

# CITY OF EL CENTRO

## POLICY STATEMENT

Policy Statement No: 115  
Category: General  
Subject: Utility Box Art

Adopted: April 20, 2021  
Revised:  
Distribution:

### I Purpose

The City of El Centro recognizes the importance of public art and strives to create a more vibrant community. Graffiti-covered utility boxes contribute to community blight. It is the intent of this program to reflect a diversity of art and painting styles and perspectives that bring small areas of color and vitality to El Centro's urban landscape by honoring the city's rich multi-cultural heritage or creating images of fun, inspiration, and beauty.

The goal is to wrap City-owned utility boxes with art printed on anti-graffiti vinyl. The work would be performed by a contracted sign company that is certified to complete such work.

### II Procedures

The City is proposing to decorate City-owned utility boxes with art and/or photography wrapping. The boxes currently are brown or gray and a target of graffiti. The overall installation will be completed by a vinyl wrap sign company, complete with necessary preparations, including, scraping, sanding and priming. The vinyl material used also will have a UV-protective clear coat to protect the box from the sun and additional damage. (Paint directly on utility boxes is not proposed at this time due to extreme heat temperatures, which negatively affect the integrity of the art.) The twenty (20) boxes are located throughout El Centro, including major thoroughfares with traffic signals, and thus are visible to automobile, cycling, and pedestrian traffic. The City's utility boxes are the only ones available under this program.

### III Policy

It is the intent of the program to reflect a diversity of art and painting styles that bring vibrant color and vitality to El Centro's urban landscape by honoring the city's rich multi-cultural heritage or creating images of fun, inspiration, and beauty. The Public Art Program is open to student and practicing artists/photographers, photography and art teachers that are interested in mentoring a group of students and artists of all ages. Priority will be given to individuals that reside in El Centro; however, all are welcome to apply. All entries must be an original design and artwork of the entrant must be suitable for viewing by all ages. When making the selection for the El Centro Utility Box Public Art Program, the following will be considered:

- Artistic excellence, innovation, and originality
- Whether the art meets the goal of the project and has a broad appeal

- Whether the art transforms the project area
- No political, religious, racist, violent or sexual images

The selection process will consist of a review and project approval by the El Centro Library & Community Services Board. Artists will be notified by the City if and when their designs are accepted or whether they were not selected.

#### **IV Guidelines**

The City is specifically requesting artwork that may consist of digital art and photography.

Photos submitted shall be taken with a high resolution camera. The camera shall have a minimum resolution of 20 megapixels.

Drawings submitted either can be of digital drawings or high resolution scans of physical artwork. All images shall have a minimum resolution of 300 dots per inch (DPI) and be saved in jpeg file or png format.

Resolution of submitted images shall have a minimum width of 3000 pixels. Because of the size of the boxes, photos will be enlarged quite a bit.

Submitted photos shall be raw image format digital photos that have not been cropped, photo-shopped, or enhanced.

Because utility boxes are taller than they are wide, photos should be taken vertically and drawings should be oriented vertically. Use of a tripod is recommended to avoid blurry photos.

Artwork using a majority of dark colors will not be considered due to the potential of overheating the utility boxes.

#### **V Authorization**

The City reserves the right to make layout edits to designs to ensure proper airflow through the boxes. The City must be able to fully access the box and the components inside the box at all times.

The artwork is considered a long-term installation and will become the property of the City of El Centro. The artwork may include the name of the photographer artist in no larger than 3" x 5" space on one of the utility box panels. Any artist chosen to participate must agree in writing to use of the image by the City on a form provided by the City.

No monetary compensation is provided.

#### **VI Prohibited Use**

Entries that use a copyrighted or trademarked image will not be accepted. The art submitted shall not be plagiarized, stolen, or copied from any other source.

## VII How to Apply

Please go to [www.cityofelcentro.org](http://www.cityofelcentro.org) and select Public Art to access the City's Public Art Program and the following application, which is available for download.

### Application

All requirements listed below must be met or the application will be removed from consideration.

- 1. Application Form Completed
- 2. Digital design that shows all sides and the top of the utility box, included with the application.
- 3. Artwork must meet specifications for content, quality, and format included in program guidelines.
- 4. Short artist statement (2,000 characters max) that describes why the artist is interested designing a utility box, previous experience (if any) and how the artist believes the art will transform the street and/or enliven the area.
- 5. Desired box location (not guaranteed). The City's Library & Community Services Board will accept up to 3 location choices. Please rank the specific location with "#1" being the most desired, "#2" being the next, and so forth. The City's Library & Community Services Commission will have the final say on all determinations of location if the artist is accepted.

### If you are selected to complete a Utility Box Public Art Project

All artists must sign a City of El Centro Release and complete the Release Agreement before artwork will be installed. Once selected, the following shall be submitted within thirty (30) calendar days:

- 1. Final artwork and design. Artwork must be in high resolution digital format.
- 2. Title of the artwork and artist name.