PLAN?

The **Public Art Plan** is a well-presented scoping document that is the essential starting point for a public art project and is used to brief the artist/s.

**It is the responsibility of the Developer to produce and submit a Public Art Plan with the lodgement of the Development Application.** The Public Art Plan is subject to the development approval process and will be assessed according to criteria as set out in Georges River Council's **Public Art Policy**.

The Public Art Plan provides evidence of the planning process that helps inform/describe the character, location and scope of the development, and determines the intent of public art project/s within. It details the role the artwork/s will play in the new environment, its potential audience, and its capacity to address specific site or place themes.

It is important that the document includes a clear project description including the intent, art form and medium, scale, budget and other information that allows a working understanding of the final outcome and how the artwork/s will be integrated into the site/development.

The full **Public Art Process** on page 8 provides an overview of the process and key approval points/procedures.

## PUBLIC ART PLAN - CONTENTS

### **BACKGROUND/CONTEXT**

Deliver a full site description of the proposed development indicating use, scale etc, along with a site analysis that identifies the site's history and noting any natural, cultural, social aspects and its relationship to the area.

### **THE TEAM**

Outline the design team and arts consultant's skills and experience; including knowledge of contemporary arts practice and how the selection and commissioning of artist/s will be undertaken.

### **THEMES/NARRATIVES**

Discover and explore themes/narratives from the site analysis and offer information on culture, historical or contemporary reference points and directions for inclusion into artist/s brief.

### **POTENTIAL ARTWORK/S TREATMENT AREAS**

Identify potential public art opportunities/zones within the built form and an indication of the proposed preference/s and location/s within the site.


### **ARTWORK/S CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT**


Give a statement explaining the rationale of the artwork/s and how it relates to the site. It should include concept drawings that indicate form, scale and dimensions, materials, and finishes.

### **TIMELINE & BUDGET**

Provide a preliminary budget and timeline. Artwork/s should be of a scale appropriate to the development. Council supports a percentage of 1% of total construction cost.

# PUBLIC ART PROCESS

 Council's responsibility

 Developer's responsibility





# 1 GETTING STARTED

## START EARLY

**The key is to start working on a public art project as early as possible. Stating intent to commission with an appropriate budget line early on helps make projects more effective and can save money in the long term.**

Permanent public art projects are often dependent on larger building processes and longer timeframes, whilst temporary public art projects tend to offer opportunities across the life of the development and encompass a broader range of artistic practice.

It is critical to understand that whatever the project, working in the public domain often takes much longer than expected, as does integrating a public art commission as part of the construction of a new building.

## FORMING THE PROJECT TEAM

Identifying arts expertise to join the design team at this early stage will help in the project management of aligning the art project with detailed construction and procurement processes.

Design teams are often led by architects, and include engineers and other design professionals. Their expertise includes a conceptual, technical, and practical perspective.

Clear communication in the design team is critical to developing an art commission. **Council recommends Developers engage an independent Public Art Consultant to prepare a Public Art Plan.** This project management role is pivotal and can be delivered by various arts professionals including curators, art consultants and lead artists.

## TALK TO US

As with the process of undertaking any new development, it is important that consultation forms an important part of the approach.

**Developers are encouraged to start a conversation with Council early.**

Developers can engage with Council staff through a **Pre-DA Lodgement Meeting** that will give valuable practical advice and direction on developing a Public Art Plan to be lodged with the Development Application.

Ongoing dialogue will ensure that the Public Art Plan is completed to Council's satisfaction.

REQUEST A PRE-DA LODGEMENT MEETING





## 2 DEVELOPING A PUBLIC ART PLAN

### CREATING A PUBLIC ART PLAN

A Public Art Plan will help determine the focus, rationale, opportunities, and the most appropriate approach to be undertaken.

**The Public Art Plan is an informed scoping document and project plan.** The Public Art Plan can usefully show how commissioned artworks can build on the existing identity of a place, be part of the strategic focus for the development and be embedded into existing processes and structures.

The Public Art Plan can also be informed from other plans for the development like the statement of environmental effects, heritage reports, archaeology, green technologies etc.

*See page 7 for more details on the content of the Public Art Plan.*

### UNDERSTANDING THE SITE

When developing a site, there are often many opportunities to include public art projects. Often the site and proposed building surrounds will inform the different parameters and processes to consider when planning for public art.

**Connections need to be made to the context of the development, its social or cultural history, and the ways users have and will continue to interact with that place.**

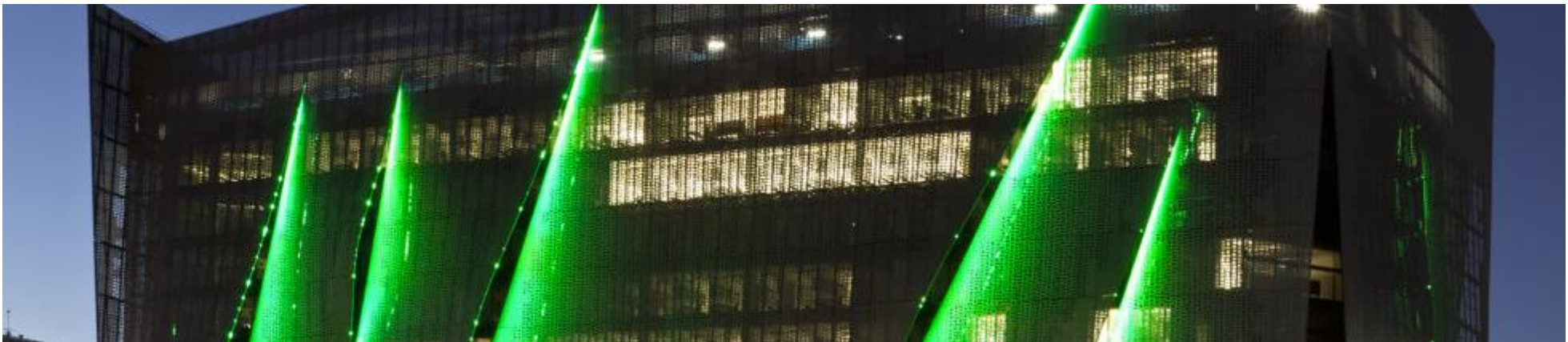
In identifying an actual site or treatment areas, it can be beneficial to leave the brief reasonably open. Being too prescriptive when identifying an opportunity can narrow a project's potential.

### SETTING A BUDGET

It is essential to set a realistic budget for the development of a public art project, covering the full commissioning process from inception through to realisation and maintenance.

**The public art budget should equate to at least 1% of the overall cost of the development.**

It is worthwhile researching comparable public art commissions to understand what likely costs are involved. Costs will vary depending on the scope/ scale/ materials of the artwork/s being commissioned.



Clarence St → Stands Q-U (B) →

← Pla



## 2 DEVELOPING A PUBLIC ART PLAN CONTINUED

### DEVELOPING A BRIEF

**It is important to start with the development of a well written artist brief. The brief/s is informed by the content of the Public Art Plan for the site.**

The brief does not need to be lengthy but should contain all relevant information and strike a balance between being open enough to allow an artist/s space to explore opportunities and detailed enough to ensure a professional outcome.

**The brief should give the artist/s context, background, and technical information, and let them know what is needed and expected of them and of the resulting artwork.** This will ensure that aesthetic, technical, maintenance and timing requirements are agreed and will be carried out to expectations. Key points to include:

- The aim of the commission
- The exact nature of the site and its intended use and users, with site plan if relevant
- Relevant historical/social contextual detail
- The role of the artist and thematic directions for the artists consideration
- Any community or public involvement
- Site constraints and opportunities

### SELECTING THE ARTIST/S

**Selecting artists can happen in several ways: direct invitation, limited competition and open competition** (see page 17).

The arts consultant will oversee this process and has the knowledge and visual arts background to identify the most appropriate artists to work with. Using the skills and experience of the design team will bring in additional expertise.

The artist's work is the central emphasis of any art commission. Their role should reflect their expertise and experience, as a professional with knowledge of their own discipline and field.

Most artists have images of their work available for prospective clients to look at.

**It is important to remember the point of working with an artist is to embrace their unique skills and ability to conceive and interpret creative ideas.** It is imperative to allow enough time for the artist/s to conceptualise a project.

### CREATING THE CONCEPT

It is critical to maintain good communication between the design team and artists. Artists should be treated as peers in their work and be given realistic timeframes for design ideas and creation of supporting material.

Contracts should be clearly agreed and issued prior to any work taking place. **There are three stages of design and fabrication work.** These follow similar steps to the design and construction of a building:

- A schematic design stage – artwork concepts in response to the brief.
- A design development stage – detailed design including feasibility/cost, construction plans etc.
- A fabrication stage – the building of the artwork.

Depending on the artist selection process, the artist/s may be paid a fee for each of the three stages of work.

**Understanding how the completed artwork will look on site and how it will function is an important part of accepting the concept.**

SUBMIT PUBLIC ART PLAN WITH DEVELOPMENT APPLICATION



## 3 4 LODGEMENT & APPROVAL OF THE PUBLIC ART

**It is the responsibility of the Developer to submit a Public Art Plan with their Development Application.** Council will review the Public Art Plan or may forward it to Council's Public Art Advisory Panel for consideration. Assessment will be based on the criteria listed in the Georges River Council Public Art Policy.

Developers will then receive a formal notice of approval (with or without conditions) or a request for revision and resubmission.

Council recognises that approved artist concept/s may change as the project is developed and details resolved. For this reason, **Developers are required to submit a copy of the detailed design documentation showing the final form of the artwork/s as it is to be constructed at the site to Council for review, prior to the work being constructed.**

Council will review the supplied documentation with reference to the concept.

Where all approval conditions are met, any changes are clearly justified, and the intent and key features of the artwork are consistent with the approved concept, Council can provide direction for the Developer to proceed.



## 5 IMPLEMENTATION

This stage is about realising the artwork/s from design to installation and completion. The fabrication and/or execution of the work can be a detailed process.

**Understanding how the completed work will look on site and how it will function is an important part of accepting the concept and approving the artwork. It is usual to require the artist to present a detailed design prior to the work being fabricated or crafted.** This includes construction drawings, models, and renderings to scale.

**This documentation must be submitted to Council for review prior to construction.**

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## 7 FABRICATING THE ARTWORK/S

Artmaking is a customised process and there are variety of methods and approaches to fabricating the final artwork/s.

The artist may build or construct the work in their studio for transportation and installation on site. The work may be crafted in situ, or may be fabricated by a specialist to construction drawings prepared by an engineer under the artist's supervision.

**Fabrication and installation will involve multiple responsibilities. Clear decisions about lines of accountability, coordination responsibilities, communications and contractual obligations need to be resolved prior to fabrication commencing.**

Often samples of the artwork and materials require approvals during work in progress of the fabrication as required.

## 8 INSTALLING THE ARTWORK/S

**The installation of artwork/s on site will require considerable planning and will need to be incorporated into the construction schedules where appropriate.**

Additional installation materials may be required, along with access for the artist and consultant to be present on site to oversee the installation process.

After the artwork is installed/completed, the Developer and the design team should inspect and sign off on the artwork. Any issues should be addressed promptly.

**Where the artwork is a condition of approval, Council requires that the artwork be completed and installed prior to the site being used or occupied.**

Ownership of the artwork will rest with the Developer, and/or the building owner. Documentation about longevity, maintenance, and attribution should be provided in relation to the artwork/s.

FEEDBACK ON FINAL DESIGNS



# WORKING WITH ARTISTS

The Developer must ensure that their public art obligation is complied with through the employment of the skills and services of professional artist/s.

**The Developer is responsible for initiating the project and engaging a professional arts consultant, along with an artist/s to achieve a high-quality public artwork.**

Artists being commissioned by the Developer must be paid appropriate fees. In the same way that architects, surveyors or engineers are paid for their work, artists too should be considered and remunerated correctly. Information on nationally recognised rates of pay can be obtained from National Association of Visual Arts (NAVA).



## ENGAGING AN ARTIST

Selecting the right artist to work on a public art project is central to a successful outcome. There are several ways an artist can be engaged to undertake public art. The approach will depend on the objectives of each project, the budget and the Developer's procurement requirements.

### DIRECT INVITATION

This may be appropriate where a particular artwork or the work of a particular artist is required. This process may also be preferred for smaller budget projects.

### LIMITED COMPETITION

This involves selecting and inviting artists to submit proposals in response to the artist brief. This may be appropriate if the artist is required to work in collaboration with an architect, landscape architect and/or an urban designer.

### OPEN COMPETITION

This model requires a public call for expressions of interest (EOI) to provide a schematic response to the artist brief, with selected applicants invited to an interview process. Short listed artists or artist teams are then invited to develop and present concept designs for a fee, and a preferred artist is selected.



# OTHER RESOURCES

Georges River Council Public Art Policy

- <https://www.georgesriver.nsw.gov.au/Council/Governance/Codes,-Policies-and-Registers>

Best Practice: Commissioning Art in Public Space (National Association For The Visual Arts)

- <https://visualarts.net.au/news-opinion/2019/best-practice-commissioning-art-public-space/>

Public Art: Design and Commissioning Information Sheet (Arts Law Centre of Australia)

- <https://www.artslaw.com.au/information-sheet/public-art-design-and-commissioning/>
- [https://www.artslaw.com.au/images/uploads/NEW\\_Public\\_Art\\_-\\_design\\_and\\_commissioning\\_information\\_sheet\\_12.01.2016.pdf](https://www.artslaw.com.au/images/uploads/NEW_Public_Art_-_design_and_commissioning_information_sheet_12.01.2016.pdf)

# IMAGE ATTRIBUTIONS

Page 4: *Allegory of a Cave*, Emily Floyd, 2017. One Parramatta Square (NSW). Commissioned by Charter Hall.

Page 6:

*Mercy Tree*, Virginia Read, 2015. Our Lady of Mercy College, Parramatta.

*The New City Beautiful I*, Nuha Saad, 2017. Rosebery. Commissioned by Meriton.

*Chester & Ella*, Travis Vinson, 2020. Newstead (QLD). Commissioned by Kokoda Property

*The Edge of Trees*, Janet Laurence and Fiona Foley. Museum of Sydney, Sydney.

*1833*, Fugato and Judith Abell, 2012. Battery Point (TAS). Commissioned by Hobart City Council.

Page 9: *Local Memory*, Brook Andrew, 2011. Central Park, Chippendale. Photograph: Frasers Property Australia.

Page 10: *Shadows*, Sabine Hornig, 2018. Barangaroo (NSW). Commissioned by Lendlease.

Page 11: Faculty of Engineering and IT Building, University of Technology building, Sydney.

Page 12: WynScreen, Alessio Cavallaro, 2017. Wynyard Walk (NSW). Commissioned by Transport for NSW.

Page 14: *Interloop*, Chris Fox, 2017. Wynyard Station, Sydney. Commissioned by Transport for NSW.

Page 15: *untitled (red gum slabs)*, Jonathan Jones, 2020. The South Eveleigh Public Art Program (NSW). Curated by Carriageworks, commissioned by Mirvac.

Page 17: *I STAY (Ngaya ngalawa)*, Jenny Holzer, 2014. Chifley Square, Sydney. Photograph: Ken Leanfore.

Page 18: *Landscape*, Bates Smart, 2018. 105 Philip Street, Parramatta (NSW). Commissioned by DEXUS & Charter Hall

Page 20: *Interchange Pavilion*, Chris Fox, 2020. The South Eveleigh Public Art Program (NSW). Curated by Carriageworks, commissioned by Mirvac.

