

## City of St. Louis Park Public Art Policy

### Purpose and vision

The City of St. Louis Park recognizes that public art is a vital tool for community building, economic development, and expressing the city's commitment to equity and creating inclusion and belonging for all. The city has a rich history of participating in arts and culture activities and has invested in public art to enhance the vitality of the community. This policy provides a process for the funding, acquisition, maintenance, and removal of public art that ensures alignment with the [strategic roadmap for advancing arts and culture \(2020\)](#), which aims to connect people, ideas, and communities; enliven public spaces; promote health and well-being; and equity and inclusion.

### Definition of public art

For the purpose of this policy, public art is defined as work in any media.

- Permanent art: intended to remain in place for 10+ years.
- Temporary art: in place for up to two years.
- Integrated art: Functional infrastructure, examples include custom benches, bridge railings, etc.

### Criteria for determining if a public art project is feasible

Staff will use the following criteria to determine if a project falls under this policy:

- The work is situated on city-owned property or within the public right of way.
- The primary objective of the installation is in alignment with the goals of the strategic roadmap for advancing arts and culture (2020), noted above on page 1 of this policy.
- The project uses a professional, artist-led design process to produce a unique and original work of art.

### Location of public art

The city is committed to equitable distribution of public art to ensure that all residents have access to arts and culture in their neighborhoods. Staff will use the following criteria when determining locations for public art:

- Priority will be given to areas and neighborhoods with limited existing art, contingent upon site feasibility and alignment with planned infrastructure.
- Staff will use available data (e.g., census data and the St. Louis Park public art map) and tools to identify locations that will provide the highest impact and align with the city's strategic goals.

### Funding

Funding for public art will be determined as follows:

- Capital Improvement Project (CIP): For city infrastructure projects, a budget for public art will be included that targets 1% of the above-ground construction costs when:
  - The project involves the installation of new infrastructure or a substantial reconstruction that significantly changes or improves existing infrastructure. Projects whose primary scope is the replacement or repair of existing infrastructure are excluded from this policy (e.g., pavement management projects, mill and overlay projects)
  - Public art can be reasonably and safely incorporated into the project, as determined by the city engineer, considering constructability, safety and utility constraints. For example, a project where the primary scope is underground utility construction is generally not eligible.

- Funding sources for public art as a part of the CIP budget will be bond proceeds, levy revenue or excess franchise fee revenue, as determined by the council as a part of the budget process. In the 5-year CIP, 1% of the above-ground construction costs will be planned for public art utilizing bond proceeds as a source. In the budget process, the year before construction begins, cost estimates and sources will be refined, and a final budget will be approved by the council.
- Standalone projects: The council may authorize the creation of a standalone public art project that is not tied to a larger CIP or private development project. This allows the city to respond to unique opportunities, landmark designations or strategic community goals. Funding for standalone projects is determined during the city's annual budget process. Standalone projects must align with the following objectives:
  - The project is for a landmark designation, creating a visual marker at a city gateway, commercial node or transit hub.
  - The project is for cultural or historical preservation purposes.
  - The project aims to advance one or more of the city's strategic priorities.
- Private developments: For private developments, the installation will be funded by the private entity funding the development.
- External grants and/or donations: The city may also apply for state, federal, or philanthropic grants or accept donations to fund standalone projects or other arts-based initiatives. Any acceptance of physical pieces of artwork must meet city standards for safety and maintenance.
- Funding for ongoing maintenance: Ongoing maintenance funding will be included in the annual operating budget to cover minor graffiti removal and basic cleaning for the existing collection. If more significant maintenance costs are needed, staff will bring a proposal through the annual budget process.

## **Governance/advisory body**

City staff serve as the primary lead for all public art projects, managing the daily administration, coordination, and technical requirements of the policy. To ensure projects remain community-centered and aligned with the Arts & Culture Strategic Framework 2020, staff collaborate with an advisory network of stakeholders, including relevant boards and commissions, arts-based community organizations and community members as needed. This partnership ensures that while staff drive the operational process, the vision and selection of art are informed by diverse community voices and professional expertise.

Projects involving significant budgetary or capital investment or permanent installation on city property may require final approval from the council. Council will be kept informed of the art project progress as part of the construction updates.

## **Selection process**

To ensure a standard of quality and equity, the following standard selection process will be used for both city-owned and private development public art:

- Arts organization partnership: The city will contract with a qualified arts organization to facilitate the artist selection process. This partner serves as a neutral administrator, providing technical expertise in public art best practices and ensuring a fair, transparent process.
- Request for qualifications (RFQ): For each project, a formal RFQ will be issued that includes the scope of the art project, a budget, the goals and themes for the artwork, selection criteria and any relevant timeline or project schedule information.
- Selection committee: A project-specific selection committee will be established to review submissions. To ensure a balance of technical, aesthetic, and community perspectives, the committee will include:

- City staff, including a representative from park and recreation maintenance, and developers (if applicable)
- Community members and residents, including representation from relevant city boards or commissions and/or neighborhood organizations.
- Representatives from the local arts and culture community.

## **Maintenance**

The City of St. Louis Park will assume ownership and provide ongoing maintenance and care for public art on city-owned property.

Artists will provide a maintenance manual for any piece of public art they are commissioned by the city to complete. The manual should include items such as:

- List of materials, finishes and fabrication methods.
- Specific cleaning instructions.
- Recommended cleaning products.
- Relevant contact information for the artists.

Staff will inspect all public art on an annual basis. City staff may perform routine cleaning or minor repairs as needed. If major repairs are required, city staff may hire additional professionals for any structural or technical issues. The city will attempt to notify the artist for consultation.

For private developments, the developer is responsible for the ongoing maintenance and repair of the artwork.

## **Removal of public art**

The city reserves the right to remove artwork if it has deteriorated beyond reasonable repair, if the site is being redeveloped, if the piece poses a safety hazard, or if it no longer meets the city's strategic priorities. This process will involve a formal review by city staff and any relevant subject matter experts or local arts organizations, and an attempt to consult or return the artwork to the artist.

## **Community engagement**

Meaningful community engagement is the foundation of a successful public art program to ensure that public art is representative and inclusive of all communities in the city. The following objectives establish the standard for an inclusive, intentional and transparent process of selection and creation of public art:

- Ensure public art reflects community identity and lived experiences by involving residents and cultural groups in the creative process.
- Create meaningful opportunities for dialogue and co-creation that connect people, ideas, and communities while enlivening public spaces.
- Advance equity and access by designing engagement processes that remove barriers, support underrepresented voices, and ensure visibility for all residents.
- Integrate community engagement into planning and decision-making processes to ensure every art project aligns with the city's art and culture goals.