

Storm Drain Murals Handbook

A step-by-step guide to launching a storm drain art contest





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ABOUT THIS PROJECT

The Storm Drain Murals Pilot Project began in January 2022 with the goal of educating the public about the importance of preventing stormwater pollution using public art.

Storm drains are the entryway to our local creeks and the San Francisco Bay. Every time it rains, trash and pollutants flow into our storm drains which connect directly to our waterways. By creating unique murals, this project can help raise awareness that stormwater is not treated so everything that goes down a storm drain will reach the San Francisco Bay.

The City of Burlingame received funding for this project from the California Water Environment Association's Pretreatment, Pollution Prevention, and Stormwater Special Project Grant.



With
Special
Thanks



ART MEDIUM

Option 1: Paint



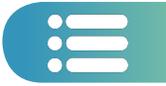
City of Raleigh, NC

Option 2: Decal



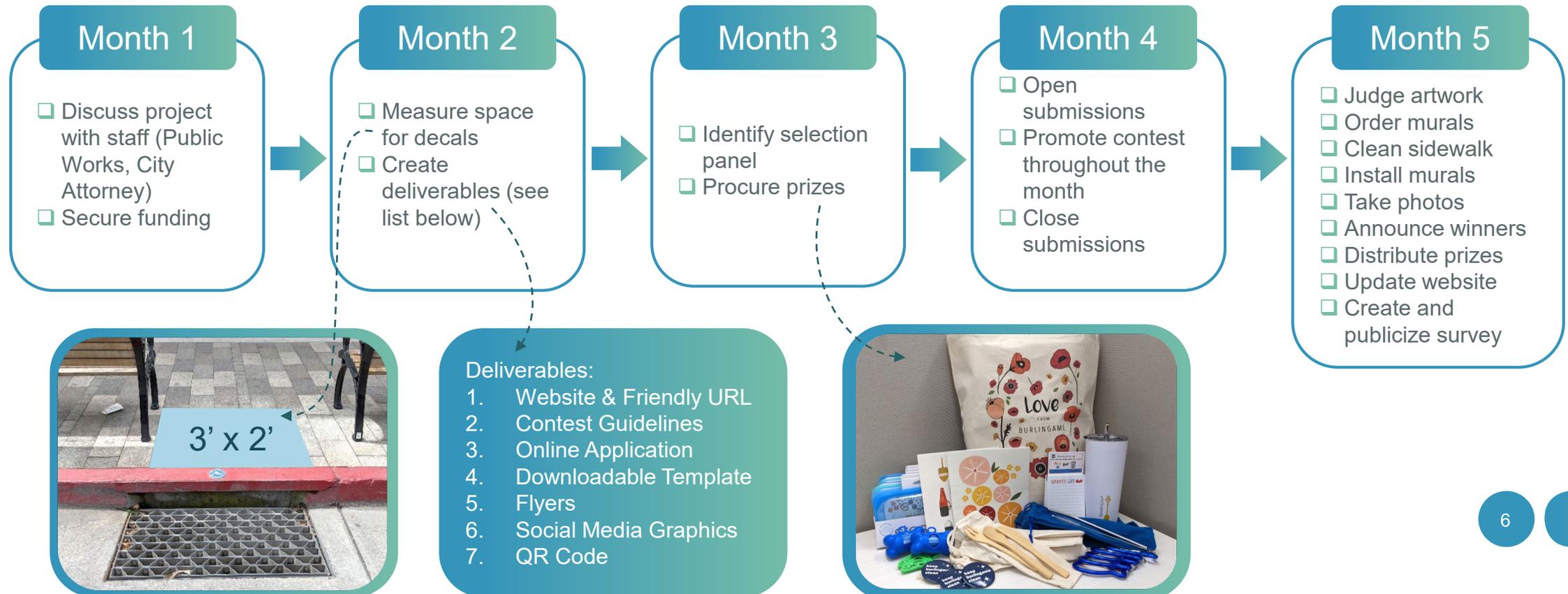
Application	Hand painted	Peel and stick
Artist	Local (or willing to travel)	No travel necessary, open to CA residents
Cleanup	Need to ensure paint does not enter drain	No runoff
Cost of Supplies	\$50 per mural (reuse supplies)	\$80-\$100 per decal
Installation Time	Several hours to multiple days	Less than one hour
Life Expectancy	1-2 years	1 year
Shape and Size	Customizable	Limited to a single shape
Supplies	Traffic paint, brushes, drinking water, buckets, cloths, paint protectant, tape	Slip-resistant textured decal, printed on UV-resistant inks, and has an adhesive backing
Traffic Controls	Required	Recommended

For this pilot project, we opted for **decals** since it was easier to order the materials and install them.



TIMELINE

The project length ranges from four to eight months and varies due to how long the art contest is held for and staff availability to install the murals. A sample timeline is provided based on this pilot project.



ART CONTEST

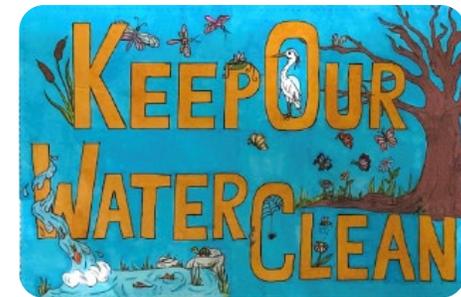
The art contest should be opened for a minimum of one month. Another option is to keep it open on a rolling basis with a deadline for early submissions.

Mural Themes

- Water Quality: Clean Water Starts with You
- Stormwater Pollution Prevention: Only Rain Down the Drain
- San Francisco Bay and Estuary: Keep It Clean We're All Downstream

Design Criteria

1. Entries must have a water quality, stormwater pollution prevention, or San Francisco Bay and Estuary theme. Exact phrases do not need to appear on the mural.
2. Only digital submissions will be accepted. The actual size of the mural will be 36" (width) by 24" (height). Entries should be at least 300 dpi resolution.
3. Acceptable formats are: .pdf (preferred), .jpg, .jpeg, and .png.
4. Each entry must not exceed 100 MB in size.
5. Artwork must be horizontal or landscape orientation. A downloadable template is available on the project website.
6. Artwork must be original work of the entrant. Any art entry that has been traced from or is a digital alteration of an existing photo or image that was created by someone other than the entrant is a violation of the competition rules. If using an image created by someone else as a model, the artwork must be significantly different to avoid plagiarism.



DELIVERABLES

The following deliverables were prepared for this project:

- ❑ **Project Webpage with Friendly URL** – Develop a webpage with information about the project, including art contest. Create a friendly URL, i.e. a short web address, such as www.burlingame.org/murals.
- ❑ **Contest Guidelines** – Develop guidelines for contest rules and design criteria. Language should be approved by the City Attorney’s Office or other legal counsel.
- ❑ **Online Application Form** – Create an application form that allows applicants to upload large files (our contest did not accept hardcopy submissions). It is also recommended to add a link to the Contest Guidelines and/or require applicants to agree to the terms in order to submit their entry. A supplemental agreement was included for applicants under 18 which required parent permission.
- ❑ **Downloadable Template** – Provide a template scaled to the finished size of the mural with additional lines showing the bleed area, cut line, and safety line. Decal vendors may have a template available on their website.
- ❑ **Flyers** – Create flyers to be distributed at outreach events or posted at local businesses. Prioritize stores next to the storm drains of where the murals will be installed.
- ❑ **Social Media Graphics** – Develop a social media toolkit, including graphics and suggested messaging, and share with other departments or organizations to post on their platforms.
- ❑ **QR Code** – Generate a QR code that can be used to track the number of clicks to measure engagement.
- ❑ **Example Murals (optional)** – Create an example mural to inspire prospective applicants. This can be helpful for artists to see what designs your organization is looking for.



ECO-FRIENDLY PRIZES

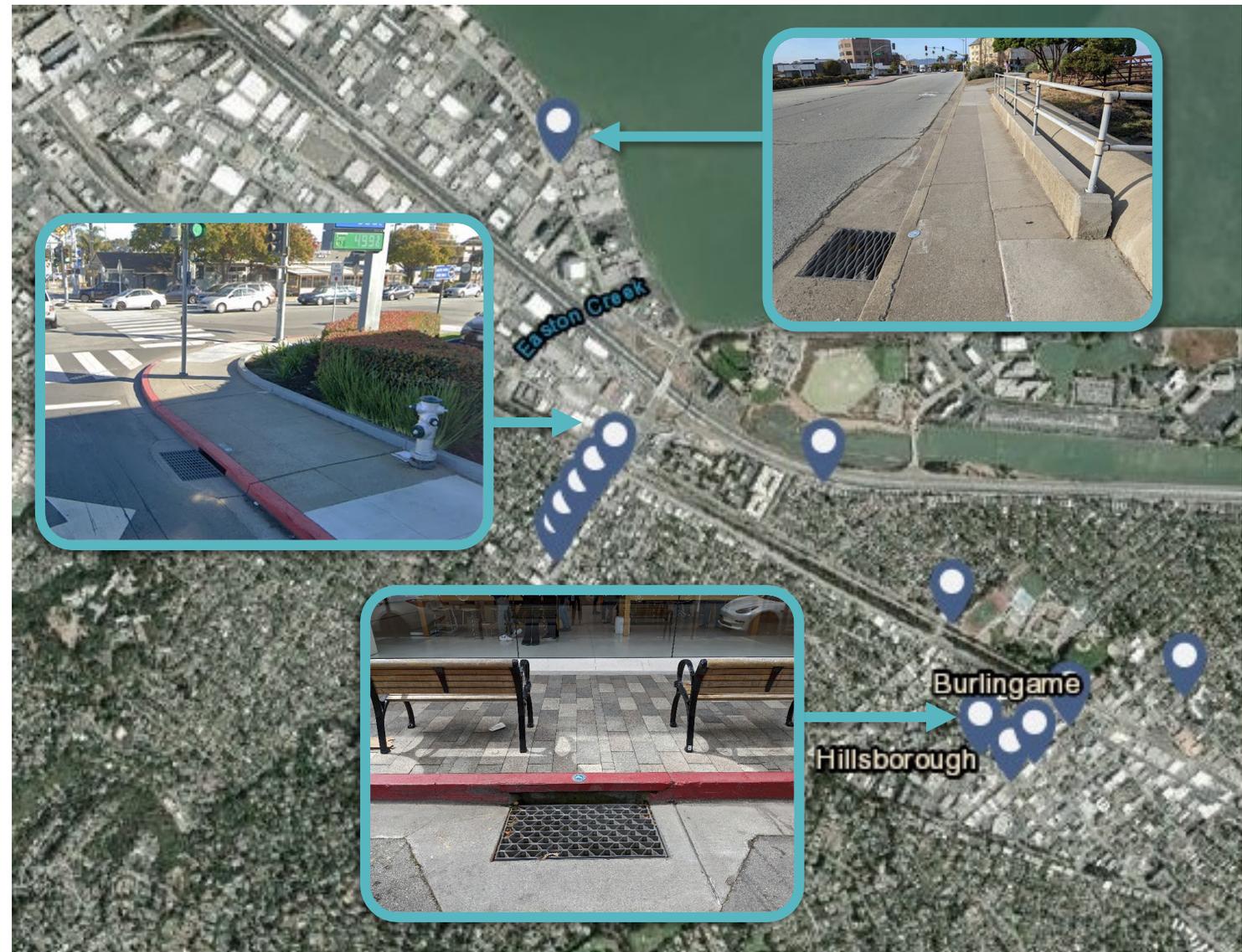
Keeping up with the theme of protecting water quality, we selected prizes that support sustainable living and/or were sold by local businesses. Alternatively, most art contests provide a stipend for artists which could be used in addition to or in place of tangible prizes.



SELECTING LOCATIONS

The storm drains selected for this project were distributed across the city. The following selection criteria were used:

- ❑ Storm drain is located in a high pedestrian activity area (e.g. downtown)
- ❑ Storm drain is located near a school
- ❑ Storm drain is in a neighborhood with previous littering or illegal dumping
- ❑ Storm drain is adjacent to a water body, creek, or bay
- ❑ No above ground utility conflicts, such as meter boxes or lamp posts

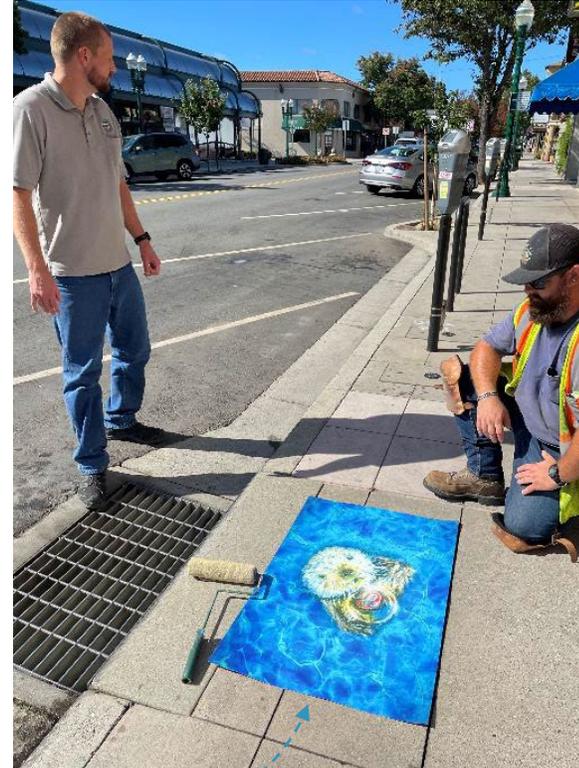


INSTALLATION

Preparation is key to making installation as smooth as possible. For our project, we installed 14 murals which took two hours. We had two staff members installing the majority of the murals and a third member taking photos and providing direction.

Here are some tips to keep in mind:

- ❑ Review the manufacturer's instructions for decal installation.
- ❑ Provide staff with the exact locations of the storm drains and specify which design will be installed at which location (if desired). For example, an artwork designed by a child could be placed next to a school.
- ❑ Use a hand roller or other hard material, such as a PVC pipe, to install the decal. Paint rollers will be too soft.
- ❑ Consider installing traffic barricades to temporarily block parking for storm drains located in downtown or where parking is limited.
- ❑ Decide which direction the murals should be oriented. For our project, we decided to have them facing a pedestrian standing on the sidewalk and not in the street.
- ❑ Take photos before, during, and after installation.



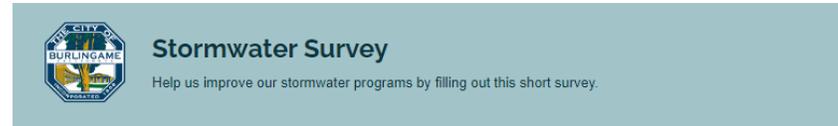
MEASURING ENGAGEMENT

To measure the effectiveness of this pilot project, the following tools were developed:

1. **QR Code** – Tracks how many people have scanned the code and directs them to the project webpage. The web address was included on the graphic so that anyone who wanted to learn more about the project would know where to find us even if they did not have a smart phone or did not know how to use a QR code.



2. **Stormwater Survey** – This public survey includes questions about people’s perceptions of stormwater, tests their knowledge of stormwater, and attempts to measure behavior change.



What is Stormwater Runoff?

Stormwater runoff is generated from rain and snowmelt events that flow over land or impervious surfaces, such as paved streets, parking lots, and building rooftops, and does not soak into the ground.



1. What does the term "watershed" mean to you?

- A structure or building for holding or keeping water
- A network or structure essential to clean drinking water
- An area where water collects then drains to lower elevation
- An underground water source



LESSONS LEARNED

Promotion:

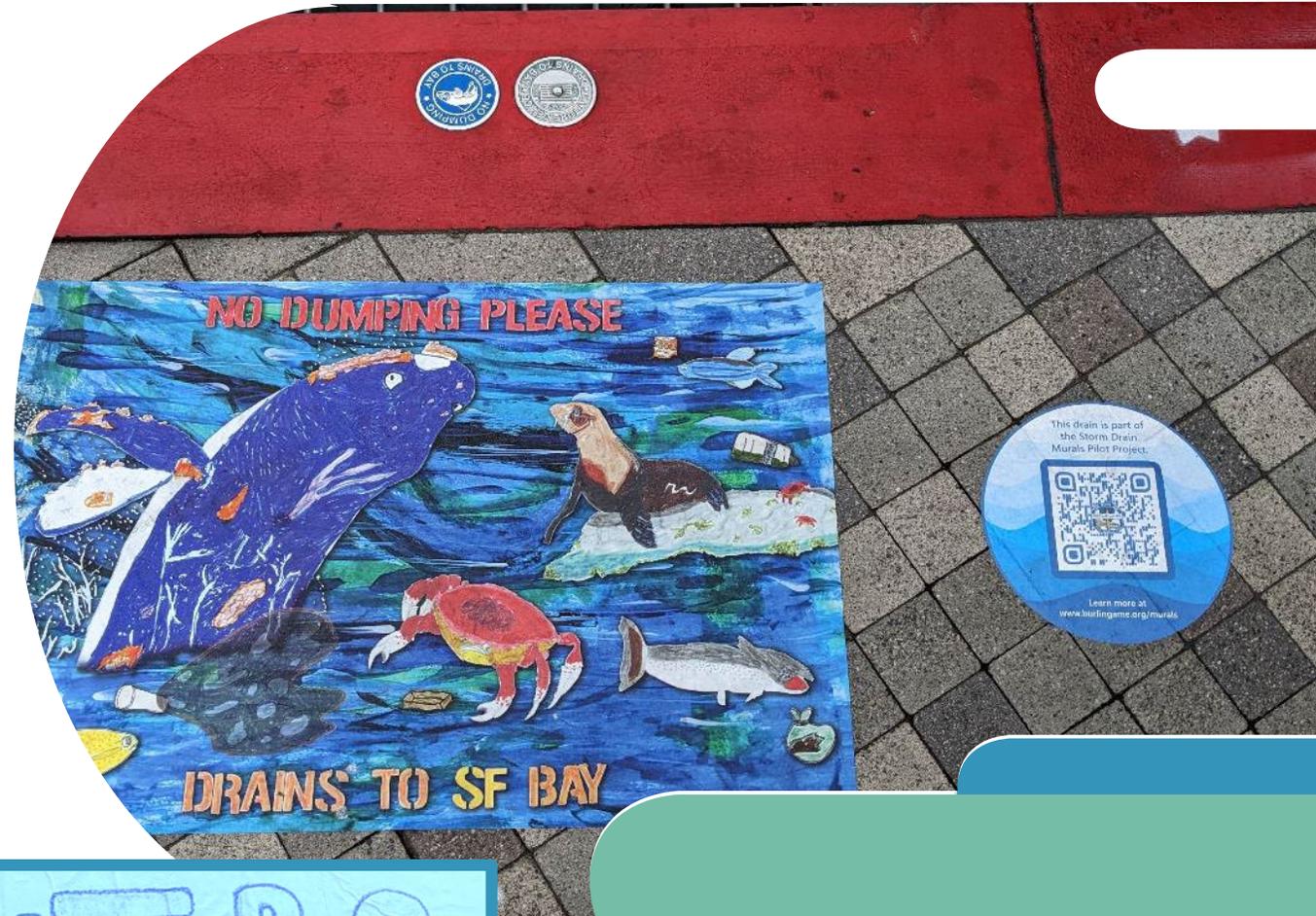
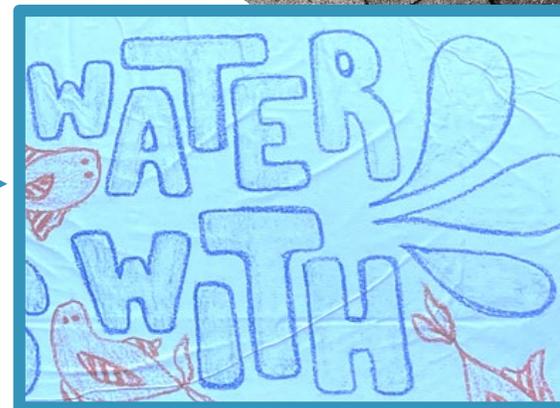
- Share art contest with the local Office of Education to engage with student artists
- Send another round of emails closer to the contest deadline to remind prospective applicants of the closing date

Design:

- Discourage designs with white backgrounds since they will get dirty

Installation:

- Use a PVC pipe or other hard roller to smooth out bumps
- Foil-based decals are more texturized but are harder to install and can lead to air bubbles



EXAMPLE BUDGET

This example is loosely based on our pilot project. While our project ultimately installed 14 decals, the scope could be scaled down to reduce costs.

Questions to Consider:

- ❑ **Who will be installing the decals?** Our project had two in-house staff members who installed 14 decals in approximately two hours.
- ❑ **How many and what types of decals will be installed?** We purchased 14 decals from a variety of vendors to test the durability of each product. We found that there were two types of decals: foil-based vs. non foil-based. The foil-based decal has a rougher slip-resistant texture but was prone to air bubbles and wrinkles during installation than the non foil-based decal.
- ❑ **What prizes will be provided for the selected artists?** Many art contests provide a stipend to the artists (e.g. \$500 cash prize). We provided a goody bag that contained sustainable products (e.g. tote bags, bamboo utensils, stainless steel tumblers, etc.) and sourced items from local businesses. As a public agency, gift cards are not allowed per California Constitution Article XVI Section 6.

Project Expenses	
Decals (10)	\$1,000
Equipment	\$50
Installation	In-house
Postage	\$100
Prizes	\$600
Total Expenses	\$1,750





FOR QUESTIONS:

EMAIL stormwater@burlingame.org

VISIT www.burlingame.org/murals