

Northfield Arts and Culture Commission

Art in Public Places

One of the purposes of the Arts and Culture Commission (ACC) is to advise the City of Northfield (the City) on arts policies and arts development, as detailed in Ordinance No. 855 establishing the Commission. The Ordinance describes Commission Purpose (Sec 2-357) and Responsibilities (Sec. 2-358). Responsibilities include:

(f) Upon request of the city council, develop and advocate design standards for city facilities, public areas, and private development, which represent a coherent image of Northfield as a place of unique aesthetic, architectural, and cultural identity;

(g) Plan and advocate funding for the installation of public art in Northfield that enhances the city's appearance and artistic appeal;

In recent years, the ACC has received requests from public and private entities regarding design standards and display of art. In order to meet these requests, the ACC is developing guidelines related to the development, siting, and installation of public arts and, in the case of public funding, review standards and procedures for the selection of quality public art. The ACC therefore has drafted the following policy and procedures related to 855.2-358 (f) and (g).

A web-link to the guidelines and review procedures will be published on the ACC web page, and the document will also be incorporated into the ten-year goals document that the ACC is currently in the process of developing.

Objectives for Art in Public Places

The ACC develops and advocates for art and design standards for City facilities, public areas, and private development that will present a coherent image of Northfield as a place of unique aesthetic, architectural, and cultural identity. To guide public and private development and the installation of art, the ACC advocates for public support of the arts and promotes art that demonstrates the following objectives:

1. Enhances the aesthetic environment of public places, such as buildings, roads, paths, sidewalks, and landscapes, through high-quality public art, including permanent and temporary art installations.

2. Contributes to community identity and place by, for instance:

- Building awareness of and celebrating the community's diverse history, identity, cultures, and geography;
- Inviting community response to proposed installations of public art; and
- Involving a broad range of groups, neighborhoods, and organizations in the planning or creation of public artworks.

3. Adds to community vitality by, for instance:

- Promoting Northfield as a nationally and internationally recognized arts city and tourist destination;
- Building the capacity of and cooperation between the private and public sectors, artists, and community members; and
- Encouraging civic dialogue about the role of art in civic life and Northfield development.

4. Involves artists in the creation and development of art by encouraging a variety of creative opportunities for artists with a range of experiences.

5. Provides opportunities for public, private, or public/private support of the creation, acquisition, and installation of art works by, for instance:

- Integrating artwork into City building projects by involving artists in the planning process
- Identifying grant, municipal and other funding sources.

Public Art Review Committee (PARC): Purpose, Membership, Processes

To carry out its public art responsibilities per Sec. 2-358(f), the ACC proposes to establish and maintain a Public Arts Review Committee, which will have the following three responsibilities:

- Advise the City regarding commissioning, installation, maintenance, and decommissioning of publicly funded art to ensure positive impact on civic quality of life and aesthetic environment.
- Update and advise the City regarding all public art that will be installed in the historic downtown district.
- Where the parties agree to a cooperative effort, advise private and non-profit projects that will be installing art in locations that will be accessible to and frequented by the public (e.g., the Depot).

1. Membership. A committee of up to nine members shall be appointed by the ACC and approved by the City Administrator. The panel will include two ACC members, a City staff liaison, a Public Works staff member, and panelists appropriate to the genre of artwork and to the location and project under consideration. Panel members may include artists, arts faculty members, architects and department staff related to the project, arts administrators, and two or more at-large community representatives, including representatives of diverse groups. ACC will convene PARC on an ad hoc basis when the need arises.

2. Scope of work. ACC/PARC will facilitate communication among City staff coordinating public art projects, artists, and public arts stakeholders. ACC/PARC will work closely with the representatives of public arts sites to advance outcomes, goals, and the interests of Northfield residents, businesses, and property owners.

3. Review criteria. PARC review of publicly funded commissions, purchases, or installations shall consider, but not be bound by any one of, the following review criteria in choosing works to recommend to the ACC and the City:

a. Artistic excellence

- Does the project represent workmanship of the highest quality?
- Does the project satisfy the parameters of the request for proposals, if applicable?
- Does the project represent a cohesive, unified theme or idea?
- Is the project original, compelling, and creative work?

b. Public involvement

- Does the project's development and review include participation by residents, users, community organizations and institutions, businesses, cultural communities, advocacy groups, and students and youth, as appropriate?
- Does the project facilitate public involvement via community meetings, community surveys, and requests for proposals?

c. Enhancement of community identity and place

- Does the site, surrounding area, or project provide an opportunity to reflect on the community and its characteristics, including history, identity, geography and cultures?
- Is the project appropriate for public display?
- Are there opportunities within the project to integrate artwork into the design or function of structures?

d. Community vitality

- Will the site and project be visible to visitors and residents?
- Will the project appeal to a broad range of people? Is the project making an effort to build capacity and cooperation between the private and public sectors, artists, arts organizations, and community members?
- Does the project encourage civic dialogue about art and civic issues?

e. Safety and maintenance of public art

- What is the plan for maintenance and repair?
- Is the piece safe for public interaction?

4. Statement of non-discrimination

Recommendations about public art decisions will be made without regard to an individual's or the perception of an individual's race, color, creed, religion, sex, domestic relationship status, parent status, familial status, sexual orientation, national origin, gender identity, age, or disability, or the use of a trained dog guide by a blind, deaf or otherwise physically disabled person.

Each call for artists will be posted on the City and Arts and Culture Commission websites.