



Arts, Culture & Heritage Commission Staff Report

Date: August 19, 2026

From: Erika Valentine, Management Analyst – Arts & Culture

Subject: Utility Box Public Art Program Review

Recommended Action

The Commission should review the Call for Art Application and provide feedback to staff.

Background

Implementing a Utility Box Public Art Program has previously been brought up multiple times during Commission meetings. Utility Boxes are existing pieces of City infrastructure, near intersections, which predominantly hold traffic light controls, cable connections, electric transformers, etc.

Putting artwork onto Utility Boxes creates an outdoor art gallery, similar to the hearts, and brings more Public Art to Wilsonville. A Utility Box Art Program also provides opportunities for local artists.

Staff has previously reached out to the Public Works Department who were in support of the program idea if vinyl wraps were utilized. Staff would work with a contracted company that produces the vinyl wraps and installs them. A heavy duty, graffiti-resistant vinyl is utilized. This also provides an equitable and accessible opportunity for artists, as they will not be doing the physical labor that is required for hand painting murals. Maintenance is expected to be very low and the wraps should last at least 5 years.

At the November ACHC meeting staff proposed a utility box public art project and the Commission unanimously recommended that staff apply for the Community Enhancement grant for funding the project. The ACHC also discussed potential themes and voted on the theme 'Celebrating the Arts,' which passed 5 to 2.

Staff submitted a Wilsonville-Metro Community Enhancement Grant Application last January for funding a utility box public art project. The Grant Committee voted unanimously to fund the project at full ask.

The City has approximately 23 boxes. Staff evaluated the boxes and received information on future construction and roads projects which would make certain box locations undesirable. Staff also became aware of which boxes at City/County owned versus ODOT.

Budget

Funding was approved for a 7 box pilot program. This would provide the opportunity to build excitement and roll out the program in phases, as well as stagger installations to help spread out any maintenance or replacement costs. For example, 7 could get installed in FY 26/27, and then 4 – 7 new boxes each year or every other year.

Budget for the pilot program – 7 boxes

Artist Stipends	\$500/ per artist X 7 boxes = \$3,500
Production/Installation to be paid to Contractor	~\$2,000 per box X 7 boxes = \$14,000
Total	\$17,500

Example Utility Box Art:



Attachments:

- Call for Art Application
- Map