



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: February 20, 2024

TO: Distribution

FROM: Rania Amen, City Engineer and Director, Engineering and Capital Projects Department

SUBJECT: Extension of Pilot Program for Creative Crosswalks in Public Right-of-Way (ROW)

A. BACKGROUND:

In order to help meet the Mayor's Strategic Plan goals to Protect and Enrich Every Neighborhood and highlight the recent designation for World Design Capital 2024, the City will extend the pilot program to allow the installation of creative crosswalks with multi-colored bars, patterns, or special designs (decorative elements) between existing white continental crosswalk markings at some locations. The pilot process is being extended from the original City Engineer Memo dated February 7th, 2019, to February 15th, 2027. This memo provides updated guidelines to protect public safety while improving public spaces' visual quality and experience and embracing community identity and culture.

These guidelines will allow applicants to install creative crosswalks with decorative elements over the unpainted, paved surface between white continental crosswalk bars at certain intersections.

B. PILOT PROJECT APPLICATION PROCESS:

This pilot program is being extended to gather additional data and update design guidelines and approval processes. The City intends to prepare and implement the final standards, guidelines, and permit review and approval processes for the installation of creative crosswalks with decorative elements between crosswalk markings by following the process outlined below:

1. The Applicant must first present the proposed decorative element to an identified City of San Diego community planning group (<https://www.sandiego.gov/planning/community-plans/cpg>) for concurrence with the proposed design prior to applying for a permit to perform the work. This concurrence would be presented to the City, along with the initial permit application.
2. Applicants may apply to the Development Services Department (DSD) for a [Placemaking](#) permit to install decorative elements between crosswalk markings. Only one intersection may be proposed per application. Each application may propose up to four crossings at the selected intersection. Creative Crosswalks may only be proposed at existing marked crosswalks.

3. The application will adhere to the placemaking ([Placemaking](#)) permitting process. The applicant will be required to process an encroachment maintenance and removal agreement (EMRA), or Public Improvement Maintenance Agreement (PIMA), for the installation and maintenance of the decorative elements. The City reserves the right to invoke the terms of the EMRA or PIMA, when necessary, to request the applicant's removal of the decorative elements, or, to repaint the decorative elements after a third-party trenches through the crosswalk. Applicable permits (such as traffic control) will be required for the removal of any decorative elements located in the public right-of-way.

In addition to the EMRA (or PIMA) requirements found in the agreement, if the City Engineer or their designee determines that the creative crosswalk is causing a safety concern, the City will require the creative crosswalk to be modified back to a standard continental crosswalk within 24 hours. If the applicant is unable to do so, the City will perform the work and back-charge the applicant for their associated cost.

C. LOCATION, DESIGN, AND PAINT GUIDELINES:

1. **Location Requirements:** Decorative elements between crosswalk markings may be allowed at the intersection of unclassified streets and/or two-lane collector streets (one travel lane in each direction) with a posted speed limit of 35 miles per hour or less, to the satisfaction of the City Engineer or their designee. Creative crosswalks will not be allowed at locations that have new or modified traffic control devices installed within the last two years. Mid-block crosswalks are not eligible for this program.

Decorative elements between crosswalk markings can be proposed at streets larger than a two-lane collector if an analysis is completed, which demonstrates that the proposed intersection does not have a history of collisions (all types) or safety concerns (<https://data.sandiego.gov/datasets/police-collisions/>). This will be reviewed and determined at the City Engineer's or their designee's discretion.

2. **Design Standards:** Decorative elements shall not conflict, block, or interfere with white continental crosswalk markings. Decorative elements may vary in color but shall not:
 - i. Resemble any traffic control devices identified in the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA-MUTCD).
 - ii. Be considered retro-reflecting.
 - iii. Contain any words, symbols, pictures, or any other attempt to communicate to roadway users
 - iv. Contain any advertising.
 - v. Contain potentially confusing, distracting, or offensive symbols or markings.

- vi. Conflict, resemble or interfere with other traffic standards, markings, and symbols.
 - vii. Paint over existing utility frames and covers and survey monuments and markers.
 - viii. Confuse vision-impaired pedestrians.
 - ix. Contain paints with the following or similar colors:
 - 1) Federal Standard Yellow or similar
 - 2) Federal Standard Green or similar
 - 3) White (any shade)
3. Material: Paint material to be used for the decorative elements shall be durable, non-toxic, lead-free, and skid and slip resistant. The paint material shall not chip off, bleed, or run off to existing storm drain structures or create other stormwater-related issues. Standard reflectivity or glass bead requirements of traffic paint shall not be applied to the material.

D. IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS:

1. To start the application process, the applicant [submits a permit application](#) and the community planning group concurrence to the Development Services Department (DSD) following the placemaking procedures outlined in the San Diego Municipal Code Section 129.0710. The request shall include the names of the applicant(s), proposed location(s), and intersections with street names. Only one intersection may be permitted with each submittal.
2. After the submittal, DSD will coordinate with the City Engineer to verify that all requirements have been met by the applicant's project proposal.
3. Once the applicant has applied and obtained the applicable permit(s) and EMRA (or PIMA) from DSD, the applicant can then install the creative crosswalks with the approved decorative elements.
4. The City of San Diego may also implement Creative Crosswalks through the Engineering and Capital Projects Department and Transportation Department as part of a capital improvement project subject to resource availability.

Grant funding programs may be available from the City to support the cost of implementing creative crosswalks. Please contact Economic Development at (619) 236 6700 for more information,

E. PILOT PROJECT PROCESS:

Upon completion of the pilot program extension period, existing traffic data will be collected at the intersections where creative crosswalks have been permitted and

installed to analyze any historical change in traffic patterns tied to safety. Once the data collection and evaluations have been completed, the design guidelines, standard drawings for creative crosswalks, and the application and approval process will be evaluated for permanent use.



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LAS/lS

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