

City of Minneapolis

# ARTIST-DESIGNED UTILITY BOXES

INSTRUCTIONS AND FORMS

Spring 2016



## Application Deadlines

Earliest Start Date June 4, **Pre-application Due April 8, 4:00 pm**

Earliest Start Date August 6, **Pre-application Due June 10, 4:00 pm**

Earliest Start Date October 8, **Pre-application Due August 12, 4:00 pm**

(See Page 13 for more information.)

## **Artist-Designed Utility Boxes**

This document includes a comprehensive overview of the guidelines, steps, and criteria for creating custom artist-designs on City-owned utility boxes, including boxes that are painted or wrapped in adhesive vinyl. Potential applicants are encouraged to read the instructions thoroughly prior to the application process. The City also offers a simpler utility box program, Minneapolis Arts Wraps, which provides applicants with the opportunity to use pre-approved artists designs. For more information about Minneapolis Arts Wraps, visit the City's website at <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/dca/WCMS1P-083277>.

These instructions and forms were created by the City of Minneapolis Departments of Community Planning and Economic Development and Public Works.

### **CONTACT**

**Mary Altman**  
**Public Art Administrator**  
**Community Planning and Economic Development**  
**[mary.altman@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:mary.altman@minneapolismn.gov)**  
**612.673.3006**

Cover artists: Bruce Silcox and Sue Stirling, (left), Sarah Linnes-Robinson and Mary Mueller (middle), Aria Dominquez (left)

Artist, adjacent page, Mark LaCroix

### **Special thanks to these organizations for their images and their vision:**

Corcoran Neighborhood Organization  
Downtown Improvement District  
Hennepin Theater Trust  
Kingfield Neighborhood Association  
Longfellow Community Council  
Lyndale Neighborhood Association  
Native American Community Development Insitute  
Powderhorn Park Neighborhood Association  
Saint Anthony West Neighborhood Organization  
Standish Ericcson Neighborhood Association  
Uptown Business Association  
Whittier Alliance



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# CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC ART GOALS

## **Stimulate Excellence in Urban Design and Public Arts**

- ◆ *Enhance the aesthetic environment of public places within the City through engaging, unique and high quality public artworks.*
- ◆ *Engage qualified and experienced artists.*

## **Enhance Community Identity and Place**

- ◆ *Build awareness of community history, identity, cultures and geography.*
- ◆ *Develop artworks that are integrated into City building projects and are compatible with their settings.*

## **Contribute to Community Vitality**

- ◆ *Promote Minneapolis as a nationally and internationally recognized arts city and tourist destination.*
- ◆ *Build the capacity of and cooperation between the private and public sectors, artists, arts and community members.*
- ◆ *Encourage civic dialogue about important City issues.*
- ◆ *Develop and maintain safe artworks.*

## **Involve a Broad Range of People and Communities**

- ◆ *Enhance opportunities for all citizens, neighborhoods and organizations to participate in the planning and creation of artworks.*
- ◆ *Celebrate the City's cultural communities.*
- ◆ *Provide opportunities for the community to come together.*

## **Value Artists and Artistic Processes**

- ◆ *Provide a range of creative opportunities for artists with a range of levels of experience.*
- ◆ *Ensure the ongoing integrity of artworks and respect the creative rights of artists.*
- ◆ *Always involve artists directly in the concept, design and creation of artworks.*
- ◆ *Ensure budgets adequately support artists and the creative process.*

## **Use Resources Wisely**

- ◆ *Develop and sustain projects in a cost-effective manner.*
- ◆ *Use City funds to leverage private investment in public art and use public art to leverage private investments in other city ventures.*



# ABOUT

## Purpose

The goal of the City's Artist-Designed Utility Box program is to increase connections between artists and neighborhoods, organizations and residents through placemaking and also to reduce graffiti.

## Objectives

- Encourage projects that contribute to the quality of the public realm.
- Support public art initiatives to enhance the community, that come from the community and that have strong community support.
- Build the capacity of groups to develop public art projects that support the City's public art values.
- Involve, support, respect and encourage artists.
- Assist applicants in developing projects within realistic timelines.
- Ensure applicants have the capacity for maintenance and removal.
- Comply with all codes and statutes.
- Ensure public safety.





# EXAMPLES

Sculpture by Ben Janssens  
Utility Box by Sarah Linnes-Robinson  
and Stephanie Torbert

# ABOUT

## Corcoran Neighborhood Association

*Value Artists and Artistic Processes*

Through a call for artists, the Corcoran neighborhood selected painter Sree Nair, who proposed translating his vivid images of plants and animals onto three utility boxes on Cedar Avenue. Without suggesting a theme or slogan, Corcoran gave Sree to freedom create these designs from his imagination, resulting in bold, detailed and compelling art works for pedestrians to contemplate. One advantage of painted boxes is that the majority of the budget supports the artist and their work.



Sree Nair



Design Works, Minneapolis College of Art and Design

## Whittier Alliance

*Stimulate Excellence in Urban Design and Public Art*

Students in the Minneapolis College of Art and Design's Design Works program studied the varied complex utility box forms along Eat Street and created complex three-dimensional designs addressing the many attachments, sides and angles of the boxes. On both single boxes and pairs, these colorful abstract shapes go beyond the typical four-sided wrap.

# ABOUT

## Native American Community Development Institute

*Contribute to Community Vitality*

In a neighborhood with the largest urban population of Native Americans in the United States, this thoughtful approach goes beyond corridor branding and celebrates the history and meaning of the lives of people through highly colorful photographs taken at local pow wows and celebrations.



Justin Kii Huenemann



Curiosites of Lyndale by Carly Schmidt

## Lyndale Neighborhood Association

*Involve A Broad Range of People  
and Communities*

The most adventuresome community engagement process for utility boxes involved Lyndale residents bringing the objects from home that best represent their personal story or their community to events such as Neighborhood Night Out. Another adventuresome aspect of this project was the copyright approval process, which involved obtaining permission for dozens of images, including book jacket designs, artworks and other trademarked items.

# ELIGIBILITY

## Eligible Projects and Applicants

- Neighborhoods and community organizations.
- Individual artists, community members and business owners sponsored by one these organizations.
- Applicants who are compliant with existing permits for art, and who have completed projects for previous art permit requests and submitted the final documentation for those requests.

## Eligible Projects

- Projects proposed within review process and timeline.
- Projects that comply with all City of Minneapolis codes.

## Eligible Boxes

- City-owned utility boxes. Most City utility boxes operate traffic signals. For a map of signalized intersections, go to: <http://wcms.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/wcm1/groups/public/@cped/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-105730.pdf>.
- Utility boxes that are not scheduled to be replaced in the near future or that are not in areas scheduled to be reconstructed within the timeline. For information on the City's capital improvement plans in your neighborhood, visit the City's website at <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/public-works/>.
- Note: City-owned utility boxes may be replaced or relocated by the City as necessary without notification to the permit holder.

## Eligible Designs

- Designs developed by *artists* who are paid a fair stipend for the project.
- This project is not intended to support advertising or community signage
- Designs that do not mimic traffic control devices or street signage.

## Eligible Applicants

Neighborhoods and community organizations.

Individual artists, sponsored by an eligible organization

Community members sponsored by an eligible organization

Business owners sponsored by an eligible organization

Applicants who have completed projects for previous art permit requests

# APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITY

## Overall

- Developing projects within your capacity, including working within a realistic timeline and scale.
- Covering any additional costs that may arise as part of the permit, including special signage, insurance, mailings, etc.
- Thoroughly documenting the artwork and providing images to the City upon completion.

## Artists and Copyright

- Obtaining permission for all artwork and imagery, including a waiver from each artist to the Visual Artist's Rights Act (VARA). This includes permission to use photos of people, all copy written material and text, and images of artwork. Allow ample time to acquire these permissions.
- Obtaining permission for the City from each artist to use images of the artwork in brochures, on websites, etc.

## Community Involvement

- Engaging the community in planning and other aspects of the project.
- Notifying the community through community meetings and postings in the neighborhood newsletter.
- Obtaining approval from adjacent property owners through visits to nearby homes and businesses.
- Providing appropriately-scaled educational signage with basic information about the project and crediting the artist. The applicant organization may be credited, but this signage should not advertise the organization or other sponsors. QR codes may be used for the purpose of providing educational information about the artwork only.

## Materials and Clean-up

- Thoroughly cleaning the box prior to painting or applying the wrap.
- Priming the box.
- Using vinyl wraps or latex paint or acquiring pre-approval for another material.
- Using all materials in compliance with all State and Federal regulations and according to manufacturers specifications.
- Using particular caution and materials, equipment and safety procedures when working with youth. A good resource is the Art and Craft Safety Guide of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission: <http://www.cpsc.gov/PageFiles/103109/5015.pdf>.
- Applying paint in a quality manner and cleaning up accidental spills, drips and messy edges.

**Federal copyright law provides rights to artists related to the use of images they create. This may include the right to reproduce their images, and the right to prevent the destruction of their artworks. While waivers and permissions are needed for public art projects, applicants are encouraged to honor artists' rights to the greatest degree possible. Make sure that your agreements with artists allow for your organization and the City to use images of the artworks for educational purposes.**

# APPLICANT RESPONSIBILITY

- Not covering-up and maintaining access to any identifying information, windows, meters, vents, key holes, or any other aspects of the box needed for ongoing operation of the utility.
- Notifying vendors that they may not under any circumstances use heat guns when applying the wrap. (Boxes have caught fire in the past).
- Cleaning up and disposing of paint in an appropriate manner. (No paint or contaminated water may be poured into City sewers or waste containers.)
- Removing all materials and equipment at the site after installation is complete.

## Public Safety

- Obtaining all permits needed to work on the sidewalk and in the parking or traffic lane adjacent to the box during preparation, painting, applying vinyl and clean-up.
- Working on site during periods of low traffic activity, such as weekdays, 9AM to 3PM, weekends, and holidays.
- Educating participants about necessary safety precautions, particularly youth.

## Maintenance

- Being responsible for all ongoing maintenance of the painted work, including touch-ups, graffiti removal and repainting due to box maintenance.
- Completely removing the vinyl, thoroughly cleaning the box and repainting after significant wear or at the end of the permit period. This includes sanding chipped paint and repainting in a color that has been approved by Public Works.

**Applicants assume responsibility for maintenance and removal of the artwork when it starts to deteriorate. Artist-designed boxes reduce graffiti considerably, however, they are not maintenance free. Wraps can begin peeling after a few years, and are sometimes tagged or stickered.**





**THE INSIDE FACE OF DOUBLE BOXES IS NOT VISIBLE. IT'S OFTEN BEST TO COVER THEM WITH ONE DESIGN.**

**VENDORS NEED TO CUT AROUND VENTS, HANDLES, LOCKS, METERS AND IDENTIFYING INFO.**

**REMOVING PEELING PAINT, ADHESIVE AND OTHER RESIDUE IS KEY TO A LONG LIFESPAN OF MATERIALS.**



**MOST BOXES ARE NOT FLAT, AND CONTAIN A NUMBER OF PROJECTIONS. DENTS ARE NOT UNCOMMON.**



# BOXES

# DEADLINES AND TIMELINE 2016

## Cycle 1: April/May

Earliest Start Date	June 4
<b>Pre-application Due</b>	<b>April 8, 4:00 pm</b>
Confirmation of Eligible Boxes	April 22
<b>Arts Commission Application Due</b>	<b>April 27, 4:00 pm</b>
Public Art Advisory Panel Meeting	May 4, 3:30 pm
Arts Commission Meeting	May 18, 5:30 pm
Applicant Notified of Recommend.	May 19
<b>Encroachment Permit Materials Due</b>	<b>May 20</b>
Applicant Receives Permit	June 3

## Cycle 2: June/July

Earliest Start Date	August 6
<b>Pre-application Due</b>	<b>June 10, 4:00 pm</b>
Confirmation of Eligible Boxes	June 24
<b>Arts Commission Application Due</b>	<b>June 29, 4:00 pm</b>
Public Art Advisory Panel Meeting	July 6, 3:30 pm
Arts Commission Meeting	July 20, 5:30 pm
Applicant Notified of Recommend.	July 21
<b>Encroachment Permit Materials Due</b>	<b>July 22</b>
Applicant Receives Permit	August 5

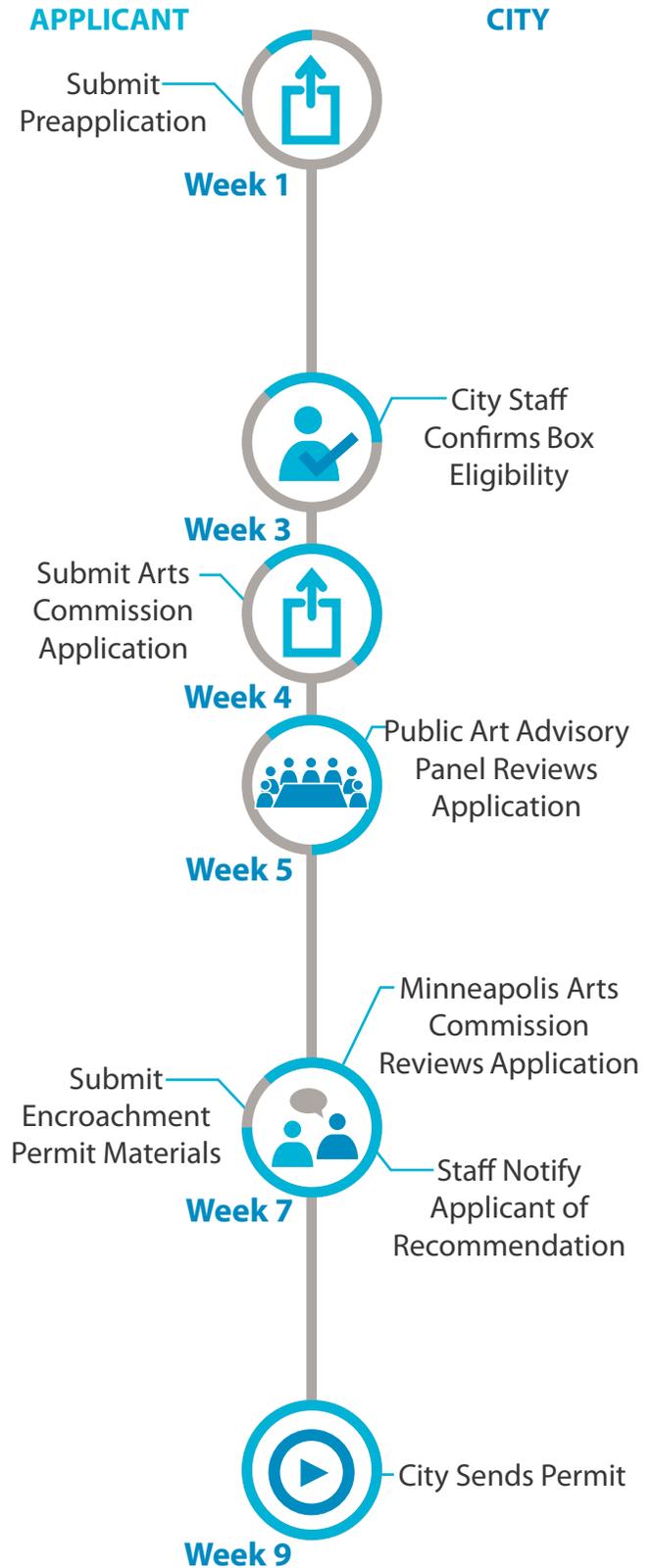
## Cycle 3: August/September

Earliest Start Date	October 8
<b>Pre-application Due</b>	<b>August 12, 4:00 pm</b>
Applicant Notified of Eligible Boxes	August 26
<b>Arts Commission Application Due</b>	<b>August 31, 4:00 pm</b>
Public Art Advisory Panel Meeting	September 7, 3:30 pm
Arts Commission Meeting	September 21, 5:30 pm
Applicant Notified of Recommend.	September 22
<b>Encroachment Permit Materials Due</b>	<b>September 23</b>
Applicant Receives Permit	October 7

The City may limit the number of projects reviewed in a cycle. Projects are reviewed on a first come first serve basis Only complete applications will be reviewed.

**Public Art Advisory Panel Meetings**  
3:30-5:00 pm, Crown Roller Mill #200  
105 5th Avenue South

**Minneapolis Arts Commission Meetings**  
5:30-7 pm, City Hall #319  
350 5th Street South



# APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

## Pre-application (See deadlines on page 13)

By the deadline, email a completed Utility Box Submission Form (see forms) with the location, size and color of each utility box proposed for wrapping or painting. Include two photographs of each box from two different views. For each view show the box in context of the surrounding streetscape. (The Public Art Advisory Panel and the Arts Commission will use these photos to consider how the proposed design connects visually to the surrounding environment and, if applicable, how it relates to nearby artworks.) Label each photo with a number corresponding to the table. Also attach a map (PDF, JPEG or Google map link) noting the exact proposed location(s). Send all of these materials to [mary.altman@minneapolisismn.gov](mailto:mary.altman@minneapolisismn.gov).

## Arts Commission Application (See deadlines on page 13)

By the deadline, complete and submit the materials below in *one single PDF file* to [mary.altman@minneapolisismn.gov](mailto:mary.altman@minneapolisismn.gov):

1. Completed Application Form (see forms)
2. Images:
  - A final and legible, color design for each location in 8.5 x 11" format. (One page per location.) Include the site dimensions, the imagery, names of the streets, and the name of the artist.
  - Early design review: The City may accept proposals without final designs or that have not yet selected artists, if the applicants and artists have experience in developing a public art project of a similar scale and quality. In lieu of final designs, submit images of previous artworks by the applicant and artist, or information on the process and criteria used to select the artist.
3. Letter of support from the neighborhood organization(s) where the project is occurring or, if the location is in a Special Service District, a letter of support from the Special Service District Board. (A map of Special Service Districts can be found at <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/boards/special/index.htm> .
4. Resumes of each artist.
5. A waiver signed by each artist of their rights under the Visual Artists Rights Act (VARA) (see forms.)
6. For applicants who have previous permits for art: For each artwork, submit one electronic photo, date stamped, documenting the condition of all sides of the artwork.

### Three Phases of the Application Process

**1**  
Pre-application:  
How you determine if the intersections you are proposing are eligible.

**2**  
Arts Commission Application: To obtain approval for the design, artist and community engagement for the project.

**3**  
Encroachment Permit Application: This is when you submit insurance and other requirements, and pay your permit fees.

# INSTRUCTIONS

## Encroachment Permit Application (See deadlines on page 13)

### Contact

Dennis Morris  
Public Works  
dennis.morris@minneapolismn.gov  
612.673.3607

Permits will be issued for 1 - 3 years. At the end of the initial permit period, the applicant may request to have the project remain additionally for 1 or more years. The City will consider this request after examining the work for maintenance needs. After you have approval from the Arts Commission, Mary Altman will notify staff in the Right of Way Division that you are ready to apply for your permit. At this phase, submit the following:

1. A completed encroachment permit application (see forms) and a check for \$50.
2. A certificate of insurance as proof of general liability coverage for \$500,000 per occurrence, naming the City of Minneapolis as additional insured as to acts committed by the applicant for which the City could be held responsible.
3. Using the Art Consent Form (see forms), signatures from all of the abutting property owners.
4. A letter of credit naming the City as payee in a dollar amount determined by Public Works (see forms). The dollar amount will be determined by Public Works. The City has the right to present this letter to the issuing bank or other financial institution for payment if the maintenance or removal is not completed by the applicant or is unsatisfactorily completed.
5. Note: Applicants or their vendors must also obtain permits for obstruction, blocking sidewalks and road and lane closures. Visit the City's website at [www.minneapolis.mn.roway.net](http://www.minneapolis.mn.roway.net) to request those permits.

An Encroachment Permit is required for any existing or proposed structure or portion thereof that projects onto, under or over any municipal right of way, under the authority outlined in Title 5, Chapter 95, of the City of Minneapolis Code of Ordinances. The Encroachment Permit gives the permit-holder permission to use a specific portion of the right of way until such time as that portion of the right of way is needed by the City of Minneapolis for public purposes. Encroachment Permits are revocable at any time in the interest of public safety.

***Overwhelmed by the amount of time and work that it takes to do these projects?*** The City also offers the applicants the opportunity to use pre-approved designs. For more information, check out *Minneapolis Arts Wraps* on the City's website at <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/dca/WCMS1P-083277>

# INSTRUCTIONS

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. How long does it take to make a project like this happen?

*It depends on the scope of the project. Wrapping and painting utility boxes usually takes 6 months–2 years including selecting artists, identifying possible locations, developing the designs, acquiring the necessary approvals and installing the wrap or doing the painting. Please read the instructions over to ensure that you have developed a realistic timeline for your project. In order to address all of these issues unique to your project, we strongly suggest that you allow at least two months for City approvals.*

### 2. Is wrapping boxes better than painting?

*Both have advantages. Wraps are generally guaranteed by the manufacturer for about 5 years. In the case of wraps, the vendors acquire all of the necessary permits for being on location and parking their equipment. Wraps are generally believed to be easier to maintain. For wraps, much of the budget goes to the vendor. With painting, much of the budget goes to the artist. The lifespan of painting depends on the location and the quality of the paint, and could possibly be longer than 5 years; however, touch up by the artist may be required in the case of graffiti.*

### 3. Can you recommend a wrap vendor?

*The City cannot recommend vendors. The vendors that previous applicants have used include Vomela, Clean Slate and Sign Minds.*

### 4. How do we wrap/paint boxes not owned by the City?

*Contact the owner of those boxes, which may include Xcel, Century Link, COMCAST, MetroTransit or a private company.*

### 5. What type of paint should be used?

*Latex. If you would like to use another material, contact Mary Altman to obtain approval of that material.*

### 6. I'm an artist. How do I get my work installed?

*Individual artists cannot apply directly to have their works or designs installed on City property. We suggest that you contact your neighborhood organization or a local arts group to see if they will sponsor you.*



# INSTRUCTIONS

**7. For utility boxes, is liability insurance needed on an ongoing basis?**

*No, only for the duration of the installation.*

**8. What is the cost of an encroachment permit?**

*\$50.*

**9. Do I need an encroachment permit for every location?**

*Yes.*

**10. Is a special electronic format needed for wrap images?**

*Image formats for the review process are outlined in the above instructions. For the purpose of installation, contact your selected vendor for more details.*

**11. What is the cost for wrapping a utility box?**

*On average the vendor's cost is \$15 per square foot for the wrap. This does not include artist or outside graphic design fees.*

**12. Can we use funds from the City's Innovative Graffiti Prevention Micro Grant to fund these projects?**

*That project was not funded for 2015.*

**13. Can we wrap the utility boxes in photographs of the neighborhood like Kingfield did?**

*If you engage an artist in one or more of the following ways: a) Curating the project; b) Working with the community photographers to take and edit their images; 3) Transforming the 2-dimensional images into a 5-sided box. Note that the applicants are required to pay the artist a stipend.*



Ayanna - Youth Photovoice Contributor

# REVIEW

## Selection Criteria

These criteria are based on the City's Public Art Goals and are used by the Public Art Advisory Panel and the Arts Commission for evaluating proposed projects. The role of these groups is to ensure that community proposals are consistent with City policies. They rarely decide to not recommend projects and often propose changes that need to be implemented before permits are issued.

### *Stimulate Excellence in Urban Design and Public Arts*

- Do the designs and the locations provide an opportunity to make an engaging or bold artistic statement?
- Does the project provide an opportunity for a unique public artwork?
- Do the proposed artists have a significant or engaging body of work?

### *Enhance Community Identity and Place:*

- Does the project have the support of the neighborhood organization and property owners?
- Are the locations good places to showcase a public artwork?
- Does the project provide an opportunity to reflect on the community and its characteristics, including history, identity, geography and cultures?

### *Contribute to Community Vitality:*

- Will the project be visible to and attract visitors and residents?
- Will the project build capacity and cooperation between the private and public sectors, artists, arts organizations and community members?
- Has the project engaged the community (or will it)?
- Does the project provide an opportunity to encourage civic dialogue on City issues?
- Is the design and location safe?

## Three Phases of the Review Process

- **Public Art Advisory Panel:** The Panel, which consists of experts, community members, and Arts Commissioners, conducts a thorough review based on all of the criteria. If the panel has a concern about a project, they may approve the project with a condition that the applicant make a change in their plan, before moving forward.
- **Minneapolis Arts Commission:** Arts Commissioners are appointed by the Mayor and the City Council. City ordinance requires the Commission approve the location of artworks. Their role is to ensure that the project is consistent with public art policy.
- **Public Works Staff:** If the Arts Commission recommends approval, the applicant provides final submittals for the permit to Public Works.

# REVIEW

## *Involve a Broad Range of People and Communities:*

- Does the project engage citizens, neighborhoods and organizations in the planning and creation of the artwork?
- Will the project be accessible to people with a range of abilities?
- Does the project celebrate one or more of the City's cultural communities?

## *Value Artists and Artistic Processes:*

- Does the project nurture an emerging artist?
- Has the design process included an artist and artistic process as a central element?
- Does the project support the artists' right to retain most of their copyrights, except for in the case of sharing information for not-for-profit purposes?

## *Use Resources Wisely*

- Are the conditions at the proposed site stable enough to support an artwork during the time frame?
- Does the applicant have the capacity to implement the project at the proposed scale?
- Is there a realistic and achievable maintenance plan?
- Are the appropriate materials being used?

Has the design process included an artist and the artistic process as a central element?

Do the designs and the locations provide an opportunity to make an engaging or bold artistic statement?





# FORMS

Minneapolis Arts Wraps Pre-approved Design by Gail Katz James

# APPLICATION CHECKLIST

## Pre-application (See page 14 for more information)

- Utility Box Submission Form
- Two photos of each box
- Map of the Locations

## Arts Commission Application (See page 14 for more information)

- Application Form
- Images of the final design
- Resumes of participating artists
- Letter of support from neighborhood organization(s) or Special Service District.
- For applicants with previous permits: Photos documenting current condition of the artwork(s)
- VARA Waiver signed by each artist

## Encroachment Permit Application (See page 15 for more information)

- Completed Encroachment Permit :  
[http://www.minneapolismn.gov/publicworks/permits/public-works\\_pw-use-permits](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/publicworks/permits/public-works_pw-use-permits)
- Certificate of General Liability
- Consent form for each abutting property owner
- Letter of Credit

The forms and Samples on this page can be found at <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/dca/WCMS1P-083277>



Norbert Marklin