

Final Working Definition of “Shameful Acts”

For the purposes of this committee, a “Shameful Act” is an act in which an individual was:

1. Directly engaged in, profited from, and/or was principally known for their role in the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade or enslavement;
2. Directly participated in the theft of land and/or genocide of Indigenous People;
or
3. Engaged in work or efforts that promoted white supremacy and/or a hierarchy of human value based on race, gender, or other aspects of human identity, including categories in the City’s non-discrimination ordinance.

Guiding Principles for Cambridge Advisory Committee on City Art, Monuments & Markers

Final

Reckoning with power to represent values in public

Recognizing that the ability to represent values in public is powerful. Reckoning with deeply rooted inequities and injustices in Cambridge while looking to a just future.

Historical understanding

Respect for and commitment to in-depth and nuanced histories acknowledging multiple perspectives, including the narratives of people who have been actively marginalized.

Inclusion

Creating conditions for all people to feel welcome in Cambridge’s public spaces and enable inclusive public processes by which City art, monuments, and markers are included in such spaces.

Complexity

Acknowledging layered and evolving narratives represented in Cambridge’s public spaces, with preference for additive, relational, and intersectional approaches over subtractive ones. City art, monuments, and markers have multiple meanings that are difficult to unravel, and it is often impossible to agree on a single meaning.

Justice

Recognizing the erasure embedded in Cambridge’s collection of City art, monuments, and markers; addressing histories of dispossession, enslavement, and discrimination not adequately represented in the current public landscape; and actualizing equity.