

The background is a vibrant, abstract painting with a utility box shape in the center. The colors are a mix of warm and cool tones, including yellows, oranges, reds, blues, and purples. On the right side, there is a vertical bar with a blue top section and an orange bottom section.

# **UTILITY BOX ART PROGRAM HANDBOOK**

CITY OF COSTA MESA  
2024

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## CITY OF COSTA MESA ♦

### UTILITY BOX ART PROGRAM HANDBOOK

#### OVERVIEW & MISSION

##### OVERVIEW

The City of Costa Mesa owns over 120 utility boxes at signalized intersections throughout the city and is dedicated to incorporating art into public spaces. A Utility Box Art Program was launched in early 2015 to spotlight a handful of utility boxes as beautiful art pieces. The city currently has over 60 utility art boxes that display designed artwork from local artists using vinyl wraps.

##### MISSION

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

#### BOX SPECIFICATIONS & LOCATIONS



*City of Costa Mesa Traffic Signal Map*

The City Traffic Signal Map indicates utility boxes that are spread out around the city wherever there are traffic signals.

Utility boxes owned and managed by the city are typically 40 inches wide, about 48 inches in height and 30 inches deep. Generally the city of Costa Mesa utility boxes are larger in size than other private company utility boxes.

## **VINYL WRAPS**

Currently, the city of Costa Mesa uses vinyl wraps to cover each box with an artist submitted design and or artwork. Vinyl wraps are a polyester film with a clear gloss that has an anti-graffiti overlamine. Once a design is approved through application process (see below), vinyl wraps take 4 to 8 weeks to install. Artists submit a photo of the artwork they wish to display and a city approved contractor/vendor measures the box, orchestrates the placement and applies the vinyl wrap.

### **Why use vinyl wraps instead of painting directly onto the utility box?**

#### **1. Graffiti Deterrent**

Vinyl wraps deter and repel graffiti, in part because it's hard to paint over the surface and in part because it's hard to see any spray painted or carved in symbols outside the artwork.

#### **2. Long Lasting**

On average, vinyl wraps typically last three years. The colors fade a lot slower than a typical house paint or acrylic.

#### **3. Quality and General Appearance**

The appearance of each utility art box holds up nicely and the colors remain vibrant over time. They can also be cleaned easily.

## **MAINTENANCE & REPAIR PROCESS**

- Utility Box Art will be inspected annually to assess for damage and or replacement depending on the age of the artwork.
- Repairs and maintenance needs can be caused by; extensive graffiti, vandalism, torn or ripped vinyl, damaged signal casings, failure of internal electrical components, or subject to mechanical maintenance upgrades.
- The City of Costa Mesa will manage all repairs and replacements for up to 3 years for each utility art box. The City reserves the right to modify or remove artwork should a utility/traffic control box require maintenance, modifications or repairs as a result of unanticipated damages.
- The City shall notify the affected artist(s) when the vinyl wrap on the utility box needs to be replaced or removed.

Duration	Repairs	Replacement
<b>Utility Box Art</b> submitted by artists shall be on display for a recommended period of 3 years.	Each box will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis for repairs. Repairs will be paid for by the city until the wrap is replaced and for up to three years (or longer, based on the condition of the vinyl wrap and as funding permits).	The replacement schedule of the exterior shall be determined by both the extent of maintenance and or repairs required at each location. If necessary, the vinyl wrap will be removed until a replacement artwork can be found, as funding permits year to year.
<b>Sponsored Utility Box Art</b> will remain for up to 3 years..	Any repairs for sponsored boxes will be paid for by the city within the 3 year period.  <u>Maintenance Costs:</u>  \$200 to remove or unwrap a box  \$80 for setup and \$20 per square foot for repairs to the applied graphic	If a sponsored box needs to be replaced or altered, the sponsor will have the option to pay the fee again and refresh the design or the vinyl wrap can be removed at no extra cost to the sponsor.

## **CRITERIA FOR SUBMISSIONS- ARTISTS**

### **ARTIST ELIGIBILITY & BASIC INFORMATION**

The Utility Box Art program is open to individual artists, a team of artists or community groups who have the vision and skills required to create a visually engaging image or artwork design for a vinyl wrap.

1. Qualifying applicants must reside in Orange County.
2. Applicants may apply online or submit a paper copy of the form (see below).
3. Each applicant must provide a high-quality photo(s) of their proposed artwork (1 to 5 high resolution, 300 dpi, art design files with the dimensions of 40 inches wide by 20 inches high).

4. Each applicant will be asked to provide a short biography written in the third person for the website map, as part of the application process.
5. Artists may submit two new designs annually, but only one artwork will be accepted per year (Please note: filling out an application does not guarantee approval from staff and the City Arts Commission).

### **Recommendations for submitting a design:**

- Ensure that artwork is appropriate for all ages- no political, religious or discriminatory subject matter will be considered.
- Consider using bright colors and heavy outlines, as they look best from the afar.
- Envision how the design will translate onto a box shape and if it will be visually interesting from all angles and directions.
- Utilize the utility box diagram to envision how the artwork might look on the shape of the box.

Utility Box locations are chosen by city staff but suggestions are welcome.

## **ARTIST HONORARIUM & SUPPORT**

### **ARTIST HONORARIUM FOR DESIGNS**

Selected artists shall be compensated for their submitted artwork and or conceptual renderings and receive an honorarium upon the acceptance of the design by the Arts Commission and the completion of the vinyl wrap installation. The amount shall cover costs for the artist's time spent in creating the artwork, submitting an application and occasionally being available for interviews or photo opportunities to be used for promotional purposes. The artist will not be responsible for installing the vinyl wrap. The honorarium for one utility box is \$300. Only one design per artist will be accepted each application year.

### **ARTIST INFORMATION**

Photos of artwork designs on completed utility boxes will be displayed on an interactive Google map on the City of Costa Mesa website. Information about the artist will accompany the image of the completed Utility Box Art.

Potential information to be included:

- **Artist Name**
- **Artist Short Biography**
- **Website or Social Media**
- **Title of the Artwork**
- **Box Description**
- **Box Location**
- **Box Number**
- **Box Year**

Utility Box Art images will also be used, intermittingly, throughout the City of Costa Mesa social media and media channels.

## **CRITERIA FOR SUBMISSIONS-SPONSORSHIPS**

### **SPONSORSHIPS COST & TERMS**

The sponsorship program will permit a sponsor to commission or select a work of art designed by a local artist, to be placed on a box. Sponsors will be acknowledged on the Utility Box Art Program webpage, on the UBAP map and through other City media channels. The donation is tax deductible.

1. The cost to sponsor a box for up to 3 years will be \$3,000.  
\*Inquire about reduced fees for small nonprofit organizations.
2. Branding on the box cannot exceed 20% of printable space and must blend into the artwork or design. The intent of the box is not to create a business billboard but a tastefully appealing piece of art that meets standards set by the Arts Commission and city staff.
3. Organizations and businesses are **required** to solicit an artwork design from a local artist. Please refer to the Artist Eligibility paragraph above for more details about the application process and the materials required. Once approved, the City will pay an honorarium to each artist for their submitted and approved design. Any other fees associated with commissioning a separate artwork(s) themed specifically to product or a business, are the responsibility of the business and or organization.

Some things to consider before participating:

- No political, religious, or discriminatory subject matter will be considered.
- The Costa Mesa Utility Box Art Program was created to beautify the City's urban landscape. Designed vinyl wraps should not serve any specific commercial purpose, and the artistic integrity of the original artwork submitted by the artist, should remain intact.
- Regular maintenance such as cleaning or removal of graffiti will be the responsibility of the City of Costa Mesa for up to 3 years which includes damage; such as severe scratching or ripping. If the damage is significant the vinyl wrap will be removed completely at no cost to the sponsor.
- The City may remove the art wrap at any time should it become repeatedly damaged, difficult to maintain, damaged beyond resources to repair, or as a result of another concern.
- Generated funds are used to provide honorariums to the artists that participate in the program.

## **REVIEW & EVALUATION PROCESS**

Utility Box Art applications are reviewed by staff who will then forward all complete and eligible applications to the City of Costa Mesa Arts Commission for evaluation and approval.

Artists and organizations will be notified by email, with a timeline for installation, if their design has been selected.

### **Approval Criteria:**

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

- Evaluation of artistic excellence
- Appropriateness of scale, form, content and design
- Relationship to the social, cultural and or historical identity of a location
- Artist or organization residency in Orange County

## **APPLICATION TIMELINE**

### **APPLICATION CYCLE**

Utility Box Art Program funding allows for 10 new or replacement art boxes annually.

Online application opens October 9, 2024 and will be open for new artwork designs until December 31, 2024.

Vinyl wraps will be installed beginning in January until the end of June of each year.



**CITY OF COSTA MESA ♦**

**UTILITY BOX ART PROGRAM APPLICATION**

♦ *Also available online*

**ARTIST INFORMATION**

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, ST Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Facebook URL: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Name (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Web Site URL: \_\_\_\_\_ Instagram URL: \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide a short biography (required). You may also attach a CV with education, exhibitions, gallery representation, etc. (optional).

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**ARTWORK INFORMATION**

Artwork Title #1:

*This may be used, in whole or in part, for promotion if your application is approved and will be placed on the Utility Box Google map.*

\_\_\_\_\_

Artwork Description #1:

*Write in a brief description of a few words that address the basic visual elements of your piece. This may be used, in whole or in part, for promotion if your application is approved and will be placed on the Utility Box Google map.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Artwork Medium #1:

*How did you make this? What materials were used? This may be used, in whole or in part, for promotion if your application is approved and will be placed on the Utility Box Google map.*

---

Year created: \_\_\_\_\_

Is there a location you prefer?

*This is a suggestion and will be honored whenever possible but not guaranteed. Please refer to the City of Costa Mesa Utility Box Google map on our website.*

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Artwork Title #2:

*This may be used, in whole or in part, for promotion if your application is approved and will be placed on the Utility Box Google map.*

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Artwork Description #2:

*Write in a brief description of a few words that address the basic visual elements of your piece. This may be used, in whole or in part, for promotion if your application is approved and will be placed on the Utility Box Google map.*

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Artwork Medium #2:

*How did you make this? What materials were used? This may be used, in whole or in part, for promotion if your application is approved and will be placed on the Utility Box Google map.*

---

Year created: \_\_\_\_\_

Is there a location you prefer?

*This is a suggestion and will be honored whenever possible but not guaranteed. Please refer to the City of Costa Mesa Utility Box Google map on our website.*

---

**Proposed Artwork:**

**Please email or upload images showing photos or drawings of your proposed artwork:**

*Envision how the design will translate onto a box shape and if it will be visually interesting from all angles and directions.*

Artwork submissions must be a high resolution (suggested 300 dpi) –file with the dimensions of 20 inches high and 40 inches wide. Maximum size allowed is 16 MB. Allowed types: jpg, .jpeg, .png

You will need to upload five photos of each artwork that you would like to be placed on the utility box; the top part of the utility box, the front and back and the two sides- [check the handbook diagram](#) (if it is an abstract repeating pattern, one image may be enough):

Artwork #1

Photo 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Photo 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Photo 3: \_\_\_\_\_

Photo 4: \_\_\_\_\_

Photo 5: \_\_\_\_\_

Artwork #2

Photo 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Photo 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Photo 3: \_\_\_\_\_

Photo 4: \_\_\_\_\_

Photo 5: \_\_\_\_\_

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Each artist is permitted 1 submission per year. An artist honorarium in the amount of \$300 will be awarded after the vinyl wrap has been completed and the artwork is visible to the public. Artists will be notified and a check will be mailed. In order for a payout, the City will need a W-9 filed. Fill out and email or upload as part of your application.

#### [W-9 Form](#)

Would you be interested in participating in a brief interview for City of Costa Mesa social media platforms to help promote and bring awareness to the program? Please circle one.

Y or N

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### **ARTS DIRECTORY**

\_\_ I give permission to include my name, social media information, biography and images of my artwork in the City of Costa Mesa's [Arts Directory](#) on the City's website.

If you'd like to be a part of the Arts Directory, please upload or email an image you would like to feature below:

Featured Image: \_\_\_\_\_

Maximum size allowed is 16 MB. Allowed types: .jpg, .jpeg, .png

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

\_\_ I have read and understand the requirements that have been provided in the handbook for City of Costa Mesa Utility Art Box Program.

\_\_ I certify that the information contained in this application and attachments are true and correct.

**WAIVER & RELEASE**

I represent that I am the author of and owner of all rights in and to the Artwork and that I have the sole and exclusive right to make within the grant of rights, including but not limited to moral rights, that neither I nor anyone else has any contractual or other arrangements which will interfere with rights herein granted and warrant that the rights herein granted will not infringe on the rights of any third party and that the consent or permission of no other party is required by City in connection with the use of the Artwork. I agree to indemnify and hold City harmless from and against any and all liability, damages, claims and demands of whatever kind and nature, either in law or in equity, which arises or may hereafter arise from the City's use or display of the Artwork or in connection with the breach or alleged breach of my representation and/or warranty made hereunder. I understand and agree that the City may remove my artwork at any time without prior notice. I further acknowledge the City will make an effort to inform me as the artist in advance of the removal of the artwork, but any such removal will not be dependent on advance notice being given.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Print Name**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**



**CITY OF COSTA MESA** ◆

**UTILITY BOX ART PROGRAM SPONSORSHIP APPLICATION**

◆ *Also available online*

**ORGANIZATION INFORMATION**

Name of the Organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Representative's First Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Representative's Last Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City, ST Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Facebook URL: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Web Site URL: \_\_\_\_\_ Instagram URL: \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide a short description of your organization (required).

\_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**ARTIST & ARTWORK INFORMATION**

*Organizations and businesses are required to solicit a design or artwork from a local artist. Contact Arts Specialist for recommendations.*

**Commissioned local artists will need to fill out the UABP Artist Application and submit the photos and sign the waiver.**

Artist: \_\_\_\_\_

Artwork Title:

*This may be used, in whole or in part, for promotion if your application is approved and will be placed on the Utility Box Google map.*

\_\_\_\_\_

**LOGO INFORMATION**

Please upload or email your organization's logo to be placed on the utility box.





**GENERAL INFORMATION**

Checks for sponsorship fees can be made out to the City of Costa Mesa and are due after receiving notice of an approved application and before the vinyl wrap is applied. The City will send over an invoice once the artwork design has been approved by the Arts Commission.

Once a check is received, the City of Costa Mesa will issue a receipt.

**Donations to a government entity are charitable contributions. Learn more about [IRS Charitable Contributions](#).**

**ARTS DIRECTORY** *(only applicable to arts organizations)*

I give permission to include my organization and social media information in the City of Costa Mesa’s [Arts Directory](#) on the City’s website.

If you’d like to be a part of the Arts Directory, please upload or email an image you would like to feature below:

Featured Image: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Maximum size allowed is 16 MB. Allowed types: .jpg, .jpeg, .png*

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I have read and understand the requirements that have been provided in the handbook for City of Costa Mesa Utility Art Box Program.  
 I certify that the information contained in this application and attachments are true and correct.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_



## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

**Laurette Garner**

City of Costa Mesa

Arts Specialist

[laurette.garner@costamesaca.gov](mailto:laurette.garner@costamesaca.gov)

(714) 754-5322

Thank you for completing this application form and for your interest in the Utility Art Box Program. If your artwork is selected you will be contacted via email. Please insure your email address is correctly displayed above.

## UTILITY ART BOX PROGRAM

### Utility Box Diagram

While the majority of utility boxes found in the City of Costa Mesa vary in size, 95% of them are the following dimensions:

**44"W x 26"D x 55"H**

