



City of Nedlands

Agenda

Public Art Committee Meeting

15 March 2021

ATTENTION

This Agenda has yet to be dealt with by the Committee.

The Administration Recommendations, shown at the beginning of each item, have yet to be considered by the Committee and are not to be interpreted as being the position of either the Committee or Council.

The Minutes of the meeting held to discuss this Agenda should be read to ascertain the decision of the Committee.

Before acting on any recommendation of the Committee a check must also be made in the Ordinary Council Minutes following the Committee Meeting to ensure that Council did not make a decision at variance to the Committee Recommendation.

Prior to entry, attendees will be required to register using the SafeWA App or by completing the manual contact register prior to entry - as stipulated by Department of Health mandatory requirements.

The public can continue to participate by submitting questions and addresses via the required online submission forms at:

<http://www.nedlands.wa.gov.au/intention-address-council-or-council-committee-form>

<http://www.nedlands.wa.gov.au/public-question-time>

Jim Duff
Acting Chief Executive Officer
9 March 2021

Table of Contents

Declaration of Opening.....	3
Present and Apologies and Leave of Absence (Previously Approved)	3
1. Public Question Time.....	3
2. Addresses by Members of the Public (only for items listed on the agenda)	4
3. Disclosures of Financial and/or Proximity Interest	4
4. Disclosures of Interests Affecting Impartiality	4
5. Declarations by Members That They Have Not Given Due Consideration to Papers.....	5
6. Confirmation of Minutes	5
6.1 Arts Committee Meeting 12 October 2020.....	5
7. Items for Discussion.....	5
7.1 Health Workers' Tribute Project.....	5
7.2 Re-instatement of Asteroids Public Artwork.....	11
7.3 Valuation of Public Artworks	14
7.4 Maintenance Budget for Public Artworks 2021/22	19
8. Date of Next Meeting	23
Declaration of Closure	23

City of Nedlands

Notice of a meeting of the Public Art Committee to be held in the Council Chambers, 71 Stirling Highway, Nedlands on Monday 15 March 2021 at 5.30 pm.

Public Art Committee Agenda

Declaration of Opening

The Presiding Member will declare the meeting open at 5.30pm and will draw attention to the disclaimer below.

Present and Apologies and Leave of Absence (Previously Approved)

**Leave of Absence
(Previously Approved)** Nil.

Apologies	Deputy Mayor L J McManus Luke Hollyock	Coastal Districts Ward Community Member
------------------	---	--

Disclaimer

Members of the public who attend Council meetings should not act immediately on anything they hear at the meetings, without first seeking clarification of Council's position. For example, by reference to the confirmed Minutes of Council meeting. Members of the public are also advised to wait for written advice from the Council prior to taking action on any matter that they may have before Council.

Any plans or documents in agendas and minutes may be subject to copyright. The express permission of the copyright owner must be obtained before copying any copyright material.

1. Public Question Time

A member of the public wishing to ask a question should register that interest by notification in writing to the CEO in advance, setting out the text or substance of the question. Questions tabled at the meeting may be unable to be answered due to the requirement for technical research and will therefore be answered direct afterwards.

Questions must relate to a matter contained within the agenda of this meeting.

2. Addresses by Members of the Public (only for items listed on the agenda)

Addresses by members of the public who have completed Public Address Session Forms will be invited to be made as each item relating to their address is discussed by the Committee.

3. Disclosures of Financial and/or Proximity Interest

The Presiding Member to remind Councillors, Committee Members and Staff of the requirements of Section 5.65 of the *Local Government Act* to disclose any interest during the meeting when the matter is discussed.

A declaration under this section requires that the nature of the interest must be disclosed. Consequently, a member who has made a declaration must not preside, participate in, or be present during any discussion or decision-making procedure relating to the matter the subject of the declaration.

However, other members may allow participation of the declarant if the member further discloses the extent of the interest. Any such declarant who wishes to participate in the meeting on the matter, shall leave the meeting, after making their declaration and request to participate, while other members consider and decide upon whether the interest is trivial or insignificant or is common to a significant number of electors or ratepayers.

4. Disclosures of Interests Affecting Impartiality

The Presiding Member to remind Councillors, Committee Members and Staff of the requirements of Council's Code of Conduct in accordance with Section 5.103 of the *Local Government Act*.

Councillors and staff are required, in addition to declaring any financial interests to declare any interest that may affect their impartiality in considering a matter. This declaration does not restrict any right to participate in or be present during the decision-making procedure.

The following pro forma declaration is provided to assist in making the disclosure.

"With regard to the matter in item x I disclose that I have an association with the applicant (or person seeking a decision). This association is (nature of the interest).

As a consequence, there may be a perception that my impartiality on the matter may be affected. I declare that I will consider this matter on its merits and vote accordingly."

The member or employee is encouraged to disclose the nature of the association.

5. **Declarations by Members That They Have Not Given Due Consideration to Papers**

Members who have not read the business papers to make declarations at this point.

6. **Confirmation of Minutes**

6.1 **Arts Committee Meeting 12 October 2020**

The Minutes of the Arts Committee 12 October 2020 are to be accepted as a true and correct record of that meeting.

7. **Items for Discussion**

7.1 **Health Workers' Tribute Project**

Public Art Committee	15 March 2021
Applicant	City of Nedlands
Employee Disclosure under section 5.70 of the Local Govt Act 1995 and section 10 of the City of Nedlands Code of Conduct for Impartiality.	Nil.
Executive Manager	Pat Panayotou – Executive Manager Community
Attachments	Nil.
Confidential Attachments	Nil.

Executive Summary

This report is being put to the Public Art Committee in order to progress the Health Workers' Tribute project. Council has requested that the Public Art Committee undertakes the project by commissioning an artwork, rather than by purchasing one. Therefore, the Public Art Committee now needs to consider the implications of commissioning a work, including the budget and staffing capacity implications. To proceed with the project, the Public Art Committee requires Council approval of expenditure associated with the project; and of the use of the site.

Recommendation to Council:

The Public Art Committee:

- 1. has considered Council's request that the Health Workers' Tribute Public Art Project should be undertaken as a commissioned work, rather than purchasing an existing work;**
- 2. requests Council's approval of transferring \$20,000 from Council's Art Reserve Account for expenditure on a consultant to undertake the work involved in commissioning an artwork, rather than purchasing an existing work;**
- 3. requests Council's approval of expenditure of up to \$50,000 on the commission of the artwork itself (including advertising, artist fees, fabrication, traffic management, foundations, plaque and installation) from the 2020/21 approved Council budget; and**
- 4. requests Council's approval of Dot Bennett Park as the site for the Health Workers' Tribute public art project.**

Background

On 17 August 2020, the Public Art Committee requested Administration to research public artworks that were available for purchase and that also fitted with the meaning behind the Health Workers' Tribute project. These artworks, to be researched and identified by the Tresillian Coordinator, were to be "fit for purpose" in the sense that they could be interpreted as expressing the role of health workers during the pandemic. The works also needed to be within the approved budget allocation of \$50,000 for public art.

The Tresillian Coordinator undertook the research project as requested, identifying 11 suitable artworks that were available for sale; could be interpreted as symbolically capturing the essence of the supportive role of health workers; and were within budget. The 11 artworks identified in the research were then presented to the Public Art Committee for consideration at its October 2020 meeting.

On 12 October 2020, the Public Art Committee considered the research that had been undertaken and from the 11 artworks, the Public Art Committee:

- selected "Circle" by Tetsuro Yamasaki as the Committee's preferred work; and
- selected Dot Bennett Park as the Committee's preferred site for the work.

These recommendations from the Public Art Committee then went to Council.

Discussion/Overview

On 24 November 2020, Council considered the recommendation from the Public Art Committee to purchase “Circle” as the Health Workers Tribute Project and install it in the Dot Bennet Reserve. In response to this recommendation, Council made the following decision:

That Council requests the Public Art Committee to pursue the option of a commissioned public art piece from a WA artist, in light of the limited choice of off the shelf selections available.

Therefore, this report now considers the option of commissioning a public artwork for the Health Workers’ Tribute Project.

Staffing Capacity

Commissioning an artwork is a significantly longer and more complex process than purchasing an existing artwork “off the shelf”. Unfortunately, at current staffing levels, the City does not have the staffing capacity to undertake the commissioning of an artwork. The Tresillian Coordinator is the City staff member with the relevant public art knowledge and expertise to advise on and implement public art projects. However, this position has limited time-capacity available for public art projects as it already includes a fulltime duty running Tresillian Art Centre, a community centre that provides 60 classes per week to > 600 community members.

Towards a Solution

However, there is a great deal of willingness to undertake this inspiring community project which is aimed at acknowledging the generosity and courage of health workers. Therefore, it is recommended that \$20,000 is allocated to pay a consultant to undertake the work of commissioning this project. The expenditure of \$20,000 on the consultant would be in addition to the \$50,000 expenditure on the artwork itself, including advertising, shortlisting, fabrication and installation of the selected work. Therefore, total expenditure on this artwork – if achieved by appointing a consultant – would be \$70,000.

The City’s standard process of calling publicly for EOI’s from interested artists; shortlisting to 3 proposals; having presentations from shortlisted artists; then selecting one proposal as the artwork to be commissioned – this standard process would still take place. The only difference is that the process would be undertaken by a consultant, rather than by a staff member. The consultant would be supervised by a staff member in order to ensure that all City standards were met.

With a consultant undertaking this commissioning process, the Public Art Committee will still make the key decisions of selecting the 3 shortlisted proposals, then selecting the winning proposal from the shortlisted ones and recommending it to Council. Therefore, it is recommended that the Public Art

Committee recommends to Council expenditure of \$20,000 on a consultant to undertake this inspirational project.

Site

The Public Art Committee has already selected the Dot Bennett Park as the most appropriate site for this project, with detailed discussion having already been held by the Committee on this matter. Therefore, it is recommended that no further discussion of the location is needed at this meeting. However, the site needs to be specified in the Public Art Committee's recommendation to Council because Council has not yet given approval for the artwork to be located on this site. Therefore, it is recommended that the Public Art Committee re-confirms its previous decision to select Dot Bennett Park as the site for this artwork, and to recommend that to Council.

Key Relevant Previous Council Decisions:

24 November 2020 – CM10.20 – Health Workers' Tribute Project Public Art.

Policy / Legislation

The Public Art Committee's Terms of Reference states that it must obtain Council approval for any expenditure > \$10,000. Therefore, the expenditure required for this artwork, being over \$10,000, must be approved by Council before the project can proceed.

Consultation

Two community members are appointed to the Public Art Committee, to ensure community input into Council decision on Public Art. These community members are volunteers who donate their time and expertise to the Committee without payment.

Budget/Financial Implications

Art Reserve Account

Council has a reserve account for public art. A Council decision is required to transfer funds from the reserve account to the Council budget for expenditure.

Current Financial Year Approved Budget

\$50,000 has been approved by Council for expenditure on public art in the current financial year. This amount is available for expenditure on the Health Workers' Tribute project.

Additional Funds Required for Consultant

In addition to the \$50,000 available in the current financial year's budget for expenditure on public art, this project will also require expenditure of \$20,000 on a consultant. Therefore, it is recommended that the Public Art Committee requests Council to transfer \$20,000 from the Art Reserve Account for expenditure on a consultant, due to the extensive work involved in commissioning an artwork compared to purchasing an existing work.

Can we afford it?

Yes. The \$70,000 expenditure on the Health Workers' Tribute project can be funded from \$50,000 already approved for public art in the 2020/21 budget; and an additional \$20,000 to be transferred from the Art Reserve Account.

How does the option impact upon rates?

The \$50,000 already approved for expenditure on public art in the 2020/21 budget has already been taken into account regarding impact on rates; and the transfer of \$20,000 from the Art Reserve Account will have minimal impact on rates.

Strategic Implications

How well does it fit with our strategic direction?

In its vision statement, the City's Strategic Community Plan states that *We will live in a beautiful place*. The work of the Public Art Committee contributes to this vision and therefore is consistent with the City's strategic direction as stated in the Plan.

Who benefits?

All community members in the City of Nedlands benefit from high quality public art that enhances the amenity of the City. Additionally, the reputation and standing of the City will be enhanced by undertaking this inspiring and community-minded project in recognition of health workers.

Does it involve a tolerable risk?

The risk of obtaining an unsatisfactory artwork is mitigated by undertaking the commission through a public EOI process; advertising the EOI widely; shortlisting to 3 proposals; then careful selection of the final proposal, to be commissioned.

Do we have the information we need?

Yes.

Conclusion

Following Council's request that the Public Art Committee considers commissioning an artwork for the Health Workers' Tribute project, this report presents a way forward to achieve that. Given the additional work involved in commissioning rather than purchasing, undertaking a commissioned work cannot be achieved within existing staffing levels. One option would be to employ a staff member dedicated to implementing the work of the Public Art Committee. Most Councils with active public art programs and collections employ a dedicated Arts Officer, ranging from part-time to full-time. However, additional staffing is not a likely option in the current financial climate, with most local governments still recovering from COVID-related impacts. Therefore, the one-off option of appointing a consultant to oversee this project is recommended. The additional expenditure of \$20,000 can be funded from Council's Art Reserve Account, while the \$50,000 for the artwork and its associated costs is within the amount already approved for expenditure on public art in the current financial year.

In addition to the approval of funds needed to undertake this project, it is recommended that the Public Art Committee also requests Council's approval to install this artwork on the Dot Bennett Park. This site is appropriate because of its proximity to the major health institutions; its proximity to major roads, which will increase its visibility and therefore its community impact; and the fact that this site is already beautifully landscaped and so will provide a fitting setting for the artwork.

7.2 Re-instatement of Asteroids Public Artwork

Public Art Committee	15 March 2021
Applicant	City of Nedlands (unless otherwise)
Employee Disclosure under section 5.70 of the Local Government Act 1995 and section 10 of the City of Nedlands Code of Conduct for Impartiality.	Nil.
Executive Manager	Pat Panayotou – Executive Manager Community
Attachments	Nil.
Confidential Attachments	Nil.

Executive Summary

The purpose of this agenda item is to report to the Public Art Committee that the artwork titled “Asteroids”, which was damaged beyond repair in 2020, has been refabricated and is expected to be re-instated by end of March 2021.

Recommendation to the Public Art Committee

That the Public Art Committee receives this information on the re-instatement of “Asteroids” by Rick Vermey.

Background

“Asteroids” is a public artwork by Rick Vermey, commissioned by the Nedlands Cultural and Community Society (the Society) and donated by the Society to the City of Nedlands in 2001. Following Council accepting the work, it was installed on the center of the roundabout on Broadway in Nedlands, adjacent to Steve’s Hotel.

Discussion

In May 2020, “Asteroids” by was damaged by storm winds. The work had to be immediately removed for safety reasons. Once removed, the work was then assessed for structural integrity by an external body and the City was advised that it had been damaged beyond repair. The City then obtained a quote of \$65,663 to replace the work, refabricating it based on the artist’s specifications.

Legal Agreement

The work was commissioned by the Nedlands Cultural and Community Society and donated to the City of Nedlands in 2001, formalised by a three-way legal agreement between the Society, the City and the artist.

- Clause 4.4 Insurance of the agreement states that “the City will insure the Artwork from the date of its donation so as to cover (i) the full replacement cost of the Artwork; and (ii) the events of theft, damage by fire, storm or tempest, and vandalism, and any other events which the City deems appropriate”.
- Clause 7 Maintenance (b) (i) states that “the City will take all necessary action (including making an insurance claim where relevant) to return the Artwork to the condition in which it was prior to the damage, alteration or modification.”

City’s Insurance of the Artwork

The work was insured for full replacement value, less a \$5,000 excess. Therefore, the City made an insurance claim, which covered \$60,663 of the \$65,663 cost of the re-instatement.

Current Status

“Asteroids” has been refabricated by the contractor agreed to by the City and the artist. Tresillian Coordinator, Lisa Macfarlane Reid, will visit the fabrication site in the near future and inspect the work as a quality control measure. Once the City is satisfied with the quality of the work, the artwork will be re-installed in its original location on Broadway, Nedlands.

Policy / Legislation

Nil.

Consultation

The artist, Rick Vermey, was consulted and was supportive of the choice of company appointed by the City to refabricate the work.

Strategic Implications

How well does it fit with our strategic direction?

In its vision statement, the City’s Strategic Community Plan states that “We will live in a beautiful place”. The work of the Public Art Committee contributes to this vision and therefore is consistent with the City’s strategic direction as stated in the Plan.

Who benefits?

All community members in the City of Nedlands benefit from high quality public art that enhances the amenity of the City. The artworks also attract visitors to the City, benefiting local businesses.

Does it involve a tolerable risk?

The risk of a sub-standard re-fabrication of the work was mitigated by involving the artist in the appointment of a suitable company to re-fabricate and install the work. The risk of having the artist take legal action against the City was mitigated by checking the legal agreement between the City and the artist and implementing the agreed terms, such as consulting the artist on re-fabrication.

Do we have the information we need?

Yes.

Budget/Financial Implications

Can we afford it?

Yes. Most of the cost of replacing the artwork was covered by insurance.

How does the option impact upon rates?

Negligible impact on rates.

Conclusion

The loss of “Asteroids” was the first major damage or loss to one of the works in the City’s extensive and important public art collection. This incident was managed well, with a positive outcome. The work was insured for “replacement value” and replacement value was, in this instance, easy to establish as “replacement” consisted of refabricating the artwork. In the near future, this much-loved work by a significant Western Australian artist will be back in its original location.

7.3 Valuation of Public Artworks

Public Art Committee	15 March 2021
Applicant	City of Nedlands
Employee Disclosure under section 5.70 of the Local Government Act 1995 and section 10 of the City of Nedlands Code of Conduct for Impartiality.	Nil.
Executive Manager	Pat Panayotou – Executive Manager Community
Attachments	Nil.
Confidential Attachments	Nil.

Executive Summary

This report is presented to the Public Art Committee for information only. The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee about the measures being taken to determine an accurate financial value for the City's public art collection. Determining the financial value of each of these public artworks is needed to ensure appropriate management and protection of the works as a class of assets.

Recommendation to Public Art Committee

That the Public Art Committee receives the information that a valuation of the City's public art collection is underway.

Background

The City owns a significant public art collection, made up of 16 major works located throughout the City. Some of these artworks, such as the Trolley Poles along Stirling Highway, are in fact made up of a number of individual works.

The public artworks are:

1. Allen Park Interpretive Signage by David Kelsall
2. Asteroids by Rick Vermey
3. 6009 by Anne Neil and Steve Tepper
4. Boat Story by Claire Bailey
5. Feathers by Anne Neil
6. A Walk in the Park by Judith Forrest (13 individual works)
7. Trolley Pole Banners by Tony Pankiw (6 individual works)
8. Snapshots of Lupin Hill by Judith Forrest (3 individual works)

9. Group of Little People by Richie Kuhaupt (3 individual works)
10. The Odd Couple by Susan Flavell (2 individual works)
11. Burnside Spit, Hall Mark & Outer Dolphin by Tony Jones (3 individual works)
12. Grandis Leaf by Leanne Bray
13. Fisher Boy by Alanna Randles-Freeman
14. Loyalty by Ayad Alqaragholti
15. Inspired by Rosie by Tania Spencer
16. Windows into the Past by Tony Pankiw.

Discussion

Appreciation or depreciation?

The original cost of commissioning and purchasing these works was in the vicinity of \$1.2 million. However, some of these works may have appreciated since being installed. There are three factors that may impact the current value of these works. Firstly, the artists were generally judiciously selected in the first place. Most of them were already significant artists with established reputations and existing artistic achievements, at the time of undertaking these works. Secondly, considerable time has elapsed since some of these works were installed. The earlier works were acquired by the City over 20 years ago, allowing enough time for significant career development by the artists since creating the works. And thirdly, many of these artists have been further recognised and awarded since undertaking the works they created for the City. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that there may have been appreciation in the value of some of these works since their installation. For that reason, it is prudent to establish the current financial value of each work, so there is evidence to support claims for their value, if required in future.

When an independent valuation may be needed

No public artworks can be expected to last indefinitely, despite the City managing risk by select only experienced, well-trained public artists whose work meets high standards of durability, safety and minimal maintenance. However, from time-to-time, damage or deterioration may occur; and the artwork will then be the subject of an insurance claim by the City. The City's public artworks are generally insured for "replacement value". Therefore, the question arises: what is the work's "replacement value"?

If the artist is living, then it is likely that he or she may still have the original design drawings, making it easier to refabricate the work. For example, this was the case with the recent refabrication of "Asteroids" by Rick Vermey. Rick Vermey was able to provide design drawings for the refabrication and the City was able to arrange to have the work refabricated. Therefore, the "replacement cost" for the work was the cost of refabricating it. This cost was not disputed by the City's insurer.

However, if the artist were no longer alive or could not provide the original design drawings for some other reason, then the City might wish to use the insurance claim funds to purchase a different artwork. The question would then arise: what is the replacement value of the insured work? If the City is not simply getting a quote to refabricate the original work, then there needs to be some objective basis for the work's value. Currently, the only data the City has on the financial value of each public artwork is the cost of its original purchase or commission. However, with the passage of time and the upward career trajectory of many of these artists, this original cost may well be an undervaluation. Therefore, undertaking a current professional valuation of the works is essential if the City is to appropriately protect its public art collection.

The public art valuation project

The public art valuation project is underway. It is being funded from a budget line item for assets valuation, not from the public art budget. An independent consultant has been selected to undertake the valuation. It is expected that the independence of this process will provide robust valuation information if an insurance claim needs to be made. Tresillian Coordinator Lisa Macfarlane Reid is supervising the independent consultant, ensuring that the project meets the City's standards, including value-for-money. It is expected that the project will be completed by 30 June 2021.

Key Relevant Previous Council Decisions:

Nil.

Policy / Legislation

Nil.

Consultation

No consultation was required for this project as it is standard operational matter of asset valuation. The aim is to ensure that this particular class of assets (public artworks) has an accurate and recent financial valuation, so that it adequately insured and protected into the future.

Strategic Implications

Protecting and ensuring the City's existing public art collection should be of a higher priority than acquiring new public artworks, since those new public artworks would be at risk if there are not adequate measures in place to value, insure and maintain the existing collection. It is a common strategic mistake to emphasize acquisition at the expense of maintenance of an art collection.

How well does it fit with our strategic direction?

In its vision statement, the City's Strategic Community Plan states that *We will live in a beautiful place*. The work of the Public Art Committee contributes to this vision and therefore is consistent with the City's strategic direction as stated in the Plan. In particular, this project, of valuing the City's public art collection, is an important step in protecting the collection into the future.

Who benefits?

All community members in the City of Nedlands benefit from high quality public art that enhances the amenity of the City. Additionally, the reputation and standing of the City will be enhanced by undertaking this inspiring and community-minded project in recognition of health workers.

Does it involve a tolerable risk?

There is little risk in undertaking this project. This project helps prevent the risk of the City's public artworks being underinsured.

Do we have the information we need?

Yes. The City obtained quotes from three suitable consultants, to undertake the work.

Budget/Financial Implications

This consultancy will cost \$11,700, paid for from an approved budget line item for asset valuation.

This project is being undertaken in a cost-effective way, with the consultant only undertaking the off-site work – i.e., site inspections, interviewing artists and writing the report. Tresillian Coordinator Lisa Macfarlane Reid will undertake all of the internal research that supports this project – i.e., providing the consultant with the list of artworks, their artists, their locations, their original commission or purchase value, their date of installation etc. Having the Tresillian Coordinator undertake this internal research has kept the cost of the consultancy down and helped to make the project cost-effective.

Can we afford it?

Yes. The consultancy will be funded from the already-approved Council budget for asset valuation.

How does the option impact upon rates?

The impact of this project on rates has already been considered in the context of the 2020/21 Council budget.

Conclusion

A report on this Public Artwork Valuation project is provided to the Public Art Committee for information only. No decision from the Committee is required. Being aware of this project will inform Committee members about the steps that are being taken to protect the City's significant and much-loved public art collection. It will also provide the Committee with information about some of the operational work required to maintain and protect the existing public art collection, which needs to be a priority before acquiring new works.

7.4 Maintenance Budget for Public Artworks 2021/22

Public Art Committee	15 March 2021
Applicant	City of Nedlands
Employee Disclosure under section 5.70 of the Local Government Act 1995 and section 10 of the City of Nedlands Code of Conduct for Impartiality.	Nil.
Executive Manager	Pat Panayotou – Executive Manager Community
Attachments	Nil.
Confidential Attachments	Nil.

Executive Summary

As with any other class of asset, the City's significant public art collection requires some regular on-going maintenance. However, no provision was made for such maintenance in the current financial year's approved Council budget. To avoid this occurring again, it is recommended that the Public Art Committee proactively approaches this issue by recommending to Council that \$5,000 is included in the draft 2021/22 Council budget for consideration by Council.

Recommendation to Public Art Committee

The Public Art Committee recommends that Council includes \$5,000 for maintenance of the public art collection, for consideration in the 2021/22 Council budget.

Background

The City owns a significant public art collection of 16 works, most of which were created by recognised and awarded WA artists. As well as being highly valued by community members, the collection adds to the aesthetic appeal and prestige of the local government area. While the artworks have been carefully commissioned to meet high standards, including that of minimal maintenance, all assets require some level of maintenance. The public art collection requires regular, on-going maintenance to ensure the works' longevity and to prevent them developing a dilapidated appearance. As with any class of asset, regular checks followed up by minor maintenance can extend the life of an artwork and prevent the need for more significant expenditure in the longer term. Therefore, budgeting for regular maintenance is an essential part of managing and protecting the collection in a cost-effective way.

Discussion/Overview

Current Issue

In most financial years, \$4,000 is allocated in the annual Council budget for maintenance of the public art collection. However, in the current financial year, no funds were allocated for maintenance of these works. Therefore, no maintenance of the collection has been able to be undertaken in the current financial year. This pushes forward the problem and will mean that maintenance that should have been undertaken in the current financial year will need to be done in the next financial year.

Determining public artwork maintenance priorities

While the City's Parks Department carries out minor maintenance of the public artworks and/or organizes a contractor to undertake more significant maintenance, the Parks Department staff do not necessarily have the expertise to determine the maintenance required. Therefore, the maintenance priorities are determined from two main inputs:

- The City's Public Art Maintenance Manual, updated as required by the Tresillian Coordinator who has extensive experience in the development and maintenance of public art; and
- Advice from the Tresillian Coordinator to the Parks Department staff.

However, regardless of the priorities listed in the Public Art Maintenance Manual, or of the advice given by the Tresillian Coordinator, the Parks Department can only undertake maintenance for which they have an approved budget, which was not included in the approved Council budget for 2020/21.

Towards a Solution

Therefore, it is particularly important that funds are included and approved as part of the 2021/22 Council budget, for maintenance of the existing public art collection. An important role that the Public Art Committee can play is to recommend to Council the inclusion of public art maintenance funds in the next financial year's budget. (Note that these funds will need to be included in the operational section of the Parks Department's budget).

It would be short-sighted to continue to add to the City's public art collection, without maintaining, valuing and adequately insuring the existing collection. The Public Art Committee is currently in the process of developing a new public artwork to recommend to Council – the Health Workers' Tribute Project. While this is a worthwhile project that will add to the City's existing public art collection, it should not be undertaken at the expense of maintenance of the already-existing works. Therefore, it is recommended that the Public Art Committee recommends to Council the inclusion of \$5,000 in the 2021/22 Council budget for maintenance of the existing collection.

Key Relevant Previous Council Decisions:

The 2020/21 Council budget did not include a provision for maintenance of public art.

Policy / Legislation

The Public Art Committee's Terms of Reference outline its role of making recommendations, including budget recommendations, to Council on matters related to public art. Therefore, this matter is within the Committee's Terms of Reference

Consultation

The Public Art Committee's role is to advise Council on matters related to public art. Two community members are appointed to the Public Art Committee in order to ensure community input to these recommendations to Council.

Strategic Implications

How well does it fit with our strategic direction?

The amenity of the area is stated as a priority in the City's Strategic Community Plan. Public art contributes to the beauty, amenity and prestige of the area and helps achieve this priority as stated in the Strategic Community Plan.

Additionally, maintaining the existing public art collection should be a higher priority for the Public Art Committee than adding new works to the collection. Adding new works to the collection adds, in the longer-term, to the cost of maintenance; and if the City cannot meet the current cost of the maintenance required, there is little point in adding to the maintenance burden in future.

Effective management of public artworks is similar to effective maintenance of any other class of asset. Regular, on-going maintenance will not only help keep the assets in good condition but will also enable the City to take advantage of the appreciation in value of these assets that may result from the upward career trajectory of some of the creating artists.

Who benefits?

The community as a whole will benefit from effective maintenance of this class of asset, as timely, regular maintenance is more cost-effective in the longer term.

Does it involve a tolerable risk?

Undertaking regular, ongoing maintenance in a planned and targeted way is the best strategy for managing the risk to the life of these artworks. Neglecting this regular maintenance increases that risk.

Do we have the information we need?

Yes, the City has the information and expertise it needs to undertake this regular maintenance, in the form of the Public Art Maintenance Manual as the professional public art expertise and of the Tresillian Coordinator.

Budget/Financial Implications

It is recommended that the Public Art Committee recommends to Council the inclusion of \$5,000 in the 2021/22 Council public for expenditure on public art maintenance. It should be noted that this is operational expenditure and should be include in the Parks operational budget. It is not appropriate to pay for maintenance of the City's public art collection from the Art Reserve Account, which should be used solely for the acquisition of new works. For clarity: maintenance is an operational expense and therefore should be budgeted for in the operational budget. The Art Reserve Account should be used for expenditure on capital items – i.e., new public artworks.

Can we afford it? How does the option impact upon rates?

Yes. Expenditure of \$5,000 on the maintenance of public art is affordable; has been done in many previous financial years; and will have negligible impact on rates. Neglected to undertake this expenditure is the short-term is likely to result increased maintenance expenditure in the long-term.

Conclusion

No provision was made in the current financial year's Council budget for undertaking the regular annual program of small-scale maintenance of the public art collection. This program helps prevent depreciation of the works and also helps avoid more costly maintenance in the longer term. Therefore, it is recommended that the Public Art Committee treat this matter as a key priority; and that the Committee recommends to Council the inclusion of \$5,000 in the Parks Department's operational budget for 2021/22 for maintenance of the public artworks.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Public Art Committee will be held on Monday 21 June 2021

Declaration of Closure

There being no further business, the Presiding Member will declare the meeting closed.