



CITIZEN PARTICIPATION (Replaces Art Commissions and Other Reviewing Authorities Policy) B201 (1964, R1984, R2001)

Policy Statement

There is no clearer evidence of the culture of a community's culture than its public buildings, monuments, and parks. All public projects should be exemplary works of art and design, and should be subject to public review and discussion prior to their construction. Citizen participation in planning and design processes is a critical responsibility of public officials to ensure that they understand and consider the public interest. Public agencies should actively seek out and consult with citizens, visitors, neighbors, and people with traditional cultural ties to the site throughout the decision-making process.

Rationale

All members of the public should be encouraged to participate during the preparation of a plan for public property. Public involvement will help identify the issues important to the community in developing a wider range of planning and design solutions. This open public involvement process builds support for implementing the plan and increases the likelihood of long-term success since citizens have a stake in the process. Most public officials lack formal training in planning and aesthetic matters and rely on the skills of professional consultants to produce good planning and design. In many cases, use of advisory committees including qualified design experts, whose purpose is to render opinions on the artistic merits of such proposals, is helpful. Review by such a committee should include site selection and design of any publicly-owned improvement such as public buildings; memorials; bridges and highways; playgrounds and parks; and proposals for major alterations to existing projects.