

**September 2018**

**Submittal Requirements and Review Criteria  
for Public Art Included in a Public Benefit Package**



**Purpose**

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This document establishes the Seattle Design Commission (SDC) requirements and criteria for evaluating art that is proposed as part of a public benefit package for a street or alley vacation or a skybridge. City Council street and alley vacation policies (Resolution 31809) allows art to be considered as part of a public benefit package. Additionally, art included in public benefit packages for skybridges is allowed under a joint 2006 rule adopted by Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT Rule 2-06) and Department of Planning and Development (DPD Rule 23-2006).

This document does not apply to art located in a right-of-way outside of the vacation process or art included as part of a Capital Improvement Project (CIP). The authority for review of art included in a CIP project resides with the Office of Arts & Culture (OAC) and its Public Art Advisory Committee (PAAC). Art proposed for a right-of-way or required under the zoning code for a development standard departure is discussed in a joint 2007 Rule between the Department of Planning and Development (DPD Rule 6-2007), Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT Rule 1-07), and Office of Arts & Culture (Arts Rule 1-07).

**Applicability**

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The SDC takes great interest in public art. Since 1973, the SDC has included a fine artist as a designated member. In addition, two members of the SDC serve on the PAAC. For all its projects, including those recognizing art as a public benefit, the SDC believes that art integrated into the public realm can enhance the City’s vitality and is fundamental to placemaking.

The SDC supports a broad approach towards art inclusion in the projects it reviews. Art can be integrated into the architecture, landscape architecture, lighting, or streetscape, or can exist as a discrete piece.

**Process**

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For street and alley vacations or skybridge proposals seeking to include art as a public benefit, applicants must provide the SDC with information about the proposed art before the SDC begins its evaluation of any public benefit package.

The intent to include public art in the public benefit package should be disclosed as early in the City permitting and review process as possible. This would include disclosing the intent to include public art during the initial consultations with the SDC prior to beginning the vacation process, as well as in the vacation or skybridge petitions filed with Seattle Department of Transportation. The purpose of disclosing as early as possible that public art will be included in the public benefit package is to demonstrate that public art is treated as a fundamental project feature that will be integral with the building, site, landscape, or overall project program prior to the presentation of the public benefit package.

The SDC is also a strong advocate for equity. The SDC will be very interested in evaluating how equity has been embedded in development of the artwork, such as: the artist selection process, including consideration of emerging artists, and outreach to and engagement with the public.

The following information should be provided when public art is included in a public benefit package:

1. A written narrative describing the conceptual approach and how the art and its proposed siting enhance the public realm and its relationship to the place where it is located, including how the art contributes to the overall public benefit concept.
2. Location of proposed art in the context of the project.
3. Location of any other existing artwork in an adjacent right-of-way or public place within 800 feet of the project site.
4. A site plan showing proposed location(s) of artwork, either on- or offsite.
5. Drawings of the art concept or art component, including detailed elevations or three-dimensional models showing key artistic features including form, dimensions, color, visual effect, and other qualities important to conveying the concept.
6. Material samples (photographs are acceptable).
7. Lighting strategy (if applicable).
8. Artist (s) resume/background relevant to their role on this project and their experience in developing art in the public realm, including visual examples of previous work.
9. Information on durability and constructability of the proposed work, including its infrastructure requirements and how the artwork will be integrated into the site.
10. The approach for hiring or retaining an artist, including whether the artist was selected by an open call or an invitational
11. Budget allocation

The SDC may add or modify these requirements on a case-by-case basis depending on the proposed artwork, staff input or information that Commissioners seek.

## Criteria

In evaluating the art as part of the public benefit package, the SDC shall determine if:

1. The location is appropriate for the art, and the art is appropriate for its location, measured by such factors as:
  - a. The scale of the art in relation to the place where it is sited
  - b. The extent to which the surrounding architecture and/or landscape architecture supports the art
  - c. The extent to which the art supports or reflects the place where it is located
  - d. The extent to which the proposed art element reflects the vision for placemaking, established for the overall public benefit concept
2. The art enhances the public realm, measured by such factors as:
  - a. The quality of craftsmanship and appropriateness of materials, considering the proposed location, its context, and the conceptual vision of the art proposal
  - b. Promoting the use, identity, or function of the pedestrian environment
  - c. Bridging the scale between the adjacent building and the person
  - d. Enhancing wayfinding
  - e. Engaging or inviting the public into a space or to use or understand a space in ways that do not exist without its inclusion
  - f. Bringing enhanced meaning to a place
3. The applicant has made provisions to ensure a high level of maintenance and conservation
4. The artist's ability to execute work in the public realm or commensurate places, as demonstrated either in examples of the artist's previously completed work, or in documentation that details their approach towards executing in the public realm; and
5. Requirements of SDOT's *Streets Illustrated Manual* have been met.

The SDC may seek the advice of the PAAC when evaluating these criteria.