

Temporary Art: Street Murals



TEMPORARY ART: STREET MURALS

Overview

Street Murals convert parts of streets into public art installations, showcasing the creativity and input of local artists and residents. Street Murals themselves activate the public realm, and the process of creating them encourages communities to work together to create vibrant art projects in their neighborhoods. Street Murals take advantage of our most extensive public spaces—streets—to bring more art into daily life, contributing to a sense of place, and of neighborhood identity and pride.



Top: Mid-block mural in Somerville

Bottom: Intersection mural in San Francisco, CA



Top and Bottom Right: Mid-block mural in Allston, Boston
Bottom Left: Street mural on Elmhurst Street, Boston

Context and Location Criteria

Street Murals are best suited to neighborhood residential streets. Murals can be located mid-block or within intersections. A mural can take on various designs, but should not include any colors or shapes that could be perceived as traffic control indicators, and thus, confuse people about the appropriate path of travel. The design and installation of a mural should be collaborative and involve community members and local residents.

General Location Criteria

Murals can be located only on residential streets and streets classified as “local” according to the federal functional classification system.

Designs should avoid pedestrian paths of travel and should not impact existing street parking or traffic control indicators, such as crosswalks, lane lines, regulatory signs, etc.

Pavement must be in good condition.

Murals should not be installed in locations scheduled for resurfacing or utility work within 3 months of painting.

Design Criteria

Designs should not include any shapes or colors that could be perceived as traffic control indicators, or be mistaken for directions to the roadway user or pedestrian.

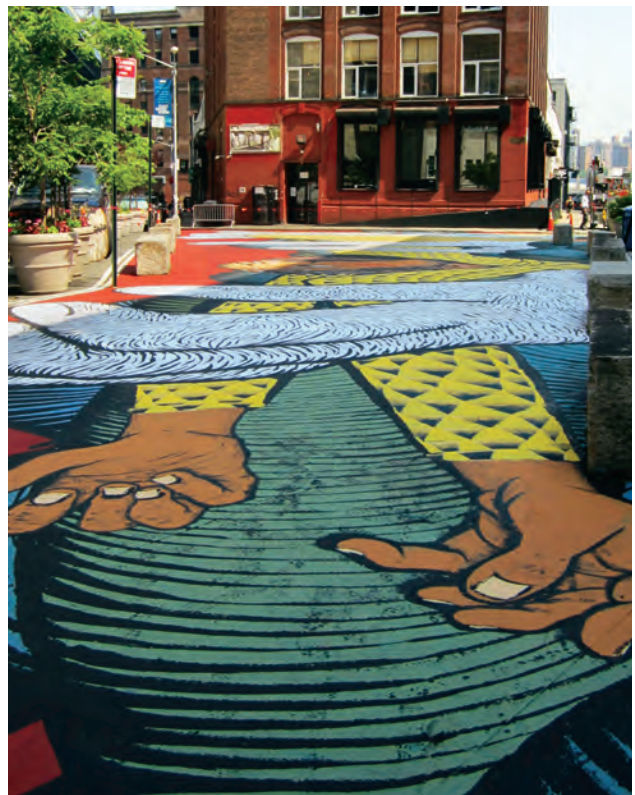
Designs should not include shapes or color contrast that would confuse persons with vision impairment.

Colors must be non-retro-reflective and must not resemble existing traffic control devices.

Designs should not invite pedestrians to linger or be distracted in the street.

Designs should not include words or universally recognized symbols, logos, any trademarked materials, or advertisements.

Paint must be skid resistant.



Street murals in New York City, NY

Possible Mural Locations

Mid-block

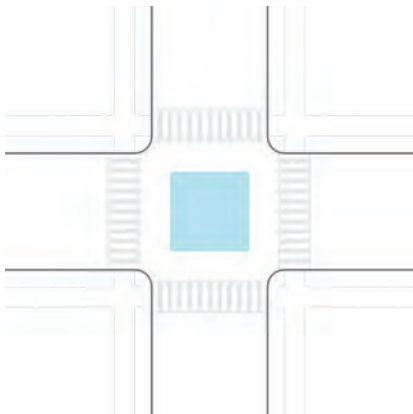
Different types of streets can be appropriate locations for mid-block murals. Neighborhood Residential and Shared Streets are the most typical locations for mid-block murals. Murals in higher-traffic locations will need more frequent repainting. See more on Neighborhood Residential and Shared Streets in the Boston Complete Streets Guidelines (<http://bostoncompletestreets.org/guidelines>).



Intersections

Murals in intersections are most appropriate on lower-volume streets with no traffic signals—in particular, Neighborhood Residential and Shared Streets.

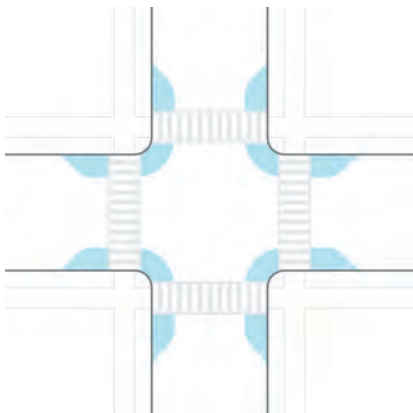
- ▶ Designs should have a small enough coverage area to avoid wear from turning vehicles.
- ▶ Any artistic design within an intersection must not indicate to pedestrians, cyclists, or drivers a path of travel that is contrary to the existing or traditional route.
- ▶ Designs must not interfere with crosswalks.
- ▶ There should not be lines, resembling lane markings, that indicate a path of travel—unless they reinforce the expected path of travel.



Painted curb extensions at intersections

Painted curb extensions can help calm turning traffic and increase visibility for pedestrians, but should not encourage pedestrians to stand in the street while waiting to cross.

- ▶ Any artistic design should increase visibility for pedestrians and drivers.
- ▶ The painted curb extension must look distinct from the sidewalk, and should not suggest that the painted curb extension is part of the sidewalk.



Application and Implementation Process

1 Submit a Boston Art Commission (BAC) Public Art & Design Application available at the link below

Application guidelines can be found at www.boston.gov/publicrealm.

Application should include:

- ▶ sketches or renderings of the mural in the context of the street to communicate size and scale
- ▶ photos and aerial image of the proposed location(s)
- ▶ CV/resume of the artist involved (if applicable)
- ▶ letter(s) of support from neighbors, the funder, project partners, and/or other local businesses

2 BAC and Boston Transportation Department (BTD) review the proposal

3 Successful applicant signs a Street Painting License

A sample is available at www.boston.gov/publicrealm.

4 Apply online for a Street Closure Permit from BTD and the Public Works Department (PWD)

More information is available at www.boston.gov/publicrealm.

5 Mural is installed by the community/ artists

Installations are intended to be temporary; applicant may reapply for permits to maintain the design after 18 months.

Community Partner Role

Street Murals not only serve as neighborhood public art installations, but also, foster inclusive and vibrant communities. The success of a Street Mural to enliven a neighborhood depends on the community partner. Individuals and organizations can apply to serve as the Community Partner to create a street mural collaboratively with artists, residents, neighbors, and volunteers to create art pieces that transform the places in which they live.

It is the community partner's role to install a Street Mural. The implementation process builds relationships within the community, and community partner's should involve neighbors and local residents in the mural's design and installation.

The installation of a mid-block Street Mural in Allston, Boston





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