

# Public Arts Plan

TOWN OF CHRISTIANBURG  
PUBLIC ARTS ADVISORY BOARD

*DRAFT*

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## **About**

The Public Arts Plan is intended to be a living document that is reviewed annually – and revised if need be—to adjust to changing trends in the culture and within the Christiansburg community. Public art is intended to enrich the experience within public spaces for citizens and visitors. The Plan further provides guidance on how the art program can be established, grown, and sustained over time. The Public Arts Advisory Board will help direct the program, but it is recognized that resident and stakeholder input and buy-in will ultimately be the key factor that will make a successful program. To this end, community involvement is recognized as crucial and is an important theme throughout this plan.

## **Vision of Public Art/ Mission Statement**

Because art enlivens our public spaces, the mission of Public Art in the Town of Christiansburg is to partner with artists to generate community pride, foster a sense of belonging, and welcome visitors.

As such, our guiding principles are to elevate the role of art in connecting people and places, express Christiansburg’s dynamic identity, provide equitable access to a diversity of artists and artistic experiences, celebrate the cultural assets of our community by highlighting our unique character, and honor our history.

## **Administration of the Program**

The following section is based on the bylaws established by the Central Business Committee and Town Council during the winter of 2019/2020. The role of the Public Arts Advisory Board is to: advise and make recommendations to Central Business Committee regarding the promotion, support and value of public artwork as a means to beautify Christiansburg throughout the town and promote creative place-making within the public spaces. The responsibilities of the Advisory Board include:

- Discuss and review prospective art projects that benefit the Town of Christiansburg and the constituency it serves.
- Provide the Central Business Committee with recommendations on the administration, execution, oversight, funding, acquisition and maintenance of public artwork within the Town of Christiansburg. The Central Business Committee will make recommendations to Town Council.
- Develop a Public Arts Plan to present to Council for approval. The plan will include long-term goals and an annual project list. The plan will be reviewed annually with an update presented to Town Council as coordinated through the Central Business Committee.
- Pursue grants to bolster arts initiatives when appropriate.
- Hold public forums to promote and seek input on public art opportunities within the community.

The Advisory Board is not responsible for the delivery of public art projects as the Board's main purpose is to utilize the skills of various community members and advise/recommend Central Business Committee on specific projects and their funding. Town staff will assist as the staff support for the Advisory Board, perform research as needed, and assist in the delivery of art projects and programs as recommended by the Advisory Board and approved through the Central Business Committee and Town Council.

## **Public Art in Private Development**

The Town of Christiansburg does not have a requirement to include public art in a private development nor offers any specific incentives to do so at this time. However, the Town recognizes that public art can increase the livability of a locality, make it a more desirable location for residential and commercial growth, potentially increase property values, be more welcoming to visitors, and improve the overall sense of community.

Commercial tenants and property owners, developers, and design consultants can be a source to offer commissions to local artists. The end result will be to inspire creativity in a neighborhood, residential or commercial complex.

Public art can tell a story about a community's heritage and promote the history of the area. It can create a tangible asset that connects citizens to their heritage. With this in mind, Christiansburg encourages public art in private developments.

Proper placement of public art enhances the image and identity of Christiansburg. The Christiansburg Public Arts Advisory Board offers assistance and guidance to any developer planning to execute a project in Christiansburg. This assistance could be, but not limited to, recommendations on style and theme of artwork, recommendations to suitable artists, recommendations to suitable installation locations, and referrals to appropriate Town officials for permits and approvals.

## Community Dialogue

Community dialogue is fundamental to any public art project for the Town of Christiansburg. All efforts should include active community participation and an open dialogue with the artist. Community conversations should help direct the early identification and development of public art. Any comment period should be at least 30 days in length but less than 90 days. The length may depend on the scope and cost of the project. The vision of the artist is critical to protect with minimal interference once a project is selected. The balance between community understanding and buy-in while promoting the autonomy of the artist will be an ongoing evaluation process.

The Public Arts Advisory Board will involve the community via methods such as:

- Conducting a citizen survey to get immediate feedback
- Hosting public meetings with the artist to discuss proposed works
- Advertising planned projects in media outlets such as the Town website, Twitter account, Facebook page, inserts with water bills and local newspapers
- Presenting at Council meetings to explain the vision and scope of recommended projects
- Consulting with the Central Business Committee, local businesses, nonprofits, landowners, and Town departments
- Enlisting neighborhood involvement in the conception, construction, and maintenance of projects
- Establishing educational and internship opportunities as an integral part of projects
- Disseminating information about the Town’s public art collection through tourism outlets

A public involvement plan will be developed by staff and the board on a case by case basis depending on the size and scope of the project.

The Public Arts Advisory Board may be reached at the following email address at: [publicart@christiansburg.org](mailto:publicart@christiansburg.org).

## **Funding of the Program**

Public art projects will be funded through several revenue streams. The following is a description of the main funding sources and the priorities for allocating each type of revenue to art projects. Funds from different revenue streams can be combined to finance a project and cover maintenance expenses. The Town will assist in providing typical documentation if required for tax purposes, however any specific questions regarding deductions, qualifications, etc...for a gift should be directed to a private legal or accounting resource.

### Grant Opportunities

Staff and the Public Arts Advisory Board will actively research and seek grant opportunities for assistance with public art projects. All potential grants will be evaluated on the consistency with the Public Arts Plan, the amount, and the administrative requirements for applying and reporting if the grant is received, as well as additional criteria that may be applicable given the grant. One example of potential resource offering various grant programs is the Virginia Commission for the Arts. It will be important for staff and the Board to establish to connect with organizations such as these to have ongoing dialogue regarding the Public Arts Plan and the Town's goals.

### Cash or in-kind donation

Cash donations can be received by the Finance Department of the Town of Christiansburg. Donation of in-kind such as materials (concrete, paint, lumber, etc.) can be accepted by Town staff if determined to be needed for a current or an upcoming project.

### Public Art Fund

The public art fund may consist of general donations to the public art program, as well as potentially allocated funding through the annual budget process.

### Partnerships

The Town may develop partnerships to further its public art program. Such partnerships may include combining Town funds with other public or private funds or grants to finance public art and the public art program. The Town may also partner with other public and private property owners to access sites for public art.

### Artist Initiated Projects

Artist-initiated public art projects proposed for placement on Town-owned property will be reviewed and evaluated in the same manner as donated artwork. Such evaluation shall take into consideration the vision, goals, core values, criteria, budget, program priorities and public art location categories outlined in this Public Arts Plan.

Recognition of Donations

All donations (materials, artwork, cash) will be recorded and followed up with a thank you letter on town letterhead. Donations of artwork or that substantially cover the cost of artwork will be recognized with a plaque on or adjacent to the piece. The recognition may be combined on the plaque with the name of the artist and the title.

## **Identification of Key Public Art Locations (Public and Private)**

### *Town-owned Buildings*

- Aquatic Center
- Fire Department
- Police Department
- Recreation Center
- Town Hall

### *Town Greenspaces*

- Medians – North Franklin Street between Wades Lane and Cambria Street
- Pocket park next to Town Hall parking lot
- Town Square (corner of North Franklin Street and Main Street)
- Other medians and town-owned spaces along major corridors.

### *Parks*

- Depot Park
- Downtown Park
- Ellett Park
- Harkrader Sports Complex
- Huckleberry Trail
- John Lemley Lane Park
- Kiwanis Park
- Signature Park (under construction)
- Skate Park
- Summit Ridge Park
- Wall Street Park
- Wayside Park

### *Other Government Owned Buildings*

- Emergency Services Building
- Montgomery County Government Center
- Montgomery County Courthouse
- Passenger Rail Station (future)

### *Private Buildings and Properties*

- Christiansburg Institute
- Great Road on Main

DRAFT – 3-9-21; revised 4-12-21; 4-22-21, 5-11-21, 5-21-21

- Hill School
- Montgomery Museum of Art and History

*Map of potential locations to be added before posted to the website.*

## **Gift and Loan Process**

The Town welcomes both gifting and loaning of art for public purposes. The Board will review and make recommendation of whether to accept the art to the Central Business Committee, which will then decide whether to make the final decision depending on the size and scope of the gift or refer it to the Town Council for a final decision. The Committee will develop a final criteria as a working document and revise periodically or as needed, however the criteria will include consideration of appropriateness of the art, available locations for the art, required short-term and long-term maintenance, etc. Staff will also initially review all pieces to ensure it is consistent and meets the basic standards of the program including that it contains no profanity and doesn't promote alcohol or tobacco products or advertise the sale of any products overall.

The Board will review each loan offer. Once a loan offer is reviewed, the art donor will be notified with comments of whether the art piece will be accepted or rejected for public display. Similar criteria to the acceptance of a gift will be applied. If accepted, the Board will list the donor on the website and receive a thank you on letterhead to confirm the donation and the terms of acceptance which will include the parameters of insurance liability and a contract approved to form by the Town Attorney. There will be acknowledgment on the website and marketing materials of the item on loan. The Board may not choose to accept the loan offer if the art piece cannot be installed without very expensive means, the installment size doesn't fit the required space allowed, or the subject matter is inappropriate and not consistent with the Town's program (for example, profanity or alcohol or tobacco promotion will be prohibited).

The artist or donor will be asked for an appraised value of the artwork prior to acceptance. The Board will evaluate the appraised value for approval. In discussions with City of Roanoke and City of Radford, both localities add the art pieces to its insurance and remove it when the art piece is removed in the case of art on loan. The City of Roanoke does not list art installments with an estimated value of less than \$5,000 on its insurance. Further research may be needed as to the specific requirements of the Town's insurance provider at the time of the installation, however the Town should have minimal responsibility in appraising or obtaining an appraisal of proposed artwork.

## **Collection Management**

A thorough collection management policy is critical to ensure the ongoing vibrancy of the pieces making up public art. This section covers protocols for maintaining the collection database overall and provides guidance to the staff administering the policy. This policy will document the procedures for the development and care of the public art collection including mechanisms for inventorying and documenting the collection; protecting, securing, and maintaining the collection; and providing the process for commissioning, acquiring, and de-accessioning artwork.

Over the past years, Christiansburg has begun the process of building its public art inventory. This includes both public and private art installations throughout the town. Maintenance for public art on private property is the shared responsibility of the property owner and the artist. Art on public property is the shared responsibility of the Town and the artist. Maintenance of existing and future collections and installations of public art requires a plan and funds to operate a successful program, ensure the integrity of the collection, build civic pride, and enable the value of the artwork to increase. In addition to identifying sustainable sources of funding for public art, the funding strategy should incorporate ongoing funding for public art maintenance and conservation. While it will be further studied as plans develop, it is estimated that around 10% of any budgeted amount for public art will be spent on maintenance and upkeep.

### ***Maintenance for Existing Public Art***

To effectively establish a plan and funds for routine maintenance and conservation needs, an analysis of all existing works in the Town of Christiansburg should be completed. The Board will evaluate the existing art in town to schedule long term goals for each piece.

### ***Maintenance for Future Public Art***

Future public art will also require maintenance and occasional repairs. Although the Town's guidelines will encourage artworks requiring minimal maintenance, future artworks will vary in the amount of maintenance required, resistance to vandalism, and ease of repair.

### ***Maintenance Record Form***

It is essential that the artist and the Town understand maintenance expectations from the initial design stages. Prior to final acceptance of the artwork, the designated town staff would require the artist to complete a Maintenance Record Form.

### ***Maintenance Responsibility***

Maintaining Town-owned or Town-sponsored public art will be coordinated through the Town Manager's Office, unless otherwise assigned to a specific department on a case-by-case basis or overall. There may be instances that contracting to a third party for maintenance work is used. Maintenance of artwork on loan exhibited in Town buildings or on Town-owned land is the responsibility of the owner, unless otherwise specified in the agreed upon conditions as part of the loan. A list that identifies the responsible party for the maintenance of a particular piece of

public art will be retained by the Town Manager’s Office or other person if designated by the Town Manager.

***Maintenance Cost***

A public art maintenance fund should be incorporated as a percentage of the overall funding for public art and should be evaluated every year.

***Types of Maintenance***

Routine Maintenance

Routine maintenance includes trash and graffiti removal, cleaning, waxing, minor landscaping, replacing light bulbs, and mechanical activities like tightening, adjusting, and oiling. Frequency will vary by type of artwork, but regular checks by maintenance staff during the normal course of their rounds would be typical.

Cyclical Maintenance

Done at regular, but much less frequent, intervals. It involves more extensive treatment such as disassembly, inspection, and surface applications of protective coatings (e.g. repainting). Because this work could significantly affect the appearance and longevity of the artwork, it may require special knowledge or skills. Before proceeding with the work, staff should either: Consult the artwork’s Maintenance Record Form for specific procedures, or Consult the artist or other competent art professional on use of cleaning compounds, paints, solvents, and surface coatings.

Repair and Restoration

This involves the treatment of damaged or deteriorated artwork to return them to as close to its original appearance as possible. Extreme care must be used to maintain the artistic integrity of the artwork. The repairs must preserve the artist’s intent in both design and materials. In many cases, such repairs require the involvement of the original artist, or if that is not possible, an art conservator trained in art restoration.

***De-Accession, Removal, Replacement of Art***

De-accessioning is the formal process used to permanently remove or relocate an object from the collections by recommendation from the Public Arts Advisory Board to the staff and Central Business Committee. The Town of Christiansburg reserves the right to edit its collections. Artwork should be retained in the collections as long as it retains its physical integrity, identity, and authenticity Town, and as long as it remains relevant and useful to the purposes, and as long as the Town can properly preserve and care for the material. Consideration will involve the same amount of careful review as a decision to receive a work of art. The removal of an artwork from the public art collection may cause damage to the reputation of the artist who created it and, in turn, may jeopardize the Town’s ability to attract high caliber artists for future projects, undermining the success of the public art program. Therefore, care should be taken in de-accessioning or removing artworks from the public art collection ensuring the interests of the public. Items should be de-accessioned only upon the written recommendation of the Public Arts Advisory Board to the staff and the Central Business Committee. The manner of disposition

shall be in the best interest of the Town, the public it serves, the public trust it represents in owning the collections, and the communities it represents, as provided below.

De-accession generally may be considered under the following conditions:

- When the artwork in question is not within the scope or mission of the Public Arts Plan; beyond the capability of the Town to maintain; not useful for exhibition or educational programs; duplicative of other artwork in the Town’s collection; physically deteriorated or potentially hazardous; or improperly acquired or subject to contractual donor restrictions that the Town is no longer able to meet.
- Priority shall be given to placing the de- accessioned items through gift, exchange, or sale in another tax-exempt public institution wherein they may serve the purpose for which they were acquired initially by the Town.
- When items are severely damaged, in an irreparable state, or of no value, disposal may be considered. If possible, materials will be reused or recycled.
- An adequate record of the conditions and circumstances under which donations are de- accessioned and disposed of shall be made and retained as part of the Town’s collection records.
- Proceeds from the sale of collections are to be used consistently with the established standards of the Town’s RFP, but in no event should they be used for anything other than acquisition or direct care of collections. Collections should not be de- accessioned in order to provide financial support for Town operations, facilities maintenance, or any reason other than preservation or acquisition.
- De-accessioning may be considered under any of the circumstances outlined above. The Public Arts Advisory Board would be consulted for its advisory recommendation to the Town Manager and Council when an object comes up for de- accession.

### ***Public Art Collection Records***

Town staff shall maintain detailed records of the town’s public art collection, such as a photograph of each artwork along with the artwork’s site (map or description of the artwork site), artist name, title, date of installation, medium and dimensions. This information is the Town’s “Public Art Registry,” which would be made available to the public. Additional information to be retained include a maintenance schedule, value (for the purposes of valuation for insurance), and other pertinent information specific to each piece. Staff shall also keep artist contact information and original proposals and agreements on file.

***Artist Registry***

Staff shall maintain the contact information of qualified artists who respond to calls for artists and artworks in order to establish a database of potential artists. If possible, Staff will also maintain an image file including at least one past artwork by each of those artists. These artists may be contacted to apply for future projects.

## **Art/Artist Solicitation and Compensation**

### ***Call for Artists/Solicitation***

A “Call for Artists” will be posted on the Town’s website, Town social media pages and at Town Hall. Notice of application availability will be posted no later than 30 days prior to application review, giving artists ample notice to produce a competitive application.

Included in the “Call for Artists” will be:

- Application close date
- Application results date
- Description of goals and content of project
- Description of project site and constraints (including photos and geotag if applicable)
- Detail of regulations and restrictions
- Applicable safety protocols
- Expected dates for project completion
- Compensation
- Selection Guidelines
- Example contract should the artist be selected including:
  - Liability
  - Copyright and ownership of artwork
  - Media release form and list of interview expectations if any
  - Payment information

Application review will take place in the two weeks following application close. Artists will be contacted with the results of their application no later than 30 days after application close.

The town will maintain an email list of artists wanting to be notified for open “Calls for Artists” requests. Likewise, we will maintain a working partnership with local and regional groups, such as, but not limited to The Montgomery Museum of Art & History, Blacksburg Regional Art Association (BRAA), K-12 art teachers, the Radford University and Virginia Tech art departments, Perspective Gallery, etc. to help disseminate information to local artists. Social media pages, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Christiansburg’s News and Announcements will also be used consistently to relay information on upcoming projects. When appropriate, information will additionally be made available on regional and state level platforms.

### ***Selection Committee***

Depending on the scale of the project and estimated cost, the approval process may vary. For projects under \$5,000, the Public Arts Advisory Board will make recommendations to the Central Business Committee for final approval. Projects in excess of \$5,000 may be referred to Town Council by the Central Business Committee for final approval. In some cases, for instance in youth competitions, where awards or recognition may be involved, a local artist may be brought in to help jury the work with the Public Arts Advisory Board. Any person appointed to the Public Arts Advisory Board that has a project up for consideration must excuse themselves from the selection committee for that project. The Board may solicit content experts or other relevant parties to assist in the selection process.

Selection Guidelines:

- Alignment of proposal with the description and goals listed in the Call to Artists
- Proof of craftsmanship
- Install-ability within the space and given timeline
- Consideration of safety issues and copyright infringement
- Furthering the mission and goals of the Public Arts Commission

Information collected on the application:

- Artist(s) name
- Age/proof over 21, proof of emancipation, or consent of legal guardian.
- Whether the artist(s) has(/have) previously held a commission with the town.
- Representation of previous work (attached images, audio samples, etc. and link to website)
- Proposal description and accompanying sketches or references
- Expected restrictions or needs not already covered by the “Call for Artists”
- Optional: Other things we should know about the proposed work

**Compensation**

In “Calls for Artists”, the projected monetary compensation will be included in the Call. The Call represents a binding agreement that will not later be changed to more or less monetary compensation. For some projects, but not all, there may furthermore be notation of separate money set aside for cost of supplies included in the contract. This “compensation” is different from the contracted payment in that artists are allowed \*up to\* this cost in supplies to be reimbursed to them upon presentation of receipts or equivalent documentation (in the case that the artist is using supplies they already own). If the project goes over budget the artist will be responsible for additional supplies. If the project comes in under budget the artist will only be reimbursed for the amount used. Reimbursement will be provided within 30 days of presentation of receipts. Artists who do not wish to pay first and then be reimbursed will also have the option of submitting a purchase request with list of materials needed for the Town to purchase directly and the artist to pick up.

In addition to monetary payment the Town agrees to market in association the artist’s name in all places the artwork is publicized. The artist may provide links to social media and contact information they would like provided in any media coverage of the project. The Town, however, reserves the right not to share social media that is deemed inappropriate or found to be in direct conflict with the goals of the Town or the Art Council.

## **Plans for the Future**

While it is recognized that larger municipalities tend to have greater resources to draw on when developing a robust Public Arts Plan, communities across the country that are a similar size—or even smaller—to Christiansburg have proven that it is within our reach given the right plan for and commitment from the community. This Public Arts Plan is foundational for establishing a sustainable arts program and aspirational for charting the path for Christiansburg to help create a truly unique and vibrant environment through public art in the decades to come.

Below are links to communities that are achieving great outcomes through public art programs:

**Brevard, North Carolina**

<https://www.brevardnc.org/>

**Radford, Virginia**

<https://www.visitradford.com/ArtTrail/>

**Tompkins County, New York**

<https://tompkscountyny.gov/files2/tourism/Beautification%20Plan%20draft%204-14-16%20%28003%29.pdf>

*Additional examples may be added during the draft stage and as the plan is revised in the future.*

**Current Public Art Inventory**

<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>Artwork</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Public/Private</b>	<b>Installation Year</b>
1	Wings and Wheels by Nikki Pynn	Covered area outside front entrance of Town Hall at 100 East Main Street (sponsored through a CDC Prevention and Public Health Fund (PPHF) Block Grant.)	Sculpture	Public	2015
2	Peace Sculpture	Montgomery County Government Center: 755 Roanoke Street main entrance. Acquired and donated by the Rotary Club of Montgomery County. The beam was salvaged from the debris of Ground Zero in New York City. It now stands as a public memorial to remember the lives lost on September 11, 2001.	Sculpture	Public	2006
3	Cambria Depot Train by Katy Shepard	Cambria Street Railroad Crossing; represents a historic symbol of Christiansburg: a train traveling toward Cambria Depot.	Mural	Public	2019
4	Horse Pull Toy	West Main Street sidewalk near Town Square Nikki Pynn	Sidewalk Mural	Public	2019

	by Nikki Pynn	reimagined preexisting features of the sidewalk to transform them into a classic toy			
5	Police Badge by Dave Mann	Christiansburg Police Department; 10 East Main Street; the painting is a symbol of unity and diversity in the community	Mural	Public	2018
6	Flowers & Bees by Katy Shepard	945 Cambria Street sidewalk; painted images that pay tribute to the environment on a storm drain to remind people of the value and importance of sustainable practices and the importance of bees for pollination.	Sidewalk Mural	Public	2019
7	Cambria Lilies by Katy Shepard	Corner of Cambria Street & Wilson Street; the painting offers serene images of lilies on a storm drain to remind people of the value of sustainable places	Sidewalk Mural	Public	2019
8	Farmers Market Robot by the Tuxedo Pandas: Team 4924	Located on the Appalachian Power box on Hickok Street; painted, a program of the New River Robotics Association.	Sculpture w/ existing street object	Public	2019
9	Smiling Fish by Dave Wertz	Old Town Mall; 19 West Main Street; Commissioned by building owners; Artwork created by	Sculpture	Private	2017

		Roanoke artist and welder installed in 2017			
10	Love Sign	Christiansburg Aquatic Center	Sculpture	Public	2013 2019(reface)

*Map of locations to be added before the document is posted on the website.*