

Memorandum



CITY OF DALLAS

DATE May 15, 2026

TO Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

SUBJECT **Update on Community Engagement Following the Removal of Decorative Crosswalks**

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide City Council with an update on the Community Identity Engagement Sessions led by the Office of Arts and Culture (OAC) that took place in April 2026 after the Texas Department of Transportation directive to eliminate decorative crosswalks. City staff would like to express gratitude to the Councilmembers and their staff who attended the engagement sessions and addressed resident concerns. During this engagement period, OAC staff also conducted a survey to receive additional feedback from concerned residents.

The recent Community Identity Engagement sessions gathered input from residents and showed a strong desire for public art that reflects the identity, resilience, and inclusiveness of our richly diverse communities, specifically those impacted by the directive, including Oak Lawn/Cedar Springs/South Dallas communities.

Participants highlighted themes of inspiration, happiness, culture, and connection, noting a preference for art that expresses shared values and lived experiences over figurative work. Across the survey, participants expressed a clear wish for a community where people feel safe, welcomed, and genuinely represented—particularly members of the historically marginalized LGBTQ+ population.

Community engagement information has been compiled by OAC and shared with Transportation and Public Works (TPW) for technical input. Survey results show that murals were identified as a preferred identity marker in roughly 67 percent of responses along with street banners or gateway signage.

Oak Lawn/Cedar Springs

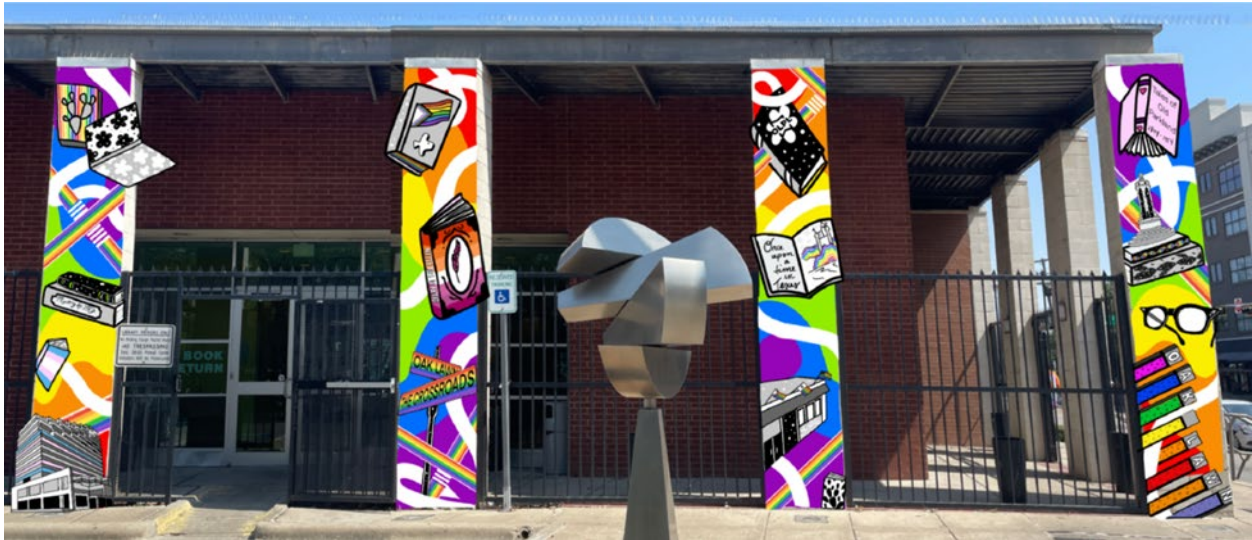
Participants consistently described Oak Lawn/Cedar Springs as a uniquely vibrant, diverse, and accepting neighborhood with a long-standing cultural legacy, including important landmarks such as the M-Line Trolley and one of the nation's few remaining LGBTQ+ districts.

A community art project is underway at the Oak Lawn Library Branch previously developed by community members in the neighborhood and funded by an external donor

through a designated special library fund from the Benjamin and Selma Parrill Trust Fund for the benefit of the Oak Lawn Branch Library.

The project scope involves installation of a mural on the four exterior columns facing the library parking lot. An artist selection panel, made up of staff from the Library, OAC, and District 14 Municipal Library Board Member, completed a selection process and recommended an artist in 2025. The selected artists, Will Heron in collaboration with Sam Lao, are well-established local muralists.

Rendering of the mural:



Community members have also suggested painting the steps at the front entrance of the Oak Lawn Branch facing the road. Staff will work to ensure alignment with the branch mural as these concepts advance.

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Participants in the community engagement and survey reflect strong community support for strengthening cultural identity, neighborhood visibility, and public engagement through historical recognition, wayfinding and branding, and a variety of public art strategies. Participants consistently highlight the value of cultural pride, tourism, and economic activity, alongside preferences for murals, banners, lighting, temporary installations, painted street furniture, and digital or augmented reality elements. Overall, the community expresses a clear desire for a cohesive, creative approach that blends heritage and visual vibrancy to enhance neighborhood identity and inspire residents and visitors.

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South Dallas Cultural Center

Participants express a strong desire to celebrate cultural visibility, historical recognition, and shared identity through public art, wayfinding, and neighborhood branding. Participants consistently highlight the importance of honoring local heritage, supporting education through art and culture, and fostering tourism and economic activity. Frequently mentioned public realm features include murals, street banners, temporary installations, cultural plaques, lighting and streetscaping, painted street furniture, digital and augmented reality elements, and restoration initiatives. Overall, the community participants wish to preserve its resilience and history, celebrate its unique culture, feel represented and connected, and be inspired by creative expressions that reflect shared values and collective humanity.

Alongside community members and TPW, OAC plans to begin activating concepts as resources allow. We welcome continued feedback from the City Council. For additional information or to share your feedback, please contact Office of Arts and Culture Director Martine Philippe at martine.phillipe@dallas.gov by May 29, 2026.

Service First, Now!



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