

Streetlight Pole Banner Program in Castro Valley

Overview

Castro Valley Boulevard is now lined with new art banners created by Alameda County artists. The artwork was created by four Alameda County artists whose artwork is also featured on utility boxes throughout Castro Valley. The installation of the art banners was made possible through a partnership between the Alameda County Arts Commission and the Alameda County Economic & Civic Development Department (ECD) and is part of the ECD's Streetlight Pole Banner Program in Castro Valley. Due to the success of the Utility Box Art Program in Castro Valley, the ECD partnered with the Arts Commission to feature some of the same artworks on streetlight pole banners. The banners can be viewed along Castro Valley Boulevard beginning at Strobridge Avenue through Market Place, past Crow Canyon Road. The banners feature artworks created by artists Kanna Aoki, Bhavna Misra, and the artist team of Joaquin Newman and Jerarde Gutierrez. In addition to the banners with artworks, there are also banners featuring the words "Castro Valley" in green and gold.

It is anticipated that the art banners will be on display through November 2021 with a return in early 2022 for another season of installation.

Artwork Banner Designs

The selected artworks for the banners include Kanna Aoki's painterly images featuring Castro Valley's wildlife. Aoki's artworks remind the viewer of the open spaces and animals surrounding Castro Valley while encouraging community members to spend time in nature. Aoki's banner designs can be viewed along Castro Valley Boulevard from Crow Canyon Road to Redwood Road.

Bhavna Misra's vibrant artworks highlight the natural beauty and spectacular landscapes of Castro Valley. The artworks capture blooming poppies at Lake Chabot, evening sunlight on the trail leading to Cull Canyon, and an expansive landscape during sunset in autumn. Misra's banner designs can be viewed along Castro Valley Boulevard from Redwood Road to Nunes Avenue.

Joaquin Newman and Jerarde Gutierrez's artworks are an appreciation of and attention to the natural world. The artworks combine a selection of regional birds in lush plein-air landscape views from various trails in Castro Valley. Newman's and Gutierrez's banner designs are located along Castro Valley Boulevard between Nunes Avenue and Strobridge Avenue as well as along Crow Canyon Road to Market Place.



Background

Utility Box Art Program

The Utility Box Art Program in Castro Valley features artwork created by Alameda County artists on County-controlled utility boxes. The goal of this program is to bring more art and creativity to the Castro Valley community and to help create a welcoming environment. The Alameda County Arts Commission manages the Utility Box Art Program. The program is part of the Alameda County Arts Commission's Public Art Program which

presents artworks in County buildings and outdoor public spaces in the unincorporated areas. The Utility Box Art Program is made possible through a partnership between the Arts Commission and the Alameda County Public Works Agency (PWA). PWA provides access to the County's utility boxes, funding for the artwork designs, installation of the artwork, and maintenance.

The Utility Box Art Program was first launched as part of the Community Identifier project. The Alameda County Board of Supervisors officially approved the overall concept of the Utility Box Art Program in January 2018. Phase Two of the program focused on placing artwork vinyl wraps on County-controlled utility boxes throughout Castro Valley. Phase Two was launched after the program plan was supported by the Castro Valley Municipal Advisory Council and approved by the Members of the Alameda County Arts Commission.

The artworks for the Utility Box Art Program were selected by an Artist Selection Committee comprised of Castro Valley community members. The Artist Selection Committee recommended seven artists/artist teams to receive public art contracts. Each artist/artist team provided between five or six designs related in style and theme. The designs include images of nature, wildlife, and local scenes in Castro Valley and were all created by professional Bay Area artists. The artwork designs for the Utility Box Art Program were supported by the Castro Valley Municipal Advisory Committee and were approved by the Members of the Alameda County Arts Commission.



Artwork is featured on 47 utility boxes in Castro Valley. The artwork is applied to the boxes through a process using printed vinyl to wrap the boxes. This process enables the presentation of artwork made in a wide range of materials and styles, and also ensures safe installation and maintenance of the boxes which are often located on busy roadways.

In 2019, the Alameda County Economic and Community Development Department (ECD) partnered with the Alameda County Arts Commission to connect banner designs for their Streetlight Pole Banner Program with the artwork designs from the Utility Box Art Program. The Castro Valley community members who served on the Artist Selection Committee provided feedback to the Arts Commission and the ECD about which artworks to feature on the banners and their locations along Castro Valley Boulevard. The Streetlight Pole Banner plan included both the artwork banner designs plus the inclusion of a text banner featuring the words "Castro Valley" in green and gold. The Streetlight Pole Banner plan was supported by the Castro Valley Municipal Advisory Committee. The art banners were installed in February 2021.

Image Credit: Utility Box Artwork Locations & Artist Information

Karen Kramer, *The Secret Life of Hummingbirds*, placed at Crow Canyon Road and Manter Road (left image).

Kanna Aoki, *Coyote*, placed at Cull Canyon Road and Heyer Road (image).

For More Information

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