

# Public Art Policy

## 1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

1. Set a best practice approach to manage and maintain Coffs Harbour City Council's (Council) public art collection to keep it as high quality, progressive and appropriate to the public realm.
2. Support the creation of high quality public spaces through the integration of public art.
3. Outline a whole of Council approach to the commissioning, delivery and maintenance of public art projects.
4. Assist Council staff and community partners to prepare best practice public art projects that reflect the vision of Creative Coffs
5. Strengthen a sense of place and contribute to improving public and open spaces
6. Set a strategic direction for all public art projects located or proposed in the public realm of the Coffs Harbour Local Government Area (LGA).

**This policy supports the objectives of the MyCoffs – Community Strategic Plan:**

*We enrich cultural life through art, learning and cultural endeavour - (A1.4)*

OUTCOME: *We recognise the need for enhanced cultural precincts, venues and public art within our region*

**This policy supports the vision of Council's Creative Coffs – Cultural Strategic Plan 2017- 2022:**

VISION: *A vibrant and creative Coffs lifestyle enriched by its natural beauty, diverse people and capacity for innovation.*

## 2 Scope

Public art is artwork in any medium, created by an artist, to be experienced in the public realm outside a gallery or museum context. Public art can be permanent or temporary and can be installed in locations such as streets, parks, forecourts of public buildings, integrated into the building fabric or any space accessible to people. It can be a literal piece of artwork such as a sculpture, a painting, a wall mosaic or a mural. It can also be incorporated into a functional object including paving, water features (such as a fountain), seating, street furniture and lighting. Public art can be temporary in nature such as digital projections, sound, chalk art or an art performance in an outdoor public space.

This policy relates to public art commissioned, developed, purchased, maintained or deaccessioned by Council. It does not cover heritage items, historical or commemorative plaques, memorials or interpretive signs (unless distinct elements of design are included contributed by an artist). Signage or other works that promote a business, organisation, individual or enterprise (including any advertising material) are not public art for the purpose of this policy.

Public art projects may be delivered from within Council or in partnership with community partners and relate to projects undertaken on Council owned or managed land or assets. Public art projects may be stand-alone projects or be included in infrastructure or capital works. Public art is a Council asset and is accessioned into Council's cultural collection management systems.

While this policy does not directly relate to privately installed artworks on privately held property, property owners should consider if the art will be visible to, or located in, an area with civic, cultural or redevelopment significance. In these cases, Council would prefer the property owners contact Council for advice on the best way to integrate the art into existing master planning for the area.

## 3 Policy

### 3.1 Introduction

Incorporating public art into the urban and natural landscape enriches the visual and sensory experience of residents, workers and visitors to Coffs Harbour LGA. It increases the areas attractiveness as a place to live, work and play by stimulating and activating public places.

Public art installations add value to the local economy through cultural tourism opportunities and diversify the tourism offer, as well as employment and training opportunities for regional artists.

Public art is also essential to a place making approach as it animates spaces, rejuvenates structures, improves streetscapes and brings a sense of inspiration and pride in place. Public art is a celebration of our unique environment and cultural heritage and supports the creation of engaging, inclusive spaces that highlight the character of the Coffs Harbour LGA.

### 3.2 Application of Policy

This Policy applies to:

1. New and existing public art on Council assets and in areas owned or managed by Council, including:
  - a) Construction of new public buildings, extensions or upgrades, and
  - b) Capital projects undertaken in open spaces, parks or urban streetscape improvement programs;
2. Projects by non-Council parties on Council owned or managed assets or areas within the public domain, as outlined above; and
3. Development of Council's plans and strategies that relate to the public realm, including developer contributions and master planning, that provide opportunities to incorporate public art principles

### 3.3 Public Art Principles

Council is committed to supporting and developing public art across the LGA. Council will do this by following these guiding principles:

1. Implement a consistent whole-of-Council approach to the commissioning, delivery and maintenance of strategically planned and adequately resourced public art.
2. Support enjoyment of public art by integrating artworks into a vibrant public realm.
3. Incorporate public art into the planning and development of built infrastructure as well as into festivals, events and celebrations.
4. Acknowledge the traditional arts and cultural heritage of all people and increase understanding and awareness of local Aboriginal culture in the region.
5. Celebrate and reflect the culture, heritage and diversity of the area and enhance the natural environment for the benefit of future generations.
6. Encourage public art by partnering with artists, arts organisations and communities for innovative arts and cultural projects.
7. Support the growth of creative industries through involvement of the business sector, property owners, developers, employers, patrons and funders with public art projects.
8. Build the local community's involvement with public art projects through community engagement with the design and/or delivery.
9. Contribute to cultural tourism and enhance visitor experiences with high quality public art and through the creation of major destination artworks.

10. Ensure permanent public art uses high quality, durable materials, is long-lasting and low maintenance and suitable for the Coffs Harbour region climate.

## 4 Definitions

**Accession:** the process of acquiring and cataloguing art work and objects.

**Commissioning:** A commission is a direct request to produce a piece of art specifically for Council's public art collection. A public art commission by Council is a contracted transaction.

**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 (i.e. Local or State Government). 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.

**Deaccession:** The internal procedural step by which an object may be removed from an official collection inventory.

## 5 Key Responsibilities

Position	Directorate	Responsibility
Mayor	Council	To lead councillors in their understanding of, and compliance with, this policy and guidelines.
General Manager	Executive	To lead staff (either directly or through delegated authority) in their understanding of, and compliance with, this policy and guidelines.
Directors	All Directorates	To communicate, implement and comply with this policy and related guidelines.
Council Leaders	All Directorates	To implement this policy and related procedures.
All Council officials	Council	To comply with this policy and consider its implications for related projects and programs.

## 6 References

- Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery Collections Policy
- Creative Coffs: Cultural Strategic Plan 2017-2022
- Cultural Policy
- Disposal of Assets Policy
- MyCoffs Community Strategic Plan

## 7 Details of Approval and revision

- **Approval date:** 9/06/2022
- **Responsible Group:** Community and Cultural Services Group
- **Responsible Section:** Community Programs
- **Superseded policies/procedures:**
- **Next review date:** 28/08/2025

### Table of amendments

Amendment	Authoriser	Approval ref	Date
This policy was reviewed and there was only minor formatting changes made.	Council	2022/125	09/06/2022