

Town of Rocky Hill Public Artwork Policy

November 1, 2024

Statement

Public art creates a unique sense of place and communicates a strong civic identity and unity, while providing cultural and economic benefits for residents and visitors. The Town of Rocky Hill (the “Town”) recognizes that public artwork may be a small, but impactful, art form that can be a catalyst for social interaction and education.

For purposes of this policy, “Public Artwork” is defined as decoratively painted crosswalks, sidewalks, walkways, parking spaces and parking lots located in public parks owned and maintained by the Town.

Purposes

It is important that procedures and policies establish clear guidelines in determining where and how to place public artwork. It is vital to recognize that public artwork involves balancing artistic expression and community engagement with safety, accessibility, and regulatory compliance.

The Town adopts this policy to establish the rules and procedures regarding public artwork. Public artwork is not intended to serve as a public forum for free expression by the public, but rather as a non-public forum for the expression by the Town Council of the official sentiments of the Town, which shall constitute government speech.

The purpose of this Policy is further to provide guidelines for public artwork as an expression of the Town’s official government speech, which include:

- Design
- Review criteria for proposed artwork
- Site selection criteria

Location

1. Public artwork will only be considered on and along crosswalks, sidewalks, walkways, on parking spaces and on portions of parking lots located in public parks owned and maintained by the Town.
2. Appropriateness of a particular location for public artwork shall give due regard to any Town infrastructure projects scheduled to be constructed within 12 months or to scheduled or emergency maintenance in the immediate vicinity of the public artwork.
3. The surface on which the public artwork is to be applied must be in satisfactory condition as determined by the Director of Community Development or designee, the Parks & Recreation Director or designee, and the Town Planner.

Design

1. Public artwork cannot obscure or interfere with regulatory crosswalk markings required for safety
2. Public artwork in crosswalks located in public parks owned and maintained by the Town must be contained between two white transverse lines with reflectivity to be compliant with minimum crosswalk standards. Artwork must be contained within the two transverse lines. The infill design shall not be retro-reflective.
3. Public artwork in parking spaces located in public parks owned and maintained by the Town must be contained between the two parking stall traverse lines. Existing parking stalls shall not be reconfigured in any way.
4. Public artwork shall not contain shapes that could be confused with traffic control devices/markings.
5. Public artwork shall not contain text, word messaging, or advertising.
6. Paint used must provide a non-slip surface for pedestrians and be non-reflective. Materials used must be approved by the Director of Community Development.
7. To ensure quality installation, anticipate the need to create stencils for design creation.
8. Appropriateness of subject matter and quality of workmanship are of utmost importance. Public artwork must be suitable for display to the general public and for all ages. Public artwork should not be likely to upset children or to trigger a warning that some viewers may find them offensive. These include:
 - Graphic depictions of sexuality or violence.
 - Works that appear designed to ridicule deeply held beliefs or to disparage others for their race, gender or sexual identity, ethnicity, nationality, etc.

The Town may reject proposed artworks for any reason.

Procedure

1. Residents, Town businesses, Town departments, agencies, commissions, employees and elected or appointed officials may submit requests or suggestions for public artwork for consideration by the Town. Any such request or suggestion shall be submitted in writing, on forms provided by the Town, to the Town Manager's Office and shall include the following items:
 - Contact information of the requester
 - Project location (Town map)
 - Design mock-ups
 - Colors to be used
 - Purpose and expected community benefits
 - Materials to be used, including paint specifications

- A 12 month timeline, which includes dates, expected times of installation and anticipated duration to install the artwork.
- A 12-month plan addressing installation, maintenance and removal of the artwork with anticipated costs and funding source(s).

2. Preliminary Review of Requests and Suggestions:

The Town Manager shall forward requests or suggestions for public artwork proposals to Community Development, Parks and Recreation, Police and Planning departments within thirty (30) days of receipt to review for conformity with this policy

3. Review Criteria:

Requests or suggestions will be evaluated in accordance with this Policy and shall include:

- Safety and visibility
- Compliance with traffic, and accessibility regulations
- Potential for community engagement, social interaction and education
- Artistic merit
- Consistency with the Town's policies, priorities and objectives

4. Review and Approval by Town Council:

Following preliminary review, the Town Manager's office shall forward any request or suggestion for public artwork to the Town Council for its review. The Town Council may, by majority vote, approve, reject, modify or table any request or suggestion, or may return it to the Town Manager's Office to be revised in accordance with the Town Council's decision. The decision of the Town Council shall be final and non-appealable.

5. Installation

- Upon approval and prior to installation of the public artwork, the Town Manager shall coordinate all facets of the installation with all applicable Town departments.
- Prior to the start of installation, a cash surety in an amount to cover the cost of repairs, maintenance and removal of the artwork as determined by the Town, shall be filed with the Town's Finance Director. The requester may utilize the cash surety to perform repairs, to maintain and to remove the artwork upon request to the Town Manager.

The Town Manager shall refer requests to access the cash surety to the Director of Community Development and the Director of Parks and Recreation for recommendation prior to any funds being released. In no event shall funds be reduced beyond the cost of removing the artwork.

The cash surety shall remain with the Town the duration the public artwork is displayed. Upon removal of the artwork, any remaining balance of the cash surety shall be released to the requester by written request to, and approval by, the Town Manager.

- Installation of the public artwork must be carried out under the supervision of the Parks & Recreation and Community Development departments and in a manner consistent with any contractual or legal obligations of the Town and in accordance with this Policy.
- Installations are considered temporary as pedestrian and vehicular traffic and winter maintenance may cause premature and excessive wear.

Removal of Artwork

Maintained artwork will have a 12-month display duration. If during or after the 12-month duration period there are no additional requests from others to display artwork at the subject location, the requester may submit a written request to the Town Manager for administrative approval for up to 12 months of additional display time beyond the 12-month removal date.

The Town may order the removal, or may remove the public artwork after providing written notice to the requester at any time in its sole discretion.