CITY OF LAREDO

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Laredo Public Art Program

Project Guidelines

May 2025
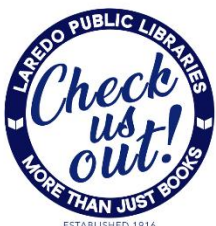Version No. 1

Public Document

This document is intended for informational purposes and public use. Please refer to the City of Laredo for the most up-to-date version.

PREPARED BY :
UP Art & City of Laredo – Arts & Culture Division

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Thank you for your interest in contributing to the cultural and artistic landscape of our city. We welcome public art proposals from individual artists, artist collectives, organizations, and community groups that aim to enrich our community through creative expression. Public art includes, but is not limited to, any paintings, sculptures, or other two- or three-dimensional special aesthetic enhancements placed in or along public spaces or on public structures, including but not limited to pavement, walls, retaining walls, slope walls, bridge structures, medians, or traffic signal boxes.

To ensure a fair and transparent process, we have established clear guidelines for submitting art proposals. Please review these guidelines carefully to ensure that you or your organization meet the requirements before completing the intake form.

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General Proposal Guidelines

1. Eligibility

1. Individual artists, artist collectives, organizations, and community groups may propose public art by submitting a Project Proposal Intake Form. General proposals or concepts not tied to a specific project or location must complete a separate intake and submission form, available on the Public Art Program webpage.

2. The applicant must be the individual or organization participating the public art project and/or the party responsible for the installation and maintenance of the proposed public art.

3. Applicants must meet the eligibility requirements specified in the public announcement, which may include, but are not limited to, age restrictions, residency requirements, thematic alignment, or other specific qualifications.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 Artist or Organization:

1. Responsible for submitting a complete proposal.
2. Collaborating with the Public Art Program Manager and/or designated city staff to secure necessary permits and establish timelines.
3. Incorporating design modifications if required.
4. Fabricating and installing the artwork in accordance with approved designs.
5. Ensuring safe installation and adhering to the safety plan.
6. Attend official unveiling of the public art project.
7. Artists must stay in contact and communicate with the Public Art Program Manager.
   - Attend scheduled meetings, and respond to inquiries or updates.
8. Maintaining the artwork for agreed upon timeline.
9. Overseeing de-installation, if applicable.

2.2 Public Art Program Manager and/or Designated City Staff:

1. Responsible for reviewing proposals.
2. Responsible for the monthly review of non-site specific project proposals.
3. Community outreach and assisting on intake application.
4. Facilitating the approval process.
5. Securing permits.
6. Coordinating inspections.
7. Informing artist of any modifications needed on design.
8. Collaborating with relevant staff for safety plan.
9. Informing Artist and/or Organization about safety plan and insurances.
10. Checking in with progress of artwork and creating timeline of gradual payment.
11. Providing guidance and logistical support to artists throughout the project lifecycle.
12. Implement public art installations on city property after accessing recommendations and receiving final approval.
    - If necessary, prepare a report for City Council Members and/or the designated city authority for project approval.
13. Collect feedback through post-project surveys.

2.3 Evaluation Committee:

1. Responsible for evaluating submitted proposals.
2. Informing the Public Art Program Manager and/or designated city staff of any conflicts of

interest regarding Artist or Organization.

- Conflicts of interest include, but are not limited to, being an employee, board member, officer, or owner of an entity submitting a proposal or seeking funding.

- Any individual serving on the evaluation committee must recuse themselves from deliberations or votes in which they have a direct or perceived financial interest or personal relationship with an artist, organization, or proposal under review.

3. Summarizing the evaluation scores.

4. Making informed recommendations to the Public Art Program Manager and/or designated city staff based on artistic merit, feasibility, and alignment with community values.

5. The evaluation committee may include members of the Fine Arts & Culture Committee, designated city staff, and/or community representatives.

- The evaluation committee members prioritize diversity in background, experience, and perspective to ensure fair and impartial evaluations.

- If applicable, the Fine Arts and Culture Committee member serving on the evaluation committee acts as the representative voice for public art in their district. They should engage with their City Council Member, participate in community outreach, assist participants with their proposal intake forms, and direct community members to the feedback survey.

6. The evaluation committee do not directly distribute funds or select organizations that receive city funds for public art project proposals.

2.4 Elected Officials, City Council Members, and/or Designated City Officials:

1. If necessary, grants final approval for public art installations on city property, based on recommendations from the Public Art Program Manager and/or designated city staff report, the evaluation committee recommendations, and/or assessments from relevant city departments.

2. Making recommendations to the Public Art Program Manager and/or designated city staff, and Fine Arts and Culture Committee member on potential public art projects.

3. City Council Members are encouraged to meet with the Fine Arts and Culture Committee to receive updates on current public art projects, as well as reports on community outreach and communication efforts, and to discuss potential future proposals.

3. Proposal Requirements

Proposal requirements may vary depending on the project type. Applicants should refer to the specific public announcement for detailed project requirements to ensure their proposal and submission is complete.

1. All proposals must include a detailed project description, including the objectives and intended impact of the art project.

2. Visual representations of the proposed project, such as sketches, renderings, or photographs, are required to provide a clear understanding of the concept.

3. A resume, CV, or portfolio demonstrating the artist's and organization's previous work and experience in the arts should be included.

4. For upcoming artists, a mentorship program is available, please see the Mentee Intake Form provided.

5. If proposal is not tied to a specific project, an estimated budget outlining all costs associated with the project must be provided.

6. Installation process and materials list, unless a design template is provided in the public announcement.

7. A proposed timeline for the implementation of the project, including completion date, is required. Please see public announcement for specific project timelines.

8. Information about the proposed site for the art installation, including any specific site considerations or limitations, should be included (please use the provided site assessment form), unless the public announcement specifies a designated site.

4. Community Engagement

1. Proposals should outline how the project will engage and benefit the local community.

2. Interactive or participatory elements are encouraged to foster community involvement and enhance the cultural experience.

5. Maintenance and Longevity

1. For non-site specific proposals, applicants must detail the maintenance requirements for the art project, including the frequency and nature of required activities.

2. The anticipated lifespan or duration of the project should be specified, along with any factors that may impact its longevity.

6. Engineering and Technical Considerations

1. If the project requires engineering expertise for design, structural considerations, or installation, please provide detailed information.

2. Ensure that all technical requirements are addressed to facilitate the successful implementation of the project.

7. Submission Format

1. Proposals should be submitted online, as indicated in the public announcement.

2. Ensure that all required documents and information are included in the submission.

   - It is the sole responsibility of the submitter to ensure that the application and all required documents, as outlined in the public announcement, are complete.

   - Incomplete proposal submissions may result in disqualification.

3. Online forms are designed to be screen reader–friendly to support ADA accessibility; however, participants experiencing any accessibility issues can contact the Support Desk for assistance.

   - The **Support Desk** section includes the available hours and contact details of the Public Art Program Manager and/or designated city staff.

   - For common questions, refer to the **FAQ sheet** section.

8. Acknowledgment and Evaluation

1. Upon submission, applicants will receive an automated acknowledgment of receipt, including a reference number, and sent to the email address provided by the individual or organization.

2. In the case of incomplete submissions, applicants will still receive an automated acknowledgment and reference number.

- Receiving an acknowledgment and reference number does *not* confirm that the submission is complete.
3. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to retain and track their reference number and keep it readily available for reference.
4. Proposals will be evaluated based on artistic merit, feasibility, community impact, and alignment with the city's cultural vision.

9. Project Implementation and Monitoring

1. A monitoring plan to oversee the progress of the art projects and require mandatory check-in dates.

PUBLIC ART PROJECT TIMELINE SAMPLE-MURALS

	Month 1				Month 2				Month 3			
	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Finalize Paperwork	▬											
FIRST PAYMENT	▬											
Gather Supplies	▬											
Clean & Prime the Surface		▬										
Transfer your design			▬									
Start Painting: Outline				▬								
Fill-In Outlines					▬							
Blending						▬						
PROGRESS PAYMENT & Feedback							▬					
Add Details								▬				
Final Touch-ups										▬		
Seal the wall											▬	
FINAL PAYMENT & Project Unveiling												▬

2. Check-in timelines may vary depending on the scope and nature of the project.
3. Artists and/or organizations will be provided a project timeline template to help track milestones and the corresponding payment schedule.
4. Regular check-ins to see the project is being implemented according to the approved plans and timelines.

- Check-ins will include evaluation procedures, constructive feedback, and potential outcomes if project implementation differs from the approved proposal.
- Address any issues or challenges that arise.
- Establish the gradual payment schedule timeline.

  Upfront Payment: Covers materials, initial work, and development of preliminary concepts and renderings.

  Progress Payment: Made at the halfway point of the project, following constructive feedback.

  Final Payment: Issued upon completion and delivery of the final project.

- Lack of communication or delays in project progress may impact the gradual payment schedule, including the release of progress and final payments.

10. Artist Mentorship Program (AMP) Intake Form

1. Depending on the project scope and availability of qualified applicants, this initiative provides opportunities for emerging artists interested in public art to gain practical experience and begin building their professional portfolio.
2. If you have someone in mind, include the completed Artist Mentorship Program Intake Form of the perspective emerging artist you selected.
3. If no applicant is identified by the artist or organization, a mentee may be designated by the Public Art Program Manager in coordination with the artist or organization.
4. Not all projects may have mentorship opportunities available.
5. A waitlist will be established for all mentee applicants.
6. AMP may include partnerships with local school districts, institutions of higher education, or individuals seeking to build experience and a professional resume in public art.
7. Participation in the AMP is voluntary and subject to selection through the application process by Public Art Program Manager and/or designated city staff.
8. It is the sole responsibility of the mentee to actively participate, maintain professional communication, and coordinate meetings with their assigned mentor.
9. Mentees will be provided with clear guidelines and expectations.
10. If an artist or organization experiences issues with a mentee, they must promptly notify the Public Art Program Manager for evaluation and potential resolution.

11. Completion of Project or Timeline Extension

1. When the project is complete the artist or organization will receive **final payment**. Any unexpected delays in project completion may result in delay of final gradual payment.
2. For unforeseen obstacles—such as extreme weather conditions, back-ordered materials, or other unexpected delays. The Public Art Program Manager must be notified immediately to assess the need for an appropriate timeline extension.
3. **Timely Communication:** Project timeline changes should be communicated promptly and responsibly to the Public Art Program Manager, including a clear explanation and a revised expected completion date.
4. **Method of Communication:** All updates or adjustments must be shared via email, phone call, and/or texting with the Public Art Program Manager for proper documentation and coordination.
5. **Proactive Updates:** If delays or changes are anticipated, notify the city before deadlines are missed to allow for collaborative problem-solving and schedule adjustments.
6. Timelines are dependent on the project's medium, size, location, and, if applicable, weather conditions.

12. Restrictions and Requirements

NOTE: An application for a proposed public art project may be denied based on any of the following prohibited characteristics, design parameters and requirements: The City reserves the right to reject a proposal for any reason.

1. Proposed art must not contain characteristics that will distract drivers, pose a safety risk, or impact

traffic flow.

2. Proposed art must not reduce or interfere with intersection sight distance, stopping sight distance, and passing sight distance for drivers.

3. Proposed public art must not resemble a traffic control device (a sign, signal, marking, or other device to regulate, warn, or guide traffic).

4. Proposed public art should not protrude into pedestrian access routes (e.g., sidewalks, shared use paths), but may be allowed if it does not impede access to persons with disabilities or otherwise pose a safety hazard.

5. Proposed public art must not impede water drainage from the public right-of-way.

6. Proposed public art must not interfere with the City's ability to perform routine maintenance or cause additional maintenance for the City.

7. The size and scale of a proposed public art installation should be relative to its context and location and be designed to enhance the surroundings.

8. Proposed public art shall not be installed on a historic bridge or structure, within an ecologically sensitive area, and must not conflict with any state or federal environmental or historical commitments, policies and regulations.

9. Proposed public art that includes painted murals or other art on pavement, retaining walls or slope walls shall use anti-skid or anti-slip paint materials for the safety of pedestrians and maintenance workers. Other paint specifications may be applicable to particular proposed public art installations, at the City's discretion.

10. Proposed public art must not contain an advertisement in any form, actual or perceived, including a message, text, slogan, logo, graphic, distinctive emblem, trademark, web address, or phone number that identifies a commercial business or a product or service offered by businesses, business complexes, schools, attractions, historical or tourist locations, malls, or other organizations (charitable, non-profit, fraternal, religious, political organizations, etc.).

11. Provided, however, the City may allow the public art to include a logo, emblem or trademark to acknowledge the Sponsor of the public art so long as the inclusion thereof does not alter the message that the City intends to convey by allowing the public art and its primary purpose is not to serve as an advertisement for the Sponsor's products or services or in violation of City sign ordinances.

12. Proposed public art must not be designed with the sole intention to provide greater visibility to existing or future businesses or advertisements.

13. Proposed public art must adhere to community standards. Any artwork that is deemed inappropriate, lewd, or obscene is subject to rejection at the City's discretion.

If you have any questions or need further information, please contact Vanessa Filazzola, Public Arts Program Manager for the City of Laredo's Arts & Culture Division, Public Library Department, at (956) 795-2400 OR submit a question: https://www.laredolibrary.org/contact-ask-librarian/.

By following these guidelines, you help ensure that your proposal is reviewed efficiently and fairly, contributing to the vibrant cultural fabric of our city. Thank you for your participation and creativity.

Proposal Design Guidelines

1. All art must be original. The artwork cannot quote, appropriate or adapt imagery created by other artists, unless that artist's permission is obtained in writing in advance and submitted to us. The adaptation of other imagery (e.g. photographs) is allowed if the images are in the public domain, or used with permission.

2. The rendering may be hand-drawn, or digital, but **must be in color, or have an explanation of the colors being used**, including but not limited to warm, cool, complementary, analogous color palette.

3. The artwork must have a title and narrative description.

4. Remember, the murals will be in public areas and must be suitable for all ages, races, etc. There should be nothing offensive, vulgar, scary, etc.

5. Logos, advertisements, organization names, and other promotional content are not permitted in the artwork.

6. **Utility Cabinet Dimensions:** The artist should be prepared to adjust artwork as the size of the cabinet may vary. Utility Cabinets vary greatly in size. Artists are expected to paint all four sides of the cabinet, as well as the top and concrete base.

7. The design may not include any fields of solid white or color, as these invite tagging/graffiti. The artwork proposed should fully occupy all surfaces, with complex or overall patterning, to assist with graffiti prevention. Artist may be asked to adapt proposed design so that all surfaces meet this rule.

8. The design must ensure artists do not paint over essential control functions, including keyholes, locks, identification numbers, and safety information. **These elements must remain visible and unaltered, and should be masked off before painting begins.** Artists are required to mask and paint around them.

9. To avoid overheating of the cabinet the image should include mostly light colors. Images with more than 20% dark colors may not be considered.

10. Artists must be careful of keeping the area around the traffic signal control cabinet clean and must always allow access for wheelchairs and pedestrians.

11. The vents should never be covered even temporarily. Ventilation is critical and keeps the cabinet from overheating. When painting the cabinet please make sure the paint does not drip inside the vents. There are also highly sensitive electronic components in the cabinet and are an important part of public safety. Damage to the utility cabinets needs to be reported immediately to the Public Art Program Manager and/or designated city staff.

12. Department of Traffic and Signals must have access to these controllers at any given time, for servicing, or repairs. Artists must work with these city employees to ensure safety of the community and allow the technician access to the cabinet immediately.

13. Artists and others associated with the project are required to wear safety vests since they will be working in close proximity to the roadway. Hardware stores sell safety vests, typically, for under $20 each.

14. All work must be completed off the roadway. Lane closures are not permitted.

15. Proposals should include the Artist's signature as it would appear on the Utility Cabinet. Signatures must not exceed 2 inches x 8 inches in actual size and cannot include the copyright sign©. Websites, phone numbers, social media handles, etc. are not allowed.

SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS

1. Artists must supply their own materials. They must protect the surrounding area from paint, and clean it up afterwards.
2. Artists are required to paint the cabinet with high quality materials. Recommended paint types include: exterior latex paint, or high-quality aerosol paint. NO MARKERS OF ANY KIND MAY BE USED.
3. The final artwork painted on the cabinet must closely adhere to the rendering submitted.
4. The Public Art Program Manager or designated city staff will be setting up a mandatory check-in and project feedback with the artist to ensure the approved proposal aligns with project progress.
5. The City of Laredo reserves the right to remove the artwork at any time, including but not limited to if it does not conform to the rendering, or serious issues with the completed work or the cabinet itself arise.

INELIGIBLE ENTRIES

A proposal/rendering will be ineligible if it contains any of the following:

1. Copyrighted or trademarked image or logo; a brand or business name.
2. Art that is plagiarized, stolen or copied or partially appropriated from another source (i.e. somebody else's idea and/or imagery).
3. It requires anything to be glued to the cabinet or attached by any means; only direct paint is allowed.
4. Anything that defames or invades the rights of any person, living or dead. Anything that could be construed as harmful to a third party.
5. Work that is not suitable for viewing by all ages and cultures, in a public location, as determined by the City of Laredo at its sole discretion.
6. City of Laredo reserves the right to reject a proposal for reasons not stated above.

If you have any questions or need further information, please contact Vanessa Filazzola, Public Arts Program Manager for the City of Laredo's Arts & Culture Division, Public Library Department, at (956) 795-2400 OR submit a question: https://www.laredolibrary.org/contact-ask-librarian/.

By following these guidelines, you help ensure that your proposal is reviewed efficiently and fairly, contributing to the vibrant cultural fabric of our city. Thank you for your participation and creativity.

City of Laredo
Standard Operating Procedures for Public Art Project

Project Proposal Intake Form

Thank you for your interest in submitting a proposed public art project to the City of Laredo. To ensure that we have all the necessary information to review and evaluate your project, please complete the following intake form and attach all necessary documents.

Failure to provide the required documents listed in the public announcement and/or proposed project may result in an incomplete intake form submission.

Please note that this form is applicable to artists, organizations, and community groups proposing murals, murals on utility cabinets, ground painting, sculptures, installations, light installations, and other projects.

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1. Contact Information

Please ensure your contact information is accurate and correctly spelled.

An automated acknowledgment and reference number will appear on screen and/or be sent to the email address provided.

1. Name:
2. Organization/Community Group (if applicable):
3. Address:
4. City:

5. State/Province:

6. ZIP/Postal Code:

7. Phone Number:

8. Email Address:

9. Website, CV, or Portfolio (if applicable):

Note: The City is not responsible for missed communications due to inaccurate or misspelled contact details.

2. Project Details

1. Type of Public Art:
   Please indicate the type of public art you are proposing:
   - Mural
   - Mural on utility cabinet
   - Ground painting
   - Sculpture or Installation
   - Light Installation
   - Other (please specify):

2. Project Title:

3. Project Description:

   3.1 Provide a brief description of your proposed public art project, including but not limited to its objectives, theme, and any relevant details about the artwork:

   3.2 What impact do you hope this project will have on the community or space it inhabits?

   3.3 Define the intended purpose of the public art, such as enhancing the aesthetics of the area, conveying a message, or promoting a specific theme.

4. Materials, Techniques, Implementation Tools and Processes:

   4.1 Describe the materials, techniques, and implementation tools and processes you intend to use for the project. Be as specific as possible.

The artist and/or organization is responsible for all supplies, protective equipment, accommodations, travel, and all related materials related to and during the execution of the mural.

3. Project Proposal

1. Project Objectives:

   1.1. What do you aim to achieve with this art project?

   1.2. What emotions, ideas, or conversations do you intend to spark through this work?

   1.3. How does the artwork reflect or celebrate the identity, values, or diversity of the community?

   1.4. Are there educational or awareness-raising goals associated with the artwork? If applicable, please describe them.

   1.5. Does the project aim to foster community interaction, dialogue, or civic pride? If so, please explain how.

1.6. In what ways does this project contribute to the vision or identity of Laredo?

1.7. Does this project align with the cultural, historical, or social context of the area? If so, please explain how.

2. Proposed Dimensions:

2.1. What are the dimensions of the artwork?

2.2. How will the artwork interact with the surrounding space (e.g., wall-mounted, freestanding, suspended)?

2.3. Are there any considerations related to scale, proportion, or viewing angles?

2.4. Will the dimensions impact pedestrian traffic, visibility, or accessibility?

2.5. *For 2D works:* What surface or structure will the artwork be applied to (e.g., wall, panel, fence)?

2.6. *For 3D works:* Will the artwork require a pedestal, foundation, or structural support?

3. Community Engagement:

3.1. How will the project engage and benefit the local community?

3.2. Will the project include interactive or participatory elements?

3.3. If so, how does it engage with various age groups within the community, such as:
- Children:
- Teenagers:
- Adults:
- Older adults:

4. Site Information: (if applicable)

Please complete this section if your proposal or idea is not tied to a specific project or location, or if you are proposing a new location for an existing project.

1. Proposed Site for Installation: ***NOTE: Site Assessment form must be submitted in Supporting Documents section***

1.1 Are there any existing structures or features at the site?

1.2 Are there any specific site considerations or limitations?

2. Proposed Location:

2.1 Provide a written description of the site for installation or display, using landmarks or GPS coordinates.

2.2 Specify any special requirements for the location, such as equipment, facilities, or assistance needed.

5. Maintenance

1. To the best of your knowledge are there any specific maintenance requirements or considerations?

2. A description of foreseeable components of maintaining the proposed public art, including inspection of structural elements, litter removal and vegetation control:

3. What is the estimated frequency and nature of required maintenance activities?

4. If unforeseen maintenance is required (e.g., graffiti removal, vandalism, or weather-related damage),

would you be willing to be hired for repairs? Please note this may be part of the contractual selection process, and compensation would be provided if services are needed.

5. What sources, experience, or methods did you use to research best practices for maintaining materials or components used in your project?

6. Have you or your team received any specific training or consulted with professionals regarding long-term care and preservation of the proposed work? If so, please describe.

6. Longevity

1. Is this a temporary or permanent installation?
2. What is the anticipated lifespan or duration of the proposed project?
    2.1 Are there any factors that may impact its longevity (e.g., weather, materials used)?
    2.2 How will the design and materials of the project adapt to environmental changes or unforeseen challenges over time?

7. Engineering Requirements

1. Does the project require engineering expertise for design, structural considerations, or installation?
    1.1 If yes, please provide details of the engineering requirements:

8. Implementation Timeline

If your proposal or idea is not already tied to a specific project, please provide an implementation timeline. For proposals related to an announced project, projected timelines with required check-ins and milestones will be provided.

1. Start Date:
2. End Date:
    2.1 Please provide a proposed timeline for project milestones:

* **The Public Art Program Manager and/or designated city staff will provide you project timeline template and coordinate with you to ensure milestones, scheduled payments, and mandatory check-in timelines are established, based on the specific project type. ***

9. Estimated Budget

If your proposal or idea is not already tied to a specific project, please provide estimated budget.

3. Estimated Budget
    3.1 Provide an estimated budget for the project, including materials, labor, and any other relevant expenses:
4. Funding Sources (if any):
    4.1 Do you have funding or sponsorship for this project? Yes/No
    4.2 Will you be seeking additional funding or sponsorship? If yes, please provide details:

10. Supporting Documents

Please attach the following documents to support your proposal. The documents should be labeled appropriately for clarity and documentation purposes.

If uploading multiple images, please scan or combine them into a single file for the respective document type and/or if applicable provide URLs.

Use the following format for all documents: LastNameFirstInitial_DocumentType

Please Note: Failure to submit documents and/or use the proper format may result in an incomplete application.

Example: for applicant John Doe:

i: DoeJ_Resume.pdf

ii: DoeJ_Portfolio.pdf

iii: DoeJ_Sketches+Renderings.pdf

1. Artist/Group Resume or Bio:
2. Portfolio of Previous Works and/or CV:
    2.1 Please include if you have done any projects with the City of Laredo [Yes/No].
    2.2 If yes: Project title, type, month & year of the project/s completion.
3. Attach Visual representation (such as sketches, renderings, or photographs or provide URLs).
4. Letters of Support (if available).
    4.1 Letters could be from individuals who can speak to your artistic abilities, character, mentors, professionals, educators, and/or clients who have commissioned you for similar projects.
    4.2 Site Assessment Form (if applicable).
    * Please submit the following, along with the appropriate projects completed site assessment form, if your proposal or idea is not tied to a specific project or location, or if you are proposing a new location for an existing project. *
    4.3 Photographs of existing site conditions of the location at time of application submission.
    4.4 An aerial image or site plan indicating the location of the placement of proposed art.
5. Attach completed **Artist Mentorship Program Intake Form** (if applicable)

11. Additional Information

1. Are you familiar with documenting your work (e.g., photos, journals, process notes)?

2. Are you comfortable receiving constructive feedback and adjusting your work accordingly?

3. Is there any other information or considerations you would like to provide regarding your art project?

12. Review and Selection Process

Please note that all proposals will be reviewed by the Public Art Program Manager and/or designated city staff, along with an evaluation committee. The committee details and evaluation criteria are outlined in the **Evaluation Criteria section of the SOP**.

If selected, the applicant/s will be required to sign a liability and indemnity agreement, enter into a contract with the Public Art Program Manager and/or designated city staff, and comply with all requirements set forth for successful completion of the proposed Public Art Project.

Declaration: By submitting this intake form, I acknowledge that I have read and understood the guidelines and requirements for proposing public art projects in the City of Laredo. I affirm that all information provided is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge, and that all necessary supporting documentation has been included with this submission. I understand that submission of this form does not guarantee the acceptance or approval of my proposed project. I understand that it is my responsibility to

retain my reference and/or tracking number and ensure all contact information provided is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

13. Confirmation:

Thank you for your interest in contributing to the public art landscape of the City of Laredo. We look forward to reviewing your proposal. If you have any questions or need further information, please contact Vanessa Filazzola, Public Arts Program Manager for the City of Laredo's Arts & Culture Division, Public Library Department, at (956) 795-2400 OR submit a question: https://www.laredolibrary.org/contact-ask-librarian/.

We encourage participants to submit feedback on the proposal process through the online feedback survey. Please remember to be respectful in all communications and to include your reference number

Introduction to the Artist Mentorship Program

Thank you for your interest in participating in the City of Laredo's emerging Artist Mentorship Program (AMP) and contributing to a public art project.

To ensure a complete and thorough review of your application, please fill out the intake form below and attach all required supporting documents. Incomplete submissions, including missing or mislabeled documents, may not be considered.

ARTIST MENTORSHIP PROGRAM INTAKE FORM GUIDE

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        ↓
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1. Purpose

This form is for emerging artists, organizations, and community members seeking hands-on experience in public art and looking to build their professional portfolios. Participation in AMP is voluntary and designed to provide practical, mentorship-based experience in the development and installation of public art.

2. Objective

The objectives of the Artist Mentorship Program (AMP) are as follows:

1. To establish a standardized intake and application process for all participants in the AMP.

2. To create a pathway for individuals without prior public art experience to gain practical knowledge and access the field through mentorship.

3. To provide meaningful, hands-on opportunities for emerging artists to gain experience in public art and build their professional portfolios.

4. To create a clear selection process which is based on project needs and mentor availability; a waitlist may be established.

5. To foster collaboration between emerging and established artists through structured mentorship, skill-sharing, and project-based learning.

6. To outline clear procedures for participation and program completion, ensuring expectations and responsibilities are transparent for both mentors and mentees.

7. To encourage community engagement and appreciation of public art through collaborative projects and inclusive participation.

8. To promote professional development by equipping emerging artists with the tools, resources, and networks necessary to pursue careers in public art.

9. To promote diversity, equity, and inclusion by supporting artists from underrepresented backgrounds and reflecting the multifaceted cultural identity of the City of Laredo.

10. To gather feedback and assess the successes of the Artist Mentorship Program through a required post-project evaluation, ensuring continuous improvement and effectiveness of the program.

3. Mentor Selection and Eligibility

1. Based on the approved proposals from established artists or organizations.

2. Artists or organizations awarded more than one project within the city's fiscal year, OR those who received two projects in the past three years, will be required to incorporate a mentee into each additional project thereafter, subject to program guidelines and applications.

3. Mentee assignment will be determined based on the complexity of the project, safety requirements, and the availability of qualified applicants.

4. Final matches will be coordinated by the Public Art Program Manager or city staff.

    4.1 Mentors may be asked to complete a feedback survey to evaluate the overall program.

    4.2 If an artist or organization experiences issues with a mentee, they must promptly notify the Public Art Program Manager for evaluation and potential resolution.

5. *NOT* all projects may have mentorship opportunities available.

6. A waitlist will be established for all mentee applicants.

4. Mentee Selection and Eligibility

1. Mentees will be selected based on the strength of their Artist Mentorship Program Application, including responses to application questions, relevant qualifications, portfolio samples, and any letters of support submitted.

2. Artists or organizations may nominate a preferred mentee, provided that the artist's/mentor's intake form is submitted along with the nominee's completed Artist Mentorship Program Application.

3. In the absence of a nominated applicant, the Public Art Program Manager or designated city staff will assign a mentee from the qualified applicant pool, ensuring alignment with the project scope, learning objectives, and compatibility with the selected artist or organization.

4. The Artist Mentorship Program may include partnerships with local school districts, institutions of higher education, or individuals seeking to build experience and a professional resume in public art.

5. Any participant under the age of 18 will require a parental or guardian signature and may only participate under adult supervision.

6. Please note: Certain projects may have age restrictions due to safety considerations or associated risks. Please refer to the public announcement for specific age requirements.

7. Not all projects may have mentorship opportunities available, which may be due to, but not limited to, project requirements, timelines, scope, or mentor capacity. A waitlist will be established for all mentee applicants.

8. Demonstrated commitment to completing the full duration of the project, including active participation throughout all phases of the public art process, from planning and site prep to installation and final review.

9. Willingness to adhere to all safety guidelines, program expectations, and City of Laredo public art procedures.

10. All mentee placements are subject to final approval by the Public Art Program Manager and/or designated city staff, based on alignment with program goals, project needs, and available resources.

11. Mentees may be eligible to receive **a stipend and/or formal recognition** for their participation in the program, depending on available resources and level of involvement.

5. Mentor Guidelines and Expectations

Being selected as a mentor is something to be proud of—your leadership shapes not only the final artwork, but also the future of Laredo's vibrant and inclusive arts community. Your guidance helps diversify participation, spark public interest in art, and foster creative expression that resonates across generations.

Through this mentorship program, you are facilitating hands-on learning, encouraging collaboration, and building the confidence of emerging artists. Your influence goes beyond the mural—you are helping cultivate the next generation of talent and ensuring that Laredo's stories, skills, and cultural identity continue to be honored and passed down through community-driven public art.

Mentors are selected based on demonstrated artistic excellence and experience—having successfully completed multiple proposals and public art pieces in Laredo. With this in mind, you serve as both a role model and a vital link between the community, the creative process, and the artists of tomorrow.

View **Mentor Onboarding Packet** for additional details.

6. Application & Documentation

1.1 Mentorship Selection

1. If an artist or organization is awarded more than one project within the city's fiscal year—or two projects within the past three fiscal years—they may be selected to mentor an assigned mentee for each additional project thereafter.

2. Please note not all projects may have mentorship opportunities available, which may be due to, but not limited to, project requirements, timelines, scope, or mentor capacity. A waitlist will be established for all mentee applicants.

1.2 Documentation and Communication

1. If an artist or organization experiences issues with a mentee, they must promptly notify the Public Art Program Manager for evaluation and potential resolution.

2. When applicable, the Public Art Program Manager may contact appropriate staff, instructors, or

program coordinators to recommend potential mentees or to inform them of a mentee's lack of participation.

    2.1 This ensures accountability and reinforces the mentee's commitment to the program.

3. Program participation, feedback, and outcomes will be included in project monitoring and evaluation to assess the impact and effectiveness of the Artist Mentorship Program.

7. Mentor Responsibilities

1. Core Responsibilities

1. Demonstrate techniques clearly by providing step-by-step demonstrations of the project process (e.g., priming, outlining, sealing) to guide participants with confidence.

2. Share your experience openly by passing on your creative or technical knowledge in a way that's approachable and meaningful.

3. Foster open dialogue by creating a welcoming space where participants feel comfortable asking questions and offering ideas. Learning thrives through communication and collaboration.

4. Give constructive, supportive feedback by focusing on growth rather than perfection.

5. Encourage progress while honoring individual voices and styles.

6. Connect art to place and meaning. When relevant, help participants explore how the work reflects Laredo's culture, identity, or history.

7. Your perspective is part of why your proposal was selected—your contribution is not only artistic, but deeply meaningful to the city.

8. Mentors are expected to dedicate a minimum of **two hours per week**, though this may vary depending on the type project and deadlines.

9. Flexibility is encouraged to accommodate both the mentor's and mentee's schedules while ensuring meaningful engagement.

10. Mentors may be eligible to receive **a stipend and/or formal recognition** for their participation in the program, depending on available resources and level of involvement.

2. Core Expectations

1. Maintain a professional, respectful tone with all mentees, volunteers, and participants.

2. Provide accurate, researched guidance (e.g., on materials, safety, and surface preparation).

3. Uphold safety standards and model proper tool usage.

4. Be aware of weather/environmental challenges unique to Laredo (e.g., heat, stucco walls, paint compatibility).

5. Keep open communication with the Public Art Program Manager and/or designated city staff, and report any concerns promptly.

3. Active Participation

Your presence is more than showing up—it's about staying engaged:

1. Guide mentees through unfamiliar tasks with patience and clarity.

2. Offer encouragement while still holding participants accountable to quality and deadlines.

3. Actively work to include all participants. Keep in mind that mentees may have varying levels of experience, ages, and backgrounds—so it's important to remain patient, adaptable, and supportive throughout the process.

4. Model inclusive language and behavior that creates a welcoming space.

5. Encourage teamwork and mutual respect among all participants.

6. Help spark curiosity in public art and local history—art is the entry point to deeper connection.

4. Safety & Site Responsibilities

Mentors are co-responsible for maintaining a safe and organized workspace:

1. Ensure all participants use proper PPE (gloves, masks, goggles, etc.).

2. Monitor ladder use, scaffold setup, and other site safety protocols.

3. Assist with or lead clean-up procedures at the end of each session.

4. Keep walkways clear and materials labeled.

5. Be the first line of response for any safety concern or incident.

8. Mentee Guidelines and Expectations

Participation in the Artist Mentorship Program is voluntary and designed to foster hands-on experience in the creation and installation of public art. All mentees must be selected through the official application process, and participation is contingent upon meeting the following requirements:

1. Application & Documentation

1.1 Submission Requirements

1. Completion and submission of the online Artist Mentorship Program Intake Application is required for consideration.

2. All supporting documents must be provided, see Artist Mentorship Program Intake Application

3. supporting documents section to view requires forms.

4. All documents should be labeled appropriately for clarity and documentation purposes

   4.1 **Use** the **following format for all documents:** *LastNameFirstInitial_DocumentType*

   Please Note: Failure to submit documents and/or use the proper format may result in an incomplete application.

   Example: for applicant John Doe:

   i: DoeJ_AMPIntakeApplication.pdf

   ii: DoeJ_LettersofSupport.pdf

5. For artists or organizations proposing a mentee, the completed mentee application must be submitted as a supporting document with the artist's Public Art Intake Form or Call to Artists proposal.

2. General Expectations

Once selected, mentees will be notified and required to meet with the Public Art Program Manager and/or designated city staff, followed by an introductory meeting with their assigned mentor to discuss

expectations for successful completion of the Artist Mentorship Program. These expectations include, but are not limited to:

1. Selected mentee will receive the Public Art Program Manager's contact information.

2. A signed email confirming receipt of this contact information will be **required**.

3. Mentee is responsible for keeping the Public Art Program Manager informed of any questions or concerns regarding their mentor.

4. Any questions or concerns regarding their mentor should be directed to the Public Art Program Manager immediately.

5. *Method of Communication:* can be via email, phone call, and/or texting with the Public Art Program Manager.

6. Any miscommunication or failure to meet responsibilities may affect future eligibility for public art opportunities with the City of Laredo.

3. Active Participation

1. Your presence is more than showing up it's about staying engaged.

2. Listen and take direction from your mentor.

3. Mentees are expected to take initiative, communicate effectively, and coordinate directly with their assigned mentor to support the progression of the project.

4. This includes, but is not limited to, all phases of the public art project such as surface preparation, sealing, and installation. The process will vary depending on the medium used and project scope.

5. Receive feedback with openness—part of this program is centered on giving and receiving constructive feedback. Growth happens through experience and a willingness to learn from others.

6. Encourage teamwork and mutual respect among all participants.

4. On-Site Engagement:

1. Mentorship is conducted in-person and on-site.

2. Mentees must be physically present during agreed-upon phases of the project.

3. Ask for guidance through unfamiliar tasks

4. Assist in on-site clean up daily and at project completion.

5. Participate and observe the different approaches.

5. Scheduling:

1. It is the mentee's responsibility to collaborate with their mentor to establish a consistent meeting schedule.

2. Projects will require a minimum number of weekly meetings, determined by the scope of work.

6. Reliability:

1. It is the mentee's responsibility to communicate effectively and inform their mentor if they cannot attend on-site for agreed upon scheduling.

2. Repeated failure to communicate, attend scheduled meetings, or actively participate in the mentorship process may result in dismissal from the Artist Mentorship Program.

   2.1 *If applicable, the Public Art Program Manager or city staff may contact appropriate staff, instructors, or program coordinators to recommend potential mentees or to inform them of a*

mentee's lack of participation.

    2.2 *Participation in the mentorship program is a privilege, and the City of Laredo reserves the sole discretion to remove a mentee from the program if necessary—based on, but not limited to, factors such as lack of commitment, poor communication, failure to meet program expectations, disruptive behavior, or conduct that does not align with the values and goals of the Public Art Mentorship Program.*

    2.3 *This may affect future eligibility for public art opportunities with the City of Laredo.*

7. Professional Conduct:

1. Mentees are expected to uphold professionalism, adhere to safety protocols, and comply with all public art program policies set forth by the City of Laredo.

8. Confidentiality & Respect:

1. Mentees are expected to respect all project information, collaborators, and community members involved.
2. Any misuse of sensitive information or disrespectful behavior may result in removal from the program.

9. Post-Project Evaluation & Feedback:

1. Mentees may be asked to complete a feedback survey or participate in a program evaluation upon project completion aimed at improving the Artist Mentorship Program and evaluating its overall effectiveness and successes.
2. Please remember to be respectful in all communications.

If you have any questions or need further information, please contact Vanessa Filazzola, Public Arts Program Manager for the City of Laredo's Arts & Culture Division, Public Library Department, at (956) 795-2400 OR submit a question: https://www.laredolibrary.org/contact-ask-librarian/.

By following these guidelines, you help ensure that your application is reviewed efficiently and fairly, contributing to the vibrant cultural fabric of our city. Thank you for your participation and creativity.

City of Laredo

Standard Operating Procedures for Public Art Projects

Artist Mentorship Program Intake Form

Thank you for your interest in participating in the City of Laredo's emerging Artist Mentorship Program (AMP) and contributing to a public art project. To ensure a complete and thorough review of your application, please fill out the intake form below and attach all required supporting documents. Incomplete submissions, including missing or mislabel documents, may not be considered.

This form is intended for emerging artists, organizations, and community members seeking hands-on experience in public art and looking to build their professional portfolios. Participation in AMP is voluntary and designed to provide practical, mentorship-based experience in the development and installation of public art.

ARTIST MENTORSHIP PROGRAM INTAKE FORM GUIDE

CONTACT INFORMATION

EXPERIENCE & PROJECT INTEREST

AVAILABILITY

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

SUBMISSION

1. Contact Information

An automated acknowledgment will be sent to the email address provided.

1. Name:
2. Organization/Community Group (if applicable):
3. Address:
4. City:

5. State/Province:
6. ZIP/Postal Code:
7. Phone Number:
8. Email Address:
9. Website, CV, or Portfolio (if applicable):

The City is not responsible for missed communications due to inaccurate or misspelled contact details.

2. Personal Details:

1. Gender: [Female/Male/Other/Prefer not to Say]

2. Age Range:
   - Below the age of 18: [Yes/No]
     - If yes, specify: _____
   - Age 18-21: [Yes/No]
   - Age 22-30: [Yes/No]
   - Age 31-40: [Yes/No]
   - Age 41-50: [Yes/No]
   - Age 51-60: [Yes/No]
   - Age 61+: [Yes/No]

3. If you're under the age of 18, what is your current grade level (If not applicable please indicate "N/A")? _____

   3.1 What school do you attend (If not applicable please indicate "N/A")? _____

4. Are you currently in an institution of higher education? [Yes/No]

   4.1 If yes, provide the institution and your level (Freshmen-Senior): _____

5. What is your highest level of education: _____

Any participant under the age of 18 will require a parental or guardian signature and may only participate under adult supervision.

3. Experience

The following questions are intended to help determine appropriate placement within the program

Indicating "no experience" is a valid response, purpose of the program is to provide opportunities for individuals who are eager to learn and gain experience in public art.

1. Are you currently employed? [Yes/No] If yes, specify:

2. What experience do you currently have in the visual arts?

   2.1 If applicable, please provide details of your experience.

3. Have you worked on any public art projects in the past? [Yes/No] If yes, specify:

4. How familiar are you with materials and tools commonly used in public art installations (e.g., scaffolding, sealants, mural paints, safety gear)?

5. What are some challenges you think come with creating art in a public space, and how would you

approach them?

6. Have you completed any safety training or participated in safety-oriented projects (e.g., school, volunteer work, other jobs)?

7. Do you have any experience interpreting or following a project timeline or schedule?

4. Project Details

1. What type of Public Art Project would you be interested in learning?
   - Mural
   - Mural on utility cabinet
   - Ground painting
   - Sculpture or Installation
   - Light Installation
   - Other (please specify):

2. If you had to select one type of Public Art Project which would it be and why?

3. What artistic mediums are you most comfortable working with (e.g., painting, digital media, sculpture)?

4. Are you comfortable using basic tools or ladders if required during the project?

5. If selected, are you willing to help with both creative and logistical aspects of the project (e.g., material handling, community outreach, safety check-ins)?

6. Do you understand that each public art project may involve collaboration with the city, local organizations, and the general public? How do you feel about this?

5. Scheduling

If selected mentees are required to attend a minimum of 2 meetings a week. Mentees are responsible of establishing and maintaining a consistent schedule.

1. What is your availability?
   - School/Semester: _____
   - Work: _____
   - Other obligations: _____

2. Are you aware that it is the mentee's responsibility to communicate and coordinate scheduling with their assigned mentor? [Yes/No]

3. Do you understand that missing project meetings—may result in dismissal from the Artist Mentorship Program and could impact your eligibility for future public art opportunities? [Yes/No]

4. Are there any known scheduling conflicts or time commitments that may limit your availability to fully participate in the mentorship program? If so, please explain. (e.g., extracurricular activities, birthdays, holidays)

If your availability changes after submitting your application, you must notify the Public Art Program Manager to update your scheduling information.

6. General Application Questions

1. Why are you interested in participating in the Artist Mentorship Program?

2. What do you hope to gain from this experience?

3. How does public art align with your personal or professional goals?

4. What strengths do you bring to a collaborative art project?

5. What areas do you hope to improve through this mentorship?

6. How do you define success for yourself in this program?

7. How do you handle feedback and constructive criticism?

8. What motivates you to complete long-term projects or commitments?

9. Is there a specific medium, theme, or type of public art you are most interested in exploring?

7. Supporting Documents

Please attach the following documents to support your application. The documents should be labeled appropriately for clarity and documentation purposes.

If uploading multiple images, please scan or combine them into a single file for the respective document type and/or if applicable provide URLs.

Use the following format for all documents: LastNameFirstInitial_DocumentType

Please Note: Failure to submit documents and/or use the proper format may result in an incomplete application.

Example: for applicant John Doe:

i: DoeJ_Portfolio.pdf

ii: DoeJ_LettersofSupport.pdf

1. Portfolio of Previous Works and/or CV in either in a single document or provide URL:

2. Provide a minimum of three (3) original visual representations of completed works (e.g., drawings, paintings, sculptures, digital art, photographs, etc.).

3. Maximum of (7) original visual representations of completed works

4. Each submission must include the title of the piece, type of project, and year of completion.

5. Letters of Support (if available)

6. Letters may include, but are not limited to, those from individuals who can speak to your artistic abilities, character, mentors, professionals, educators, and/or clients who have commissioned you for similar projects.

8. Additional Information:

1. Is there any other information or considerations you would like to provide regarding your art project?

9. Review and Selection Process

Please note that all applications will be reviewed by the Public Art Program Manager and/or designated city staff. Applicants will be evaluated based on responses to application questions, relevant

qualifications (if applicable), portfolio samples, and any letters of support submitted.

If selected, the applicant will be required to sign a liability and indemnity agreement, enter into a contract with the Public Art Program Manager, and comply with all requirements set forth for successful completion of the Artist Mentorship Program.

Declaration: By submitting this intake form, I acknowledge that I have read and understood the guidelines and requirements for participating in the emerging Artist Mentorship Program (AMP) for the City of Laredo. I affirm that all information provided is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge, and that all required supporting documentation has been included with this submission.

I understand that submission of this form does not guarantee acceptance into the Artist Mentorship Program. I also understand that it is my responsibility to update my application as needed and to ensure all contact information provided is accurate.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

10. Confirmation

> Thank you for your interest in the Artist Mentorship Program (AMP) with the City of Laredo.
> We appreciate your commitment to gaining hands-on experience in public art and look forward to reviewing your application. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Vanessa Filazzola, Public Arts Program Manager for the City of Laredo's Arts & Culture Division, Public Library Department, at (956) 795-2400 OR submit a question: https://www.laredolibrary.org/contact-ask-librarian/.
>
> We welcome your input and encourage all applicants to submit feedback on the AMP application process through our online feedback survey. Please remember to be respectful in all communications.

City of Laredo
Standard Operating Procedure

Artist Mentorship Program Mentor Onboarding Packet

Welcome & Purpose

Thank you for joining the City of Laredo's Public Art Mentorship Program. Your expertise and guidance are vital to supporting artists and enriching our city's cultural landscape. This program connects experienced professionals with emerging artists to foster skill development, encourage community collaboration, and support the creation of impactful public art.

Mentor Roles & Responsibilities

1. **Support Mentees:** Provide guidance throughout the development of their public art proposals or creative projects.
2. **Offer Feedback:** Help mentees build and refine their skills, assure they complete. Complete a feedback survey to evaluate the overall effectiveness and successes of the program.
3. **Share Expertise:** Offer insight on creative development, technical considerations, and project feasibility.
   - Reflect on when you were just starting out on your first public art project.
   - Think about what art and the act of creating has done for you—how has it shaped your life, your identity, or your connection to community?
   - What helped you learn?
   - What information do you wish you had known earlier?
   - How that insight can support others now. Sharing not just the how, but the why behind your work can deeply inspire mentees and help them see themselves in the process.
4. **Encourage Community Impact:** Help mentees explore how the work reflects Laredo's culture, identity, or history, including how they can create a future public art project on their own.
5. **Maintain Communication:** Be responsive and accessible to mentees, city staff, and collaborators.

Time Commitment

1. **Estimated minimum:** 2 hours per week
2. Time may vary depending on the scope of the project.

City Support for Mentors

1. **Orientation & Training:** We provide a brief onboarding session to familiarize you with city procedures and mentorship expectations.
2. **Ongoing Guidance:** The Public Art Program Manager and city staff are available to assist with questions, coordination, and project alignment.
3. **Resource Access:** Mentors will receive project materials, proposal templates, and access to relevant city contacts.
4. **Recognition & Stipends:** Mentors may be eligible to receive a **stipend and/or formal recognition** based on program resources and level of involvement.

Collaboration

Whether you prefer to work individually with a mentee in your district or team up with others we encourage a flexible, collaborative approach. Your insights will help shape the future of Laredo's public art archive and inspire the next generation of creators.

City of Laredo
Standard Operating Procedures for Mural Site Assessment

Complete form <u>only</u> if you are proposing a new mural site location.

Date: _____

1. **Project Details**

    1. Applicant Name:
    2. Project Title:
    3. Artist (if known):
    4. Contact Person:
    5. Phone Number for Contact Person:
    6. Installation Timeline (if known, how long will it take to install the mural):
    7. Permanent Mural: Yes/No
    8. Estimated frequency of maintenance:
    9. Estimated Duration, if temporary:

2. **General Information**

    1. Site Location / Address:
    2. Site Coordinates (latitude longitude, google maps plus codes):
    3. Assessment Date:

3. **Site Description/Location Overview**

    1. Describe the location of the mural installation, including the surrounding environment, architectural features, and any unique considerations.

4. **Mural Area Dimensions**

    Record the approximate dimensions of the mural area.
    1. Height: __ O __ in
    2. Width: __ O __ in
    3. Depth: __ O __ in

5. **Surface Type and Condition**

    Assess the condition of the surface where the mural will be installed.
    1. Identify the type of surface (e.g., brick, concrete, cinderblock, stucco, wood, metal, drywall, other)
    2. What is the wall coated with now, if known?
    3. Evaluate the surface for its suitability for mural installation. Note any specific requirements or modifications needed for the chosen materials:
    4. Note any irregularities, damage, or necessary repairs:
    5. Describe the ground in front of the wall (e.g. dirt, grass, concrete, pavers, etc.):

6. Describe the ground condition (e.g. debris etc.):

7. Note any environmental challenges (e.g. bird droppings, stray dogs, unhoused people, etc.):

6. **Type of Mural and Exposure:** (check all that apply)

   1. Mural on exterior wall
   2. Mural on interior wall
   3. Will the mural be exposed to direct sunlight for an extended period each day? [Yes/No]
   4. Will the mural be exposed to extreme weather conditions? [Yes/No] If yes, specify:

7. **Type of Material Used on Mural**

   1. Coatings System (note type and brand for each)
      • Primer:
      • Decorative Coating (i.e. paint):
      • Clear Coat:
   2. Tile or hardware affixed to wall:
   3. Parachute cloth affixed to wall:
   4. Other material:

8. **Site Accessibility**

   Determine the ease of access to the mural installation site.
   1. Proximity to parking areas:
   2. Pedestrian traffic considerations:
   3. Type of equipment to be used to install the mural (ladder, scaffolding, scissor lift, aerial boom lift):
   4. Available space for lift equipment or scaffolding:

9. **Right of Way**

   1. Is the site in the Right of Way?
   2. Is the mural site highly visible from the public Right of Way (street, highway or railway)?
   3. Are there utilities to be concerned about?
   4. Will the painting installation protrude into the public right of way?

10. **Lighting Conditions**

    Evaluate the lighting conditions around the mural site.
    1. Natural and artificial lighting sources:
    2. Impact of lighting on mural visibility:
    3. Nighttime lighting conditions:

11. **Climate Considerations / Environmental Factors**

    Assess the climate conditions of the area during the time of year you will be installing.
    1. Temperature ranges:
    2. Humidity levels:

3. Exposure to direct sunlight or extreme weather:
4. Note any potential impacts on the longevity or preservation of the mural:

12. Safety Considerations

Identify any safety hazards or concerns related to the mural installation.
1. Nearby electrical fixtures:
2. Is the utility cabinet located in a high-traffic area? [Yes/No]
3. How close to the road is the proposed surface?
4. Areas with limited visibility:
5. On a slope or ceiling:
6. Potential vandalism risks:

13. Permits (if known)

1. Are any permits required? [Yes/No/ I don't know] (if yes, which kind?)
2. Is the project address in a special zone?
   • Historic
   • Other

14. Additional Notes and Comments

1. Please check ALL that apply, if known:
   • The mural site is a chronic target for graffiti: [Yes/No/ I don't know]
   • The mural site has never been tagged but will make a great site because:
   • The mural site currently has another mural on display that has been previously vandalized or is faded
2. Why do you want a mural at this location?
3. Any additional comments, observations, or recommendations:

15. Site Assessor Information

1. Name:
2. Position:
3. Signature:

Please complete this form to the best of your ability and attach it to your application. Thank you for your cooperation.

City of Laredo
Standard Operating Procedures for Utility Cabinet Site Assessment

<div style="border:1px solid">

Site Assessment Form: Mural on Utility Cabinets

</div>

Complete form <u>only</u> if you are recommending a new location.

Date:

1. **Project Details**

    1. Applicant Name:
    2. Project Title:
    3. Artist (if known):
    4. Contact Person:
    5. Phone Number for Contact Person:
    6. Installation Timeline (if known, how long will it take to install the mural):
    7. Permanent Mural: Yes/No
    8. Estimated frequency of maintenance:
    9. Estimated Duration, if temporary:

2. **General Information**

    1. Site Location/Address (cross streets):
    2. Site Coordinates (latitude longitude, google maps plus codes):
    3. Assessment Date:

3. **Utility Cabinet Information**

    1. **Utility Cabinet ID/Number** (if available): [Enter ID/number of the utility cabinet]
    2. **Utility Cabinet Dimensions**:

        Height: _____ O _____ in
        Width: _____ O _____ in
        Depth: _____ O _____ in
    3. **Utility Cabinet Material (base)**: [Enter the material of the utility cabinet base (e.g., concrete, pole)]

4. **Site Assessment**

    1. **Site Description/Location Overview**: Describe the location of the utility cabinet for the utility cabinet art installation, including the surrounding environment, architectural features, and any unique considerations.
    2. **Surface Type and Condition**: Assess the condition of the utility cabinet where the mini mural will **be** installed.
        • What is the cabinet coated with now?
        • Is the utility cabinet surface suitable for painting a mural? [Yes/No] If no, specify the issues: [Surface issue description]
        • Note any irregularities, damage, or necessary repairs:

- Describe the ground around the cabinet (condition, debris, etc.):

5. **Type of Mural:** (check all that apply)

   1. Mural painted on exterior of utility cabinet and base:
   2. Mural consisting of vinyl wrap or other material affixed to exterior of utility cabinet:

6. **Accessibility**

   1. Is the utility cabinet easily accessible for artists to work on? [Yes/No]
   2. Are there any obstacles or obstructions (e.g. vegetation, poles, power lines, position near fence, ant mounds, etc.) that could hinder the painting process? [Yes/No] If yes, specify:
      - [Obstacle/Obstruction description]:
      - [Location of obstacle/obstruction]:
   3. Are there any safety concerns or hazards associated with the utility cabinet? [Yes/No] If yes, describe:

7. **Surroundings**

   1. Is the utility cabinet located in a high-traffic area? [Yes/No]
   2. How close to the road is the cabinet?

8. **Exposure**

   1. Is the utility cabinet exposed to direct sunlight for an extended period each day? [Yes/No]
   2. Does the utility cabinet experience extreme weather conditions? [Yes/No] If yes, specify:

9. **Additional Notes/Comments**

   1. Please check ALL that apply, if known:
      - The mural site is a chronic target for graffiti: [Yes/No/ I don't know]
      - The mural site is highly visible from the street: [Yes/No]
      - The mural site has never been tagged but will make a great site because:
      - The mural site currently has another mural on display that has been previously vandalized or is faded
      - Why do you want a mural at this location?
      - Any additional comments, observations, or recommendations:

10. **Site Assessor Information**

    1. Name:
    2. Position:
    3. Signature:

Please complete this form to the best of your ability and attach it to your application. Thank you for your cooperation.

City of Laredo
Standard Operating Procedures for Ground Painting Site Assessment

<div style="border:1px solid">

Site Assessment Form: Ground Painting

</div>

Complete form <u>only</u> if you are recommending a new location for a ground painting.

Date:

1. Project Details

1. Applicant Name:
2. Project Title:
3. Artist (if known):
4. Contact Person:
5. Phone Number for Contact Person:
6. Installation Timeline (if known, how long will it take to install the ground painting):
7. Permanent Ground Painting: Yes/No
8. Estimated frequency of maintenance (if known):
9. Estimated Duration, if temporary:

2. General Information

1. Site Location / Address:

2. Site Coordinates (latitude longitude, google maps plus codes):

3. Assessment Date:

3. Artwork Area Dimensions

Record the approximate dimensions of the artwork area.

1. Height: _____ O ____ in
2. Width: _____ O ____ in
3. Depth: _____ O ____ in

4. Surface Type (Select the most appropriate option)

1. Asphalt
2. Black Top
3. Concrete (bare, coating, or sealed?)
4. Paved Brick
5. Cobblestone
6. Other:

5. Existing Conditions: (Check all that apply)

1. New surface
2. Smooth and even surface
3. Rough or uneven surface
4. Cracked or damaged surface
5. Other:

6. Location Type

1. Crosswalk
2. Street
3. Embankments (e.g. curbs)
4. Sidewalk
5. Trail
6. Pedestrian Plaza
7. Other:

7. Materials

1. Tempera Paint
2. Water-Based Field-Marking Paint
3. Latex or Acrylic Household Paint
4. Traffic Marking Paint (water or oil based)
5. Epoxy-based pavement coating
6. MMA (Methyl Methacrylate)
7. Thermoplastic
8. Other:

8. Site Assessment

8.1 Surface Condition

1. Is the surface clean and free from debris? [Yes/No]

2. Are there existing marked crosswalks, curb extensions, or other traffic pavement markings? [Yes / No]. If yes, describe:

3. Are there any significant cracks, potholes, or other damages that need to be addressed? [Yes/No]

4. Are there other street design elements such as: ADA ramps, bus stops, electrical poles, on-street parking, or driveway curb cuts? [Yes/No] If yes, describe:

8.2 Surrounding Environment

1. Is there heavy traffic or foot traffic in the area? [Yes/No]

   If yes, describe: (high-low foot traffic):

2. Are there any obstacles or obstructions near the painting area that may impact the artwork or access? [Yes/No] If yes, describe:

3. Are there any trees, lampposts, or other features that may affect the painting process? [Yes/No] If yes, describe:

4. Is the area well-lit during the day? [Yes/No]

5. Is the area well-lit during the night? [Yes/No]

9. Accessibility

1. Is there convenient access to the painting site for equipment and materials? [Yes/No]

   If no, please describe the possible approach to accessing the site with equipment and materials?

2. Are there any restrictions or permits required for working on the site, if known? [Yes / No / Not Sure]

3. Are there any nearby parking facilities for project team members or contractors? [Yes / No / Not Sure]

10. Safety Considerations

1. Do you have an artwork installation plan? [Yes/No] If yes, describe:

2. Are there any safety hazards in the vicinity of the painting area (e.g., busy roads, construction sites)? [Yes/No] If yes, describe:

3. Are there any potential risks to pedestrians or vehicles during the painting process? [Yes/No] If yes, describe:

11. Weather Conditions

1. Are there any specific weather conditions that may affect the painting process?

   [Yes/No] If yes, describe:

2. Is there a need for protective measures in case of rain, strong winds, or extreme temperatures? [Yes/No] If yes, describe:

12. Additional Notes and Comments

1. Please check ALL that apply, if known:

   • The ground painting site is a chronic target for graffiti: [Yes/No/ I don't know]

   • The mural site has never been tagged but will make a great site because:

   • The mural site currently has another mural on display that has been previously vandalized or is faded:

2. Why do you want artwork at this location?

3. Any additional comments, observations, or recommendations:

13. Site Assessor Information

1. Name:

2. Position:

3. Signature:

Please complete this form to the best of your ability and attach it to your application. Thank you for your cooperation.

City of Laredo
Standard Operating Procedures for Sculpture or Installation Site Assessment

Site Assessment Form for Sculpture or Installation, including Lighting Installation

Complete form only if you are recommending a new location for a sculpture or installation.

Date:

1. **Project Information**

    1. Applicant Name:
    2. Project Title:
    3. Artist (if known)
    4. Contact Person:
    5. Phone Number for Contact Person:
    6. Installation Type – please describe in detail:
        • Sculpture or Installation:
        • Light Installation:
        • Other (please specify):
    7. Installation Timeline (if known, how long will it take to install):
    8. Permanent Installation: Yes/No
    9. Estimated Duration, if temporary installation:

2. **General Information**

    1. Site Location / Address:

    2. Site Coordinates (latitude longitude, google maps plus codes):

    3. Assessment Date:

3. **Site Assessment**

    3.1 Site Conditions

    1. Describe the overall site conditions (e.g., urban, rural, indoor, outdoor):

    2. Note any potential challenges or restrictions related to the site (e.g., historical site, protected area, limitations on access):

    3.2 Site Topography

    1. Describe the terrain, elevation, slopes, and any notable features:

    2. Note any potential impact on installation stability:

    3.3 Surroundings

    1. Identify nearby structures, landscape elements, or significant features that may affect the installation (e.g., trees, light poles, power lines, buildings, bodies of water):

    2. Are there any potential interactions or visual relationships between the installation and its surroundings?

4. Climate and Environmental Factors

1. What are the typical weather conditions, including temperature ranges, precipitation, wind patterns, etc.?
2. Are there any specific environmental considerations (e.g., coastal exposure, high humidity, extreme temperatures, pollution) that may impact the materials, structural integrity, or long-term maintenance of the installation?

5. Accessibility

1. How accessible is the site for installation, transportation of materials, and equipment?
2. Are there any restrictions or requirements related to vehicle access, loading/unloading areas, and pathways to the installation site?

6. Utilities and Services

1. What is the availability and proximity of utilities such as electricity, water, and drainage?
2. Is there a need for power supply, lighting, or any specialized services for the installation?

7. Electrical Infrastructure (if applicable)

7.1 Power Source

1. Identify the available power source(s) near the installation site:
2. Specify the voltage and phase of the power source(s), if known:
3. How do you plan to supply your own power source, if needed?

7.2 Electrical Load Capacity

1. Determine the electrical load capacity of the power source(s) to support the lighting installation:
2. Note any limitations or requirements regarding load capacity:

7.3 Electrical Connections

1. Assess the feasibility of connecting the lighting installation to the power source(s):
2. Identify any necessary electrical wiring or conduits required:

8. Engineering Considerations (if applicable)

8.1 Structural Requirements

1. Given the chosen medium, what is the estimated weight of the installation?
2. What is the expected load-bearing capacity and anchoring needs for the installation?
3. What type of foundation or structural support is required based on the weight, size, and design of the sculpture/installation?
4. Are there any potential impacts of wind loads, seismic activity, or other external forces on the stability of the installation?

8.2 Materials and Durability

1. What materials are proposed for the sculpture/installation?

2. How durable and weather-resistant are the materials, and what are their maintenance requirements in relation to the site's climate and environmental factors? _____

3. What is the expected longevity of the installation, and are there any necessary protective coatings or treatments to ensure its preservation.

9. General Safety and Risk Assessment

1. What are the potential hazards and safety considerations associated with the installation?

2. Are there any public safety measures, including required barriers, warning signs, hand railings, or measures to prevent accidents or vandalism?

10. Installation Process

1. What is the step-by-step installation process, including any specialized equipment or expertise required?

2. Are there any specific timeframes, logistical considerations, or coordination needed with site personnel or contractors?

11. Lighting Design (if applicable)

11.1 Objectives

1. Outline the desired lighting objectives for the installation (e.g., light art project, accentuate artwork, enhance visibility, create ambiance):

2. Specify any specific color schemes, lighting effects, or programmable features:

11.2 Light Fixtures (if known)

1. Determine the number and type of light fixtures needed for the installation:

2. Describe the desired placement and arrangement of the fixtures:

11.3 Light Levels (if known)

1. Determine the desired light levels for different areas within the installation site:

2. Identify any specific areas requiring different light levels (e.g., pathways, seating areas):

11.4 Controls (if known)

1. Identify the preferred control system for the lighting installation (e.g., manual switches, dimmers, automated programming):

2. Specify any special control requirements or features:

12. Additional Notes and Comments

1. Any additional observations or recommendations:

13. Site Assessor Information

1. Name:
2. Position:
3. Signature:

Please complete this form to the best of your ability and attach it to your application. Thank you for your cooperation.

City of Laredo
Standard Operating Procedures for Evaluation for Public Art Proposals

Evaluation Criteria

Each completed proposal will be evaluated by an objective Evaluation Committee based on four key criteria, with a maximum possible score of 100 points.

PUBLIC ART PROPOSALS EVALUATION CRITERIA

- Artistic Merit
- Relevance and Impact
- Feasibility
- Artist/Organization Qualifications

25%
35%
30%
10%
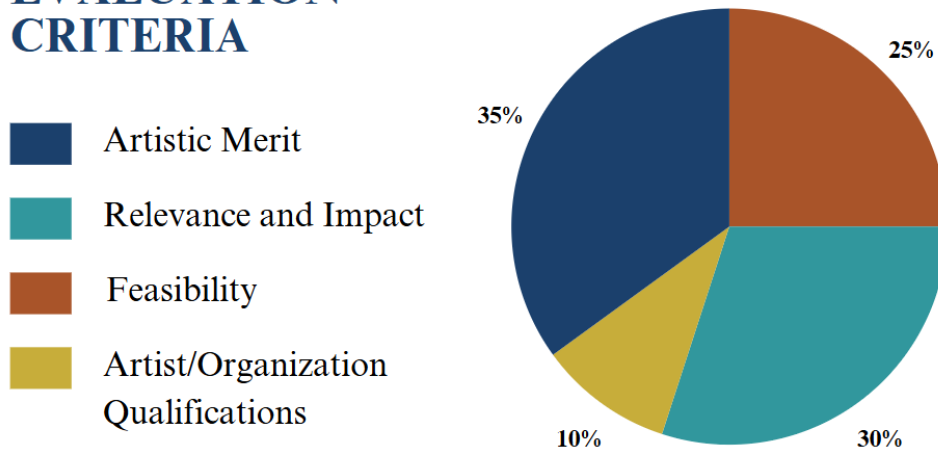
Evaluation Committee Members:

1. The committee is composed of qualified individuals, such as artists, cultural experts, representatives from relevant city departments, and community members.
2. The committee is appointed by the Public Art Program Manager and/or authorized city personnel.
   2.1 Members selection prioritize diversity of background, experience, and perspective to ensure fair and impartial evaluations.
   2.2 If applicable, the Fine Arts and Culture Committee member serving on the evaluation committee acts as the representative voice for public art in their area. They should engage in community outreach, assist with intake applications, and direct community members to the feedback survey.
   2.3 *Individual serving on the committee must recuse themselves from deliberations or votes where they may have a direct or perceived conflict of interest.*
   2.4 Conflicts of interest include, but are not limited to, being an employee, board member, officer, or owner of an entity submitting a proposal or seeking funding.
3. The evaluation committee do not directly distribute funds or select organizations that receive city funds for public art project proposals.
   3.1 The evaluation committee make informed recommendations to the Public Art Program Manager and/or designated city staff based on artistic merit, feasibility, and alignment with community values.

4. Depending on the project type, final decisions regarding funding, contracts, or commissions are made by the Public Art Program Manager and/or designated city staff, elected officials, City Council members, and/or the designated city authority.

1. **Artistic Merit (35 points)**

   - Creativity and Originality (15 points)
   - Quality of Previous Work (10 points)
   - Artist's Vision (10 points)

2. **Relevance and Impact (30 points)**

   - Community Engagement (10 points)
   - Cultural Significance (10 points)
   - Educational Value (10 points)

3. **Feasibility (25 points)**

   - Technical Feasibility (10 points)
   - Maintenance (15 points)

4. **Artist/Organization Qualifications (10 points)**

   - Experience (5 points):
   - References and Reputation (5 points):

City of Laredo
Standard Operating Procedures for Public Art Projects

<u>MURALS</u>

Murals are widely accepted by stakeholders in the city. Murals have experienced a remarkable surge in popularity in recent years, captivating communities worldwide with their vibrant colors and compelling designs. These large-scale artworks have become powerful tools for self-expression, cultural representation, and urban revitalization, fostering a sense of identity and unity among local residents while attracting tourists and art enthusiasts alike.

Murals add color and life to private and public spaces. Outdoors, murals can also improve dark or neglected spaces or even become a focal point of a neighborhood.

Murals can also be immensely satisfying projects for established and emerging artists who want to see their work on a grand scale. You don't have to be a professional to paint a mural, but it's important to have substantial painting or illustrating experience, be comfortable working with paint, and be prepared to create drafts and work at a large scale.

There are many things to consider when painting a mural:

1. What Kind of Mural? — Interior or Exterior
2. What Kind of Paint? — Optimal Mural Paint
3. What Else is Needed? — Artist Supplies
4. Anything Else? — Hardware Supplies
5. Surface Preparation
6. Environment
7. Surface Protection
8. Maintenance
9. Budget
10. Planning and community engagement

In this SOP, we provide guidelines for artists and anyone interested in creating public art projects on city property. While this guidance focuses on outdoor murals, many of the same techniques and processes can generally be applied to indoor murals as well.

To ensure the longevity and integrity of public artworks, applicants are strongly encouraged to thoroughly research their materials, follow appropriate techniques, and adhere to industry best practices.

STEPS TO PAINTING A MURAL

1. Assess the wall and its environment.
2. Draft a scaled concept.
3. Gather supplies.
4. Planning the mural.
5. Prep the wall.
6. Scale your design.
7. Paint the wall.
8. Seal the wall.

Step-by-Step Instructions for Painting a Mural

Step 1. Assess the wall and its environment.

When creating an outdoor mural, it is important to consider weather conditions and other environmental factors that may impact the longevity of the artwork. Durability can be affected by variables such as the building material, paint type, color selection, directional exposure, and surrounding environment Using sun and weatherproof paint is an important step, but murals in places with heavy foot traffic or exposed to harsh elements, pollution, or exhaust fumes may discolor and get old faster.

The surface you are working on may include brick, masonry, cement, stucco, latex-painted walls, unfinished surfaces, or walls that are new and clean—or old and weathered. Each surface requires different preparation and may affect how paint adheres and ages over time. When planning, preparing, and painting your mural, the qualities of surfaces become important considerations. Early in your thinking, it might be prudent to consider painting on panels rather than directly onto the surface at hand, especially if the wall you are working on is rough, dirty, patchy, or heavily textured.

See Exhibit A (Wall Assessment Form) for a complete set of environmental and production factors.

Step 2. Draft a scaled concept.

Whatever you're painting, you'll need a strong concept and several preliminary sketches before applying paint to any wall. Creating scaled mock-ups is a crucial step—accurate proportions in your small-scale design help ensure the mural looks correct when transferred to a large surface.

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One effective method is to assign a consistent ratio—for example, each inch in your sketch could represent one foot on the wall. This means a 10-inch by 8-inch drawing would scale to a 10-foot by 8-foot mural. Using this approach, artists can transfer their design to a large surface accurately by marking out a corresponding grid on both the sketch and the wall to ensure correct placement and proportions.

Some artists use digital projectors to trace their designs directly onto the wall. However, this method isn't always accessible. Outdoor locations may lack nearby electrical outlets, and setting up the projector in the exact same position over multiple days can be challenging—slight shifts can throw off proportions. For this reason, understanding how to scale your work manually is an essential skill for muralists working in varied environments.

Step 3. Gather supplies.

To complete an outdoor mural, the following materials—organized into applicable categories—are typically required, though additional items may be necessary depending on the specific project and site conditions.
The applicant (artist and/or organization) is responsible for all supplies, protective equipment, accommodations, travel, and all related materials related to and during the execution of the mural.

Surface Preparation & Protection

1. Wire brushes or scrapers – remove old paint/debris
    o Power Drill, Drill batteries, & Drill Brush for quicker removal
2. Power washer – for cleaning large surfaces
3. Soap or appropriate surface cleaner – dependent on surface type, helps remove dirt, oils, or residues before priming
4. Primer and sealants – for proper adhesion and longevity
5. Masking tape/painter's tape – for sharp edges and masking areas
6. Drop cloths/plastic sheeting – protect surroundings from paint
7. Tarp – for ground protection or covering supplies
8. Rags/paper towels – for wiping surfaces and cleaning

Measuring, Layout & Design Transfer Tools

1. Measuring tape
2. Chalk line – for straight, long lines
3. Laser level OR Meter Stick – for accurate horizontal alignment
4. String – for measuring or using guidelines
5. Pencil or erasable chalk – for sketching outlines or grid
6. Clipboard or sketchpad – for notes and referencing the design
7. Printed scaled design/mock-up – for accuracy
8. **Projector (optional)** – for projecting the design directly on the wall
    o Extension cord – to power a projector or other tools

Painting Tools & Materials

1. Paints: (Silicate/Mineral, Enamel, Acrylic, Acrylic Latex, Industrial, and/or Aerosol (spray paint))
2. Brushes and rollers
3. Roller extension poles
4. Paint sprayer & Water to thin out paint if needed
5. Paint trays, buckets
6. Several buckets of water – for cleaning brushes/tools

Equipment & Support Tools

1. Stepladder, ladder, scissor lift or boom lift (and plywood for leveling on uneven surfaces)

2. Canopy or tent – for shade and shelter, if needed
3. **Fan** – to help paint dry faster or provide airflow in hot conditions

Safety Gear & Personal Protection

1. Gloves
2. Safety goggles
3. Safety vest
4. Respirator with filters – if using aerosol or industrial paints
5. Hard hat – if working in/around construction areas
6. High-visibility vest – if working near roads or public areas
7. Non-slip footwear
8. Clamp light – for working in low-light conditions (morning/night) or cloudy days
9. **Weather-appropriate protective clothing**:
   o Breathable, long-sleeve shirts and pants for sun exposure
   o Layered clothing for cold weather
   o Wide-brim hat or cap for sun protection
   o Sunscreen
   o Hydration (water bottle/cooler)

Documentation

1. Camera or smartphone – for before, during, and after photos
2. Sketches or digital renderings – for stakeholder reference and approval

Selection of Material: Consideration

You will need a variety of brushes—larger ones and smaller detail brushes in both flat-edged and chisel tipped brushes are useful. Different brushes are necessary for enamel, acrylic, and latex paints. You may also need a sponge roller (and a paint tray or paint bucket) for covering larger surfaces with a single color. You never know what nook or cranny you might need to get into. Having a wide range of brushes will really help you.

Roll anything larger than four inches in width. By rolling you get a better coat of paint on the wall that will last many years longer than filling things in with a brush. You will save time and energy and not have to work so hard painting the inside gaps as a thick grade roller should get most of these spaces. This also goes for using paint sprayers. If using a paint sprayer, be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions for the specific type of paint. Paint sprayers often require water or other thinning agents and are best used in light, even layers. Always clean the sprayer thoroughly between colors to avoid clogging and ensure color accuracy.

For outdoor murals, you'll need **hard-wearing water and weatherproof paints** appropriate for the type of wall, like enamel, acrylic or latex paints suitable for outdoor use. If you're comfortable with a spray can, you can also use spray paint for indoor and outdoor murals. If using them indoors, ensure the room is well-ventilated, and in both locations, wear a mask to prevent inhalation of the paint and safety goggles. Spray paint allows for good blending but one can doesn't cover much wall area.

Oil paint isn't recommended for outdoor art and mural painting. It continues to oxidize, becoming harder, more brittle, and less flexible overtime. Oil paint does not breathe. Moisture cannot be transmitted away from a painted wall if it becomes wet. The oil-painted surface requires more attentiveness and protection than is practical in an outdoor setting.

If you're painting a very large wall (such as the side of a multi-story building), it will be best to use

industrial-level paints that are self-priming.

Concrete or brick walls are the most common surface to see outdoor murals on, but you may also want to paint on metal (such as garage doors) or wood walls. You might even need to know how to paint a mural on a wood fence. While concrete and brick walls are suitable for almost any kind of paint, metal or wood walls are a bit trickier, and it's important to look for paints that are suitable for these surfaces.

If your design includes metallics or other specialty finishes, keep in mind that these paints are typically more expensive, though they are often available in smaller quantities. When working within a budget, it's important to consider the type and amount of paint needed during the design phase. Planning a large, shimmering metallic element—like a radiant sun rendered in enamel—may not be cost-effective. This may be a better opportunity to incorporate spray paint, which offers a wider variety of specialty finishes, including metallics, and can be applied more efficiently for detailed or textured effects.

Step 4. Planning the mural.

If you're working on a massive scale, spend some time carefully planning the perspective and scaling the design before you get into the painting phase. When you're first learning how to paint a mural on a wall, it's even more important to take your time planning, your approach to type of paint.

You will also need to factor in the weather when painting outside. You can't paint when it's raining, but you probably don't want to stand outside all day in the mid-summer sun, either. Work in the cooler mornings and evenings, or when there's some cloud cover, if possible. If you're working in low-light conditions (morning/night) or cloudy days it is suggested to use clamp lights.

When working on a mural, it's essential to understand the compatibility of different paint types to ensure the longevity and integrity of your work. If you plan to layer or combine paints—such as acrylics and oils—take care to apply them in the correct order. **For example**, oil-based paint can be applied over a fully dried acrylic layer. *Conversely,* acrylic paint should *not* be applied over oil-based paint, as it will not adhere properly and can lead to peeling or flaking over time. A seasoned muralist is typically familiar with these techniques and should still plan ahead, but anyone newer to mural painting is strongly encouraged to research the specific materials they plan to use. Understanding proper layering, compatibility, and drying times is crucial, as improper mixing can compromise both the durability and appearance of the final piece.

Step 5. Prep the wall.

Prepping is a crucial step for painting outdoor walls. Water leaks, moss or mold, and other moisture can affect how the paint adheres to the wall, and ultimately how long a mural will last.

The primary enemy is moisture. Moisture in the wall, combined with the freeze/thaw cycles occurring in northern winters, can cause flaking of paint layers and sometimes spalling of the wall surface. Murals that are painted on old brick and concrete walls are particularly prone to this kind of damage.

Moisture can originate from many sources:
1. The ground (rising damp)
2. Within the building if the wall structure or insulation is inadequate
3. Openings such as cracks or joints that do not have adequate flashings or caulking
4. Deteriorated mortar
5. Water run-off from the roof, etc.

Before painting a mural on a wall, inspect the wall carefully to ensure it does not have a moisture problem:

1. Is there salt efflorescence or other signs of moisture damage?
2. How does water move over the wall during rainfall — does it flow over the surface or is it directed away?
3. Is a "wetting" pattern or area visible?
4. Are improvements necessary to divert water flow and drainage?
5. Do the caulking or flashing need improvements?
6. Have modifications to the wall resulted in areas of local instability?
7. Is there staining/rusting from metal attachments?
8. Are bathroom, laundry, or kitchen vents present?

Cleaning

We would recommend pressure washing to remove any flaking existing paint or loose debris. Use a lower pressure setting so you don't damage the grout.

Proper cleaning of the wall is the *MOST* important step in preparing for a mural. We would recommend pressure washing to remove any flaking existing paint or loose debris. Use a lower pressure setting to avoid damaging the grout. In addition to power washing, wire brushes and soapy water should be used to remove dust, cobwebs, and other dirt. If you have access to a power drill with a wire brush attachment, it may make the process easier and more efficient. Depending on the condition of the surface, you may even need to scrape off any stubborn debris. Pressure washing is recommended to thoroughly clean the surface and ensure adhesion.

In some cases, sandblasting may be required, especially for surfaces like concrete, stucco, or masonry that are heavily soiled or have multiple layers of old paint. Sandblasting provides a more aggressive cleaning method to prepare the surface for painting, ensuring proper adhesion and a longer-lasting mural.

For wood or metal surfaces, proper preparation is also crucial. Wood should be sanded down to remove any rough spots, old paint, or stains, and it may require a wood primer to prevent moisture damage. For metal surfaces, rust should be removed, and the surface may need to be primed to ensure that the paint adheres properly. Cleaning and sanding these surfaces beforehand will provide a solid base for your mural and help ensure that your artwork lasts.

All walls are different, so prepping may take different forms, but ultimately, you want to turn the wall into a clean canvas for your art.

Repairs

You might find that your wall has chips, holes, or other imperfections. Some textural irregularities might be covered up by your mural, especially if it's a detailed design with lots of colors and patterns, while other imperfections will look better if you fix them at the prepping stage.

Small holes should be repaired using a spackling compound or patching plaster, depending on the surface. It's important to research the appropriate method for your specific surface type. These materials should be applied to the holes, allowed to dry, and then sanded smooth. Once prepared, you can paint over the patched area, ensuring a smooth, even surface for proper paint adhesion.

Fix any existing gutter leaks or structural issues noticed after the cleaning. This could include mortar repair, stucco, caulking seams, etc. Color matching is not as important in areas that will be painted

over. Please allow adequate time for any masonry repairs to properly cure before priming.

Priming

Once the surface is cleaned and repaired, we recommend using a high-quality primer. Unless noted otherwise, using a WHITE color base for all primers is best, but depending on the design gray may suffice. It is recommended that the entire background be primed and painted first. Doing so will give you an easier surface to work on when you have to paint those fine details.

For a wall that has never been painted previously, a primer is absolutely required. A commercial-grade primer is best, appropriate for the wall surface (concrete, brick, wood, metal, etc.). Brick surfaces may require a brick sealer primer. If budget allows, for a surface that has graffiti underneath or a faded mural, a block primer may be needed.

If your mural requires a base layer in a uniform color, use a roller or a paint sprayer to paint the whole surface. The primer can also be sprayed and then back rolled with a thicker nap to really get into the grooves. If you don't have access to a sprayer, you can just roll it as well.

It is recommended the always apply two coats of primer. Wait a sufficient amount of time for the paint to dry before going to the next step—possibly overnight. If budget allows, this can be done by a contractor as they can get this done quickly.

Assuming that the surface is masonry (concrete, stucco, cinderblocks, bricks, etc.) here are some quality products that we recommend:

- Sherwin Williams LOXON Concrete & Masonry Primer
- ZINSSER Bulls Eye 1-2-3 Water Based Primer

The following is a brief overview of methods for preparing various surface types before priming.

More specific and detailed information is available through a Web search of particular surfaces and problems. It is strongly recommended to conduct thorough research on any unforeseen surface preparation requirements that may not be explicitly covered.

Concern yourself with the nature of the surface

Consider the kind of paint and its physical condition. Painting over an existing coat is never as permanent as a stripped and freshly coated surface. If the paint is a water-based polymer, chances are good that the recommended paints will adhere sufficiently. Always abrade or remove high-gloss paint—especially if it is oil-based—to ensure proper adhesion of new paint layers. If the existing paint film is deteriorating, then it is best to have it removed (sandblasted, power-washed, scraped, etc.). It is critical to wash any painted surface, even a newly painted surface, with soap and water prior to application of acrylic products. A major coatings manufacturer states that as much as 80% of all coating's failure can be directly related to insufficient surface preparation.

Outdoor unpainted wood

Prime clean, dry unpainted wood as soon as possible. Ideally, temperatures are between 65 degrees F and 75 degrees F, not lower than 50 degrees F, and never if it is rainy or foggy. Sand and spot-prime knots. Mend cracks and splits with acrylic caulk before spot-priming. Follow with wood primer or gesso.

Painted wood

Remove loose, peeling paint; sand rough patches smooth. Use commercial cleaners and detergent solutions to clean deposits of dirt, grease, and oil. Power washing is another option. Remove mold and mildew with bleach or appropriate commercial cleaner. Take precautions: wear rubber gloves, protect eyes, avoid getting on skin. Never mix bleach with any substance with ammonia content. Abrade, use household abrasive cleaner or liquid de-glosser on glossy surfaces, and clean well with soapy water. Always rinse thoroughly and allow surface to dry completely before continuing.

Bare masonry

Verify whether the masonry has a glazed finish, as paint will not adhere properly to glazed surfaces. Clean and treat mature masonry with a masonry conditioner to improve adhesion. If the surface's porosity is reduced, a filler may be blocked—so ensure proper preparation before applying a latex primer suitable for masonry. Use a breathable, alkali-resistant masonry primer designed to accommodate expansion and contraction.

Newly constructed masonry must fully cure—*typically for 28 days—*before applying any coatings. Premature priming can trap moisture and cause peeling or efflorescence. Masonry must be completely dry. Use a moisture meter if needed, especially if the area has recently been cleaned or rained on.

White, chalky mineral deposits should be removed with a stiff brush and appropriate masonry cleaner before priming. Failure to do so may prevent proper adhesion.

Painted masonry

Begin by removing all loose, peeling, or flaking paint using a scraper, wire brush, or power washer. Ensure the surface is free of dirt, grease, oils, waxes, and any resistant substances that could interfere with adhesion. Old coatings should be abraded—either by sanding or, if necessary, sandblasting—to create a surface profile suitable for bonding.

If the existing paint has a glossy finish, especially if it is oil-based, it must be dulled or removed to allow for proper adhesion of new coatings. Always test a small area to confirm adhesion before proceeding.

Inspect the masonry for signs of efflorescence (white powdery deposits), which should be scrubbed off with a stiff brush and an appropriate masonry cleaner. Moisture problems must be addressed at the source before painting, as trapped moisture can lead to failure of the new coating.

Use a breathable, alkali-resistant masonry primer that's compatible with the existing paint type. Special primers from industrial or specialty suppliers may improve adhesion and may eliminate the need for aggressive abrasion, depending on the condition of the painted surface.

Proper surface prep is especially critical for exterior masonry, where exposure to weather can accelerate deterioration if the new paint is not bonded securely.

Metal surfaces

All metal surfaces must be completely clean, dry, and lightly abraded to promote proper paint adhesion. Surface preparation is essential to prevent premature peeling, rust, or poor bonding. Remove all rust, mill scale, grease, oils, and old flaking paint using a wire brush, sandpaper, degreaser, or appropriate solvents. For heavily rusted areas, consider using a rust converter or rust-inhibitive primer before applying paint.

Each type of metal (e.g., aluminum, galvanized steel, iron) requires specific preparation and compatible primers. For example:

- **Aluminum** should be degreased and lightly sanded, and may benefit from an etching primer.

- **Steel** often requires rust removal and a rust-inhibitive primer.

- **Galvanized metal** needs degreasing and potentially a special galvanized metal primer to prevent peeling.

- **Iron** should be thoroughly cleaned of rust using a wire brush or sandpaper, then treated with a rust converter (if needed), and primed with a rust-inhibitive metal primer formulated for ferrous metals to prevent corrosion.

Check manufacturer recommendations and consult product labels or online technical sheets for guidance specific to the metal you are working with.

A DTM (Direct-to-Metal) primer is often recommended for convenience and durability, but ensure it is appropriate for the type of metal and environmental exposure. If the mural will be outdoors, select a primer rated for exterior use and compatible with your chosen topcoat paint (e.g., acrylic, enamel).

Be sure to follow proper drying and recoat times. Failure to do so can compromise adhesion and reduce the longevity of the mural.

That said, painting directly onto metal is not always the best long-term solution due to its non-porous nature and susceptibility to environmental factors like moisture and temperature fluctuations. In some cases, a high-quality vinyl wrap or other alternative surface treatment may offer greater durability and ease of maintenance, particularly for detailed or high-value designs where longevity is a priority.

Additionally, metal surfaces can reach temperatures significantly higher than the ambient air temperature when exposed to direct sunlight. This amplified heat can affect both the application and curing of paint layers, potentially leading to faster degradation or compromised adhesion. It's important to consider both environmental conditions and the unique thermal properties of metal when planning a mural on this type of surface.

Brick

Brick, especially old brick, tends to be absorbent. Use masonry conditioner on brick surfaces and a masonry sealer. If there are doubts about how to prepare any surfaces or about what sort of materials to use on them, consult with experts (such as a sales rep at a commercial paint store) before you begin.

They will have current information about products and suggestions on how to use them. They will understand the kinds of problems you may encounter with the kinds of surfaces you are covering.

Stucco

Before painting on a stucco wall, it's essential to properly prime the surface to ensure good paint adhesion and longevity. Start by cleaning the wall thoroughly to remove dirt, debris, or loose particles—use a stiff brush or pressure washer if needed, but allow the surface to dry completely. Apply a high-quality masonry or acrylic primer using a roller or brush designed for textured surfaces. For very rough or porous stucco, two coats of primer may be necessary. Be sure to let the primer dry thoroughly according to the manufacturer's instructions before beginning any painting.

Step 6. Scale Your Design

If you have a detailed mural design, it's important to scale it appropriately to fit the larger surface area of your wall. Without proper scaling, you risk distorting the perspective or proportions of key elements. This is why Step 2: Draft a Scaled Concept is essential in your design process. Scaling is less critical if you're working with abstract or decorative patterns that don't require precise proportions or alignment.

The easiest and fastest way to scale your design is by using a projector, if available. Project the image onto the wall and trace it with chalk or paint. Be mindful of maintaining consistent projector placement to ensure accurate proportions, especially when tracing intricate designs that may span multiple days of work.

If a projector is not available, there are alternative methods such as the grid method and the doodle grid method:

1. **Grid Method:** Divide your design into proportional squares that match the scale of your wall. Use light chalk lines or string to mark out the same grid on the wall, then carefully transfer your image square by square. This method is time-consuming but very effective for achieving accurate scaling without technology.

2. **Doodle Grid Method:** This modern technique replaces the traditional grid with a wall full of random, easily identifiable doodles or shapes. Take a photo of the wall once the doodles are complete, then digitally overlay your design. This reference helps guide placement and proportions as you sketch the design directly onto the wall. It's a creative and flexible approach especially useful for complex or organic compositions.

Step 7. Paint the wall.

As you work, regularly step back to assess the piece from a distance, as it's easy to lose perspective or get sizing wrong when viewing up close. Taking this step ensures the overall composition remains balanced. However, for your safety, NEVER step back into the street.

When painting, work from background to foreground elements to avoid smudging and to ensure visual depth and clarity in the design.

It's advisable to work from the top down during each step of painting. This approach accounts for gravity, allowing any drips to fall onto areas you haven't finished yet, making touch-ups easier as you progress toward the bottom of the wall.

Keep your phone, sketches, and/or renderings on hand for reference.

1. **Outline the Large Shapes:** After prepping your wall, start by painting the larger shapes or designs first. This provides a clear framework for the overall mural.

2. **Block in Base Colors:** Once the large shapes are outlined, begin blocking in the base colors within those shapes. This will serve as the backdrop for any finer details. Use larger brushes, paint sprayers, or rollers for more efficient coverage, but remember to stay within the lines of the larger shapes.

3. **Blending:** If your design calls for smooth, transitional blends (such as creating a 3-dimensional effect or gradient), use the appropriate brush size to achieve the desired effect. This step helps in creating smooth transitions and will be important if you're working with complex lighting or shadow effects.

   If available, a paint sprayer is highly recommended for achieving even, consistent blends across larger areas. When using a sprayer, always remember to clean it thoroughly between paint colors to prevent clogging or unintended color mixing. Thin the paint as needed, according to the manufacturer's instructions, to ensure smooth application.

4. **Add Details:** After the base colors have dried, move on to adding more intricate details. A

smaller, chiseled-tip brush is ideal for these fine touches, allowing you to refine shapes, outlines, and smaller elements. Pay attention to how these details contribute to the overall composition.

5. **Final Touch-ups:** Once the major details are painted, take time to carefully examine the mural. Look for areas that may need additional layers or touch-ups to ensure smooth, even coverage and clean lines.

Step 8. Seal the wall / Surface protection.

Once your mural is fully dry, it's important to protect it to ensure its longevity and resistance to weather, pollutants, UV rays, and vandalism. Exposed paint surfaces are vulnerable and will deteriorate more quickly without proper sealing. To help preserve your work, apply a protective, durable coating suited to the surface and the environment.

Step 1: Apply an Isolation Coat

An isolation coat serves as a barrier between the painted surface and the final varnish or topcoat. It adds durability, unifies the painted surface, and protects the underlying acrylic paint in case the final varnish needs to be removed later for maintenance or graffiti removal.
Golden Paints recommends:

- **For spray application**: A 2:1 mixture of **GAC 500** with **Transparent Airbrush Extender**.
- **For brush application**: A 2:1 mixture of **Soft Gel Gloss** to water.

Allow the isolation coat to cure for **2 to 5 days** before applying any varnish or protective topcoat.

Step 2: Choose Your Protective Finish

You have several options for sealing your mural depending on your surface (brick, metal, wood, masonry) and desired durability:

Artist-Grade Varnish (Recommended for High-Quality Finish)
Apply a product such as **Golden MSA (Mineral Spirit Acrylic) Varnish**, which includes UV protection to prevent fading.

- Offers strong resistance to moisture, dirt, and pollutants.
- Removable with mineral spirits or turpentine—ideal for long-term maintenance or graffiti removal.
- Spray application recommended (1–3 thin coats for best results).

Solvent-Based Polyurethane Coating
Solvent-based polyurethanes provide a tough, industrial-grade protective barrier over painted surfaces.

- Not artist-grade; may discolor (yellow) over time, especially in direct sun exposure.
- Best suited for high-traffic or harsh environments.
- Always consult the product specifications and artist reviews before use.

Mural-Specific Anti-Graffiti or Exterior Clear Coats *(Alternative Option)*
For added protection, especially in public or high-risk areas, use an **anti-graffiti barrier coating** or **UV-stabilized exterior clear coat** specifically designed for murals or architectural finishes. These products are formulated to resist environmental degradation and facilitate cleaning if the mural is vandalized.

- Available in matte, satin, or gloss finishes.
- Designed to withstand fluctuations in temperature and humidity.
- Some products allow graffiti to be removed without damaging the mural beneath.

Note: When sealing murals on masonry, leave a small unsealed edge (breathing space) to prevent moisture or gases from becoming trapped, which can cause bubbling or peeling. This is especially important for porous walls like brick or concrete.

Also consider: Because metal surfaces retain more heat than ambient air temperatures, this can accelerate the breakdown of coatings and paints. Be especially diligent in your product selection for metal surfaces, and consider temperature-resistant sealers or alternatives like vinyl mural wraps for longer durability.

Maintenance

For any mural painted on City property, a maintenance plan and related questions are included in the intake form. A maintenance plan will be in place to address unforeseen issues such as graffiti removal, vandalism, or weather-related damage.

It's important to note maintenance planning is a required component for muralist. While normal wear is expected over time—particularly for outdoor murals exposed to the elements—concerns arise when signs of deterioration, such as peeling, flaking, or fading, appear prematurely. This may result from improper surface preparation, incorrect layering of paint types, or inadequate weatherproofing techniques, and can reflect poorly on the artist's or organizations professional standards. Such issues may be taken into consideration when evaluating future proposals. To ensure the longevity and integrity of public artworks, applicants are strongly encouraged to thoroughly research their materials, follow appropriate techniques, and adhere to industry best practices.

As part of the maintenance plan, the mural should be inspected for signs of wear or damage at least once or twice per year, especially in spring. If deterioration of the clear coat is visible—such as cracking or flaking— gently remove any loose material and apply a fresh coat of clear sealant.

For routine cleaning, use mild soap (without ammonia), warm water, and a soft sponge to gently wash the mural by hand. Avoid pressure washing and harsh solvents. In the event of graffiti, cleaning should be conducted by or in consultation with someone experienced in mural conservation, such as a professional conservator.

Ongoing care of the paint surface is essential. The Canadian Conservation Institute offers a downloadable form for tracking the condition of outdoor murals, which can be a valuable tool for anyone seeking to preserve their mural over the long term.

To ensure the longevity and integrity of public artwork, artists are strongly encouraged to:

- o Carefully research and select materials appropriate for the specific surface and environmental conditions.
- o Use proper techniques for surface preparation, application, and sealing.
- o Follow established industry best practices throughout all stages of mural production.

Reference/Sources

In accordance with the resources below, it is always recommended to conduct your own research based on the specific project type and surface. When selecting materials, consult with experts and review relevant technical details. There is a wealth of free, accessible resources available online, including instructional videos and professional guidance.

This guide was developed using a variety of reputable sources, including:
- Skill Share: How to Paint a Mural: A Step-by-Step Guide

- [Ecker Design Co.: Tips and Tricks for Painting a Mural on a Brick Wall](#)
- [The Paint Spot: 10 Mural Tips for Artists](#)
- [Canada.ca: Creating a new mural](#)
- [Greetings Tour: Mural Maintenance](#)

City of Laredo
Standard Operating Procedures for Public Art Projects

MURALS ON UTILITY CABINET (MINI MURALSTM)

The City of Laredo recognizes the value of incorporating public art into urban spaces, including utility cabinets such as traffic signal control cabinets. This initiative transforms these functional structures into canvases for artistic expression, enhancing the visual appeal of the city and promoting community pride. Utility cabinet art offers opportunities for artists to contribute to urban beautification while also protecting these cabinets from vandalism. This SOP provides guidelines for artists proposing to paint utility cabinets on city property.

There are many things to consider when painting a mural on a utility cabinet:
1. Location and Environment
2. Materials and Supplies
3. Surface Preparation
4. Artistic Process
5. Surface Protection
6. Maintenance
7. Budget
8. Community engagement

STEPS TO PAINTING A MURAL ON A UTILITY CABINETS

1. Assess the cabinet and its environment.

2. Modify your Design.

3. Gather supplies.

4. Prep the surface.

5. Transfer your design.

6. Paint the cabinet.

7. Apply protective coatings.

Step-by-Step Instructions on how to Paint a Mural on a Utility Cabinet (Traffic Signal Control Cabinet)

Step 1. Assess the Cabinet and Its Environment.

Begin by evaluating the utility cabinet's current condition, location, and exposure to weather. Note any specific challenges, such as proximity to high-traffic areas or potential obstructions. Consider factors such as visibility, sunlight exposure, and the surrounding landscape. This assessment helps determine the best approach for preparing and painting the cabinet.

See "Site Assessment Form: Utility Cabinets" for a complete set of environmental and production factors that need to be considered.

Step 2: Modify your Design.

See DESIGN GUIDELINES in Appendix A.

Each utility cabinet varies in size and the placement of essential controls. You may need to adjust your initial design to accommodate these elements. Ensure your design maintains appropriate proportions and scale relative to the cabinet's dimensions.

While modifications might be necessary on just one side, depending on your design and the desired effect, you may need to adjust all four sides, as well as the top and base of the utility cabinet.

Once you have the specific box you are designing, ensure you do not paint over essential control functions, including keyholes, locks, identification numbers, and safety information. These elements must remain visible and unaltered, and should be masked off before painting begins. Likewise, air vents must never be covered, even temporarily, as they are critical for preventing overheating.

Step 3. Gather supplies.

Gather all necessary materials to paint a mural on a utility cabinet. The applicant (artist and/or organization) is responsible for all supplies, protective equipment, accommodations, travel, and all related materials related to and during the execution of the mural.

For longevity reasons, the following paints are recommended. You may use exterior latex paint or aerosol paint, however please **DO NOT use markers of any kind (e.g. Sharpies, acrylic paint markers, et al.) The ink quickly degrades, the artwork does not last, and the clear coat will destroy it. Therefore, NO Markers of any kind are allowed.**

Recommended paints

It is always recommended to research the specific surface type before purchasing any materials. Having all supplies ready will streamline the painting process.

1. **Exterior Latex Paints**

   These are great for projects requiring brush or roller application and offer strong weather resistance:

   - Behr Marquee – Excellent coverage and durability (Home Depot or Lowe's).

   - Sherwin-Williams Pro A100 – Durable and budget-friendly.

   - Sherwin-Williams Emerald – Premium exterior paint with advanced fade resistance.

   - Benjamin Moore True Spec – Quality latex paint with good adhesion and finish.

2. **Aerosol Spray Paints (For Detailed or Gradient Work)**

Popular for vibrant colors, smooth application, and quick drying:

- MTN 94 – Low-pressure for detailed control, wide color range.
- Montana Gold – Versatile with matte finish and excellent UV resistance.
- Montana Black – High-pressure for fast coverage, durable with a glossy finish.
- Krylon ColorMaxx or Fusion All-In-One – Bonds well to metal, often no primer needed.

3. **Direct-to-Metal (DTM) Acrylic Paints**

- Formulated specifically for metal surfaces; excellent for durability and adhesion:
- Sherwin-Williams DTM Acrylic Coating – Designed for direct application to metal.
- Benjamin Moore Ultra Spec HP DTM Acrylic – Tough, waterborne enamel for indoor/outdoor metal use.
- PPG Break-Through! – High-performance paint for hard-to-coat surfaces like metal.

4. **Oil-Based Enamel Paints**

Known for superior hardness and rust protection:

- Rust-Oleum Protective Enamel – Long-lasting finish ideal for primed metal surfaces.

5. **Primers (Essential for Proper Adhesion & Longevity)**

- Rust-Oleum Clean Metal Primer – Ideal for bare or slightly rusted metal.
- Zinsser Bulls Eye 1-2-3 Primer – Excellent bonding primer for hard surfaces.
- Sherwin-Williams Pro Industrial Pro-Cryl – Great for commercial-grade adhesion.

Safety Gear & Personal Protection
1. Stool or chair (for breaks or low painting angles)
2. Safety vest
3. Hat or shade structure (umbrella, canopy, etc.)
4. Water bottle (stay hydrated)
5. Bug spray
6. Wasp/fire ant spray
7. Sunscreen
8. Knee pads
9. Gloves
10. First aid kit (recommended for outdoor work)

Surface Preparation
1. Cleaning supplies (wire brushes, soap, water)
2. Rags and/or paper towels
3. Buckets of water (for cleaning brushes or surface)
4. Whisk broom (for clearing debris)
5. Pruning shears (if overgrowth/weeds are present)
6. Sandpaper or sanding block (optional, for smoothing surfaces)
7. Degreaser or household cleaner (for removing oils or residues)

Painting Supplies
1. Paint brushes and rollers (various sizes)

2. Paint trays
3. Applicable Exterior Paint
4. Painter's tape or masking tape
5. Drop cloths, plastic sheeting, tarp, or old newspapers (for protecting surrounding areas)
6. Mixing sticks or stirrers
7. Paint can opener
8. Sealant or clear coat (if required by the city)

Tools & Equipment

1. Stepladder (if cabinet is tall)
2. Extension pole (for rollers or shading structures)
3. Utility knife or scissors (for tape, plastic sheeting, etc.)
4. Portable lighting (if working in dim conditions or shadows)

Step 4. Prepare the surface.

Cleaning

Prepping is a crucial step for painting on the cabinet. Thoroughly clean the cabinet to remove dirt, grease, and old paint. Use wire brushes, soapy water, or a power washer if necessary.

Priming

Once the surface is cleaned and repaired, apply a suitable direct to metal (DTM) primer to ensure good paint adhesion and durability. Using a WHITE color base for all primers is best. The entire cabinet should be primed first. Doing so will give you an easier surface to work on when you have to paint those fine details.

Allow the primer to dry completely before proceeding. Proper surface preparation is crucial for the longevity of the artwork. If your mural requires a base layer in a uniform color, use a roller or a paint sprayer to paint the whole surface. Wait a sufficient amount of time for the paint to dry before going to the next step.

All metal surfaces must be completely clean, dry, and lightly abraded to promote proper paint adhesion. Surface preparation is essential to prevent premature peeling, rust, or poor bonding. Remove all rust, mill scale, grease, oils, and old flaking paint using a wire brush, sandpaper, degreaser, or appropriate solvents. For heavily rusted areas, consider using a rust converter or rust-inhibitive primer before applying paint.

Each type of metal (e.g., aluminum, galvanized steel, iron) requires specific preparation and compatible primers. For example:

1. **Aluminum** should be degreased and lightly sanded, and may benefit from an etching primer.
2. **Steel** often requires rust removal and a rust-inhibitive primer.
3. **Galvanized metal** needs degreasing and potentially a special galvanized metal primer to prevent peeling.
4. **Iron** should be thoroughly cleaned of rust using a wire brush or sandpaper, then treated with a rust converter (if needed), and primed with a rust-inhibitive metal primer formulated for ferrous metals to prevent corrosion.

   Check manufacturer recommendations and consult product labels or online technical sheets for guidance specific to the metal you are working with.

   A **DTM (Direct-to-Metal)** primer is often recommended for convenience and durability, but

ensure it is appropriate for the type of metal and environmental exposure. If the mural will be outdoors, select a primer rated for exterior use and compatible with your chosen topcoat paint (e.g., acrylic, enamel).

Be sure to follow proper drying and recoat times. Failure to do so can compromise adhesion and reduce the longevity of the mural.

That said, painting directly onto metal is not always the best long-term solution due to its non-porous nature and susceptibility to environmental factors like moisture and temperature fluctuations. In some cases, a high-quality vinyl wrap or other alternative surface treatment may offer greater durability and ease of maintenance, particularly for detailed or high-value designs where longevity is a priority.

Additionally, metal surfaces can reach temperatures significantly higher than the ambient air temperature when exposed to direct sunlight. This amplified heat can affect both the application and curing of paint layers, potentially leading to faster degradation or compromised adhesion. It's important to consider both environmental conditions and the unique thermal properties of metal when planning a mural on this type of surface.

Step 5. Transfer the design.

Transfer your design onto the cabinet using a projector, grid method, stencils, or the newer doodle method. Ensure accurate scaling and positioning of the design elements. Outline the main components of the design using chalk, pencil, or a light base color. This step ensures that the design is correctly placed and scaled for the cabinet surface.

The easiest and fastest way to scale your design is by using a projector, if available. Project the image onto the wall and trace it with chalk or paint. Be mindful of maintaining consistent projector placement to ensure accurate proportions, especially when tracing intricate designs that may span multiple days of work.

If a projector is not available, there are alternative methods such as the grid method and the doodle grid method:
1. **Grid Method:** Divide your design into proportional squares that match the scale of the utility box. Use light chalk lines or string to mark out the same grid on the wall, then carefully transfer your image square by square. This method is time-consuming but very effective for achieving accurate scaling without technology.
2. **Stencil:** first secure the stencil firmly in place using painter's tape, making sure it lies flat against the surface to prevent smudging or uneven lines. Using a pencil or chalk, carefully trace along the inner edges of the stencil to outline the design. Once the tracing is complete, gently remove the stencil and touch up any faint or uneven lines as needed. This method ensures clean, accurate linework for painting or further detailing.
3. **Doodle Grid Method:** This modern technique replaces the traditional grid with an outline of random, easily identifiable doodles or shapes. Take a photo of the utility box once the doodles are complete, then digitally overlay your design. This reference helps guide placement and proportions as you sketch the design directly onto the cabinet. It's a creative and flexible approach especially useful for complex or organic compositions.

Step 6. Paint the cabinet.

As you work, regularly step back to assess the piece from a distance, as it's easy to lose perspective or get sizing wrong when viewing up close. Taking this step ensures the overall composition remains balanced. However, for your safety, NEVER step back into the street.

When painting, work from background to foreground elements to avoid smudging and to ensure visual depth and clarity in the design.

It's advisable to work from the top down during each step of painting. This approach accounts for gravity, allowing any drips to fall onto areas you haven't finished yet, making touch-ups easier as you progress toward the bottom of the cabinet.

Keep your phone, sketches, and/or renderings on hand for reference.

1. **<u>Outline the Large Shapes:</u>** After prepping your cabinet, start by painting the larger shapes or designs first. This provides a clear framework for the overall mini-mural.

2. **<u>Block in Base Colors:</u>** Once the large shapes are outlined, begin blocking in the base colors within those shapes. This will serve as the backdrop for any finer details. Use larger brushes, paint sprayers, or rollers for more efficient coverage, but remember to stay within the lines of the larger shapes. When painting, work from background to foreground elements to avoid smudging and to ensure visual depth and clarity in the design.

3. **<u>Blending:</u>** If your design calls for smooth, transitional blends (such as creating a 3-dimensional effect or gradient), use the appropriate brush size to achieve the desired effect. This step helps in creating smooth transitions and will be important if you're working with complex lighting or shadow effects.

   If available, a paint sprayer is highly recommended for achieving even, consistent blends across larger areas. When using a sprayer, always remember to clean it thoroughly between paint colors to prevent clogging or unintended color mixing. Thin the paint as needed, according to the manufacturer's instructions, to ensure smooth application.

4. **<u>Add Details:</u>** After the base colors have dried, move on to adding more intricate details. A smaller, chiseled-tip brush is ideal for these fine touches, allowing you to refine shapes, outlines, and smaller elements. Pay attention to how these details contribute to the overall composition.

5. **<u>Final Touch-ups:</u>** Once the major details are painted, take time to carefully examine the mural. Look for areas that may need additional layers or touch-ups to ensure smooth, even coverage and clean lines.

Installation Safety & Etiquette

1. Anyone involved in the installation **must wear a safety vest at all times**. They can be purchased very inexpensively.

2. **Make sure to protect the surrounding area from paint,** with a tarp or other covering and clean up the area carefully when the project is completed.

3. During installation, **do not block sidewalks or block people from using informal pedestrian paths**. These areas must be kept clear to allow access for wheelchairs and pedestrians.

4. **Never stand in the street or roadway as you work**. For your safety, you must stay at least six feet away from moving vehicles, if possible. Blocking or barricading traffic lanes is **not permitted**, however cones may be placed around the box to help with visibility.

5. **Be polite and friendly** if people stop to ask you about your work. If granted permission, you are working in the public realm as a representative of the City of Laredo.

6. **Don't block the box!** The keyholes, locks, identification numbers, and safety information are essential to the control function of the cabinets. These elements cannot be obscured or painted over and should be incorporated into your design. Artists must mask off these areas before they begin painting. Similarly, the air vents should never be covered, even temporarily as they prevent overheating. Do not allow any paint to get inside the vents.

7. **The cabinet owner and public employees need continuous access to the contents of the cabinets**. They may need to access the traffic signal control system it houses. Please allow immediate access to City staff upon request, during installation.

Step 7. Apply protective coatings.

Once the painting is complete and fully dried, apply a clear protective sealant or, "clear coat". These coatings protect the artwork from UV rays, weather, and vandalism. Recommended products include anti-graffiti coatings with UV- resistant properties. Protective coatings are essential for preserving the integrity and vibrancy of the artwork.

It is important to ensure that both the clear protective sealant or "clear coat" and the paint used are compatible with each other and with the surface of the utility box. You should always read manufacturer's specs for the products you are using, including the primer, paint and clear coat.

Also consider: Because metal surfaces retain more heat than ambient air temperatures, this can accelerate the breakdown of coatings and paints. Be especially diligent in your product selection for metal surfaces, and consider temperature-resistant sealers or alternatives like vinyl mural wraps for longer durability.

Maintenance

A maintenance plan will be in place to address unforeseen issues such as graffiti removal, vandalism, or weather-related damage.

It's important to note maintenance planning is a required component for muralist. While normal wear is expected over time—particularly for outdoor murals exposed to the elements—concerns arise when signs of deterioration, such as peeling, flaking, or fading, appear prematurely. This may result from improper surface preparation, incorrect layering of paint types, or inadequate weatherproofing techniques, and can reflect poorly on the artist's or organizations professional standards. Such issues may be taken into consideration when evaluating future proposals.

To ensure the longevity and integrity of public artworks, applicants are strongly encouraged to thoroughly research their materials, follow appropriate techniques, and adhere to industry best practices.

Reference/Sources

This guide was created using a variety of sources including:
   o   Guidance from similar public art projects in other cities.
   o   Best practices for outdoor art maintenance.

This SOP aims to provide a comprehensive framework for artists and the City of Laredo to collaborate on creating vibrant, lasting utility cabinet art that enhances the city's aesthetic and cultural landscape.

City of Laredo
Standard Operating Procedures Public Art Projects

GROUND PAINTING

(also known as asphalt art, street painting, trail art, sidewalk art, etc.)

The City of Laredo recognizes the value of incorporating public art into urban spaces, including asphalt surfaces such as streets, sidewalks, plazas, and trails. This initiative transforms these functional areas into canvases for artistic expression, enhancing the visual appeal of the city and promoting community pride. Asphalt art offers opportunities for artists to contribute to urban beautification while also enhancing the pedestrian experience.

In this SOP, we provide guidelines for artists and others interested in creating public art projects on city property. This guidance is for visual interventions on roadways (intersections and sidewalks) and pedestrian spaces (plazas, trails, sidewalks). A portion of this SOP was adapted directly from *Bloomberg Associates' Asphalt Art Guide*.

Considerations for Painting on the Ground:

1. Location and Environment
2. Materials and Supplies
3. Surface Preparation
4. Artistic Process
5. Surface Protection
6. Maintenance
7. Budget

STEPS FOR PAINTING ON THE GROUND

1. Assess the site and its environment.
2. Create and Submit Design Mock-Up.
3. Gather supplies.
4. Site Safety & Traffic Control.
5. Prepare the Surface.
6. Implement the Artwork.

Step-by-Step Instructions for Painting on the Ground

Step 1. Assess the Site and Its Environment.

Begin by evaluating the current condition of the surface, its location, and exposure to weather. Note specific challenges, such as high-traffic rates or potential obstructions. Consider factors like visibility, sunlight exposure, and the surrounding landscape. This assessment helps determine the best approach for preparing and painting the surface.

See the "Site Assessment Form: Ground Painting" for a complete set of environmental and production factors that need to be considered.

Planning for Longevity: Before developing a design and implementing the project, decide how long the project will last, if it will be allowed to fade, if it will be maintained, or if it will be replaced by another project after a predetermined amount of time. Decide who will be responsible for maintenance and removal. Options include the artist or designer, the site owner or manager, city staff, or community volunteers.

Step 2: Create and Submit Design Mock-Up.

See PROJECT DESIGN GUIDELINES.

Develop a strong concept with preliminary sketches or digital renderings of your design. Ensure the design is appropriate for public display and aligns with community values. Submit the design for approval by through the Public Art Project Intake Form, including details about color schemes and themes. This step ensures the artwork meets city standards and community expectations.

Several factors contribute to a successful and beautiful design. The first driver of a design should be the identity of the surrounding neighborhood, cultural characteristics, and diversity of the community. Another factor in the design process should be consideration of how the project will be implemented. Designers must find a balance between the complexity of a proposal and the resources available for implementation, such as paid contractor labor and stencils or volunteer help.

Scale is a key consideration in the design process. Think about how the project will be experienced by pedestrians walking over it, potentially from multiple directions—this can be incorporated into your design. Keep in mind that designs which look effective on an 8.5" x 11" sheet may not translate well at full scale. Similarly, a mural that photographs well from above may be difficult to interpret from ground level. Repetitive patterns and solid background colors can help create a design that's visually effective from various angles and distances.

For projects that impact the layout of the street, the design may need to be submitted for approval to the city's or another government entity's traffic engineering department. While the Manual of Uniform Traffic Devices (MUTCD) is the document that traffic engineers use to guide the use of pavement markings and paint colors, art on the street is not considered a traffic control device and thus is not regulated by MUTCD. However, where art is used as part of a striped crosswalk, the Federal Highway Administration has provided some guidance: "subdued-colored aesthetic treatments between the legally marked transverse crosswalk lines are permissible provided that they are devoid of retroreflective properties and that they do not diminish the effectiveness of the legally required white transverse pavement markings used to establish the crosswalk." Every city handles approval differently based on local context. It is important to have open communication with the approving traffic engineer to translate the community vision into an approved plan.

Ground painting art projects are generally not considered advertising as long as they do not incorporate commercially recognizable symbols or draw attention to a product, activity, or service. The inclusion of logos or commercial symbols and characters may be subject to regulation.

Step 3. Gather Supplies.

Selecting the right type of paint for a ground mural depends on the desired lifespan, durability, and surface conditions. Below is an overview of commonly used paints, ranging from very temporary to long-term options. Most of these can be combined with non-slip additives—such as silica sand, glass beads, aluminum oxide, or Shark Grip®—to help prevent surfaces from becoming slippery, especially in wet or high-traffic areas particularly in pedestrian areas or crosswalks:

It is always recommended to conduct your own research based on the specific project type and surface.

Below is a list of common products used for ground art projects:
- **Tempera Paint** – Very temporary: Ideal for short-term events or children's activities. Not weather-resistant and washes off easily.
- **Water-Based Field Marking Paint (e.g., Rustoleum®)** – Temporary: Typically used for grass or sports fields but can be applied to pavement for short-term use. Washes away with weather or wear.
- **Latex or Acrylic Household Paint** – Short-term: Affordable and easy to apply. Suitable for temporary installations with limited foot traffic.
- **Traffic Marking Paint (e.g., Ennis Flint)** – Mid-term: Designed for roads and parking lots. Offers good durability and visibility; appropriate for moderate wear and outdoor exposure.
- **Epoxy-Based Pavement Coating** – Mid- to long-term: Highly durable and chemical-resistant. Ideal for surfaces exposed to heavy use. Can be textured with non-slip materials.
- **MMA (Methyl Methacrylate) (e.g., Roadzilla® MMA)** – Long-term: Extremely durable, UV-resistant, and skid-resistant. Commonly used for high-traffic areas such as intersections and crosswalks.
- **Thermoplastic Materials (e.g., TrafficPatterns®, DuraTherm®, DecoMark®)** – Long-term: Heat-applied and bonded to the pavement. Offers exceptional longevity and built-in texture for slip resistance.

To enhance safety and prevent slips, it is recommended to mix in or broadcast non-slip additives like SharkGrip® into the paint or coating, especially in areas with frequent pedestrian use or exposure to water.

To ensure the paint's durability or to extend its life, consider the following methods:
- Power wash and clean the site from any debris the day before or a few hours before the installation begins, ensure that the surface has completely dried.
- Ensure the artwork area is completely closed off to vehicles and foot traffic until the paint has completely dried.
- If using light colors, consider applying a white base coat.
- Freshly paved areas will absorb more paint, so account for extra layers of paint if painting over a recently paved surface.
- Consider testing a range of installation tools before purchasing them and ensure the installation crew or volunteers receive proper training to ensure the application process matches expectations.
- If using stencils, ensure they are cleaned before reusing to avoid damaging other parts of the project.
- Set up a workstation that will hold all of your painting materials in one place by covering the surface with a large tarp.
- Utilize materials that combat particular environmental challenges, such as "cool pavements" that increase solar reflectivity or permeable concrete that can absorb water and cool the surrounding area.

For more advanced processes such as working with MMA and Thermoplastic, working with a traffic markings contractor is necessary.

If you are painting without a contractor, other supplies to consider:

Application Tools
1. Brushes (various sizes)
2. Rollers and roller frames
3. Paint trays and liners
4. Stencils (custom or pre-made)
5. Spray applicators (optional, depending on paint type)

Surface Preparation
1. Broom or push broom
2. Leaf blower
3. Wire brushes
4. Pressure washer (optional)
5. Soapy water and buckets
6. Rags and/or paper towels

Protection & Safety
1. Protective gloves
2. Face masks or respirators (especially with aerosol paints or strong coatings)
3. Safety goggles
4. Knee pads (for extended ground work)
5. Sunscreen and hat (for sun exposure)

Site Control & Workspace Setup
1. Painter's tape or masking tape (for clean edges)
2. Drop cloths or plastic sheeting (to protect nearby surfaces)
3. Traffic cones
4. Safety barriers or caution tape
5. Signage to alert pedestrians

Additional Supplies
1. Chalk or markers (for layout and guides)
2. Measuring tape or ruler
3. Water for clean-up
4. Garbage bags (for disposal)

Having all supplies ready will streamline the painting process.

The choice of paint for street, sidewalk, trail, or pedestrian plaza applications can depend on various factors such as the surface material, anticipated traffic levels, weather conditions, and project requirements. Here are some general recommendations for each:

1. **Street**
   - **Traffic Paint:** Traditional traffic paint is commonly used for street markings, including road lines, crosswalks, and symbols. It is typically formulated to adhere well to asphalt or concrete surfaces and withstand moderate to heavy traffic. Traffic paint is available in various colors and provides good visibility.
   - **MMA (Methyl Methacrylate):** MMA paints offer excellent durability and weather resistance,

making them suitable for street markings in high-traffic areas or locations with harsh weather conditions. MMA paints adhere well to asphalt and concrete surfaces and provide long-lasting performance. Professional installation is recommended.

- **Thermoplastic:** Thermoplastic materials are often used for street markings as well. They offer exceptional durability, resistance to wear, and high visibility. Thermoplastic materials are heated and applied to the surface, creating a thick, long-lasting layer. Professional installation is recommended.

	Traffic Paint	MMA (Methyl Methacrylate)	Thermoplastic
Pros	Cost-effective, quick drying, good adhesion	Superior durability, quick curing, high reflectivity, adhesion to various surfaces	Excellent durability, longevity, high visibility, adherence to surfaces
Cons	Lower durability, fading over time, limited color range	Higher cost, specialized application, limited color options	Higher cost, specialized application, limited color options, removal difficulty
Longevity	Moderate	Long-lasting	Long-lasting
Suitable For	Road markings, symbols, temporary art installations	High-traffic areas, harsh weather conditions	High-traffic areas, longevity requirement, enhanced visibility
Application	Brushes, rollers, spray guns	Specialized expertise and equipment required	Heating and specialized equipment required
Reflectivity	N/A	Can be formulated with reflective beads	Can be formulated with glass bead reflectivity

2. **Sidewalk**
   - **Acrylic or Latex Paint:** For sidewalk art or murals, acrylic or latex paints are commonly used. They offer good adhesion to concrete surfaces and provide a wide range of colors and finishes. These paints are more flexible and can handle minor surface movements and expansions without cracking.
   - **Chalk-based Paint:** Chalk-based paints are often used for temporary sidewalk art installations or for creating vibrant and easily removable designs. They provide a matte finish and are suitable for short- term projects or events.
   - **Epoxy-based Paint:** For sidewalks that may have a higher-foot or even bicycle traffic might require a more durable paint solution and epoxy-bases paint could be a better choice. Additionally, if they are exposed to the elements (no shade) Epoxy-based paints provide excellent durability, chemical resistance, and adhesion to various surfaces. They can withstand heavy use and are commonly used for trail markings and signage.

3. **Trail**
   - **Epoxy-based Paint:** Trails often require a more durable paint solution due to their exposure to foot, bicycle, or even vehicular traffic. Epoxy-based paints provide excellent durability, chemical resistance, and adhesion to various surfaces. They can withstand heavy use and are commonly used for trail markings and signage.
   - **MMA (Methyl Methacrylate):** MMA paints are another suitable option for trails due to their exceptional durability and resistance to weathering. They can withstand heavy traffic, making them

ideal for high- use trail sections or areas with extreme weather conditions. Professional installation is recommended.
- **Thermoplastic:** Thermoplastic materials can also be used for trail markings, especially in high-traffic areas. They provide excellent durability, visibility, and resistance to wear, ensuring the longevity of trail markings. Professional installation is recommended.

4. **Pedestrian Plaza**
- **Polyurethane Paint:** Polyurethane paints are highly durable and resistant to abrasion, making them an excellent choice for pedestrian plazas that experience heavy foot traffic. They offer a variety of finishes, including glossy, matte, and satin, and can be applied to both asphalt and concrete surfaces.
- **MMA (Methyl Methacrylate):** MMA paints are also ideal for pedestrian plazas due to their outstanding durability, slip resistance, and fast curing times. They can handle high foot traffic and are resistant to weather and UV exposure.
- **Water-based Acrylic Paint:** Water-based acrylic paints are environmentally friendly and provide good adhesion and durability for pedestrian plazas. They come in a wide range of colors and are easy to apply and maintain.
- **Epoxy-based Paint:** For areas with extremely high traffic or where additional durability is required, epoxy-based paints are suitable. They provide a tough, long-lasting surface that is resistant to chemicals and wear.

Step 4. Site Safety & Traffic Control.

Ensure that everyone on-site has a safe, secure, and comfortable environment to work in. It is recommended that artists and/or organizations implementing the ground painting have access to a shaded area, seating, and drinking water during installation.

If the project requires a temporary traffic detour, a Traffic Control Plan will be in place. If the paint is applied over existing traffic markings, the design and traffic control plan must be reviewed by the appropriate city departments. Designs that affect traffic flow or safety will require approval.

The plan will also include:

- Temporary signage to inform the public about the project.
- Volunteer training to respond to community inquiries.
- Copies of all relevant permits kept on-site, if applicable.

Installation Safety & Etiquette

- **Safety Vests:** All personnel involved in the installation must wear high-visibility safety vests at all times.
- **Protect Surrounding Areas:** Use tarps or other protective coverings as needed. Clean up the work site thoroughly once the installation is complete.
- **Maintain Pedestrian Access:** Do not block sidewalks or pedestrian paths unless those areas are being painted. Accessible routes must be maintained for all pedestrians, including those using wheelchairs.
- **Roadway Safety:** Only enter the street or roadway if it is part of the designated painting area. Maintain a minimum distance of six feet from moving vehicles at all times.
- **Situational Awareness:** Remain alert to your surroundings, especially when working near traffic or intersections.
- **Public Communication:** Clearly display temporary signage with project information to inform and engage the public.

Step 5. Prepare the Surface.

It is always recommended to conduct your own research based on the specific project type and surface. When selecting materials, consult with experts and review relevant technical details.

Thoroughly clean the asphalt surface to remove dirt, grease, debris, and loose materials. Use wire brushes, soapy water/mild detergent, or a power washer if necessary. If the surface is rough or uneven, consider using a primer or base coat to create a smooth and even canvas for the artwork. Allow the surface to dry completely before proceeding. Proper surface preparation is crucial for the longevity of the artwork.

1. Street (Asphalt Roadway)

Surface Preparation
- Perform a full sweep and remove all dirt, oil spots, grease, tar, and loose gravel using wire brushes, soapy water and mild detergent. Power washing is often necessary for heavily trafficked areas.
- Ensure all traffic markings or thermoplastic paint in the area to be painted are either removed or sufficiently abraded to improve paint adherence.
- If you are painting over traffic markings or thermoplastic be sure the paint is compatible.
- Relevant city departments need to be contacted in advance to patch cracks or potholes, as paint will not adhere properly to unstable surfaces.
- Information about any required repairs must be included in the site assessment form.

Priming
- Use an asphalt-compatible primer for older, oxidized, or porous roads. This will seal the surface and provide better paint bonding.
- Allow the primer to cure fully before painting—timing will vary based on product and climate.

Additional Considerations
- Schedule installation during dry weather with low humidity; avoid rain forecasts within 24 hours of installation.
- You will be informed by city traffic departments in implementing a temporary street closure and detour plan.
- Confirm compliance with local ordinances and secure permits, especially if blocking public roads.
- Use traffic-rated, non-slip paint or thermoplastic materials for long-term safety and durability.
- Consider temperature: most street paints should be applied when surface temps are between 50°F–85°F. Artists and/or organizations may need to consider scheduling work during early mornings or evenings to accommodate Laredo's weather conditions.

2. Sidewalk (Concrete Surface)

Surface Preparation:
- Use brooms to remove dust, then wash with soap or degreaser. Allow to dry thoroughly—moisture trapped beneath paint causes peeling.
- Remove chewing gum or other residues with scrapers or a degreasing agent.
- Inspect for chipped or scaling concrete. Relevant city departments need to be contacted in advance to patch spalls or repair concrete.
- Information about any required repairs must be included in the site assessment form.

Priming:
- Apply a masonry primer if the concrete is smooth, sealed, or has inconsistent absorbency. This ensures even coverage and stronger adhesion.

- Always check for sealants—if the sidewalk has been sealed, abrading or etching may be required to ensure the primer adheres properly.

Additional Considerations:
- Maintain ADA compliance: ensure that no artwork impairs tactile walking indicators or ramps.
- Use anti-slip additives in the topcoat or paint, especially in high pedestrian traffic zones.
- Coordinate with building owners or city departments for access, closure notices, and business interruptions.
- Post signs during and after installation to warn pedestrians that paint is drying.

3. Trail (Asphalt or Concrete Recreational Path)

Surface Preparation:
- Clear organic material (leaves, moss, mud) thoroughly, as trails often collect debris.
- Wash with mild detergent or use pressure washing in areas with excessive grime or shade buildup.
- Identify and address any roots, buckling, or surface warping beforehand.
- If removal or corrective action is needed during surface preparation, this must be noted in the site assessment form.

Priming:
- For older or heavily worn trails, a base coat may be needed to unify the surface color and smooth texture differences.
- Choose a primer suited for recreational path materials (asphalt or concrete).

Additional Considerations:
- Trails are typically narrower than streets, so plan for staggered work zones to allow pedestrian and cyclist access.
- Inform local trail users or parks departments in advance—consider signage a few days before the work begins.
- Avoid installations during wet seasons—shaded trails often take longer to dry.
- Use reflective or UV-resistant coatings to preserve color in exposed sunlit areas.

4. Pedestrian Plaza (Pavers or Decorative Concrete)

Surface Preparation:
- Clean between joints to remove weeds, sand, and debris. Avoid displacing joint material unless necessary.
- Remove any sealant or coatings if paint is not adhering properly; test a small area to check for bonding.
- Scrub oil stains, gum, or food spills, especially near dining areas or event zones.

Priming:
- On sealed or polished pavers, apply a masonry primer compatible with decorative stone or brick.
- If not sealed, priming may not be required, but a base coat can help unify the artwork's color vibrancy.

Additional Considerations:
- Consider water drainage patterns—avoid blocking natural runoffs with impermeable coatings.
- Use low-VOC or non-toxic paint, especially in areas frequented by children, pets, or food vendors.
- Refrain from painting over expansion joints or paver seams that are designed to move—this can crack the paint prematurely.
- Schedule during off-peak hours to minimize disruption to public life and businesses.

Step 6. Implement the Artwork.

Implementing the Project: Implementing the project involves several stages, from setting up the site to applying the paint. The following guidelines will help ensure a smooth and successful implementation:

1. **Set Up the Site**

    •   **Site Preparation:** Ensure the site is well-prepared as outlined in the surface preparation step. Clean the area thoroughly and let it fully dry.
    •   **Secure the Area:** Use traffic cones, barriers, and signage to secure the area. Ensure pedestrian safety by clearly marking off the work zone.
    •   **Material Organization:** Arrange all materials and tools in an accessible manner. Cover the ground near the painting area with a tarp to prevent paint spills and facilitate easy cleanup.

2. **Layout the Design**

    •   **Design Reference:** Always have a printed or digital copy of your design, layout, and/or reference photos readily available on-site. It's recommended to digitally overlay your design onto an image of the actual surface beforehand to map out placement and scale accurately.
    •   **Weather Awareness:** Choose a dry day for layout and painting. If using chalk to mark the design, keep in mind that rain or moisture can erase your work. Always check the forecast and have a backup plan.
    •   **Grid System:** For large or intricate designs, use a grid system to scale the design from paper to pavement. Use chalk lines, tape, or string to mark out the grid and ensure proportions are accurate.
    •   **Stencils:** If your design includes stencils, align them precisely according to your layout plan. Secure them with tape, weights, or spray adhesive to prevent movement while painting.
    •   **Doodle Grid Method:** This creative method involves sketching random, easily identifiable shapes or doodles on the ground, then taking a photo of the area. Digitally overlay your final design on top of that photo to guide placement and proportion during transfer. This is especially helpful for complex or free-form designs.
    •   **Surface Variations:** Take note of surface features such as drains, manhole covers, texture changes, or elevation differences. These may affect how your design appears once laid out and may require adjustments.
    •   **Visibility and Orientation:** Consider how the artwork will be viewed (from which angle or direction). Design layout should ensure maximum visibility and readability for pedestrians or drivers, depending on the location.

3. **Apply the Base Coat**

    •   **Base Color**: If your design includes a base color, apply it first. Use rollers or, if available, a paint sprayer for large areas, and brushes for edges or detailed sections. Ensure the base coat is applied evenly and allow it to dry completely before continuing with additional layers or details.

4. **Paint the Design**

    When painting, work from background to foreground elements to avoid smudging and to ensure visual depth and clarity in the design.
    •   **Outline:** Once the base color has dried completely, outline the key areas of your design to guide the painting process. Use chalk, pencil, or a small brush, depending on surface texture and visibility. For crisp edges, especially between color sections, masking tape can be used to define boundaries.
    •   **Blending:** For designs requiring smooth, gradual color transitions, use the appropriate brush size or blending tool. A paint sprayer is recommended for large areas to achieve even, consistent

blends. Always clean the sprayer thoroughly between colors to prevent clogging or unintended mixing.

- **Detail Work:** Begin with the detailed sections of the design. Use smaller brushes for precision and larger rollers for broader strokes. Follow the design layout carefully to ensure accuracy. When painting, work from background to foreground elements to avoid smudging and to ensure visual depth and clarity in the design.
- **Layering:** Apply multiple layers if necessary, allowing each layer to dry before applying the next. This ensures better coverage and durability.
- **Non-Slip Additive:** Mix a non-slip additive like Shark Grip® into the paint, especially for areas with heavy foot traffic, to prevent slippery surfaces.

5. **Finishing Touches**

- **Touch-Ups:** After the main painting is complete, inspect the artwork for any areas that need touch-ups or additional layers of paint.
- **Clean Edges:** Remove any stencils or tape carefully and touch up the edges as needed to ensure clean lines.

6. **Drying and Curing**

- **Dry Time:** Allow the paint to dry thoroughly. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations for drying times, especially if using multiple layers of paint.
- **Protection**: Ensure the area remains closed off to vehicles and pedestrians until the paint is completely dry and cured.

7. **Clean Up**

- **Material Disposal:** Properly dispose of any used materials, such as paint cans and brushes, according to local regulations.
- **Site Cleanup:** Remove all protective coverings and barriers. Clean the surrounding area to leave the site in pristine condition.

Following these steps ensures that the artwork implementation process is efficient, safe, and successful, resulting in a vibrant and durable public art piece that enhances the urban environment and fosters community pride.

Additional Considerations

Materials Storage: Project teams should secure materials and place them in storage at least a few weeks before the installation begins. Consider longer lead times for custom or large orders of paint and think about the size of any stencils or other equipment needed for installation. Work with a local business or public facility near the project site to store supplies, materials, and personal belongings prior to and during the installation. If a space is not available, you can rent a portable storage locker for the site.
Note: The artist and/or organization is responsible for all supplies, protective equipment, accommodations, travel, material storage, and all related materials related to and during the execution of the mural.

Documents: For ground art projects, artists and organizations should have a traffic control plan and any necessary permits readily available.

Reference/Sources

See Bloomberg Associates' Asphalt Art Guide in Appendix A for more detail about the ground painting process.

This guide was created using a variety of sources including:
- Bloomberg Associates' Asphalt Art Guide
- Guidance from similar public art projects in other cities.

To ensure the longevity and integrity of public artworks, applicants are strongly encouraged to thoroughly research their materials, follow appropriate techniques, and adhere to industry best practices.

This SOP aims to provide a comprehensive framework for artists and the City of Laredo to collaborate on creating vibrant, lasting public art that enhances the city's aesthetic and cultural landscape

City of Laredo
Standard Operating Procedures for Public Art Projects

SCULPTURE AND INSTALLATION ART

The City of Laredo recognizes the value of incorporating public art into urban spaces, including both temporary and permanent sculptures and installations on city property. These artistic expressions enhance the visual appeal of the city, promote community pride, and contribute to urban beautification. Sculptures and installations offer opportunities for artists to create impactful pieces that engage the community and enrich public spaces.

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) provides guidelines for artists and others interested in creating public art projects involving sculptures or installations on city property, covering the entire process from proposal submission to post-installation maintenance.

When undertaking sculpture and installation-based public art projects, it is essential to recognize that, beyond the visual and conceptual elements, primary emphasis must also be placed on structural integrity and public safety. Due to the three-dimensional and often interactive nature of these works, the majority of fabrication typically occurs off-site in a studio, workshop, or other production facility, with final installation taking place on City of Laredo property. This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) outlines critical guidance regarding both the structural aspects of the artwork and the protocols for on-site installation.

Considerations for Sculpture and Installation Art:

- Location and Environment
- Materials and Supplies
- Safety and Stability
- Artistic Process
- Site Preparation
- Installation
- Post-Installation
- De-Installation (for temporary installations)
- Budget
- Engineering and Technical Considerations

Definitions
- **Sculpture:** A three-dimensional form of art created through techniques such as carving, casting, modeling, assembling materials, or incorporating movement in kinetic works.
- **Installation:** A work of art that may include multiple elements arranged in a specific location, often interactive or site-specific.
- **City Property**: Any land, building, or infrastructure owned or managed by the City of Laredo.

STEPS TO CREATING A SCULPTURE OR INSTALLATION

1 — Assess the site and its environment.

2 — Create a Mock-Up OR Sketch.

3 — Determine Materials and Lighting Components to Be Used.

4 — Create a Model.

5 — Technical and Safety Considerations.

6 — Prepare the Installation Site.

7 — Installation.

8 — Post-Installation.

9 — De-Installation. (for Temporary Installations)

Step-by-Step Guide to Installing a Sculpture or Installation on City Property:

Step 1. Assess the Site and Its Environment.

Begin by thoroughly assessing the site and its environment. Evaluate the current condition of the site, including its location, exposure to weather, and any specific challenges such as high-traffic areas or potential obstructions. Consider factors like visibility, sunlight exposure, and the surrounding landscape to determine the best approach for preparing and installing the artwork.

Use the "**Site Assessment Form**" to document environmental and logistical factors. Plan for the longevity of the project by identifying its expected duration and outlining any maintenance needs. Responsibility for ongoing maintenance—and, for temporary installations, removal—will be addressed during the **Display and Preservation Agreement** with the City of Laredo.

Step 2. Create a Preliminary Mock-Up or Sketch.

Develop detailed sketches or digital renderings of the proposed artwork that clearly illustrate the concept, including:

- **Dimensions and Scale:** Include height, width, depth, and a scale reference in relation to the surrounding environment.
- **Color Palette**: If color is part of the design, include a proposed palette with notes on durability

and UV resistance, especially for outdoor installations.

- **Structural Considerations:** Include anchoring methods, estimated weight, and how the structure will interact with the site (e.g., ground-mounted, freestanding, integrated into existing infrastructure).
- **Conceptual Details:** Describe the inspiration or intended message behind the artwork and how it relates to the location or community.
- **Site Context:** Provide images or diagrams that show how the piece will be positioned within the space to ensure proper scale, pedestrian flow, and sightlines.

For three-dimensional work such as sculptures or installations, mock-ups and detailed sketches are essential. The added dimension introduces spatial and visual complexities that are more difficult to conceptualize without adequate preparation. These visual tools help reviewers fully understand the intent, scale, and interaction of the artwork with its surroundings.

Submit the mock-up or sketch to the City of Laredo as part of your **Public Art Project Proposal Intake Form**, which will be reviewed by the Public Art Program Manager and/or designated city staff during their monthly review. This step is essential for receiving feedback, addressing any concerns, and securing preliminary approval before proceeding to fabrication or installation planning.

These materials will also be required when the Public Art Program Manager and city staff assess the structural feasibility and safety of the proposed work.

Step 3. Determine Materials to Be Used.

When it comes to materials, each project will require a different selection based on the project's desired durability and aesthetic. Choose materials that are suitable for the environment and that will withstand exposure to weather and public interaction.

Below is a list of common materials used for sculptures and installations:

- Metals (e.g., aluminum, stainless steel, bronze)
- Stone (e.g., granite, marble)
- Wood (e.g., treated lumber, hardwoods)
- Epoxy
- Glass or acrylics
- Concrete
- Plastics and composites
- Recycled materials
- Fabric
- Mixed Media
- Paints and coatings for surface protection

Evaluate the pros and cons of each material option, including cost, availability, and ease of installation. Selecting the right materials is essential for ensuring the artwork's stability and visual impact throughout its intended lifespan.

Artists and/or organizations developing sculpture or installation art must be willing to collaborate with and take direction from city departments such as Engineering, Utilities, and Risk Management. This includes remaining open to feedback and making necessary modifications to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the community. Modifications may relate to, but are not limited to, the structural design, materials selected, site conditions, or installation methods.

Ensure all materials meet safety standards and are appropriate for outdoor use. Consider working with local suppliers and fabricators to source materials.

Types of sculptures and installations to be considered for public art projects:

1. **Carving**
   Carving is a subtractive sculptural process that involves removing material from a solid block—such as wood, stone, or other mediums—to reveal a desired form. Artists typically use sharp tools like chisels, gouges, or knives to cut away excess material and shape the artwork. While traditional carving is done in wood or stone, contemporary practices may incorporate materials such as foam, plastics, or even glass (through techniques like glass cutting or cold working).

   Carvings can take various forms, including low relief (where the design projects slightly from the background), high-relief (where elements are more deeply undercut and extend further from the surface), and sculpture in the round, which is fully three-dimensional and viewable from all sides. Each technique offers a different relationship between the artwork and the surrounding space, emphasizing depth, dimension, and craftsmanship.

   In public art, carved sculptures can be seamlessly integrated into architectural elements—such as decorative stone reliefs on building facades—or stand alone as monuments and memorials, often commemorating people or events. Carved forms are also commonly used in functional artworks, such as engraved benches, gateway signs, or plaques that combine both utility and aesthetic expression. These installations not only serve as visual focal points but also contribute to the cultural identity and accessibility of public spaces.

2. **Casting**
   Casting is an additive sculptural process, in contrast to carving, which is subtractive. In casting, an object or sculpture is first modeled—often in clay or wax—and then used to create a mold. Molds can be made from various materials such as rubber, plaster, or silicone, depending on the level of detail required and the intended casting material. Once the mold is prepared, a liquid substance—such as molten metal, resin, epoxy, plaster, or concrete—is poured into the hollow cavity of the mold and allowed to cure or harden. After the material sets, the mold is removed, revealing the final cast sculpture.

   Traditionally, bronze casting was the most common method, especially for statues and monuments. In contemporary practices, however, casting often involves two-part chemical mixtures (like epoxy or resin) that react and harden without heat. Casting is ideal for producing complex shapes, and although it can be labor-intensive, it is often more economical and scalable—particularly when using non-destructive molds that allow for multiple reproductions of the original form, similar to printmaking. Molds, depending on the material, may be reused several times before deteriorating.

   In public art, cast sculptures are frequently seen as figurative statues mounted on concrete pedestals, stone slabs, or installed directly into the landscape for a more contemporary look. Another common public art use of casting is in architectural relief panels or murals, which are embedded into building façades or retaining walls to provide a narrative or decorative element in civic spaces.

3. **Modeling**
   Modeling is a sculptural technique that can be both additive and subtractive. Artists often begin with an internal support structure, typically made from wire or metal, to help establish the basic shape and maintain stability. Using pliable materials such as clay, plaster, or wax, the artist builds

up the form by hand, employing techniques like pushing, pulling, pinching, carving, or even pouring the material into place. While primarily an additive process, some subtractive actions—such as refining by carving or trimming—may also be used depending on the desired detail and finish.

Modeling is often a preliminary step in casting, where the modeled form is used to create a mold. However, when the intention is to fire the modeled clay, it becomes a ceramic sculpture—a permanent piece in its own right rather than a prototype for casting.

In public art, ceramic modeling has been widely embraced for its expressive potential and durability when properly fired and glazed. For example, artists might create ceramic tile murals embedded into building façades, community benches, or freestanding mosaic columns in parks. Other applications include ceramic totems or sculptural columns composed of stacked, modular ceramic components, often seen in plazas or civic spaces. Artists also produce full 3D figurative sculptures or tile-covered forms that bring vibrant color and texture to public environments. These works not only showcase the hand-modeled texture and artistic expression of the artist but also engage the public in storytelling, history, or cultural celebration.

4. **Construction/ Assemblage**
Construction or assemblage is a sculptural technique in which artists repurpose found, manufactured, or altered objects to create a unified form. Materials may be welded, glued, bolted, or wired together, resulting in dynamic and often unexpected compositions. In more contemporary approaches, the technique, process, or transformation of the materials becomes part of the conceptual narrative of the work itself.

This method allows artists to explore themes such as consumerism, sustainability, and cultural identity by reclaiming and reimagining discarded or everyday materials. Assemblage can be both accessible and visually engaging, offering a powerful commentary through the careful selection and repurposing of objects.

In public art using this method can include large outdoor sculptures made from welded scrap metal forming abstract or animal shapes, or colorful figures created from reclaimed plastic and household items displayed in urban parks or near community centers. These pieces can also be deliberately arranged to cast unique shadows at certain times of day, integrating light and shadow into the visual experience and making the artwork interact dynamically with its environment.

When planning an assemblage-based public artwork, the selected site should be thoughtfully considered, as these types of sculptures often rely on environmental interaction to enhance their impact. For instance, the location may need to allow for natural light to cast intentional shadows that are part of the artistic experience. Additionally, because assemblage works can involve unconventional shapes or protruding elements, the site should accommodate safe viewing distances, accessibility, and structural support. Selecting a location that complements the materials, scale, and message of the work ensures the sculpture is both visually effective and safely integrated into the public space.

5. **Movement**
Movement or kinetic sculpture represents a modern and dynamic approach to public art, incorporating elements of motion—such as light, sound, air currents, or motorized mechanisms—to create an ever-changing visual experience. These artworks are intentionally designed to transform either autonomously or in response to environmental factors, inviting viewers to engage with the piece from multiple perspectives as time of day, weather, and surroundings shift.

When planning a kinetic sculpture, thoughtful consideration of the site is essential. The interplay of natural elements like wind or water, along with the quality and direction of ambient light, can

greatly enhance the intended effect. Additionally, the location must accommodate space requirements, ensure public safety, and account for environmental conditions that may affect the artwork's movement and durability.

Sound has long been incorporated into sculpture for spiritual or ceremonial purposes, and in contemporary public art, it adds to the sensory and narrative richness of a piece. This might include the soothing flow of water, the rustling of moving parts, or even interactive features that invite public participation. A kinetic installation may use suspended components that respond to the wind, generating melodic tones and shifting visual patterns that evolve with the environment. These works celebrate the fusion of art, nature, and technology—fostering community engagement and offering an immersive, ever-evolving experience.

Step 4. Create a Model.

Create a small-scale model, also known as a maquette, of the proposed sculpture or installation to provide a tangible and visual representation of the final artwork. This scale model allows artists to refine design elements, assess proportions, and identify potential structural or aesthetic issues before moving to full-scale fabrication. Present the maquette to the designated Public Art Program Manager and/or designated city staff for evaluation and feedback. This step is essential for incorporating practical recommendations, aligning the design with city standards, and ensuring that the final work will be structurally reviewed and approved prior to installation.

Step 5. Technical and Safety Considerations.

The engineering aspects of any sculpture or installation are critical to ensuring both stability and public safety. When selecting materials, artists and/or organizations must consider the expected load-bearing capacity of the site and structure. This includes evaluating how the sculpture will be anchored or supported and confirming whether the foundation or surrounding infrastructure can support the weight and stress of the piece.

Additionally, consider potential external forces such as wind loads, seismic activity, and exposure to weather or environmental conditions. All proposed materials should be assessed for their durability, weather resistance, and long-term maintenance needs—particularly as they relate to the local climate and site-specific environmental factors.

Before any proposals are selected, the City of Laredo's Public Art Program Manager and/or designated city staff must submit the design for structural feasibility review and gain approval from the City's Engineering Department. This step ensures that all structural requirements have been met and that the project is safe for public interaction.

Step 6. Prepare the Installation Site.

Artists are responsible for cleaning and preparing the site. For above-ground installations, artists will be responsible for preparing the site, which includes removing debris, cleaning the ground, power washing if needed, and ensuring the area is safe and accessible.

If ground-breaking or excavation is required, this must be clearly indicated in the **Site Assessment Form** in advance. Preparation may involve leveling the area or installing necessary infrastructure to ensure a stable and secure foundation for the artwork.

Artists are also responsible for arranging any required equipment or assistance—such as scaffolding, lifts, or cranes—to support the installation process, and must adhere to all relevant safety protocols when operating such equipment.

Step 7. Installation.

The City of Laredo reserves the right to deny approval of any sculpture or installation that does not meet the safety, engineering, or risk management recommendations and requirements set forth by the relevant departments.

The installation process is critical for ensuring the safety and success of the sculpture or installation. Follow these detailed steps to ensure a smooth and effective installation:

1. **Secure Necessary Equipment and Personnel**
   - Arrange for any required equipment such as cranes, scaffolding, or lifting devices.
   - Ensure all personnel involved in the installation are trained and briefed on safety protocols and procedures.

2. **Prepare the Site**
   - Ensure the site is clear of debris and any obstacles that could interfere with the installation process.
   - Mark the exact location for the placement of the sculpture or installation according to the approved site plan.

3. **Transport the Artwork**
   - Carefully transport the artwork to the installation site. Use protective coverings and secure transport methods to prevent damage during transit.
   - If the artwork is composed of multiple pieces, ensure each piece is properly labeled and organized for efficient assembly.

4. **Assemble the Artwork**
   - Begin the assembly process by following the detailed instructions provided in the installation plan.
   - Use appropriate tools and hardware to secure each component of the artwork. Ensure all connections are stable and secure.
   - If the artwork requires anchoring, follow the specified anchoring methods to ensure it is firmly attached to the ground or base.

5. **Ensure Stability and Safety**
   - Double-check all connections and anchors to ensure the stability and safety of the sculpture or installation.
   - Conduct a thorough inspection to identify any potential hazards or weak points, as indicated by the engineers.
   - Make any necessary adjustments or reinforcements to ensure the artwork can withstand environmental conditions and public interaction.

6. **Site Cleanup**
   - Remove any installation equipment, tools, and debris from the site.
   - Restore the surrounding area to its original condition or better, ensuring the site is clean and safe for public use.

7. **Final Inspection**
   - Be present during the final inspection conducted by the Public Art Program Manager and relevant City departments.
   - If needed, during the final inspection artists might need to adjust.
   - Address any final adjustments or concerns identified during the inspection.

Step 8. Post-Installation.

Upon completion of the installation, the focus must shift to the ongoing preservation and care of the artwork, as outlined in the Maintenance Plan established during the **Display and Preservation Agreement** with the City of Laredo.

Regular inspections and upkeep are essential to address any issues that arise, such as weather-related damage, vandalism, or wear from public interaction. Safety signage might be installed where necessary to protect the public and ensure that the artwork remains safe for viewing and interaction.

Given the interactive nature and potential safety implications of three-dimensional public artwork, these installations require increased oversight and more frequent evaluations to ensure public safety and structural integrity, particularly when compared to some two-dimensional works.

To support long-term documentation and public transparency, submit photographs and/or videos of the installed artwork to the Public Art Program Manager and/or designated staff. This helps maintain a visual record of the installation's condition over time.

Step 9. De-Installation. (for Temporary Installations)

At the end of the temporary installation of the project's designated display period, the sculpture or installation must be safely and responsibly deinstalled in accordance with the terms outlined in the **Display and Preservation Agreement**.

The Public Art Program Manager will begin planning the deinstallation process in advance, ensuring that all required personnel are present. Artist must have insurances in order in case of injuries or damage to the surrounding areas occur.

Following removal, the site must be restored to its original or improved condition, which may include backfilling holes, cleaning surfaces, reseeding grass, or repairing any disturbed infrastructure.

Finally, the Public Art Program Manager and/or designated city staff will submit a comprehensive final report. This report should include documentation of the deinstallation process, any issues encountered, lessons learned, and feedback gathered from the community or stakeholders during the life of the project.

Reference/Sources

This guide was created using a variety of sources including:
- [Boise State University: Sculpture and Installation](#)

City of Laredo
Standard Operating Procedures for Public Art Projects

LIGHT ART INSTALLATION

The City of Laredo recognizes the value of incorporating public art into urban spaces, including light art installations on city property. These artistic expressions enhance the visual appeal of the city, promote community pride, and contribute to urban beautification. Light art installations offer opportunities for artists to create dynamic and impactful pieces that engage the community and enrich public spaces.

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) provides guidelines for artists and others interested in creating public art projects involving light installations on city property, covering the process from proposal submission to post-installation maintenance.

Considerations for Sculpture and Installation Art:

- Location and Environment
- Materials and Supplies
- Safety and Stability
- Artistic Process
- Site Preparation
- Installation
- Post-Installation
- De-Installation (for temporary installations)
- Budget
- Engineering and Technical Considerations

Definitions

- **Sculpture**: A three-dimensional form of art created through techniques such as carving, casting, modeling, assembling materials, or incorporating movement in kinetic works.
- **Installation**: A work of art that may include multiple elements arranged in a specific location, often interactive or site-specific.
- **Artist**: An individual or group proposing to create and install a sculpture or installation.
- **City Property**: Any land, building, or infrastructure owned or managed by the City of Laredo.

STEPS TO CREATING A LIGHT ART INSTALLATION

1 Assess the site and its environment.

2 Create a Mock-Up OR Sketch.

3 Determine Materials and Lighting Components to Be Used.

4 Technical and Safety Considerations.

5 Conduct a Lighting Test.

6 Prepare the Installation Site.

7 Installation.

8 Post-Installation.

9 De-Installation.
(for Temporary Installations)

Step-by-Step Guide to Installing a Light Art Installation on City Property:

Step 1. Assess the Site and Its Environment.

Begin by thoroughly assessing the site and its surrounding environment. Evaluate the current condition of the area, including its location, exposure to weather, and any specific challenges such as high-traffic zones, limited accessibility, or potential obstructions. Consider key factors like visibility, the surrounding landscape, and existing lighting conditions to determine the most effective approach for installing the light artwork. Be sure to assess available power sources, as the installation will likely require a reliable energy supply.

Use the **Site Assessment Form** to document environmental and logistical considerations. Additionally, plan for the long-term sustainability of the project by determining its expected duration and outlining maintenance requirements. A Maintenance Plan will be established prior to installation and discussed as part of the **Display and Preservation Agreement** with the City of Laredo. This agreement will identify who is responsible for ongoing upkeep and, in the case of temporary installations, who will manage the safe removal of the artwork.

Step 2. Create a Mock-Up/Sketch.

Develop preliminary sketches or digital renderings of the proposed light artwork, including dimensions, conceptual details, and intended lighting effects.

This visual representation should clearly communicate the concept and demonstrate that the design is suitable for public display and aligns with community values. Submit the mock-up or sketch to the City of Laredo as part of your **Public Art Project Proposal Intake Form**, which will be reviewed by the Public Art Program Manager and/or designated city staff during their monthly review.

Be as thorough as possible—especially if the project involves advanced lighting techniques, color effects, or interactive elements, which are critical to the overall experience of the installation.

This step is essential for receiving feedback and preliminary approval before advancing to detailed planning. These materials will also be required when the Public Art Program Manager and city staff assess the structural feasibility and safety of the proposed work.

Step 3. Determine Materials to Be Used.

Identify appropriate materials and lighting components for the project by considering durability, energy efficiency, safety, and compatibility with the surrounding environment. Materials must be weather-resistant, UV-stable, and able to withstand temperature fluctuations, moisture, wind, and other environmental factors common in outdoor public spaces. Common components for light installations include LEDs, fiber optics, projection equipment, solar-powered systems, and programmable lighting fixtures.

Carefully evaluate the pros and cons of each material, including expected lifespan in outdoor conditions, maintenance needs, visual performance (e.g., brightness, color rendering), and resistance to corrosion or vandalism. Also consider cost, availability, weight/load, energy consumption, and ease of replacement in the event of damage or failure. Selecting high-quality, efficient materials helps ensure the long-term success and sustainability of the artwork.

Before proceeding, the Public Art Program Manager will also evaluate the proposed materials and design. If any element is found to potentially compromise the structural safety or utility infrastructure, the proposal may need to be revised to minimize risks while still maximizing visual impact.

Step 4. Technical Considerations and Safety Considerations.

The technical aspects of a light installation are critical to ensuring its safety, stability, and long-term functionality.

Before any proposals are selected, the Public Art Program Manager and/or designated city staff will work with relevant city departments to review for approval. If any structural, technical, or safety concerns arise during this review, the proposal may need to be revised to minimize risk while maximizing visual impact. This step ensures that all structural requirements have been met and that the project is safe for public interaction.

Lighting components—such as LED arrays, projectors, or fiber optics—must also be rated for outdoor use, heat tolerance, and UV protection to prevent early failure or safety issues.

Step 5: Conduct a Lighting Test.

Before full installation, conduct a test of the lighting components. This step involves setting up a temporary version of the light installation at the actual site or a similar environment to evaluate its performance. Ensure that the lighting effects, intensity, color schemes, and overall visual impact

meet the project's objectives.

Adjustments and calibrations can be made based on the test results to optimize the final installation. This test also helps identify any potential technical issues or challenges that may arise during the actual installation. The lighting designer and electrical engineer, if involved, should oversee this process to ensure the desired effects are achieved.

Step 6. Prepare the Installation Site.

Artists are responsible for cleaning and preparing the site. For above-ground installations, artists will be responsible for preparing the site, which includes removing debris, cleaning the ground, power washing if needed, and ensuring the area is safe and accessible.

If ground-breaking or excavation is required, this must be clearly indicated in the **Site Assessment Form** in advance. Preparation may involve leveling the area or installing necessary infrastructure to ensure a stable and secure foundation for the artwork.

Artists are also responsible for arranging any required equipment or assistance—such as scaffolding, lifts, or cranes—to support the installation process, and must adhere to all relevant safety protocols when operating such equipment.

Step 7. Installation.

The City of Laredo reserves the right to deny approval of any sculpture or installation that does not meet the safety, engineering, or risk management recommendations and requirements set forth by the relevant departments.

The installation process is critical for ensuring the safety and success of the light art installation. Follow these detailed steps to ensure a smooth and effective installation:

1. **Transport the Artwork and Lighting Components:**
   - Carefully transport the artwork and lighting components to the installation site. Use protective coverings and secure transport methods to prevent damage during transit.
   - If the artwork is composed of multiple pieces, ensure each piece is properly labeled and organized for efficient assembly.

2. **Assemble the Artwork and Lighting Components:**
   - Begin the assembly process by following the detailed instructions provided in the installation plan.
   - Use appropriate tools and hardware to secure each component of the artwork. Ensure all connections are stable and secure.
   - If the artwork requires anchoring, follow the specified anchoring methods to ensure it is firmly attached to the ground or base.
   - Install the lighting components according to the design specifications, ensuring proper alignment and connection to the power source.

3. **Ensure Stability, Safety, and Electrical Integrity:**
   - Double-check all connections, anchors, and electrical wiring to ensure the stability, safety, and functionality of the light installation.
   - Conduct a thorough inspection to identify any potential hazards or weak points.
   - Make any necessary adjustments or reinforcements to ensure the artwork can withstand environmental conditions and public interaction.

4. **Site Cleanup:**
   - Remove any installation equipment, tools, and debris from the site.
   - Restore the surrounding area to its original condition or better, ensuring the site is clean and safe for public use.

5. **Final Inspection:**
   - Be present during the final inspection conducted by the Public Art Program Manager and relevant City departments.
   - If needed, during the final inspection artists might need to adjust.
   - Address any final adjustments or concerns identified during the inspection.

Step 8. Post-Installation.

Upon completion of the installation, the focus must shift to the ongoing preservation and care of the artwork, as outlined in the Maintenance Plan established during the **Display and Preservation Agreement** with the City of Laredo.

Regular inspections and upkeep are essential to address any issues that arise, such as weather-related damage, vandalism, or wear from public interaction. Safety signage might be installed where necessary to protect the public and ensure that the artwork remains safe for viewing and interaction.

Ongoing communication with the community ensures timely coordination of maintenance needs, safety concerns, and feedback related to the installation. Given the interactive nature and potential safety implications of three-dimensional public artwork, these installations require increased oversight and more frequent evaluations to ensure public safety and structural integrity, particularly when compared to some two-dimensional works.

To support long-term documentation and public transparency, submit photographs and/or videos of the installed artwork to the Public Art Program Manager and/or designated staff. This helps maintain a visual record of the installation's condition over time.

Step 9. De-Installation. (for Temporary Installations)

At the end of a temporary light installation's designated display period, the work must be safely and responsibly deinstalled in accordance with the terms outlined in the Display and Preservation Agreement with the City of Laredo.

Advance planning is essential. Coordinate the deinstallation well before the scheduled end date to ensure all necessary components—such as lighting equipment, tools, protective materials, and qualified personnel—are in place. Depending on the scale and complexity of the installation, this may involve cranes, scaffolding, safety gear, and appropriate transport vehicles.

The deinstallation process must begin with the safe disconnection and removal of all electrical systems. All power sources should be turned off and properly secured before dismantling any structural or artistic components. Follow safety protocols to prevent electrical hazards, injury, or property damage.

Handle all materials and artwork with care. If the installation is being stored or relocated, use appropriate packing materials and labeling to protect the components from damage during transport or storage.

Restore the site to its original or improved condition. This may involve backfilling holes, removing residue or debris, reseeding vegetation, cleaning surfaces, or repairing any disrupted infrastructure. The artist or installation team is responsible for ensuring the site meets all city requirements upon project closeout.

A final report must be submitted to the Public Art Program Manager and/or designated city staff. This report should document the deinstallation process, highlight any challenges or risks encountered, outline lessons learned, and include feedback gathered from the community, stakeholders, or city departments during the project's duration.

Reference/Sources

This guide was created using a variety of sources including:
- Paso Del Norte Community Foundation
- Portland State University

City of Laredo
Standard Operating Procedures for Public Art Projects

LAREDO PUBLIC ART PROGRAM – FAQ SHEET

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Q1: Who can apply to participate in the Public Art Program?
A: Any artist, creative, or community member interested in contributing to Laredo's public spaces can apply. This includes emerging artists, students, and established creatives. Specific eligibility details are outlined in the intake form or public announcement.

Q2: Is this program only for muralists?
A: No! The program supports a range of public art forms including murals, ground paintings, utility cabinet murals, sculptures, installations, light installations, and other mediums.

Q3: What's the difference between a site-specific and non-site-specific project?
A: A **site-specific** project responds to a specific location (e.g., a designated wall or space) and is usually part of a City-issued *"Call to Artists."*
A **non-site-specific** project is a general public art proposal that is not tied to an active public call. For example, if an artist proposes a mural for a park wall without a current announcement or designated site, the proposal may later be matched with a suitable location.

PROPOSAL INTAKE FORM QUESTIONS

Q1: I'm not sure how much detail to include in the concept section. What's expected?
A: Provide a clear vision of your concept, including your inspiration, how it relates to the community, and the general look/feel of the piece. You don't need finalized designs at this stage, but provide enough for the review team to understand your intent.

Q2: Do I need to include a full budget breakdown?
A: A full breakdown isn't required, but a basic line-item budget is needed to assess feasibility. To the best of your knowledge, include an explanation of estimated costs based on the size of the project and type of materials. Try to account for materials, labor, preparation, transportation, and any other anticipated expenses.

Q3: What if I haven't created public art before?
A: That's okay! The mentorship program is designed to support learning. Just be honest about your experience and emphasize your interest, goals, and artistic background.

EVALUATION CRITERIA QUESTIONS

Q1: How is my proposal evaluated?
A: Proposals are assessed on artistic merit, feasibility, relevance to the community, safety, and alignment with program values such as inclusion, cultural representation, and site appropriateness.

Q2: Will I receive feedback if my proposal is not selected?
A. Whenever possible, the City of Laredo aims to provide constructive feedback to support future submissions. Artists are encouraged to actively seek feedback and remain open to growth and development throughout the process.

SITE ASSESSMENT FORM QUESTIONS

Q1: What is a site assessment and why is it important for non-site-specific proposals?
A: A site assessment helps determine whether a proposed location is suitable for the type of public art being considered. It looks at factors like visibility, foot traffic, safety, surface condition, and surrounding context. For non-site-specific proposals, this step ensures the project can be thoughtfully matched to an appropriate space.

Q2: What should I consider when reviewing a potential site for my artwork?
A: Think about the size and scale of the wall or space, its condition, lighting, accessibility, and how people interact with the area. Ask yourself if the site aligns with the message or style of your piece and whether installation is feasible (e.g., is there access to electricity or protection from weather if needed?).

Q3: Can I suggest a site if I don't have one officially assigned yet?
A: Yes! Artists are encouraged to suggest possible locations in their proposal. While it may not be guaranteed, your insight can help City staff match the right art to the right place. Include photos or a brief description if possible, and explain why the location is meaningful or appropriate.

Q4: Who is the site assessor?
A: Before submitting your proposal, you must contact the Public Art Program Manager and/or designated city staff to assess whether the proposed site qualifies for inclusion in the City of Laredo's Public Art Program.

ARTIST MENTORSHIP PROGRAM QUESTIONS

Q1: What is the role of a mentor or mentee in the program?
A: Mentors guide others through the public art process, offering technical advice, feedback, and encouragement. Mentees gain hands-on experience in design, preparation, installation, and community engagement.

Q2: What kind of time commitment is expected?
A: This varies by project. Generally, participants should expect meetings, hands-on workdays, and check-ins throughout the creation and installation phases. Specific timelines will be outlined in the project plan.

Q3: What if I can't make all the meetings or site visits?
A: Consistent participation is important. If conflicts arise, communicate with the Public Art Program Manager or mentor in advance. Excessive absences or lack of communication may impact your participation status.

TECHNICAL & INSTALLATION QUESTIONS

Q1: Who handles wall prep or safety equipment?
A: Artist or organizations are responsible for surface prep and safety compliance. These responsibilities will be clearly outlined in the agreement.

Q2: What if I've never used a lift, spray paint, or exterior-grade materials?
A: That's okay! The Artist Mentorship Program allows for hands-on training. Indicate your comfort level in the intake form so mentors and coordinators can provide support.

Q3: Do I need permits?
A: The City will coordinate permitting when needed. Artists must follow safety guidelines and approved procedures.

Q4: Do I need to have insurance to participate?
A: Details about insurance requirements will be provided during the agreement phase. If you're unsure, reach out to the Public Art Program Manager for guidance or potential resources.

COMMUNITY ENGAEMENT

Q1: As a public artist, am I representing the City of Laredo?
A: Yes. When participating in a City-sponsored public art project, artists are viewed as ambassadors of the Laredo Public Art Program. Artists are expected to conduct themselves professionally, communicate respectfully with the community, and align with the program's values of inclusion, equity, and civic pride.

Q2: Are there any guidelines for public behavior or social media use while working on a City project?
A: Yes. Artists should not post the full artwork prior to the official unveiling. After the official unveiling artists are encouraged to share their work and process but should do so respectfully and avoid offensive, political, or controversial content that may conflict with City values. Any public statements or media interactions should reflect positively on the project, the community, and the City of Laredo.

Q3: What should I do if someone from the community approaches me while I'm working?
A: It's common for community members to show interest or ask questions during installation. Be courteous and respectful, but keep conversations brief so as not to disrupt the work or compromise safety. You can let them know you are part of a City project and refer them to public announcement or the Public Art Program Manager for more details.

MISCELLANEOUS

Q1: What are the expectations for communication during the project?
A: Regular, timely communication is essential. Artists must stay in contact with the Public Art Program Manager, attend scheduled meetings, and respond to inquiries or updates. Lack of communication may impact continued participation in current or future projects.

Q2: Can I collaborate with another artist?
A: Yes, collaboration is encouraged. Just make sure to indicate all team members in your proposal and clearly define roles.

Q3: What happens after my piece is installed?
A: You'll participate in a final walk-through, and may be highlighted in public materials. Participation in the unveiling event will also be required. Maintenance plans or expectations will be reviewed as part of the project closeout. Artists will also be asked to complete a brief feedback survey to help improve future program processes.

Q4: Who owns the artwork?
A: Most public artworks commissioned through the City are considered the property of the City of Laredo, though artists are credited. Details will be outlined in your agreement.

LAREDO PUBLIC ART PROGRAM – SUPPORT DESK

Need help or couldn't find an answer to your question? We're here to support you throughout the public art process.

Contact:
Vanesa C. Filazzola
Public Art Program Manager
Phone: (956) 795-2400
Submit a question: https://www.laredolibrary.org/contact-ask-librarian/

Support Hours:
Monday–Friday
9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
2:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Please allow 1–2 business days for a response. For urgent matters during active installations, contact the Program Manager directly via phone.