



Walnut Creek Public Art Program Arts + Recreation Department Mural Design & Application Guidelines

The City of Walnut Creek's Mural Program is intended to enhance the beauty and vibrancy of our streetscape and structures, and to add to the diversity of artists, styles, and concepts of public art in Walnut Creek. The application and guidelines will provide applicant with a clear process that will support the interests of the community as well as those of the property owner.

To make an appointment for mural review, please contact the Arts & Recreation Department's Public Art Manager, Marija Nelson, at (925) 295-1472 or mnelson@bedfordgallery.org

Mural Definition: Typically two-dimensional, singular works of art for exterior or interior walls, in which all text, graphics, and design elements are related to the artistic and conceptual design. Murals may not contain signage.

Murals under Arts Commission Jurisdiction

The Walnut Creek Arts Commission must review and approve all:

1. Murals to be placed upon City-owned property.
2. Murals financed in whole or in part with City funds to be placed on privately owned property.
3. Murals financed by private business for any exterior wall/surface visible to the public.

Mural Design Approval Process

To place a mural on City-owned property, you must first obtain approval from the appropriate City department to proceed with the project prior to submitting a proposal to the Arts Commission. The Arts Commission will not review a proposal without the appropriate written approvals. To begin the department approval process for your desired site, contact the Public Art Manager at (925) 295-1472 or mnelson@bedfordgallery.org

Mural proposals are reviewed by appointment with the Public Art Manager. The lead artist and the building owner or representative must attend this meeting. If staff approves the proposal, the Public Art Manager will present the proposed mural design to the Arts Commission. Requirements for staff's recommendation to approve murals are listed below. Mural project applicants are expected to attend the appropriate meeting(s) of the Arts Commission to answer any questions about the mural proposal.

Content

Proposed murals may not include design elements that would be considered inappropriate, offensive, and/or indecent by community standards. Mural proposals may not advertise for, or otherwise be connected to, any particular business or related products (i.e., signage).

Responsibility

Please note that the Arts Commission's approval of any mural design does not constitute acceptance of the completed mural into the City's Public Art Collection, unless the mural has been specifically commissioned by or acquired by the Arts Commission for the City of Walnut Creek. All City application fees, maintenance, repainting, restoration, removal, and painting over of the mural shall be the responsibility of the property owner. If a private property is sold, the mural will transfer along with the property and the new owner will be responsible for the continuing maintenance and care of the mural.

Submittal Requirements for Approval of Mural Design Proposals

The Public Art Manager will review mural proposals to ensure integrity of design and concept, and to determine that the lead artist has presented a professional proposal appropriate to the setting and architecture. Consideration of the proposal is contingent upon submittal of the following items:

1. Written application including description of proposed design, site, wall preparation (including a condition report of the wall prior to cleaning and priming), materials, and processes to be used (including required anti-graffiti coating), individuals/groups involved in the mural design and/or preparation, and parties responsible for subsequent maintenance of the mural. A maintenance plan must be provided by the artist.
2. Solo or (if a team) lead artist's qualifications and visual examples of previous work.
3. Funding source(s) identified for the project (e.g. privately funded, grants, contributions, etc.)
4. Evidence of community support for the project, (e.g. letters of support from the surrounding businesses, Walnut Creek Downtown, neighborhood associations, etc.)
5. A letter of permission to proceed with the project, including any requirements from the property owner or City department. This letter should also include acknowledgment that the property owner has received and read the California Art Preservation Act (CAPA) and Visual Artists Rights Act (VARA) relating to preservation and removal of artworks.
6. For all murals to be placed on City-owned property, a signed Waiver of Proprietary Rights.
7. Digital presentation including scale drawing in color of the proposed design and an onsite rendering, and any text that will be contained in the mural. Include several design options if possible (1-3 is preferable) and confirm what media will be used, e.g. paint (brand label), temporary wall construction (design of wall and proposed length of mural life).

8. Proposed mural label design (artist's name, title of artwork, date).
9. Photographs of the proposed site and physical surroundings.
10. Timeline for completing the project.
11. Signed agreement to provide City with documentation of finished work. Photographic documentation of completed projects is required for City records.

Lifespan and Maintenance

Murals are expected to have a minimum life span of five years. Mural artists shall retain rights to the mural and shall guarantee their work to be free from defects of materials and workmanship for a period of five years from the date the mural is completed. The property owner remains responsible for responding to and repairing damage of any kind within 10 days of notification by the City of Walnut Creek. After five years, the Public Art Manager and the property owner will assess the mural and mutually determine whether the mural's lifespan should be extended, or if the mural must be restored, removed, or replaced.

PLEASE NOTE:

Once the Arts Commission has approved a proposed mural design, the artist may not make additional changes to the design without returning to the Arts Commission for approval of the changes prior to implementation of the mural.

Current April 2025