



Legislative Summary

O-14-26

Art in Public Places – Amending Definitions, Duties, and Membership

The City of Annapolis Office of Law created this summary for the use of Annapolis City Council members during their consideration of the legislation.

Note: This summary outlines the legislation as introduced and does not address any amendments.

Bill Summary

O-14-25 reconstitutes the Art in Public Places Commission with fewer members and an updated mission.

Background

The Art in Public Places Commission was created in 2000 by Ordinance 5-2000 to promote and enhance public art throughout the City of Annapolis. The Commission operates under Article XVIII of Chapter 2.48 of the City Code, which governs its duties, membership, and administration of the art fund.

On February 23, 2026, the City Council adopted O-4-26, which temporarily dissolved the Commission for up to six months. O-4-26 transferred the Commission's duties to the Director of Planning and Zoning for the duration of the transition period, including the administration of the 2026 calendar-year grant cycle.

O-4-26 directed the City Manager, in consultation with the Director, to conduct a comprehensive review of the Commission's structure, policies, and procedures and to present the City Council with proposed changes to the City Code that restructure the Commission



During the review, the City Manager and Director identified deficiencies in the definitions, membership composition, and duties and responsibilities outlined in Article XVIII. O-14-26 was developed as a result of that review and addresses the restructuring framework mandated by O-4-26.

Details

O-14-26 amends Article XVIII of Chapter 2.48 of the City Code (Sections 2.48.700, 2.48.710, 2.48.720, 2.48.740, 2.48.750, 2.48.760, and 2.48.770) and repeals Section 2.48.730.

Subsection Details

Section 2.48.700 — Definitions

New definitions are introduced for “art activation,” “permanent work of art,” “publicly accessible space,” and “temporary work of art.” These terms expand the ordinance to include performing arts and art activations, in addition to the previously covered visual arts.

The definitions of “art in public places,” “artist,” “performing arts,” “visual arts,” and “work of art” are updated to align with the ordinance’s broader goals. The definition of “work of art” now includes both temporary and permanent installations, performances, programmed activities, and art activations, including those using technology. The term “fund” is removed, and “art fund” is now consistently used throughout the article.

Section 2.48.710 — Art Fund

O-14-26 revises the purpose of the art fund to encompass the development, creation, performance, and display of art in public spaces. It includes a list of allowable uses for the fund, such as supporting performing arts, acquiring visual arts, maintaining City-owned artworks, and funding artists and organizations that promote public art.



New provisions establish procedures for the distribution of art fund monies, requiring the Commission, in consultation with the Planning and Zoning Director and Finance Director, to develop procedures addressing insurance and liability, indemnification, funding priorities, application evaluation, and the mix of visual arts, performing arts, and art activations to be funded. Funding source provisions are also updated to reflect the broader program scope.

Section 2.48.720 — Duties and Responsibilities

The Commission's responsibilities are updated to: (1) recommend art management and disposition on City-owned property; (2) suggest art fund distribution procedures; (3) advise on art fund expenditures; (4) coordinate with other City entities, including the Historic Preservation Commission; (5) promote public awareness and participation; and (6) advise the Mayor, City Council, and Department Directors.

Commission membership is reduced from nine to five, with a shift from ward-based appointments to a general residency preference, allowing for broader participation, including members from outside the City for regional arts expertise.

Provisions for officers, ex officio members, and annual reporting are retained and updated.

Section 2.48.730 — Repealed

Section 2.48.730, which contained guidelines and procedures for the Commission, is repealed. Its provisions are now included in Section 2.48.720(F) with updated terminology.

Section 2.48.740 — Art Selection

O-14-26 reorganizes art acquisition and selection processes into two sections.



Section 2.48.740(A) mandates that the Commission create selection procedures for public art and publish findings based on eight factors, including site compatibility and community representation. Section 2.48.740(B) states that the Commission will recommend art selections to the Director.

Section 2.48.750 updates placement standards to ensure written agreements for displaying art on non-City property, while retaining terms for loaning visual art for exhibitions.

Some requirements, including Director certification for installation and removal, have been removed.

Key provisions on recordkeeping, artist recognition in City publicity, and artist consultation for art installation, maintenance, and relocation remain intact.

Sections 2.48.760 and 2.48.770 — Ownership and Exemptions

These sections are retained without substantive change.

Section 2.48.760 provides that all works of art acquired pursuant to the article are acquired in the name of the City, and the City shall hold title.

Section 2.48.770 exempts works of art displayed in private City offices or areas not generally frequented by the public from the provisions of the article.