

Community art to beautify downtown

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GREENFIELD — Downtown Greenfield is about to get a bit more colorful thanks to two community art projects.

Local artists are invited to submit proposals to the Recreation Department for painted utility boxes, which the town hopes will contribute to the vitality and attractiveness of the streetscape and enhance the Downtown Crossroads Cultural District.

Artists may also submit letters of interest to guide youth in the creation of three separate public art projects, including a large utility box mural, parking meter painting and Rainworks art installations.

Kelly Jenkins, program supervisor at the Recreation Department, said 10 downtown utility boxes will be painted as part of the project, as well as a utility box on the corner of Main Street and Bank Row that will be painted by teens in grades 8 to 12.



RECORDER FILE PHOTO/MATT BURKHARTT

A parking meter outside the Garden Cinema on Main Street in Greenfield, that was painted by local students last year.

“It enhances the artscape of the downtown and Main Street,” Jenkins said, “especially with the youth projects, it lets them have a say in what’s represented in the town.”

Children and teens participating in the program will work on the projects after school during April and May.

The Rainworks project for grades eight to 12 will feature inspirational, humorous and uplifting designs that only appear when it rains. Designs will

be created using a super-hydrophobic coating that is invisible on dry concrete, but repels water, showing designs or messages when the rest of the concrete darkens on rainy days.

Children in grades five to seven will have the opportunity to paint 20 parking meters with individualized designs.

The projects are funded through the Massachusetts Cultural Council Adams Grant Program, the Greenfield Local Cultural Council and the Town

of Greenfield. Selected artists will receive a \$200 stipend for utility box paintings and a \$1,000 stipend for guiding youth projects. Applications for both projects are due to the Recreation Department by March 20.

Artists applying for the utility box paintings must submit designs and a short biography. Different artists may be selected for each youth program, and applicants are asked to include resumes and work samples.

Artwork for the utility boxes must avoid dark palettes in order to prevent boxes from overheating in the summer sun, and artists must be willing to adjust designs based on varied utility box sizes.

The Recreation Department coordinated several community art projects last year, including painted parking meters and a large mural on the side of the downtown Greenfield Community College building.