

## **Best Practices for Public Art**

Compiled by the Cincinnati Park Board (2009)

When providing a conceptual design suggestion for public art and when creating public artworks, it is important that:

- The art must fit its setting and be integrated into park landscape and design.
- The art must be physically accessible to people of all abilities.

### **Fundamental Questions:**

- How does the art tell its story?
- What will be needed to support the art structurally and what site conditions are necessary?
- How durable and long-lasting is the art?
- How will the artwork age? Consider the aging of materials and best attachment methods and systems.
- Should the art always look like it did on completion and be maintained that way? Or is it expected to take on a patina with age?
- How often will the art require a major overhaul or maintenance?
- How often does the art need to be cleaned or resealed and what are the methods and materials to be used for this work?
- Can the art be readily vandalized (marked, cut, burned, marred or scratched)?
- How will the art withstand vandalism? Is an anti-graffiti sacrificial surface incorporated into the finished art?

### **Safety Issues:**

- Will the art become a “playground”?
- Will it encourage and/or allow people to climb on it? Is this desired? If not, how can it be prevented?
- Is the art stable if climbed on?
- Will the art be a lightning rod? If so, how will it be grounded?
- Will the art create dark/obscure areas and could it entice illegal activities?
- Is there potential for moving or applied parts to detach and fall?
- Is any included water feature deep and/or accessible enough to allow drowning?
- Is there a fire risk created by materials and/or systems?
- Is any of the material flammable or could it melt if torched?

### **Budgets for artwork including artist fees must cover all aspects of the work. Consider and address the following:**

- Fabrication costs, installation costs and processes
- Shipment cost and broker costs as applicable
- Travel of the artist and all assistants for installation and dedication
- Structural foundation required for installation of the artwork
- Temporary storage of art elements and parts prior to installation

- Structural/Civil/Geotechnical Engineering and permitting services
- Cost increases because of delays or increases in the cost of material or labor must be anticipated and built into contingencies in the project budget.

**Maintenance Issues:**

All artworks will require the submittal of a detailed maintenance plan.

Maintenance endowments are desired but are not necessarily available, so maintenance and on-going related costs should be kept to a minimum.

- Will special equipment be needed to install the art?
- What is this equipment?
- What materials, methods and labor are needed to do maintenance and how often?
- What is the availability of replacement parts and where are they available?
- Is there a need to stockpile parts?
- Are there moving parts and if so, how are they attached and how are they maintained or repaired?
- Will the art attract roosting birds or other animals or be susceptible to pests? How is this addressed so that it is not a problem?

**Other considerations:**

- Is the art designed to take advantage of seasonal changes? The artist should consider how the piece will be viewed in different seasons and weather conditions.
- How and from where is the art to be primarily viewed?
- Are there any special interpretive requirements to explain the story and intent?
- Will the art require special lighting and if so what is that lighting?
- What site conditions are best for the art to be experienced?
- What kinds of walking surfaces and landscape are desired?

**For further information, questions or clarification,** please contact:

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