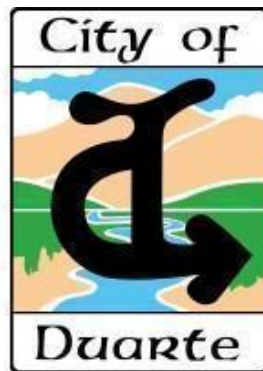


UTILITY BOX ART PROGRAM

Guidelines



April 23, 2024

(Rev. February 3, 2026)



Utility Box Art Program

Overview, Mission, & Objective

Overview

The City of Duarte is dedicated to incorporating art into public spaces, supporting efforts to create places and spaces that people will find vibrant, welcoming, and inclusive. The City owns 17 traffic controllers at signalized intersections throughout the community. There are also nearly a dozen City-owned meter pedestals in various locations throughout the community. “Utility boxes” include traffic controllers, meter pedestals, and irrigation control boxes. A Utility Box Art Program was launched in late 2023 to transform city-controlled utility boxes into beautiful art pieces that recognize the unique character of the community.

Mission

To support local and regional artists and to create an opportunity for them to showcase their talents, while promoting vibrant and memorable public art throughout the City that enhances the urban landscape.

Objective

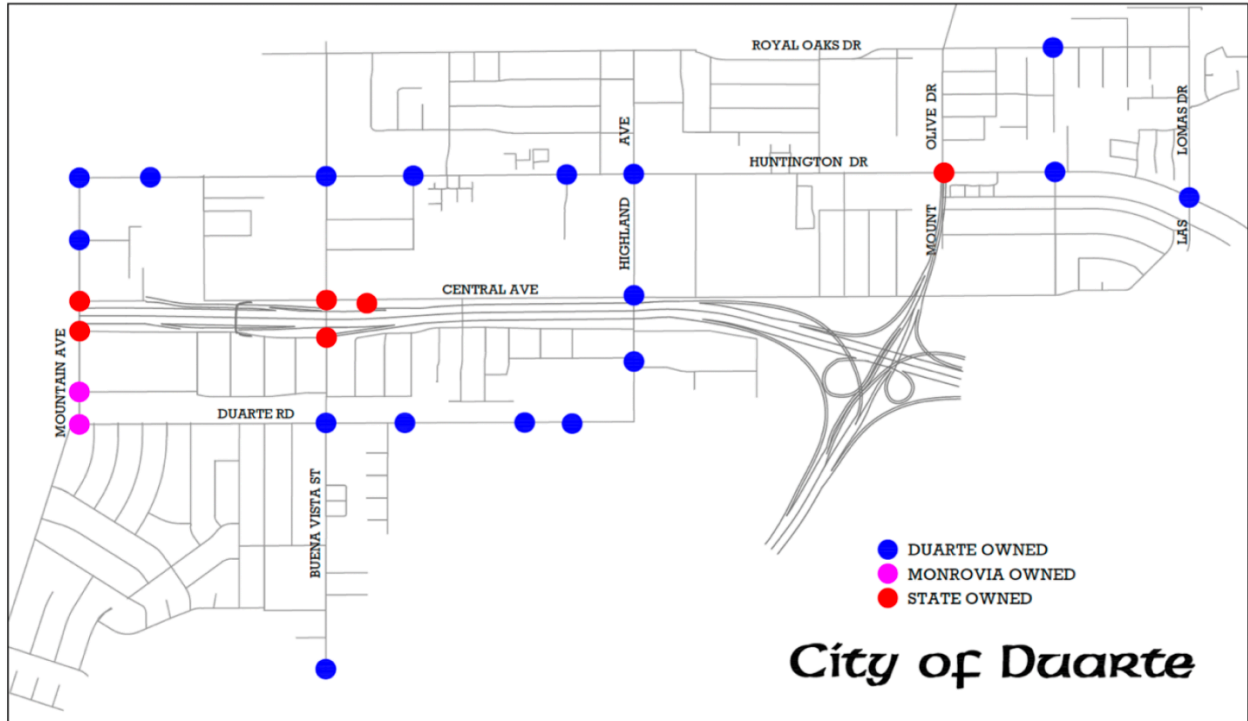
Based on available funding and the number available utility boxes, the City will fund three (3) or more project locations each year. Utility box art projects will be recommended by the Arts Ad Hoc Committee to the City Council for final selection, which will be conducted within two months of the Committee’s recommendations. For its first year, the Arts Ad Hoc Committee has selected the theme of each of the four (4) utility box art projects, based upon their relationship, association, and context with the selected location. Future Committees may elect to modify that year’s theme; one such option would be to choose one common theme for all boxes per year.

Box Specifications & Locations

The map below shows the locations of traffic control boxes distributed throughout the city, along with the public agency that owns the equipment. Currently, only utility boxes owned by the City of Duarte are eligible for participation in this program. The City plans to explore partnership opportunities for program expansion at other publicly and privately owned utility box locations (e.g., CalTrans, electrical, television, and phone utilities) once City-owned box locations have been completed.



Utility Box Art Program



Utility boxes owned and managed by the City are typically 64 inches tall, 30 inches wide, and about 24 inches deep (for traffic signal control boxes). Generally, City utility boxes are larger in size than other private company utility boxes. Some utility boxes are accompanied by a City electrical meter pedestal. Pedestals generally measure 48 inches tall, 25 inches wide, and 16 inches deep. In locations where utility boxes are paired with meter pedestals, artists will prepare complementary designs for both pieces of equipment. The last type of utility box is an irrigation control box. These boxes are generally located in the median island of arterial roadways, but are also found in City parks and green spaces. The typical dimensions for an irrigation control box are 44 inches tall, 13 inches wide, and 6 inches deep.

Application Medium

The inaugural Arts Ad Hoc Committee chose to use vinyl wraps to cover each box with an artist-submitted design and or artwork. Vinyl wraps were selected over painted boxes due to several factors, including longevity, inherent graffiti protection, and ease of maintenance. Once a design is approved through the Call for Artists process, vinyl wraps take two to three months to coordinate and install. Artists submit the approved artwork to be displayed, and a City-approved contractor/vendor measures the box, orchestrates the placement, and applies the vinyl wrap.



Utility Box Art Program

Future Committees may recommend painted utility boxes for consideration by the City Council. Painted boxes are very different from vinyl wrapped boxes, since they are hand-applied by the artist, require additional graffiti protection, involve working in the City's right-of-way, and have different maintenance needs. Due to these inherent differences, details, specifications, and requirements related to painted utility box art projects would be incorporated into future Call for Artists applications that involve the use of paint.

Installation, Maintenance, & Repair Process

- For vinyl-wrapped boxes, the City will work with a third-party vendor to install the selected designs as a graffiti-resistant vinyl wrap on each box.
- Utility Box Art will be inspected annually to assess for damage and/or replacement depending on the age of the artwork.
- The City of Duarte will manage all repairs and replacements for vinyl-wrapped boxes for up to three (3) years for each utility art box project. The City reserves the right to modify or remove artwork should a utility/traffic control box require maintenance, modifications, or repairs as a result of unanticipated damage.
- The City may remove the art wrap at any time if it becomes repeatedly damaged, difficult to maintain, damaged beyond the resources to repair, or as a result of another concern.

Criteria for Submissions - Artists

Artist Eligibility & Basic Information

The Utility Box Program is open to individual artists, a team of artists, or community groups who have the vision and skills to create a visually engaging image or design.

1. Applicants must reside, work, or attend school in the Greater Los Angeles area.
2. Artists must be 18 years of age or older to apply.
3. Artists may submit a maximum of three (3) design proposals for each Call for Artists cycle, regardless of configuration type or location. Artists may have more than one (1) submission chosen by the City in the same calendar year, provided that the total stipend amount for all selected designs remains within the prevailing monetary limit established by law.



Utility Box Art Program

4. The original artwork can be designed/created in any 2D medium. The file should be no larger than 2 MB, and pdf or jpg format only. We encourage applicants to develop designs in digital format utilizing the templates found **on page 33-34 in our 2025 Call for Artists document**; however, the City will also accept photographs or scans of physical art for the application as well. The design concept must be provided in color. Please note that selected artists will need to convert final designs into one of the following file types: PDF, .ai, .psd, TIFF, or JPEG. TIFF and JPEG images must have a minimum resolution of 300 DPI and a minimum of 2,000 pixels.
5. Each applicant will be asked to provide:
 - a. **Utility Box Art Program application**
 - b. **Original artwork.** The artist must indicate the orientation of the artwork. Preferably, the applicant will use the geographical direction (north, west, etc.) of how the art is facing. The direction facing needs to be indicated below the submitted artwork or on another sheet that provides both the artwork and orientation. At minimum, the artist needs to indicate on the artwork or another sheet, the orientation of the artwork to the public street or streets it is adjacent to (e.g., facing Huntington Drive or facing Huntington Drive and Buena Vista Street).
 - c. **Artist statement.** A maximum 200-word statement that describes why the artist is interested in designing artwork for the utility box, any previous experience working on art projects, previous experience working on public art projects (not required), and how the artist believes the art will beautify the surrounding area. (Note: the Artist Statement and Artwork Statement need to be combined onto the same document with item c listed before item d.)
 - d. **Artwork statement.** A maximum 200-word statement that describes and/or interprets the submitted artwork, as it relates to the theme and topics. (Note: the Artist Statement and Artwork Statement need to be combined onto the same document, with item c listed after item d.)
 - e. **Resume (optional).**
 - f. **One to three examples of previous artwork (optional).** Include a brief description of each artwork and where it is/was located.



Utility Box Art Program

Submission Requirements:

- All artworks must be original and created by the artist(s) applying for this project.
- The subject matter of the artwork must be relevant and representative of the unique aspects of each site location.
- All artwork should be appropriate for all ages to view in a public setting. Artwork may not contain:
 - Political statements or persons;
 - Religious references, symbols, or numbers;
 - Drug-related or criminal conduct content;
 - Sexual imagery;
 - Offensive or obscene references or imagery;
 - Defames or invades the rights of any person (alive or dead);
 - Addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, URLs, social media handles/tags/links;
 - Copyrighted or trademarked material;
 - Commercial marketing;
 - Corporate or organizational branding; and/or
 - Representation of traffic signals or signs.
- Only original artwork is accepted. Designs may not include any breach of intellectual property, trademarks, copyrights, brands, images of illegal activity, or involve the attachment of objects to the utility box.

Recommendations for Submitting a Design:

- Ensure that the artwork is appropriate for all ages.
- Consider using bright colors and bold outlines, as they appear best from a distance.



Utility Box Art Program

- Art should be visible from a distance.
- Creativity and innovation of design are encouraged.
- Envision how the design will translate onto a box shape and if it will be visually interesting from all angles and directions.
- Use the utility box diagram to visualize how the artwork might appear on the shape of the box.

Artist Stipend & Use of Imagery/Artist

Artist Stipend

Selected artists shall be compensated for their approved artwork and/or conceptual renderings and receive a stipend upon the completion of the artist's agreement and completion of the project installation. The amount shall cover costs for the artist's time spent in creating the artwork, submitting an application, and occasionally being available for interviews or photo opportunities to be used for promotional purposes. The artist will not be responsible for installing vinyl wraps. The stipend will be based on the different types of utility box arrangements (e.g., traffic controller and meter pedestal vs meter pedestal alone). The limit for stipends is established under prevailing wage requirements and is subject to change as allowed by law.

Use of Imagery and Artist Information

Photos of artwork and/or design on completed utility boxes may be displayed on an interactive map on the City of Duarte website. Information about the artist will accompany the image of the completed Utility Box Art.

Potential information to be included:

- Artist Name (given name and/or alias)
- Artist Short Biography
- Website or Social Media
- Artist and/or Artwork statement
- Title of the Artwork

Utility Box Art images and the information shown above may be used throughout the City of Duarte's social media platforms, media channels, and website.



Utility Box Art Program

The City reserves the right to include a QR code decal on the artwork, enabling individuals to scan and access a dedicated Utility Box Art Program webpage on the City's official website. This webpage may feature digital information about the artwork, artist, location, history, and context of each designed utility box.

To preserve the integrity of the artwork, the City will strategically place the QR code to minimize interference with its presentation. Every effort will be made to best match or complement the QR code's color with the artwork, ensuring seamless integration. Maintenance and replacement of the QR code decals will be the responsibility of the City.

The name of one artist or artist group name may be included on the art, but shall be limited to no more than a 2" tall x 10" wide letter block, located on no more than two sides of any box, and placed in the lower one-third of the artwork. Artist(s) names should not detract from the art.

The Committee may recommend that artists make minor modifications to artwork recommended to the City Council for final consideration. Minor modifications may only seek to strengthen and clarify rather than alter the image or distort the artist's vision for the art piece. The artist must consent to the minor modifications. An example of strengthening and clarifying an image was an artwork attempting to depict parrots. However, the beak resembled that of a pigeon more than a parrot's, and the feathers were bluer than those of the typical parrots that live in our area. Altering the shape of the beak and recoloring the parrots from blue to green would be appropriate. In a second example, it was suggested that the street name signs be relocated and the Duarte imagery be moved from the lower part of the image to the top. This request alters the image and asks the artist to make modifications that may distort their vision for the artwork.

Other Requirements

Artist

- It is the responsibility of the artist to submit a complete application by the due date listed within the application, as well as to include all required materials.
- The artist will be responsible for working with the printer/installer of vinyl wraps to assist in adjusting all artwork, files, and necessary materials for printing and installation on the utility boxes.
- The artist retains the copyright to their original artwork.



Utility Box Art Program

City

- By participating in the program, artists grant the City a non-exclusive, royalty-free license to reproduce, display, and distribute images of the artwork for City-related purposes (e.g., promotional materials, website, and social media).
- The City reserves the right to remove, replace, or adjust the artwork as necessary for the duration of the project and/or the artwork.

Review & Evaluation Process

Utility Box Art applications are received by staff who will then forward all complete and eligible applications (up to the first 250 complete submittals in the order received) to the Arts Ad Hoc Committee for evaluation and recommendation to the City Council. Staff will present the final utility box art designs and locations, as recommended by the Arts Ad Hoc Committee, to the City Council for final approval.

The City reserves the right to consider submitted artwork in categories, locations, or applications that may be different from those selected by the artist.

The City reserves the right not to recommend or approve artwork for any art installation location, based upon the quantity, quality, or content of submittals. In the event this situation arises, the City Council may postpone one or more art installation locations to a future Call for Artists.

Artists will be notified by email with a timeline for final artwork if their design has been selected.

Conflicts of Interest:

Members of the Ad Hoc Committee must, in good faith, disclose any potential conflicts of interest to avoid situations where their personal or professional interests could influence their judgment related to the proposed artist(s) and/or artwork(s) being considered under the Utility Box Art Program. The following provide the types of interest that must be disclosed to the Committee before considering and voting on submitted artwork proposals, the Program Guidelines, and/or the Call for Artists documents:

- **Financial Interest** – A member has a direct financial gain or loss made by the Committee.



Utility Box Art Program

- **Personal Interest** – A member has a family and/or personal relationship or ties to the artist(s), artwork(s), and/or vendor(s).
- **Business Interest** – A member has a professional relationship or ties to the artist(s), artwork(s), and/or vendor(s).

In the event a known or potential conflict of interest arises, a Committee Member should do the following:

- **Disclosure** – All members must disclose any known or potential conflicts of interest before considering and/or evaluating any submitted artwork proposals, the Program Guidelines, and/or the Call for Artists documents.
- **Recusal** – Members with any known or potential conflicts of interest must recuse themselves from discussions and decisions related to that conflict.

In the case that a member suspects a conflict of interest may exist for another member, the Committee shall conduct a vote to assess the known or potential conflicts to ensure impartiality. If the majority of the present Committee members determine there is a conflict of interest, the subject member shall recuse themselves from consideration of that particular artwork proposal.

Approval Criteria:

The criteria used to select eligible artists, artwork, and/or designs shall be evaluated accordingly:

- Evaluation of artistic excellence.
- The relevance of the design for the site location and application of themes.
- Vibrancy, innovation, and originality of work.
- Relationship to the social, cultural, and/or historical identity of a location.
- Appropriateness of scale, form, content, and design.
- Duarte artists or organizations may be given preference in the selection process if all other factors are equal.

Evaluation and Scoring:

The scoring rubric is composed of weighted scoring for four (4) categories, based upon the criteria shown below:



Utility Box Art Program

1. Design Proposal
2. Artwork Statement
3. Artist Statement
4. Local Preference

To weigh each evaluator's scores fairly, an aggregate ranking system is used instead of a purely numerical scoring system:

- First, each evaluator will score each submitted artwork on a City-provided score sheet, based on their own score from 1 – 101, with 101 being the highest.
- Second, each evaluator will rank their top three (3) choices based upon their own individual scoring.
- Third, the rankings are tabulated amongst evaluators. The artwork with the most first-place votes amongst the Committee is selected as the top-ranked proposal, the second-most votes will be the second choice, and the third-most votes will be the last choice. The process will assign the top three (3) ranked artwork pieces.
- Finally, the top two (2) ranked selections will be recommended to the City Council for ultimate consideration. The Committee can vote to include a third recommended selection, if desired.
- In the event of a tie, a second vote would be made amongst the top two (2) tied artwork selections.

Committee Member	Choice #1	Choice #2	Choice #3	Voting Results					
				Choice #1	Votes	Choice #2	Votes	Choice #3	Votes
Evaluator #1	R. Martinez	R.Del Cid	D.Williams	V. Cruz	0	V. Cruz	4	V. Cruz	1
Evaluator #2	R. Martinez	V. Cruz	R.Del Cid	R.Del Cid	0	R.Del Cid	3	R.Del Cid	1
Evaluator #3	R. Martinez	R.Del Cid	V. Cruz	S. Finta	0	S. Finta	0	S. Finta	1
Evaluator #4	R. Martinez	R.Del Cid	S. Finta	C. Gordon	0	C. Gordon	0	C. Gordon	1
Evaluator #5	R. Martinez	A. Morinishi	C. Gordon	R. Martinez	0	R. Martinez	0	R. Martinez	0
Evaluator #6	R. Martinez	V. Cruz	D.Williams	C. Miner	0	C. Miner	0	C. Miner	0
Evaluator #7	R. Martinez	V. Cruz	D.Williams	A. Morinishi	0	A. Morinishi	1	A. Morinishi	0
Evaluator #8	R. Martinez	V. Cruz	D.Williams	J.Priti	0	J.Priti	0	J.Priti	0
Evaluator #9	R. Martinez	D.Williams	A. Morinishi	A. Morinishi	0	A. Morinishi	0	A. Morinishi	1
				D.Williams	0	D.Williams	1	D.Williams	4
Committee Notes									
Raquel Martinez (Top Choice)	may have to move vehicle to one panel, curve the beak on the parrot								
Victoria Cruz (Runner-up)	need to reorient the position of the sign, re-align the Route 66 sign, put Route 66 on one panel, don't like cuts on panels								