



Council Policy Manual

WEST WIMMERA SHIRE COUNCIL

COUNCIL POLICY		
PUBLIC ART POLICY	Policy No:	
	Adopted:	19 November 2025
	Next review date:	November 2029
Executive Director:	Director Corporate & Community Services	
Responsible Officer:	Community Development Manager	
Functional Area:	Corporate & Community Services	
Introduction & Background	West Wimmera Shire Council (WWSC) recognises the significant role public art plays in celebrating community identity, enhancing public spaces, strengthening civic pride, supporting tourism, and fostering connection to place. The unique character of our Shire is shaped by agricultural landscapes, unique biodiversity, and rich history. This Policy sets a consistent, transparent framework for commissioning, approving, installing, maintaining, and, where necessary, decommissioning public art across the Shire. It brings together best practice guidance for Council-initiated, community-led and developer-delivered artworks, and supports both permanent and temporary works.	
Purpose & Objectives	This Policy aims to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Celebrate local identity, Country and culture through high-quality public art.• Embed public art into placemaking, capital works and tourism strategies to enhance the visitor economy.• Enable inclusive participation and build the capacity of local and regional artists through mentoring, up-skilling and collaboration.• Provide clear pathways for proposals, commissioning, approvals, installation, maintenance and deaccessioning.• Ensure public artworks are culturally safe, accessible, durable, safe to use and appropriately insured (if required).• Promote respectful engagement with Traditional Owners and protect Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP).	



Council Policy Manual

WEST WIMMERA SHIRE COUNCIL

Policy Details	
1.	<p>Scope & Definitions</p> <p>1.1 This Policy applies to public art on Council-owned or managed land and, where relevant, on privately owned properties that are visible from the public realm and provide a demonstrable community benefit. It covers Council-initiated, community-led, and developer-delivered projects, and applies to both permanent and temporary works.</p> <p>1.2 What is Public Art</p> <p>Public art refers to creative works intentionally placed in public spaces for the benefit of the broader community. This includes (but is not limited to) sculptures, murals, mosaics, digital projections, interactive installations, artist-designed street furniture, lighting, and artworks integrated into landscaping or building design. Public art may be permanent (intended lifespan of 10 or more years) or temporary (including installations and event-based works).</p> <p>1.3 Exclusions</p> <p>Commercial advertising, business signage, and mass-produced decorative items are not considered public art under this Policy.</p> <p>1.4 Related Terms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public places: Spaces freely accessible to the public, regardless of ownership.• Site-specific art: Works designed in response to a particular site, context or cultural story.• Community art: Projects co-designed and/or delivered with community involvement under the leadership of an approved artist.
2.	<p>Guiding Principles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Place, identity and story: artworks reflect our people, places, culture, history and environment.• Cultural safety and inclusion: engage respectfully with Traditional Owners; ensure accessibility and universal design.• Quality and innovation: pursue artistic excellence, originality and relevance to site.• Safety and durability: ensure suitability of materials, fabrication and installation for local conditions.• Transparency and accountability: apply clear processes, criteria and agreements.• Capacity-building: preference opportunities that up-skill local artists and communities.



Council Policy Manual

WEST WIMMERA SHIRE COUNCIL

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainability: consider environmental impacts, maintenance and end-of-life from project inception.
3.	<p>Governance & Legislative Alignment</p> <p>This Policy gives effect to the overarching governance principles of the Local Government Act 2020, including the community engagement, public transparency and service performance principles. It should be read alongside relevant Council frameworks and policies.</p> <p>Key legislation (Victoria):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative Victoria Act 2017 • Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 • Equal Opportunity Act 2010 • Gender Equality Act 2020 • Heritage Act 2017 • Local Government Act 2020 • Planning and Environment Act 1987 <p>Associated Council documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Engagement Framework & Policy • Arts & Culture Strategic Plan (when adopted) • Disability Access and Inclusion Plan • Privacy Policy • Procurement Policy • Risk Management Framework
4.	<p>First Nations Engagement & Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP)</p> <p>WWSC is committed to ensuring that any artwork referencing Aboriginal stories, language, designs or symbols is developed with the guidance of Traditional Owners and done respectfully. Proponents must consult early with the Barengi Gadjin Land Council (or relevant Traditional Owner body) to seek cultural approval and ensure appropriate representation. Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP) rights will be respected; agreements must address cultural permissions, attribution, moral rights, and ongoing custodianship as applicable.</p>
5.	<p>Locations & Integration with Capital Works</p> <p>Public art may be located in civic buildings, town entrances, streetscapes, community halls, playgrounds, walkways, reserves and other public places. Where appropriate, artworks may be installed on private properties visible from the public realm, subject to landholder permissions and community benefit.</p>



Council Policy Manual

WEST WIMMERA SHIRE COUNCIL

	<p>Early involvement of artists in capital works, building design and landscaping projects is encouraged to enable meaningful integration. All completed works should include interpretive material (e.g., plaque or artist statement) and may include technology-enabled features (e.g., QR codes) to deepen engagement with the story of the work.</p>
6.	<p>Commissioning & Artist Selection</p> <p>6.1 Initiation Pathways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council-initiated commissions (including expressions of interest). • Direct invitation to artists with relevant experience or site connection (with probity and value-for-money demonstrated). • Community-initiated proposals in collaboration with Council. • Developer-delivered artworks as part of planning approvals or conditions (where applicable). <p>6.2 Proposal Requirements (All Proponents):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project intent and community benefit (including alignment to this Policy and place-based context). • Artist/collective CVs and relevant experience; referees. • Concept visuals (sketches/renders), materials, scale and technical specifications. • Site analysis, installation methodology and program timeline. • Budget (inclusive of artist fees, fabrication, installation, permits, insurances, maintenance and decommissioning allowances). • Risk assessment (including public safety), permits/approvals required, and public liability details. • First Nations engagement plan (where relevant) and confirmation of cultural permissions. • Maintenance plan and anticipated lifespan. <p>6.3 Assessment Criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Artistic quality, originality and relevance to site/place. • Cultural safety and appropriateness (including Traditional Owner input where relevant). • Feasibility (technical, timeline, budget) and value for money. • Public safety, durability, maintenance needs and environmental considerations. • Community engagement and capacity-building opportunities (local artists, apprentices, schools). • Contribution to civic pride, tourism and placemaking outcomes. <p>6.4 Agreements:</p> <p>All approved projects must be governed by a written agreement covering scope, deliverables, program, payment schedule, warranties, insurance and indemnity,</p>



Council Policy Manual

WEST WIMMERA SHIRE COUNCIL

	intellectual property and moral rights, attribution, maintenance responsibilities, access, safety, and decommissioning.
7.	<p>Community Proposals & Engagement</p> <p>Community members and groups are encouraged to develop ideas collaboratively and seek early advice from Council. Proposals should demonstrate broad community benefit and outline community contributions to delivery. Council provides a single point of contact within Corporate and Community Services to discuss concepts, navigate approvals and identify funding pathways.</p>
8.	<p>Ownership, Maintenance & Asset Management</p> <p>Ownership will be confirmed in the commissioning agreement. As a general principle:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council-owned/managed artworks: recorded in Council's cultural asset register and planned for lifecycle maintenance and cleaning. • Community-led artworks on Council land: the proponent (community group/artist) is the default owner and is responsible for insurance, maintenance and end-of-life, unless Council formally agrees to accept the asset at completion under defined conditions. <p>All proposals must include a maintenance plan and budget commensurate with the artwork's materials, exposure and expected lifespan. Council cannot provide insurance or ongoing maintenance for artworks it does not own or manage.</p>
9.	<p>Relocation, Removal & Decommissioning</p> <p>Artworks may be relocated, restored, removed or decommissioned when one or more of the following apply: the artwork is unsafe; has deteriorated beyond repair; no longer reflects the artist's intent; site use has changed; the work is repeatedly vandalised; cultural or community expectations have shifted; or other reasonable grounds exist. Decisions will, where practicable, be made in consultation with the artist/owner and relevant stakeholders.</p>
10.	<p>Funding & Partnerships</p> <p>Public art may be funded through Council budgets, grants (state, federal, philanthropic), developer contributions and community partnerships. Council may assist eligible community groups with grant application development. Bequests and gifts of artworks may be considered subject to assessment against this Policy and asset management implications. Joint projects with other municipalities require a Council resolution in an open meeting.</p>
11.	Interpretation & Digital Engagement (QR Codes)



Council Policy Manual

WEST WIMMERA SHIRE COUNCIL

	<p>Council encourages interpretive materials (plaques/artist statements) and the integration of Dynamic QR codes to provide further information about the artwork and its creator. For artworks using Dynamic QR codes, applicants must provide the target URL(s) at application stage and ensure ongoing link integrity. Council reserves the right to remove or disable QR codes if links cannot be verified or are found to be unsafe. Owners of non-Council owned artworks are responsible for monitoring and maintaining QR code content.</p>														
12.	<p>Roles & Responsibilities</p> <table> <tr> <th>Group</th><th>Responsibilities</th></tr> <tr> <td>Council</td><td>Endorses policy, approves major commissions, considers funding via existing community grant applications, considers bequests/gifts.</td></tr> <tr> <td>Council Staff</td><td>Provide single point of contact; assess proposals; manage procurement, contracts, installation and maintenance for Council-owned works.</td></tr> <tr> <td>Community Groups</td><td>Propose ideas; partner with artists; contribute to project delivery and ongoing care where they are the owner.</td></tr> <tr> <td>Artists</td><td>Design and deliver artworks in line with the brief, agreement and this Policy; participate in engagement and safety processes.</td></tr> <tr> <td>Traditional Owners</td><td>Provide cultural guidance and permissions where needed; ensure appropriate use of Indigenous cultural content.</td></tr> <tr> <td>Developers/Funders</td><td>Collaborate with Council to integrate and resource public art aligned to this Policy and planning requirements.</td></tr> </table>	Group	Responsibilities	Council	Endorses policy, approves major commissions, considers funding via existing community grant applications, considers bequests/gifts.	Council Staff	Provide single point of contact; assess proposals; manage procurement, contracts, installation and maintenance for Council-owned works.	Community Groups	Propose ideas; partner with artists; contribute to project delivery and ongoing care where they are the owner.	Artists	Design and deliver artworks in line with the brief, agreement and this Policy; participate in engagement and safety processes.	Traditional Owners	Provide cultural guidance and permissions where needed; ensure appropriate use of Indigenous cultural content.	Developers/Funders	Collaborate with Council to integrate and resource public art aligned to this Policy and planning requirements.
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13.	<p>Filming in Public Places</p> <p>WWSC welcomes filming in public places subject to compliance with relevant legislation and permits. Applicants should contact Corporate and Community Services for advice.</p>														



Council Policy Manual

WEST WIMMERA SHIRE COUNCIL

14.	Review & Version Control
	This policy will be reviewed every four years or earlier if required.

Policy Adopted:	Council Meeting 08/07/13	Minute Book Page	SRV Governance-Policies, Procedures, Plans Strategies
Policy Reviewed:	Council Meeting 18/09/2019		
	Council Meeting 19/10/2022		
	Council Meeting 19/11/2025		