

# Guidelines for Street Murals

District of Saanich

## Revision History

Version No.	Description	Status	By	Approved	Date
1.0	Issued for publication.	Final	Stefan Baer, P.Eng.	Jason Hodgins, P.Eng.	February 20, 2026

## Definitions

Throughout this document, all definitions are presented in *italicized* font.

<b>Average Daily Traffic</b>	The average number of vehicles that travel through a specific point of a street/road per day [vehicles/day].
<b>Crosswalk Mural</b>	A type of <i>Street Mural</i> that is painted on the road surface, within the interior of a marked crosswalk, and bound by both twin parallel crosswalk pavement markings.
<b>District</b>	The Corporation of the District of Saanich.
<b>District of Saanich</b>	The Corporation of the District of Saanich.
<b>Intersection Mural</b>	A type of <i>Street Mural</i> that is painted on the road surface in the interior of an intersection or on roads leading up to an intersection.
<b>Live End Mural</b>	A type of <i>Street Mural</i> that is painted on the road surface at the end of a street (e.g. dead-end streets, cul-de-sacs).
<b>Midblock Mural</b>	A type of <i>Street Mural</i> that is painted anywhere along a street, on the road surface, and away from intersections.
<b>Municipal</b>	Refers to the <i>District of Saanich</i> .
<b>Proponent</b>	Refers to a person or organization who initiates a <i>Street Mural</i> project or installation.
<b>Sidewalk Mural</b>	A type of <i>Street Mural</i> that is painted on the sidewalk surface.
<b>Skid Resistance</b>	The amount of traction between the road surface and tires or shoes. Adequate skid resistance helps prevent slipping or skidding, especially when the surface is wet.
<b>Street Mural</b>	A form of art installed directly on the street or sidewalk surface.
<b>Traffic Control Devices</b>	An official sign, signal, pavement marking, used to regulate, warn, guide, or manage road users (e.g. stop lines, crosswalk lines, zebra markings, bicycle markings, lane lines).

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## Introduction

### Context

*Street Murals*, a form of art installed directly on the street or sidewalk surface, are one form of placemaking used to celebrate and express community identity and culture. Across Saanich, residents, artists, and community groups have shown a growing interest in creating vibrant public spaces through art and other forms of placemaking. Because *Street Murals* are installed on public roads and interact directly with road users, clear guidance is needed to ensure installations do not adversely affect traffic operations and road safety.

### Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance on design, installation, and maintenance of *Street Mural* projects on *District of Saanich* streets and sidewalks. Specifically, this guide is intended to:

- Discuss design standards, guidance, and safety considerations that must be met.
- Explain the approval process from concept to installation.
- Outline roles and responsibilities between applicants and the *District of Saanich*.
- Support community-led placemaking initiatives that align with *District* policies and operational needs.

### Scope

This guide applies to all *Street Mural* projects and installations on *District of Saanich* streets and sidewalks.

### Exceptions and Variances

In special circumstances, the *District* may modify or adjust the criteria, process, roles, or responsibilities as needed. Any such changes may be made at the *District's* sole discretion based on site-specific conditions, professional judgment, or other relevant considerations.

## Design

This section outlines design criteria for *Street Mural* projects and installations.

### General

This section outlines design criteria for all *Street Mural* projects and installations.

#### Standard:

- *Street Murals* shall not:
  - confuse, obscure, or conflict with existing *Traffic Control Devices*; or
  - mimic or copy the colours, designs, or shapes of *Traffic Control Devices*.
- *Street Murals* shall include content that is appropriate for all ages and respectful of diverse cultures and beliefs. They shall not include inappropriate or controversial subject matter. They shall not include political, racist, violent, hateful, discriminatory, or sexual content.
- *Street Murals* shall not include content to promote any business or commercial activities (e.g. advertisements, logos, trademarks, or brands).

#### Guidance:

- *Street Murals* with yellow or white paint may be considered on a case-by-case basis. These colors will not be considered where there are any existing lines or markings.
- *Street Murals* painted within vehicle lanes may be installed on streets with an *Average Daily Traffic* volume equal to or less than 3500 vehicles/day.

### Crosswalk Mural

A *Crosswalk Mural* is a type of *Street Mural* that is painted on the road surface, within the interior of a marked crosswalk, and bound by both twin parallel crosswalk pavement markings.

#### Standard:

- *Crosswalk Murals* shall not be installed within 30 cm of existing twin parallel crosswalk pavement markings. This helps promote visibility of twin parallel crosswalk pavement markings to all road users.

#### Guidance:

- *Crosswalk Murals* should be installed at existing marked crossings.

- *Crosswalk Murals* may be considered at existing unmarked crossings on a case-by-case basis. They may require more engineering support, capital infrastructure, and capital expense to ensure safe operation.

### Intersection Mural

An *Intersection Mural* is a type of *Street Mural* that is painted on the road surface in the interior of an intersection or on roads leading up to an intersection.

#### Guidance:

- *Intersection Murals* should only be considered for intersections on local, residential, or collector streets that do not surpass the volume threshold.
- *Intersection Murals* may be considered on the stop-controlled approach of an intersection with a pedestrian signal or an activated pedestrian crossing on a case-by case basis.
- *Intersection Murals* may be considered at traffic circles, mini-roundabouts, or roundabouts on a case-by-case basis.

### Live End Mural

A *Live End Mural* is a type of *Street Mural* that is painted on the road surface at the end of a street (e.g. dead-end streets, cul-de-sacs).

#### Guidance:

- *Live End Murals* should only be considered on local, residential, or collector streets with low or medium traffic volumes.

### Midblock Mural

A *Midblock Mural* is a type of *Street Mural* that is painted anywhere along a street, on the road surface, and away from intersections. *Midblock Murals* are typically installed next to parks or community amenities (e.g. schools, community centres, libraries).

#### Standard:

- *Midblock Murals* shall not be installed on streets with more than three vehicle lanes (including centre two-way left turn lanes).
- *Midblock Murals* shall not be installed within the functional area<sup>1</sup> of an intersection. They shall not be installed within 65 metres of the stop line of an existing signalized intersection.

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<sup>1</sup> The functional area of an intersection is a section of a road street that supports intersection traffic operations. The functional area includes the intersection itself, intersection approaches, and turn lanes.

## Sidewalk Mural

A *Sidewalk Mural* is a type of *Street Mural* that is painted on the sidewalk surface.

### **Guidance:**

- *Sidewalk Murals* may not be suitable in areas that have specific streetscape guidelines intended to promote a coordinated look and feel (e.g. historic downtown, village centres).

## Material Specifications

This section outlines the specifications for materials used in *Street Mural* projects and installations.

### Paint

Paint used in *Street Murals* need to balance longevity, road safety, cost, and environmental sustainability.

#### **Standard:**

- Paint for *Street Murals* shall:
  - be considered low toxicity;
  - be rated or formulated for exterior (outdoor, all-weather) use;
  - be used by following manufacturers instructions and specifications; and
  - include additives (e.g. sand) to increase *Skid Resistance*.

#### **Option:**

- Thermoplastic pavement markings may be used to increase durability and longevity of *Street Murals*.
- *Street Murals* may use a combination of “blank space” (unused road/pavement/sidewalk surface) or non-slip additives (e.g. sand or available commercial products) to increase overall *Skid Resistance*.

## Review and Approval

All *Street Mural* proposals shall be approved by the *District* before they can be installed. This section outlines the general process for review and approval of *Street Mural* proposals.

### Submission Requirements

Refer to **Table 1** for a list of submission requirements for the review and approval of *Street Mural* proposals.

*Table 1 – Submission Requirements for Review and Approval of Street Mural Proposals*

Item	Description
Location and Drawing/Sketch (Required)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide the location of the proposed <i>Street Mural</i> (e.g. nearest address intersection).</li> <li>Provide a colour drawing, sketch, or graphical representation of the proposed <i>Street Mural</i> on an aerial photo (available on Google Maps or SaanichMap).</li> </ul>
Material Specifications (Required)	Provide <i>Street Mural</i> material specifications about application, <i>Skid Resistance</i> , toxicity, waste & disposal, and WHMIS <sup>2</sup> Safety Data Sheets.
Artist Information and Permission (As Required)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide names of all artist(s).</li> <li>Provide letters of permission from artists for use of copyrighted material for design and <i>District of Saanich</i> use in communications and marketing.</li> <li>Provide a brief bio about the artist(s) (Optional).</li> </ul>
Evidence of Community Support (As Required)	Provide evidence of community support for the proposed <i>Street Mural</i> . Examples of evidence of community support include: (1) petitions, or (2) letters of support from adjacent property owners, adjacent businesses, or community groups/associations.

### Timelines

*Proponents* should consider the following timelines in their overall project schedule:

- District* review and approval of a complete *Street Mural* proposal – 10 business days.

### Process

#### Gather and Demonstrate Community Support

Gathering community support is important so that *Street Mural* projects are welcomed by broader community. It also helps make sure the murals have broad support and don't become a point of future community contention.

<sup>2</sup> [Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System](#)

Evidence of community support can be demonstrated in any of the following ways:

- Petitions
- Letters of support from adjacent property owners.
- Letters of support from community associations, business improvement associations, or other neighbourhood/community groups.

### **Submit your Proposal to the District**

Submit your *Street Mural* proposal to the *District*:

District of Saanich, Engineering  
3500 Blanshard St, Victoria, BC V8X 1W3  
(250) 475-5575  
[engineering@saanich.ca](mailto:engineering@saanich.ca)

### **District Review and Feedback**

- The *District* will review your *Street Mural* proposal for completeness and let you know if any information is missing or incomplete.
- The *District* will review your complete proposal within ten (10) business days. The *District* will inform you about the outcome of the review and potential next steps in writing.

### **Receive and Obtain District Approval**

- If your *Street Mural* proposal is accepted, the *District* will inform you about the decision and potential next steps in writing.
- You should wait for the *District* written approval before doing any further work on the *Street Mural* project (e.g. grant applications, permit applications). Please note that approval of a *Street Mural* proposal does not guarantee approval of other grant or permit applications.
- Once a *Street Mural* proposal has been accepted, no further changes are allowed without written approval from the *District*.

## Implementation

This section outlines the general process for implementation of *Street Mural* projects and installations.

### Permits

Depending on the nature of the *Street Mural* project and installation, one or all the following permits may be needed:

- *Permit to Construct Works on the Public Road Allowance or Municipal Right of Way*
- *Special Event Permit*

### Timelines

*Proponents* should consider the following timelines in their overall project schedule:

- *District* review and approval of a *Permit to Construct Works on the Public Road Allowance or Municipal Right of Way*.
- *District* review and approval of a *Special Event Permit*.

### Scheduling

*Proponents* of *Street Mural* projects should account for weather conditions when scheduling installation. These requirements help prevent paint from entering catch basins or storm infrastructure and support the long-term durability of the *Street Mural*.

- *Street Mural* installation shall only occur during suitable weather conditions to prevent negative environmental impacts and ensure proper application of materials. Installations shall not proceed during rain, imminent rain, heavy winds, or when the road/sidewalk surface is wet, saturated, or below the manufacturer's minimum temperature for paint application.
- The *Proponent* is responsible for monitoring weather forecasts and scheduling installation during dry conditions that provide adequate drying time for all materials.

### Process

#### **Apply for Permits**

- Apply for all necessary permits.

#### **Arrange Equipment, Materials, and Supplies**

- Arrange for necessary equipment including safety equipment: safety vests, safety goggles, gloves.

- Purchase materials and supplies that conform to the approved material specifications. The District recommends waiting for permit approval prior to purchase of non-refundable equipment, materials, and supplies.

### **Shortly Before Implementation**

- Review permit conditions and implement any special requirements.
- Take pictures of the road or sidewalk surface before you start.
- Implement temporary traffic control and work zone closures in accordance with the approved traffic control plan and permit conditions.

### **During Implementation**

- Place paint on tarps to prevent spillage.
- Apply paint carefully to the road or sidewalk surface. Clean up any accidental spills, paint drips, or messy edges. Ensure paint does not enter any catch basins or storm drains.
- Do not modify or change *District* infrastructure such as signage or pavement markings.

### **After Implementation**

- Take pictures of the road or sidewalk surface after *Street Mural* installation. Do not include pictures including people. Submit the pictures to the *District*.
- *District* staff will inspect the project within five (5) days after installation to ensure compliance with the approved proposal and the relevant conditions of permits.
- Remove all equipment and materials from site after installation is complete and fully dried. Dispose of paint in accordance with manufacturer's guidelines and local and provincial regulations.

## Maintenance, Repair, and Removal

This section outlines the general process, roles, and responsibilities for maintenance, repair, and removal of *Street Mural* projects and installations.

### Overview

The quality of materials, quality of installation, surface condition, weather, traffic, road construction, and environmental conditions all affect the overall useful life of *Street Murals*. Over time, *Street Murals* may become damaged or fade. It is important to establish a plan for maintenance, repair, and end of life removal of *Street Mural* projects and installations through their lifecycle.

### Roles and Responsibilities

*Street Murals* require clear roles and responsibilities for their entire lifecycle.

### Proponent's Responsibilities

The *Proponent* of a *Street Mural* project shall be responsible and bear all costs for ongoing maintenance of the *Street Mural*, including but not limited to:

- touch-ups, graffiti removal, and repainting after street maintenance or utility cuts;
- touch-ups and repainting after significant wear or fading;
- removing the *Street Mural* at the end of its useful life using a method approved by the *District*.

### District of Saanich Responsibilities

The *District of Saanich*:

- shall bear no responsibility to repair or replace the *Street Mural*; and
- reserves the right to order the *Proponent* to remove the *Street Mural*, at the *District's* sole discretion at the *Proponent's* cost.
- reserves the right to change, modify, destroy, remove, relocate, move, replace, transport or restore the *Street Mural* within the *Municipal* right-of-way in whole or in part, at the *District's* sole discretion without any compensation to the *Proponent*.

## Resources

This section includes resources and links for *Street Mural* installations and projects.

- [Bloomberg Associates – Asphalt Art Guide](#)
- [Capital Regional District – Household Hazardous Waste – Paint Disposal](#)
- [District of Saanich](#)
  - [Community Canvas Mural Grant Program](#)
  - [Engineering Permits – Permit to Construct Works on the Public Road Allowance or Municipal Right of Way](#)
  - [Special Event Permit](#)
- [Global Designing Cities Initiative – Designing Streets for Kids](#)
- [Greater Victoria Placemaking Network](#)
- [Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System](#)