Walls, Y’all!

A Practical Guide to Creating Murals in Dallas
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What is a Mural?

A mural is a painting or other work of art executed directly on a wall. A mural can be created from various materials including paint, mounted mosaic tile, a collage of elements, and digitally produced imagery that is printed out and attached to the surface.

A sign is not a mural.

The City of Dallas Sign Ordinance makes a distinction between a sign (or an advertisement) and a mural.

**Sign:** Any display to public view of letters, words, numerals, figures, statues, devices, emblems, pictures, or any parts or combinations thereof designed to inform, advertise or promote merchandise, services, or activities.

Murals are considered public art, not billboards or signs. Murals containing logos, slogans, or advertising messages of any kind are considered signs and must comply with City of Dallas Sign ordinance.
Defining Your Goals

- What are you trying to do or say with the mural?
- What is your idea or message?
- Is it to beautify a neighborhood?
- How will the community be impacted?
- Are you making a place for community gathering?
- Is it a backdrop for photos?
Finding a Wall

Walls can be interior or exterior and can be identified by the sponsor, building owner, community, or artist.

City of Dallas Owned Walls
These projects will go through an artist call or a post on the Office of Arts and Culture website at DallasCulture.org. These wall designs will go through the public art review process.

When you find a potential wall, do your research.

- Evaluate the conditions, visibility, surface conditions, orientation, drainage, and surroundings.
- Look around the prospective wall in 360 and at the neighborhood.
- Make sure that there are good sight lines to the mural, safe ways to access it, and that the mural will not impede traffic flow.
- Who owns the wall?
- What is the wall a part of?
- Is the wall historic? If yes, it’ll have to be approved by the Landmark Commission.
- Is anything nearby historic?
- How will we see the wall? On foot, driving, on scooters?
- Has the wall been painted prior to this?
- Study the light and wall material. This helps when considering appropriate materials.
- Is it safe to work in this location?
- How will I get permissions? Will I need permits?
- What is the condition of the wall?
- Where will the water flow?
- What is the mural’s lifespan?
- Who will be providing maintenance?
Funding the Mural

The business owner who owns the wall may be willing to pay for material costs.

Other options:
- A Community can apply for a grant.
  - Check out the city funding programs ArtActivate, Dallas Neighborhood Vitality Grant and SpaceFinder Dallas. (see resource pages)

  - Community or business sponsor
    Some muralists fund walls by announcing that people who contribute a certain amount of money can have their names on the wall.

- Partnership with local galleries
  Could the project be an artist in residency or community based project?
- Crowdfunding.
Choosing an Artist

Artists,
where to find mural opportunities:
Apply to call- www.callforentry.org
Dallas Space finder app
OAC website-Dallasculture.org
Ask building owner

Where to find an artist:
Issue a call for artists
Ask the community
Reach out to OAC at dallasculture.org
Post your wall on SpaceFinder Dallas
Look at existing murals—contact the artists
Social Media
Hiring an Artist

This is a Job.

What to consider when looking for an artist:

- Artistic approach
- Technical Skill
- Style
- Availability

Look at their work! Inquire about inspiration, experience, project management skills, approaches to safety, and budget? Do these match the goals for the mural and community?

Artists- put your best foot forward and submit professional presentation material. To develop these skills, attend a OAC workshop.
Contracts

Have a written agreement with signatures of stakeholders (Make sure you include the artist and the owner of the wall)

Include:
- Designs
- Timeline
- Maintenance plan and who will take care of the mural, how will they be informed of damage
- Permissions to go on private property
- Liability insurance
- VARA rights
- Copyright holder
- Waivers for volunteers, if any.
Working with the Community

Whether on a public or private wall, the mural will impact the community.

It is vital to engage the community.

The community can help:
- Identify a mural location
- Suggest artists
- Cast a vision
- Serve as panelist on selection panels
- Provide volunteer assistance
- Support the creation!
Creating a Design

Think about:
Context of where the mural will be painted—not just its physical location but the history of the building and the neighborhood. Think about the activities and people around the site.

Be sensitive.

- **Style** – murals can range from abstract to objective, from graphic to painterly.
- **Theme** – develop a theme and concept and help the artist keep their artistic integrity and process while managing the project.
Measure the wall to determine time, material costs, and equipment fees.

- ALL projects should include adequate fees for the artist. “Exposure” is not enough compensation. This is a job for the artist.

**Typical fee categories:**
- Community engagement
- Design
- Painting
- Project management
Safety

Painting large murals can often be a dangerous job, so it is important to make sure it is going to be safe for the artist and community.

- Check traffic flow.
- Obtain volunteer waivers if needed.
- Look around for electrical wires, overhead or nearby.
- If using scaffolding, lifts or ladders, ensure there has been safety check and training for artist or artist team.
- Don’t allow volunteers to use lifts, swing stages, or scaffolding.
- Maintain insurance.
- Ladders are not designed as painting platforms.

Other things to keep in mind
- Work in well ventilated places
- Consider the environment- use eco safe materials.
- All materials should be used according to the manufacture's instructions
- If using spray paint, make sure to wear a respirator mask
You will want to prime the wall before starting, so the paint will stick to the wall more easily. Test paint on the wall before priming to see if needed.

- Direct painting—check the thickness of the paint- one coat is best
- Surface should be clean, dry and free from loose material-flaking paint, dirt, and debris.
- Consult with an expert if stripping or removing old paint to ensure safety to yourself, the residents and the environment.
  If dirty: low pressure wash, media wash or simply wash with Dawn, water, and an industrial broom.

- Check with a building contractor/engineer if you have questions about the stability of the surface.
1. **Prime**
   - If the wall has never been painted before - prime the wall following manufacturer’s recommendations.
   - Acrylic, water based is preferred. (or Mineral based material like Kiems)

2. **Draw**
   - There are multiple ways to translate the design to the wall including:
     - Using a Projector
     - Using a Grid
     - Drawing it Freehand
     - You can sketch it out using charcoal, marker, paint or spraypaint.

3. **Paint**
   - Use the right paint for the surface - house paint or spray paint
     - Check lightfast ratings.

4. **Coat**
   - Anti graffiti, sacrificial coats, clear coats - can help protect work from UV rays and allow the work to be cleaned up after vandalism
     - Choose products labeled non yellowing.

Isaac Davies
• Brushes (several sizes)
• Roller with appropriate wale (extensions)
  • These can be borrowed from – call for details: The Community Hand Tool Program
    2721 Municipal Dallas, Texas 75221
    214.671.9188
    Bernetta.young@dallascityhall.com
• Paint
  HINT: Good estimates on paint quantities will save money.
  Check requirements for disposal.
• Paint can storage containers
• Metal scrapers
• Small empty containers for mixing colors (with lids)
• Level
• Buckets
• Scaffolds, ladders, or lifts
• Chalk liner
• Masking tape
• Wire brushes
• Rulers or squares
• Drop cloth
• Brooms and shovels
• Spray Paint masks
• Bug spray/sunscreen
• First aid kit
• Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)
Wrapping up the Project

- Determine the lifespan of the mural
- Develop a Maintenance and Conservation Plan
- Include contact information (who to call and when)
- Include the product information and Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS)
- The product information will guide short and long term plans.

- Use the suppliers as resources
- Keep maintenance plan and contacts updated and accessible.
- If you need help, conservators can help develop these plans.

Give Credit

- Recognize donors
- Ensure the artist(s) signs the work
- Send a press release
- Dedicate the art
- Document with photos and social media
- Send us a photo and location

Dallas Office of Arts and Culture: Publicart@dallascityhall.com

Drew Merritt
City of Dallas Information

- Community hand tool program in Code Compliance loans rollers with long handles.
  - The Community Hand Tool Program
    2721 Municipal Dallas, Texas 75221
    214.671.9188
    Bernetta.young@dallascityhall.com

- Office of Arts and Culture
  - https://dallasculture.org/ or call 214 670.3687
  - https://dallasculture.org/cultureprograms/artsactivate2020

- Call your substation or talk to your local police patrol about the location and times that you will be working on the mural.
  - Central Patrol Division / CEU 214-670-4420
  - Northeast Patrol Division / CEU 214-670-7747
  - Southwest Patrol Division / CEU 214-670-6792
  - Southeast Patrol Division / CEU 214-671-0147
  - Northwest Patrol Division / CEU 214-670-6206
  - North Central Patrol Division / CEU 214-670-7247
  - South Central Patrol Division / CEU 214-671-4532

- Street closure or right of way or approval for painting on retaining wall
  - Department of Public Works
    320 E. Jefferson Boulevard – Room 307
    Dallas, TX 75203
    Or: 214-948-4259
    christina.turner@dallascityhall.com

- The Street Department has safety vests. Let them know the sizes you will be needing and give them 3 days advance notice.

  Questions call 214.671.8900
Resources

PLANNING & URBAN DESIGN

Kevin Acosta
Dallas Neighborhood Vitality Grant Program Manager
kevin.acosta@dallascityhall.com
214-671-8874

Sandra A.M. Bowie
Manager
sandra.bowie@dallascityhall.com
214-671-9565

Megan O’Neal
Senior Planner
megan.oneal@dallascityhall.com

Don Raines
Senior Planner
don.raines@dallascityhall.com

GENERAL GRANT QUESTIONS
Litter Abatement

NEIGHBORHOOD ENGAGEMENT / ORGANIZATION

URBAN DESIGN

LANDSCAPE DESIGN

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT & CONSTRUCTION

Carlos Talison
Planner
carlos.talison@dallascityhall.com
214-948-4480

Real Estate

Lolita Williams
Manager
lolita.williams@dallascityhall.com
214-948-4100

Building Inspection
Customer Service
214-948-4480
320 E. Jefferson Blvd.

REAL ESTATE/ PROPERTY

ZONING PLANS

PERMITS
Resources

SPECIAL EVENTS PERMITS
Beverley Whittet
beverley.whittet@dallascityhall.com
214-939-2759

OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY & SUSTAINABILITY
Bob Curry
Urban Agriculture
robert.curry@dallascityhall.com
214-670-1196

DALLAS WATER UTILITIES
Karen Woodard
City Forester
2255 Irving Blvd.
karen.woodard@dallascityhall.com
214-670-0161

DEPARTMENT PUBLIC WORKS
Urban Forestry
Kristoffer Rasmussen
kristoffer.rasmussen@dallascityhall.com
214-671-0899

MowMentum Program
Jon Taylor-Brown
2710 Municipal Street
Dallas, Texas 75215
214-671-0945

Efrain Trejo
Manager
320 E. Jefferson Blvd. Room 307
efrain.trejo@dallascityhall.com
214-948-4162

Special Events
Community Gardens
Tree Canopy Program
Branch Out Dallas
Tree Canopy Program
Urban Forestry
Right-of-Ways
Sidewalk Replacement
Resources

OFFICE OF ARTS AND CULTURE
Lynn Rushton
Manager, Public Art Collection
lynn.rushton@dallascityhall.com
214-670-0634

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Crosswalks, Pedestrian Crossings
Fernando Villareal
Sr. Program Manager
fernando.villareal@dallascityhall.com
214-671-9956

Traffic Sign Division
John Lemon
Supervisor
3204 Canton St. 75226
john.lemon@dallascityhall.com
214-670-3324

DEPARTMENT OF PARK & RECREATION
David Lopez
david.lopez@dallascityhall.com
214-670-1986
Resources

Materials and Installation

Mineral Paint
http://www.keim.com/Mineral-Art/Products
http://www.keim.com/Mineral-Art/Colors

Acrylic
- Krylon www.krylon.com/spray-paint-how-to/

Alternative surfaces
Vinyl wraps
Jose Loza Artist Web Site (painting with parachute cloth) www.jmloza.com/loza-blog/mural-fabric

Resources

Anti Graffiti Coat
- Sacrificial coat Sherwin Williams
www.sherwin-williams.com/property-facility-managers/education
http://www.sherwin-williams.com/property-facilitymanagers/education/project-profiles/sw-article-proeyecandy.html
- Keim
http://www.keim.com/Product-Details/Product/126/PSS-20-antigraffiti-coating
- Golden
http://www.goldenpaints.com/products/varnish-top-coat
Mural Making Guides

- American Institute for Conservation, Mural Making Guide
- Chicago Public Art Group: Community Public Art Guide: Community Murals
  www.cpag.net/guide/2/2_pages/2.htm
- Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council: Mural Making 101
  www.pittsburghartscouncil.org/component/content/article/20-general/4295-mural-making-101
- Redwood City: A Handbook for Public Mural Projects
- City of Nelson: A Practical Guide to Creating a Mural
  www.nelson.ca/DocumentCenter/View/294
- Albus Cavus Create Public Art
  www.createpublicart.org/
- Planning, Preparing and Painting Your Mural
- Just Paint blog, Golden Artist Colors www.justpaint.org/
- How to Paint a Mural From Start to Finish
  www.widewalls.ch/how-to-paint-mural-think-grid/
- Muralroutes Mural Practices Survey
- Contracts and Rights
  www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/networksand-councils/public-art-network/public-art-resourcecenter
- Copyright www.copyright.gov
- Artist Moral Rights in Visual Artworks
  www.copyright.gov/reports/exsum.html
- Insurance www.fracturedatlas.org/site/liability

- Americans for the Arts, Public Art Network/Public Art Resource Center
  www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/networksand-councils/public-art-network/public-art-resourcecenter
- Public Art Guide: Community Murals www.cpag.net/guide/2/2_pages/2.htm
Conservation and Commentary

- Conservation and commentary
  https://www.gsa.gov/portal/mediaId/136930/fileName/GSA_FineArts_FrontMatter.action
  http://www.si.edu/mci/english/learn_more/taking_care/acrylic_paintings.html
  http://scholarworks.umb.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1175&context=nejpp
  https://www.getty.edu/publications/virtuallibrary/089236162X.html

Don’t hesitate to reach out to Public Art Staff in the Office of Arts and Culture!

Send us your mural location and images.