

Sesquicentennial Utility Box Art Project Submissions Summary

Submission No. 1

Applicant Name: Courtnie Jensen

Minor (Yes/No): No

Preferred Utility Box: Any

Artwork Title: Walking Through the Poppies



Design:

Design Description: The hills of Martinez are a treasure. One that is recognizable to anyone who has driven past them. And the poppies and other wildflowers that sprinkle them in the Spring absolutely beckon people to risk the allergies and walk through the hills. They were here before we were for the Karkin (Carquin) Ohlone tribes, for John Muir. These hills are here now, connecting people through beauty and activity, in a time when so many other things are divisive. And the community has taken steps to proactively be sure that they will be here in the future. Hiking together, acknowledging beauty together, preserving together, are some examples of how these hills bring us together.

How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: Without overthinking it, there is a sense of peace when it comes to the nature that is imbedded into our surroundings in Martinez. People come to Martinez to enjoy what the hills have to offer, and locals often see friends when traversing the paths up in the green (sometimes brown) landscape. These paths are open to everyone, and connect Martinez to surrounding local communities. Historically, we aren't the first to find life in the hills. John Muir himself walked these hills.

Before that, the Karkin (Carquin) Ohlone people spent time here. Currently the hills provide a place and activity for community members to connect and spend time together. I consider connectivity a value that Martinez embodies.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character: The bold chunks of color reflect the hills in various stages. The simplicity of the depiction reflects how it doesn't take something complex to bring about camaraderie in community.

Artwork Title: Vineyards 365

Design:

Both designs intended to be installed on one box.



Design Description: Martinez and Contra Costa County have a long history consisting of farming, fishing, industrial, commercial, and residential communities. Vineyards serve as a timeless bridge traversing residential and farming community with the history of Martinez. The design will show the seasonal beauty of the vineyards in the spring and fall. Nearby Viano Winery is one of the oldest vineyards in Contra Costa County, it is important to pay tribute to the legacy of farming, multi-generational families, and the beautiful community in the Morello Park neighborhood. This design reflects the past, present, and future of this community and that together we thrive.

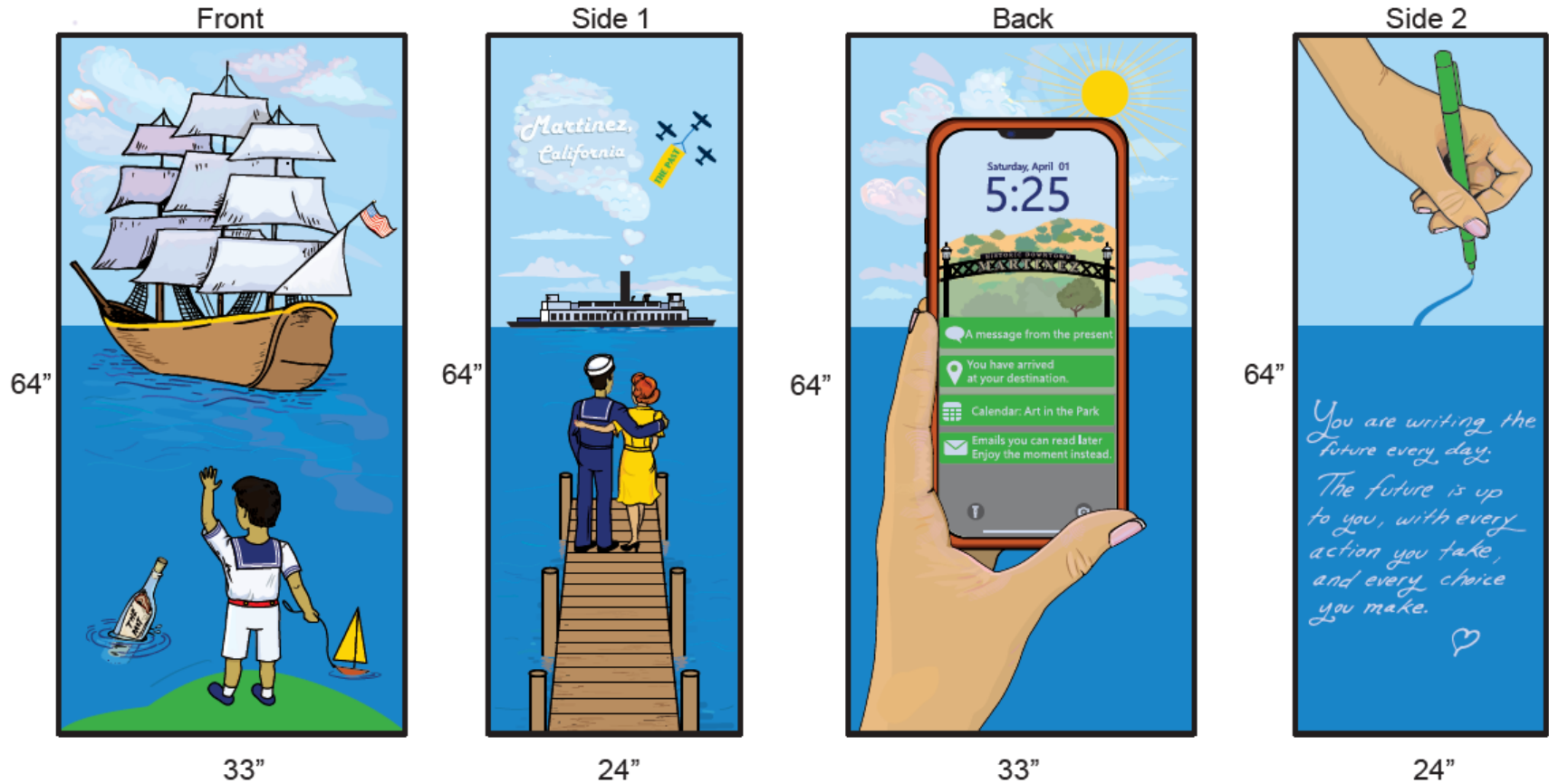
How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: This design shows the diverse cultural, historical, and social values of the community with representation of farming, suburban, urban, and diverse neighborhoods within the City. The vineyard design serves as mirror of the Martinez community values and demonstrates the connections between generations. The proposed design celebrates the diversity and fosters the social harmony with farming and residential neighborhood for the community. This design shows the diverse cultural, historical, and social values of the community with representation of farming, suburban, urban, and diverse neighborhoods within the City. The design signifies the spirit, resiliency and natural human experience in the community.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character:

This design style relates to Viano Vineyards which is located down the road on Morello. The vineyard serves as touch stone regarding the valuable legacy and strength of community. The composition commemorates the beauty of the vineyards seasonally. The vineyard has served as a strong partner and contributor to the city and community.

Artwork Title: Passage of Time on the Waterfront

Design:



Design Description: Each side of the design represents a part of the Sesquicentennial theme. The design shows people enjoying the waterfront throughout history. I sourced the main colors in the design directly from the palette listed in the call to artists. Front: On the front, the past from the late 19th century is portrayed. There is a message in a bottle bearing the words “THE PAST” floating towards the boy. A message in a bottle is inherently a message from the past for someone in the future to read. The boy is looking at the ship and is wearing a sailor outfit. He has a toy boat with him because he aspires to be a sailor one day. Side 1: On side 1, the WWII period of the past is represented. The Navy sailor is a generation descended from the boy depicted on the front, representing the continuity of time. Back: On the back of the cabinet is a scene from the present. A cellphone in the foreground of the design symbolizes the role that technology has in the present. The phone’s wallpaper depicts the arch in historic downtown Martinez. The time listed on the cellphone is 5:25 p.m. I chose that time because 525 Henrietta Street is the address of City Hall. The map notification, “You have arrived at your destination” alludes to Martinez being a special destination. The email notification on the bottom of the phone says, “Emails you can read later. Enjoy the moment.” This serves as a reminder to enjoy the present although we are

surrounded by technology and digital distractions. Side 2: On side 2, the future shows a message of empowerment to the public. The future is in the hands of the individual because of their choices and actions.

How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: The design celebrates the maritime history and vibrant waterfront of Martinez. Side 1 depicts the Martinez Benicia ferry which has served countless residents as the first and longest operating ferry service in the San Francisco Bay Area. My artwork title, "Passage of Time on the Waterfront" symbolizes time and the "passage" of vessels on the water. The activities in Martinez are referenced on the cellphone depicted on the back of the cabinet. For example, there is a calendar notification on the phone for "Art in the Park" showing the connection to the city's local events. There are no faces shown in the design so that it is easier for the viewers to place themselves in the scenes. I kept in mind the city's vision of "honoring our past" and "embracing innovation" as I was creating the artwork.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character: The traffic signal cabinet art that I propose for this call to artists will contribute color and beauty to the area and will stand out to motorists and pedestrians. It will also convey a sunny feeling of positivity and exuberance. I am receptive to my art being used for any of the five available traffic signal cabinet locations in Martinez. My goal was to tell a story about the past and future for the community members of the present to enjoy together.

Artwork Title: Roots of Tomorrow

Design:

Front



64"

33"

Side 1



64"

24"

Back



64"

33"

Side 2



64"

24"

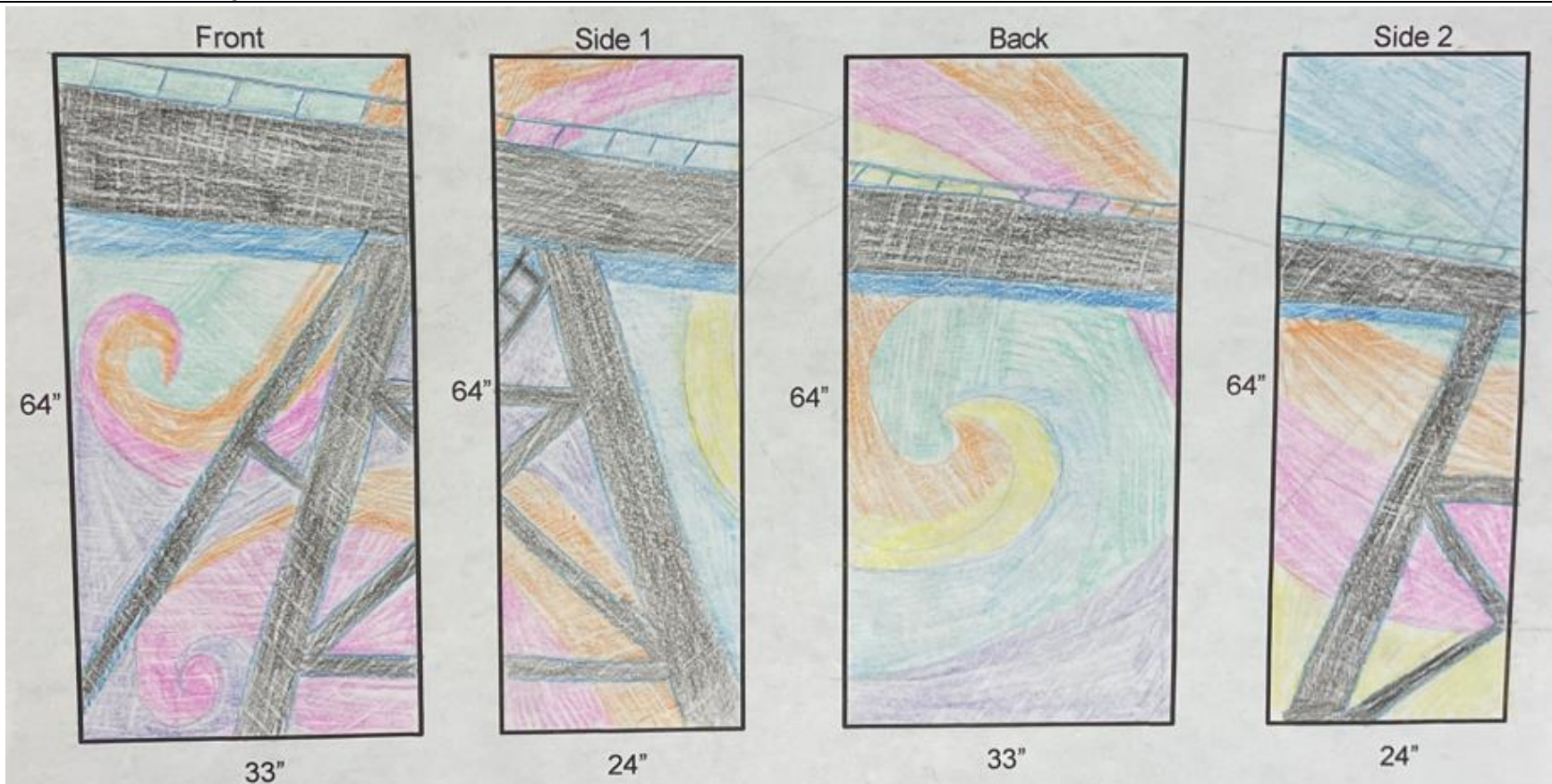
Design Description: Inspired by the wildflowers and ecological richness celebrated by John Muir, this design reflects Martinez's past, present, and future through a thriving meadow of native species growing together. The diverse blooms symbolize community, resilience, and shared stewardship of the natural landscape. Media: Acrylic Paint and Inks on canvas.

How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: This design reflects the cultural, historic, and social values of Martinez through a shared appreciation of nature, community, and the beauty that connects people. I was inspired by the wildflowers along the John Muir Trail and wanted to create something that celebrates the landscape that has shaped Martinez's identity for generations. The different wildflowers growing together represent the diversity of the Martinez community—different colors, forms, and species coexisting in one vibrant ecosystem. To me, that mirrors a community made stronger by its variety, connection, and shared roots. The piece also speaks to Martinez's history through its connection to John Muir and the city's long relationship with conservation and the natural world. At the same time, I wanted the painting to feel joyful and alive in a way that reflects the present-day spirit of the community and an optimistic future. More than anything, I hope the artwork brings a sense of wonder and pride to everyday spaces—turning something ordinary into a reminder of the natural beauty and connectedness that make Martinez special.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character: The style of this design relates to the surrounding context by drawing directly from the natural character of Martinez and the landscapes associated with John Muir. The wildflowers are inspired by native California blooms and the open-space beauty found in and around the area, helping the artwork feel rooted in place rather than decorative for decoration's sake. The bold colors and expressive, layered painting style are meant to reflect the vibrancy and warmth of the Martinez community while also working well in a public streetscape. Because utility boxes are viewed in passing—by pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers—I wanted the design to feel visually striking from a distance, while still revealing texture and detail up close. The organic forms and immersive field of flowers also complement Martinez's balance of urban life and natural surroundings. The piece is intended to bring a sense of movement, life, and local identity into the streetscape, transforming everyday infrastructure into something that feels connected to the character, beauty, and spirit of Martinez.

Artwork Title: Winds of Change

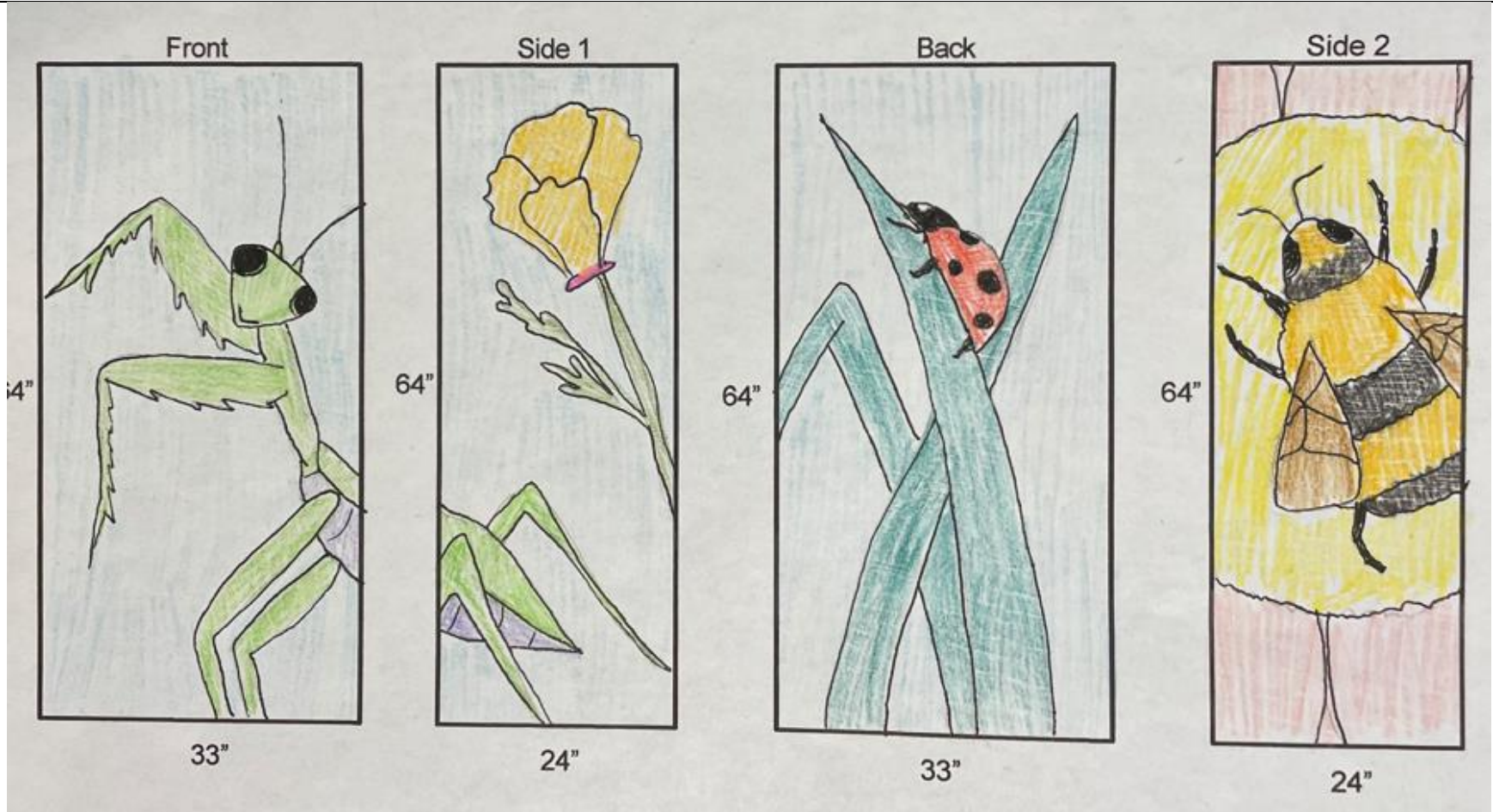
Design:



Design Description: The train tracks have existed in Martinez since the 1800s and have stood as a backdrop as our city has grown and changed. The train trestle is a monument to our long history.

How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: The simple imagery of the train trestle is a symbol of our historic roots.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character: This box is near one section of the train tracks, as well as near Viano Winery, a beautiful landscape in our town. The colors would go well with the Morello neighborhood.



Design:

Design Description: This is a tribute to the smallest residents of Martinez. Martinez is full of wildlife and beautiful nature preserves.

How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: This design serves as a reminder that we co-exist alongside so much flora and fauna that deserves our appreciation and protection.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character: This design would fit near any park, trail, or nature area.

Artwork Title: Between Then and When

Design:

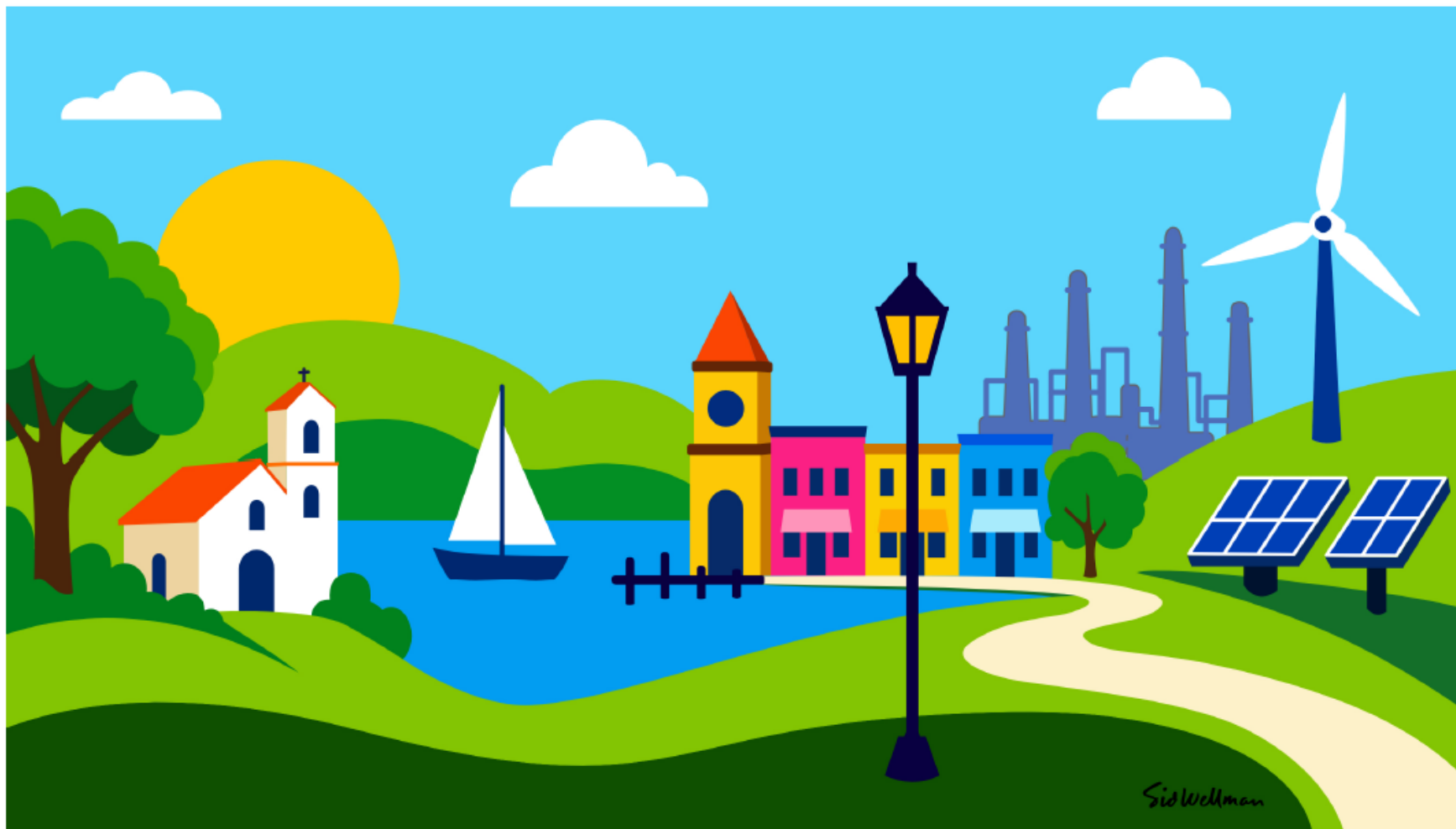


Design Description: This four part rendering begins with the dark sky, with a moon and stars. Ocean waves flow through each panel. The water represents the proximity of Martinez to the water which has been a part of our community through many years, from commerce to recreation. The second panel celebrates our wildlife with a river otter. The third panel is about the produce grown in our community with tomatoes and grape vines, and the 4th panel is the future of Martinez, showing diversity with the hands, plus baseball, soccer, and coffee and a cold beer which invites gathering of friends and family.

How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: Cultural is represented by the hands in the 4th panel plus representing diversity. History is shown here through the produce - grapes (wine region) and tomatoes, like the old canning factory. We are a farming and fishing community that goes back to native populations and the Spanish, Italian, and German immigrants, which is part of our diverse population.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character: I added iconic images that show local character through the river otter which begins its journey at the waters edge and heads all the way to Hidden Lakes. The grapevines and tomatoes are part of our Sunday farmer's market which brings people outdoors, socializing, drinking coffee, and maybe a cold beer at the beer garden. And in the summer, head to the Sturgeon's game for the most small town awesome experience.

Design:



Design Description: A bright, simplified utility wrap design presents a cheerful, flat vector landscape representing Martinez. The composition stretches horizontally, using bold, saturated colors and clean shapes for easy readability at a distance. On the left, a large golden sun rises behind rolling green hills, casting wide, graphic rays across a clear blue sky. A stylized tree and a small white mission-style building with a red roof suggest the area's historical roots. In the center, a calm blue waterfront features a simple sailboat and a dock, leading to a cluster of colorful downtown buildings. A central clocktower, painted in warm yellow and orange tones, anchors the scene and draws the eye. Toward the right, the imagery transitions into industry and forward-looking elements. Simplified refinery structures appear in soft blue silhouettes behind the town, while a tall white wind turbine and angled solar panels sit on green hills, symbolizing sustainability and future growth. A curved, pale pathway winds

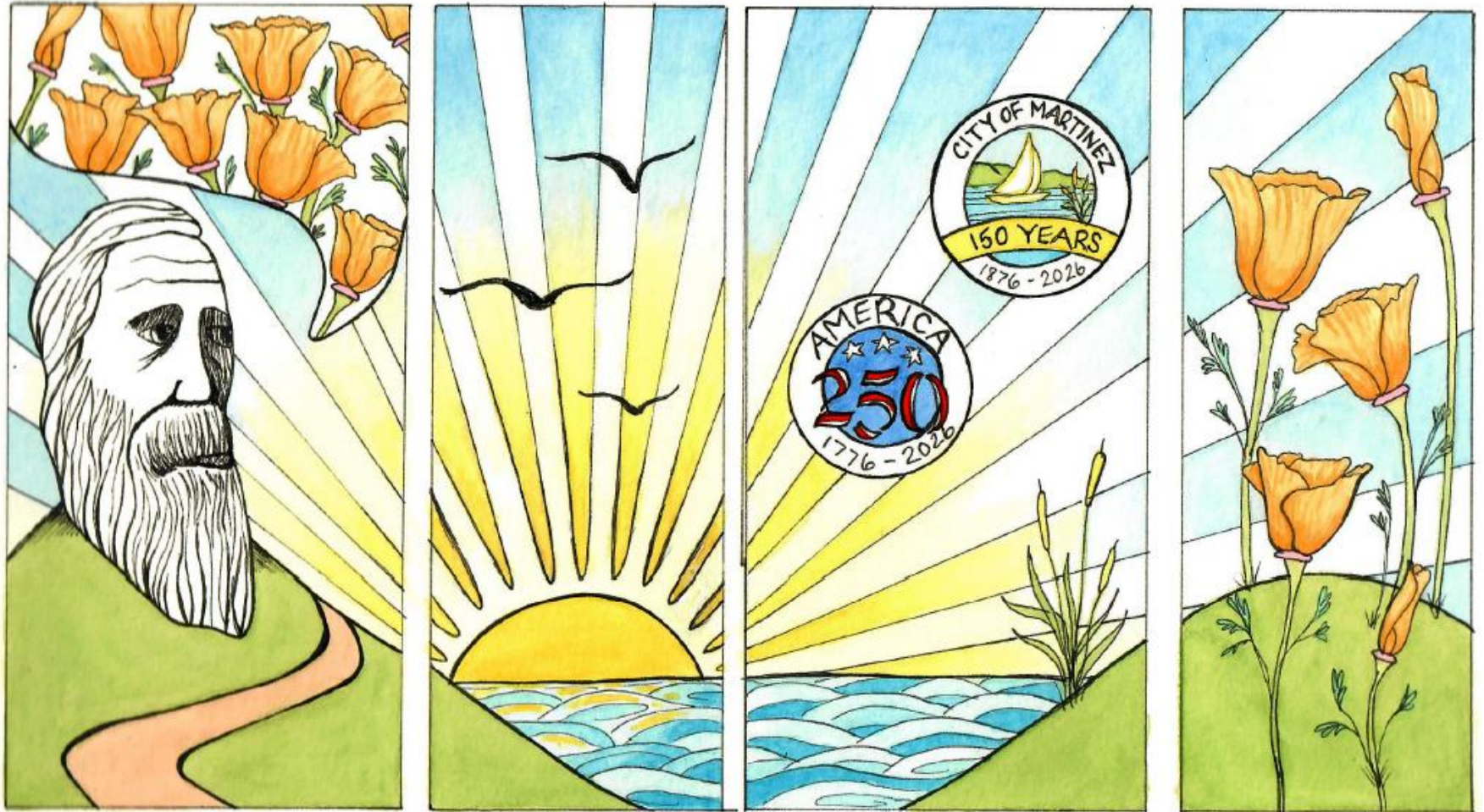
from the foreground into the distance, visually connecting all parts of the composition. Across the bottom, a dark blue band suggests: "Connected," "Sustainable," and "Essential," reinforcing the theme of community and progress. Overall, the design balances past, present, and future through color shifts and icon-like imagery, maintaining clarity and impact for large-scale viewing.

How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: The image communicates the diverse cultural, historic, and social values of Martinez through simplified but meaningful visual symbols that represent different aspects of the community's identity. Historically, the small mission-style building and natural landscape on the left suggest early settlement and the region's deep roots. These elements reflect Martinez's connection to California's early history and its longstanding relationship with the land. The inclusion of nature - trees, hills, and open space - also echoes the environmental legacy associated with figures like John Muir, emphasizing values of conservation and appreciation for the natural environment. Socially, the central waterfront scene with a sailboat, dock, and colorful downtown buildings represents present-day community life. The bright, welcoming colors and simplified forms suggest accessibility, inclusiveness, and a sense of shared public space. The clocktower and clustered buildings symbolize civic identity, local business, and everyday interactions that bring people together. Culturally and economically, the right side introduces industry alongside sustainability. The refiner structures acknowledge Martinez's industrial history and economic foundation, while wind turbines and solar panels point toward a future focused on environmental responsibility and innovation. This juxtaposition reflects a community balancing tradition with progress. Finally, the blue band at the bottom (which runs throughout) suggests "Connected," "Sustainable," and "Essential" which reinforce core community values - highlighting unity, environmental awareness, and the importance of infrastructure and services. Together, these elements present Martinez as a place shaped by its past, active in the present, and evolving toward the future.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character: The design style relates to the surrounding context of Martinez by translating local character into a clean, bold, and highly readable visual language that works in a public, everyday setting like a utility wrap. First, the simplified, flat vector style mirrors the practical, accessible nature of Martinez itself - a working waterfront town with a mix of residential, industrial, and civic life. The clarity of shapes and strong outlines ensure the artwork can be quickly understood by pedestrians and drivers, which is essential for infrastructure-based public art. The bright, optimistic color palette reflects the California environment - sunlight, blue water, and green hills - while also reinforcing a welcoming, community-oriented atmosphere. These colors help the piece feel lively and approachable rather than formal or distant, aligning with Martinez's small-town feel within a larger Bay Area context. The icon-like imagery (mission building, marina, downtown, refinery, wind turbine) connects directly to recognizable local features without overcomplicating them. This keeps the design rooted in place while making it universally legible to a broad audience, including residents and visitors.

Artwork Title: Sun Shines in Us

Design:



Design Description: There is much to love about our fair city of Martinez, but top of the list for me, is its geography and access to nature. Many of the elements of my proposed design relate to the theme in layered ways. John Muir's legacy of nature conservation reflects not only our past, but also the present and future as we enjoy the parks and open spaces his namesake land trust preserves for our enjoyment. The California poppies also align with the theme as their beauty graces us year after year and invites us to connect to nature's glory. The waterfront and marina, as well as the many hiking trails in Martinez provide exceptional outdoor spaces for all of our residents to enjoy, and connect, together. The sketch presented here was done in ink and watercolor, as would be the final artwork, if selected. Although designed for box #4, it could go on any of them.

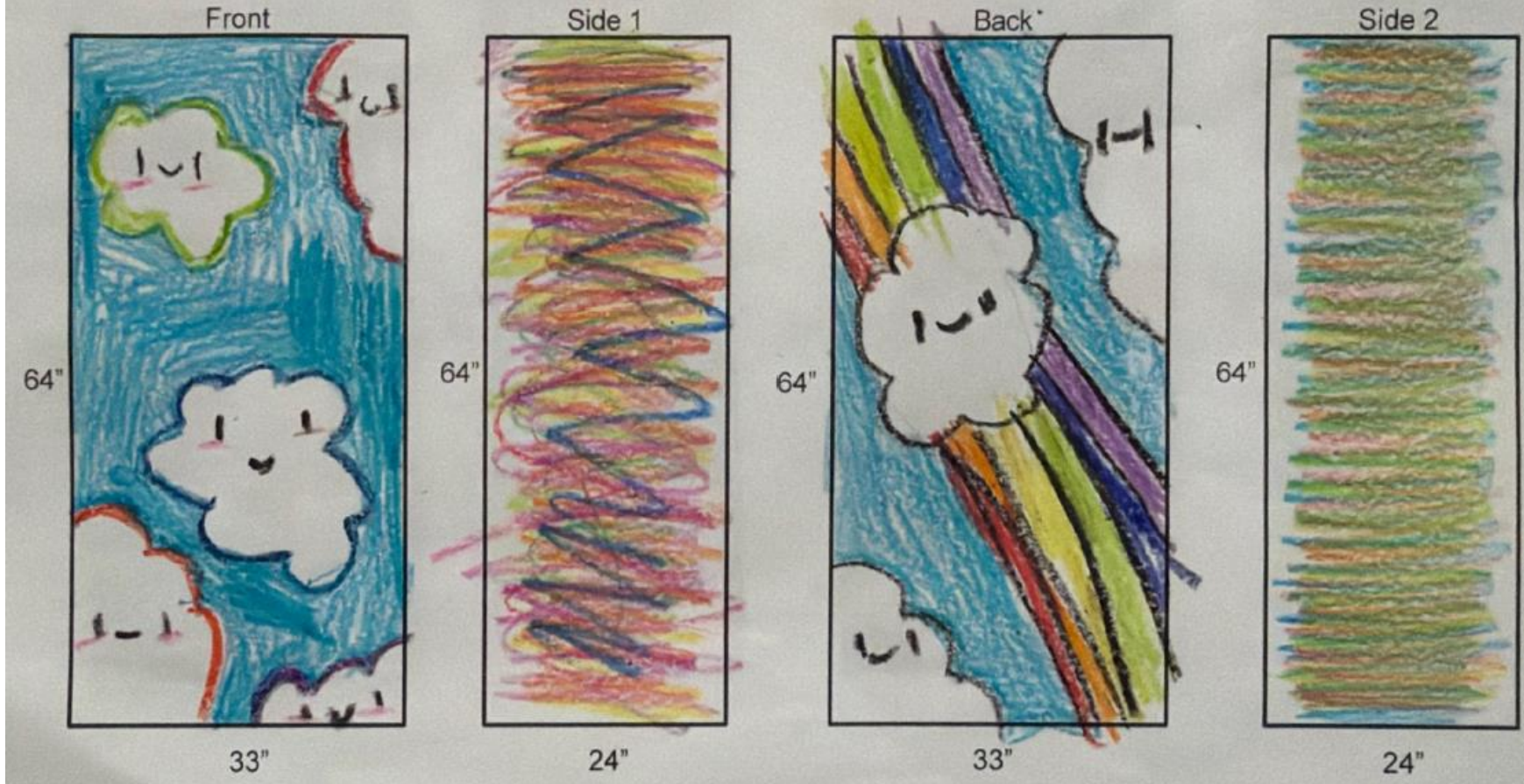
How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: I had a lot of ideas for the design of the proposed artwork, but in the end, simple and clean seemed best to create art that would be pleasing to passers by. John Muir reflects our historic

values in obvious ways, being one of our famous residents of the past. And I believe he also reflects our social values in his advocacy of preserving land for the sake of the land, as well as its people.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character: The design relates to the surrounding context because of the proximity of box #4 to the Muir home and National Historic Site. I have included the city's Sesquicentennial logo as well as a design representing our nations Semiquincentennial celebration. The design will be eye catching and also mirror the nearby hills, poppies and views of the waterfront. The front panel features John Muir's head sitting atop Mount Wanda and a speech bubble full of flowers; this symbolizes his many pieces of writing that honor and advocate for nature and all its inhabitants. I was inspired by a quote of his in the creation of this design: "The sun shines not on us but in us. The rivers flow not past, but through us. Thrilling, tingling, vibrating every fiber and cell of the substance of our bodies, making them glide and sing. The trees wave and the flowers bloom in our very bodies as well as our souls, and every bird song, wind song, and tremendous storm song of the rocks in the heart of the mountains is our song, our very own, and sings our love." John Muir

Artwork Title: Rainbow and Sun

Design:



Design Description: Martinez is always nice & sunny & will always be a bright place for me.

How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: All 5 submissions are colorful and inclusive of the large amount of love & acceptance Martinez has to offer.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character: This is an art hub. All are colorful and inclusive just like our town.

Artwork Title: Space

Design:



Design Description: We are just little humans in a much bigger universe. Just a reminder.

How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: All 5 submissions are colorful and inclusive of the large amount of love & acceptance Martinez has to offer.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character: This is an art hub. All are colorful and inclusive just like our town.

Artwork Title: Clouds Flower



Design:

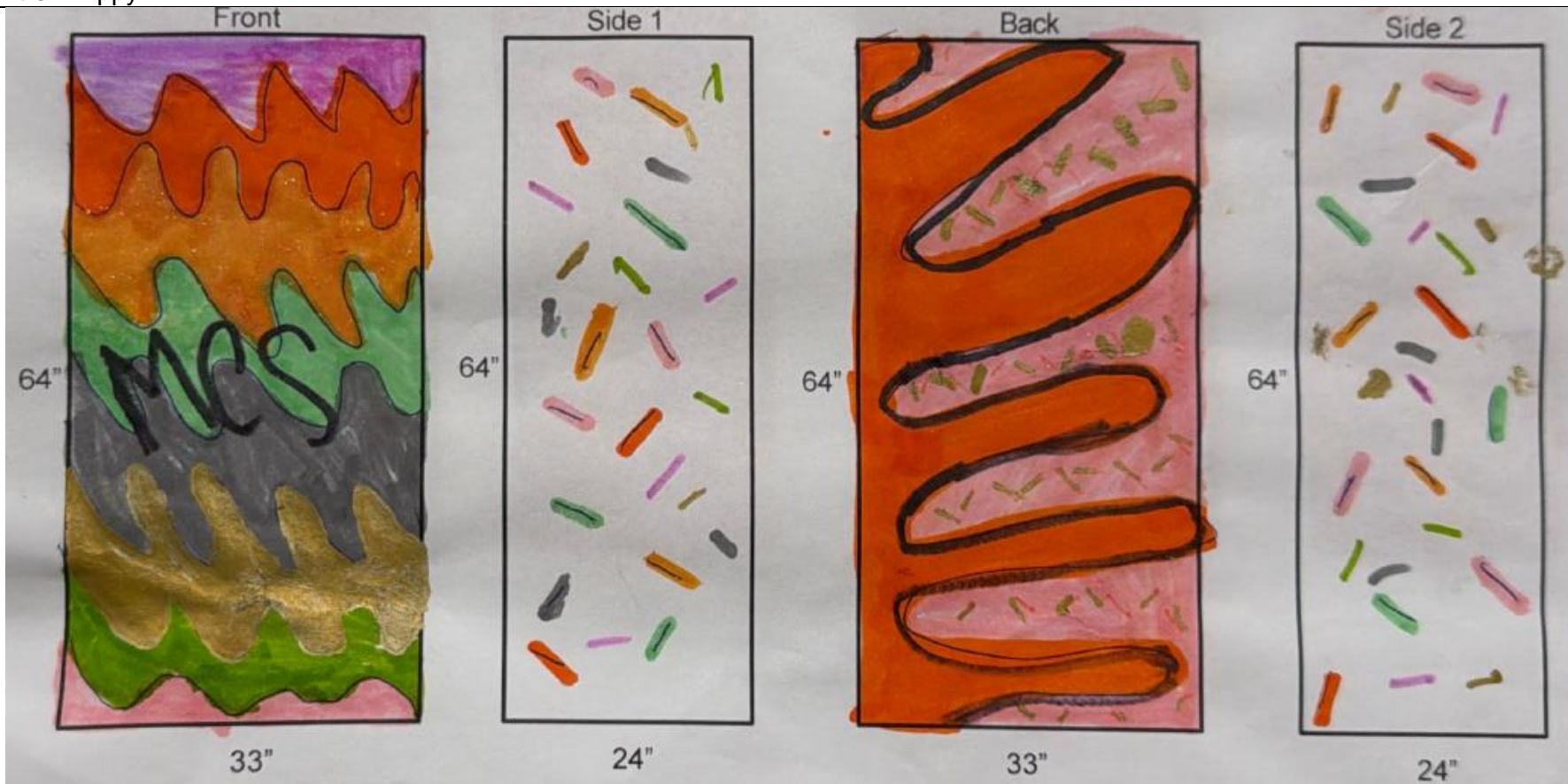
Design Description: Rainbow Pride for inclusion & acceptance of all people & of all types of beauty.

How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: All 5 submissions are colorful and inclusive of the large amount of love & acceptance Martinez has to offer.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character: This is an art hub. All are colorful and inclusive just like our town.

Artwork Title: Drippy

Design:



Design Description: Martinez is my favorite thing over ice cream w/ sprinkles.

How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: All 5 submissions are colorful and inclusive of the large amount of love & acceptance Martinez has to offer.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character: This is an art hub. All are colorful and inclusive just like our town.

Artwork Title: I Left My Heart in Martinez



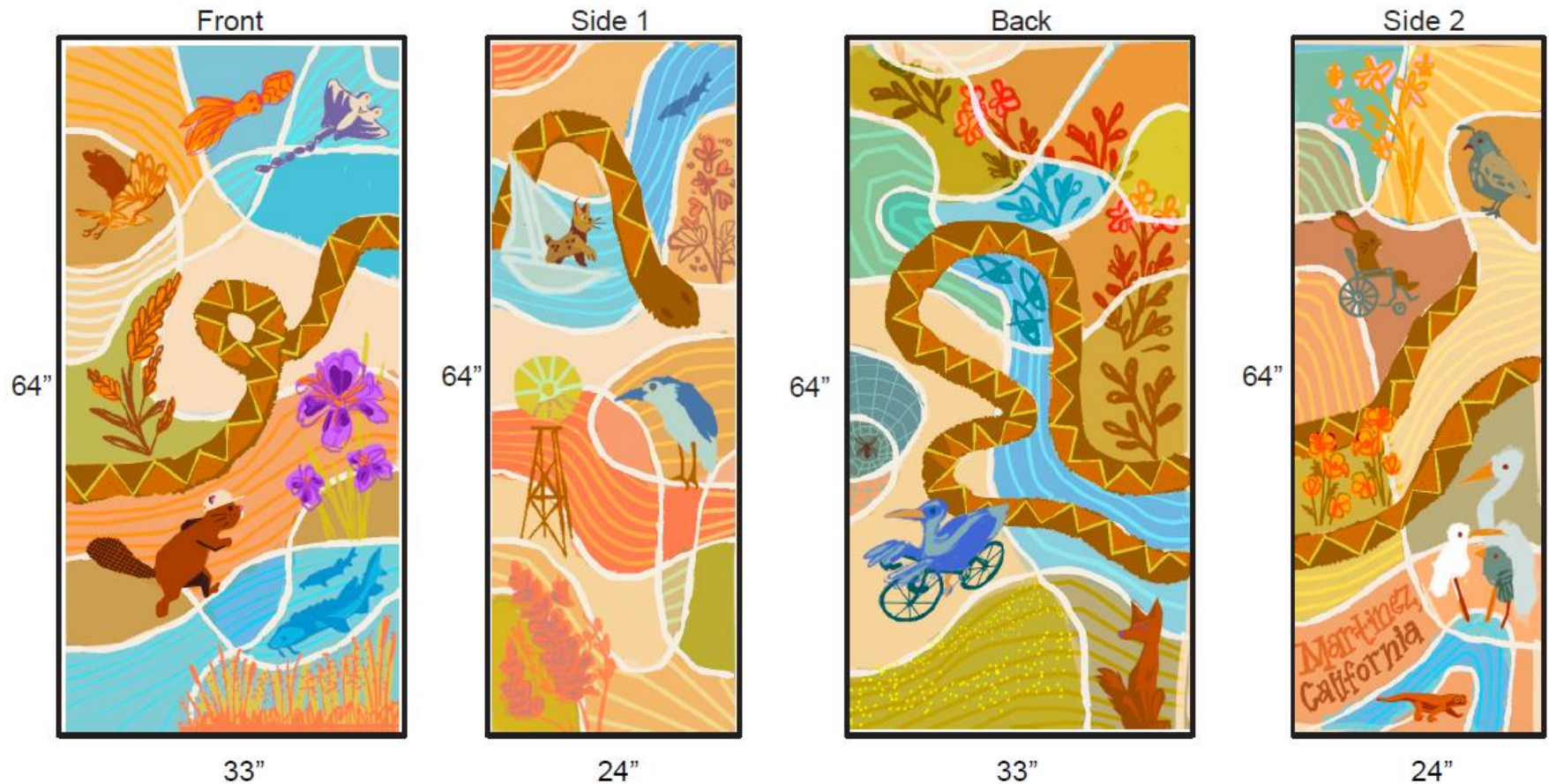
Design:

Design Description: Martinez is an art hub. Playing on leaving my heart in SF but emphasizing "Art".

How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: All 5 submissions are colorful and inclusive of the large amount of love & acceptance Martinez has to offer.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character: This is an art hub. All are colorful and inclusive just like our town.

Artwork Title: Hissed Connections



Design:

Design Description: My design illustrates the wide range of uses our local trails have to offer, and how maintaining them has kept, and will continue to keep, them as a sacred space to enjoy nature and help preserve our local wildlife.

How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: Our hilly trails have been explored and utilized over the past 150 years and continue provide access to all of those who wish to venture through them. This piece illustrates the diverse crossover of use over the same stretches of land.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character: This design will use colors found in nature with contrasting pops of color, where appropriate.

**Design:**

Design Description: The variety and quantity of parks in Martinez show the importance of the natural environment to the citizens of Martinez. There are so many beautiful parks in Martinez it was hard to choose just four to include in my design. After much consideration I chose to include Rankin Park, one of my favorite Martinez parks, Susana Park, home of the Beaver festival, the plaza across from City Hall, with the beautiful fountain, and finally, Hidden Lakes park, the scene with otters and cormorant, both animals I have seen there. These parks show the past, present and future of Martinez as they demonstrate the values of its citizens as well as its beauty.

How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: The people enjoying the parks reflect the diverse culture of Martinez. In my design I've included people walking their dogs, sitting on a park bench eating ice cream cones, picnicking, and

enjoying the playground to show some of the ways people enjoy Martinez parks. The history is demonstrated by the parks that are a part of that history as well as scenes that reference important parts of Martinez history, such as the Amtrak station and the fountain.

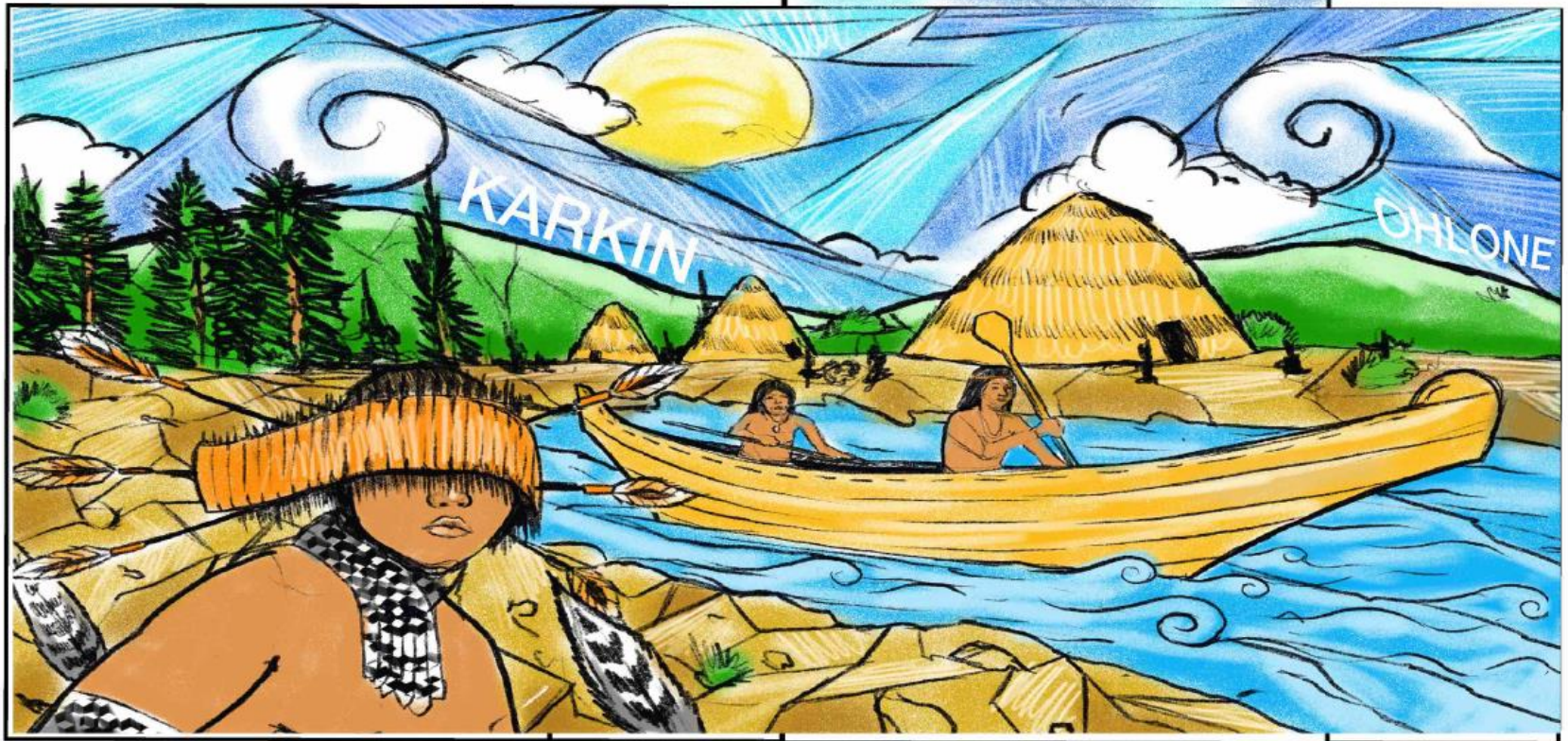
How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character: The depiction of some of the amazing and wonderful parks of Martinez relates to the character of Martinez, as so much of Martinez is made up of natural spaces for their residents to enjoy.

Artwork Title: Celebrating our Indigenous Roots

Design:

Art Title:

Top of Box



Back

Left Side

Front

Right Side

CHRIS GRANILLO ART

Design Description: This design, entitled “Celebrating our Indigenous Roots”, honors Martinez’s original inhabitants, the Karkin, a band of the Ohlone. Depictions of fishing, hunting, and dancing and the wearing of traditional ceremonial garments honor the past and are teachable to each new generation of the importance of Martinez’s original stewards.

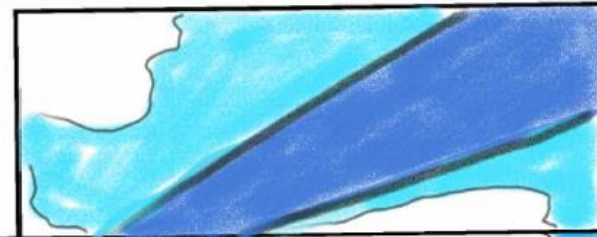
How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: The three designs that I am proposing can be viewed as a triptych of Martinez’s early origins. The symbols and motifs in each design represent critical historical moments (snapshots) in Martinez’s growth into a cultural and economic center for the County and a gateway to the Bay and the Strait of Carquinez. The designs honor and reflect back to the community Martinez’s rich history while serving as a legacy to future generations to come.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character: My proposal and location for each design are intentional and strategic. My aim is to use these designs not just to adorn the streets, but to spark curiosity about the history they are depicting, and to create a tribute to the places across the city where one may have witnessed these scenes.

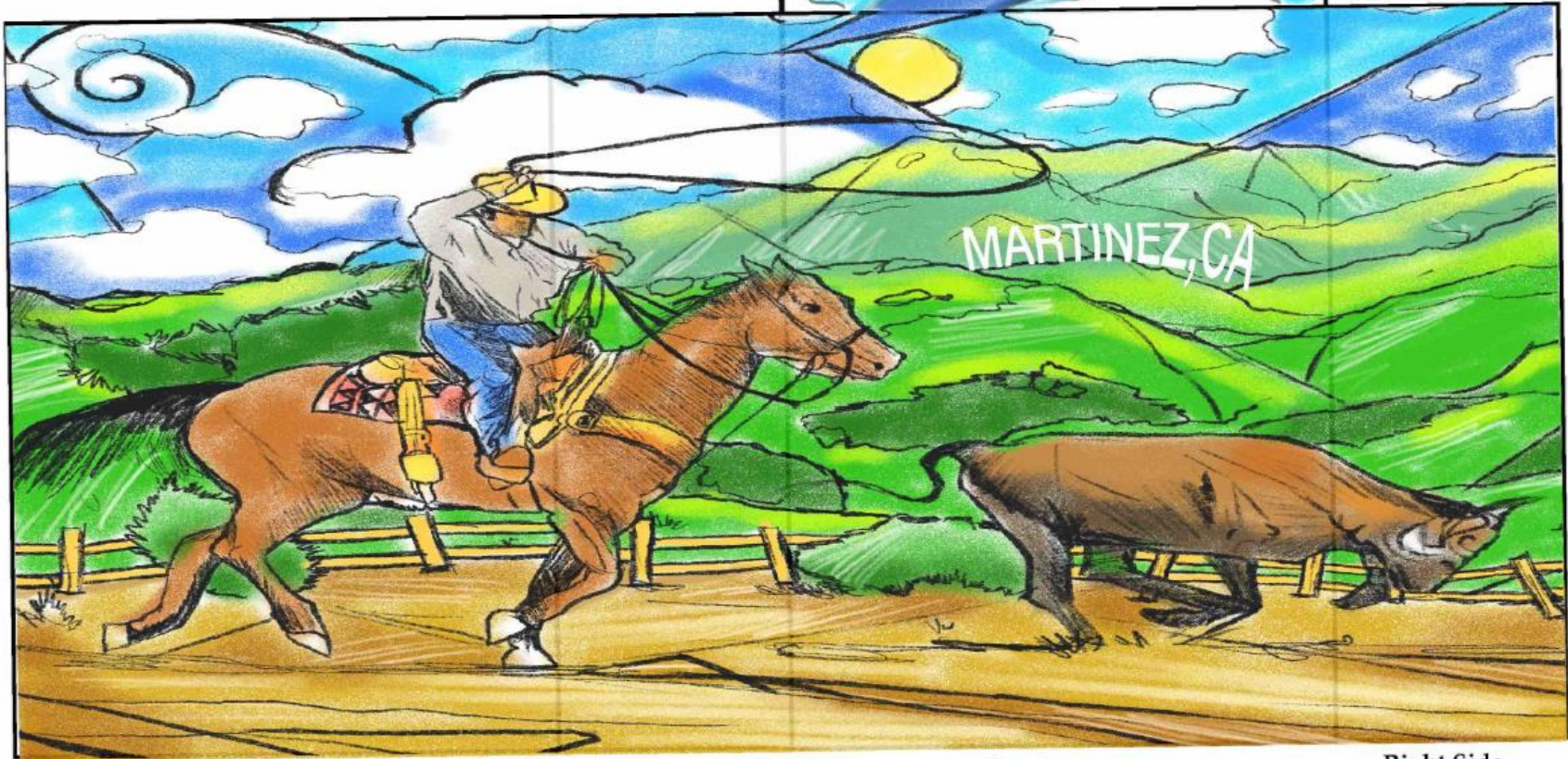
Artwork Title: Cattleman of Alhambra Valley

Design:

Art Title: 2. Cattleman of Alhambra Valley (Utility Box #5)



Top of Box



Back

Left Side

Front

Right Side

CHRIS GRANILLO ART

Design Description: This design is inspired and honors and reflects the early settlement of the Alhambra Valley and the ways in which Cattleman toiled the land to make it what it is today.

How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: The three designs that I am proposing can be viewed as a triptych of Martinez's early origins. The symbols and motifs in each design represent critical historical moments (snapshots) in Martinez's growth into a cultural and economic center for the County and a gateway to the Bay and the Strait of Carquinez. The designs honor and reflect back to the community Martinez's rich history while serving as a legacy to future generations to come.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character: My proposal and location for each design are intentional and strategic. My aim is to use these designs not just to adorn the streets, but to spark curiosity about the history they are depicting, and to create a tribute to the places across the city where one may have witnessed these scenes.

Artwork Title: Passing Through Martinez

Design:

Art Title: Passing through Martinez, CA (Utility Box #1)



Top of Box



Back

Left Side

Front

CHRIS GRANILLO ART Right Side

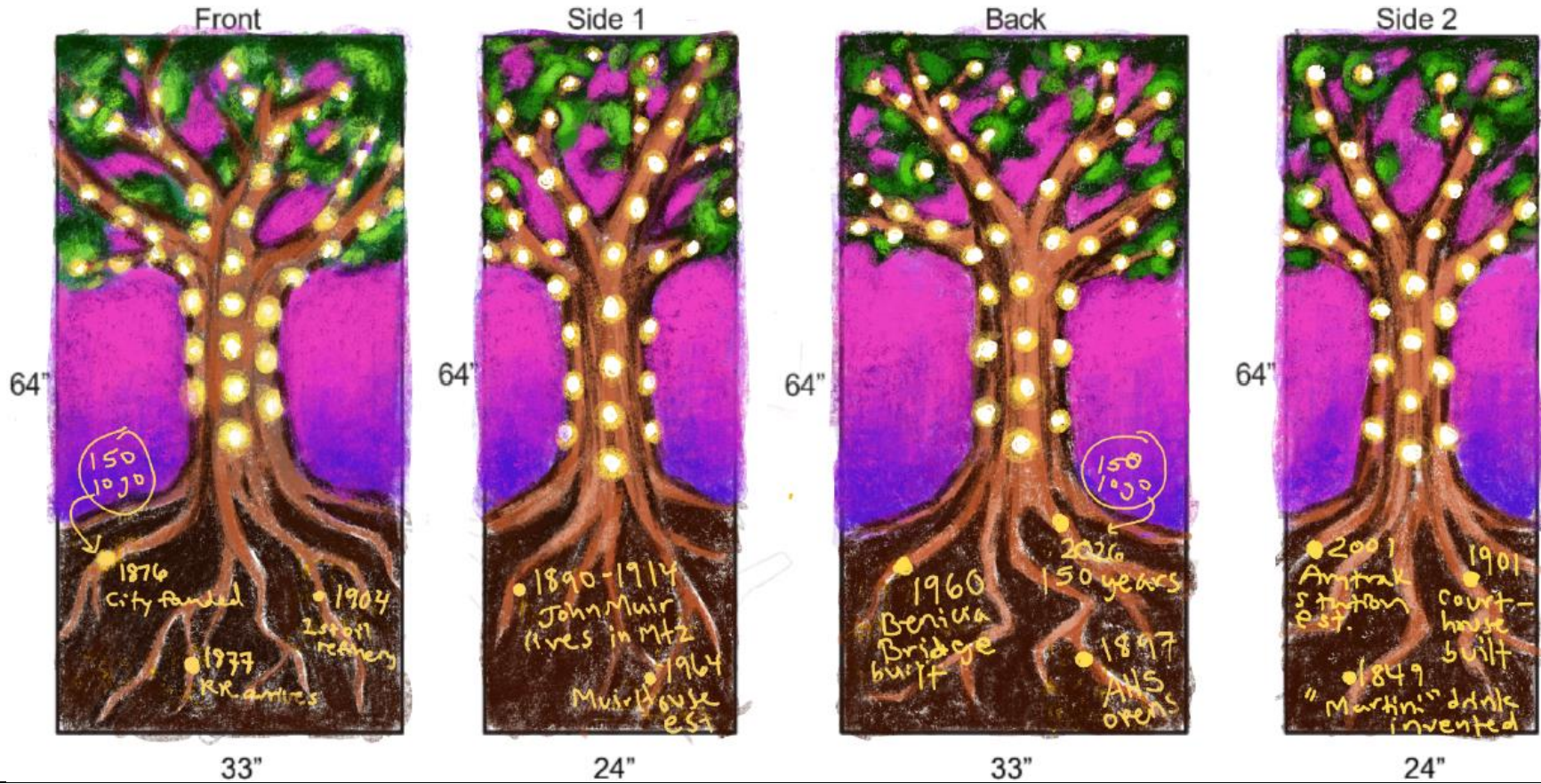
Design Description: This design celebrates the early feats and endurance in engineering and transportation, that the locomotive represents. Its depiction reminds the community of the role it has and continues to play as a connector to the rest of the world and as a lifeline.

How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: The three designs that I am proposing can be viewed as a triptych of Martinez's early origins. The symbols and motifs in each design represent critical historical moments (snapshots) in Martinez's growth into a cultural and economic center for the County and a gateway to the Bay and the Strait of Carquinez. The designs honor and reflect back to the community Martinez's rich history while serving as a legacy to future generations to come.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character: My proposal and location for each design are intentional and strategic. My aim is to use these designs not just to adorn the streets, but to spark curiosity about the history they are depicting, and to create a tribute to the places across the city where one may have witnessed these scenes.

Artwork Title: Tree of Lights

Design:



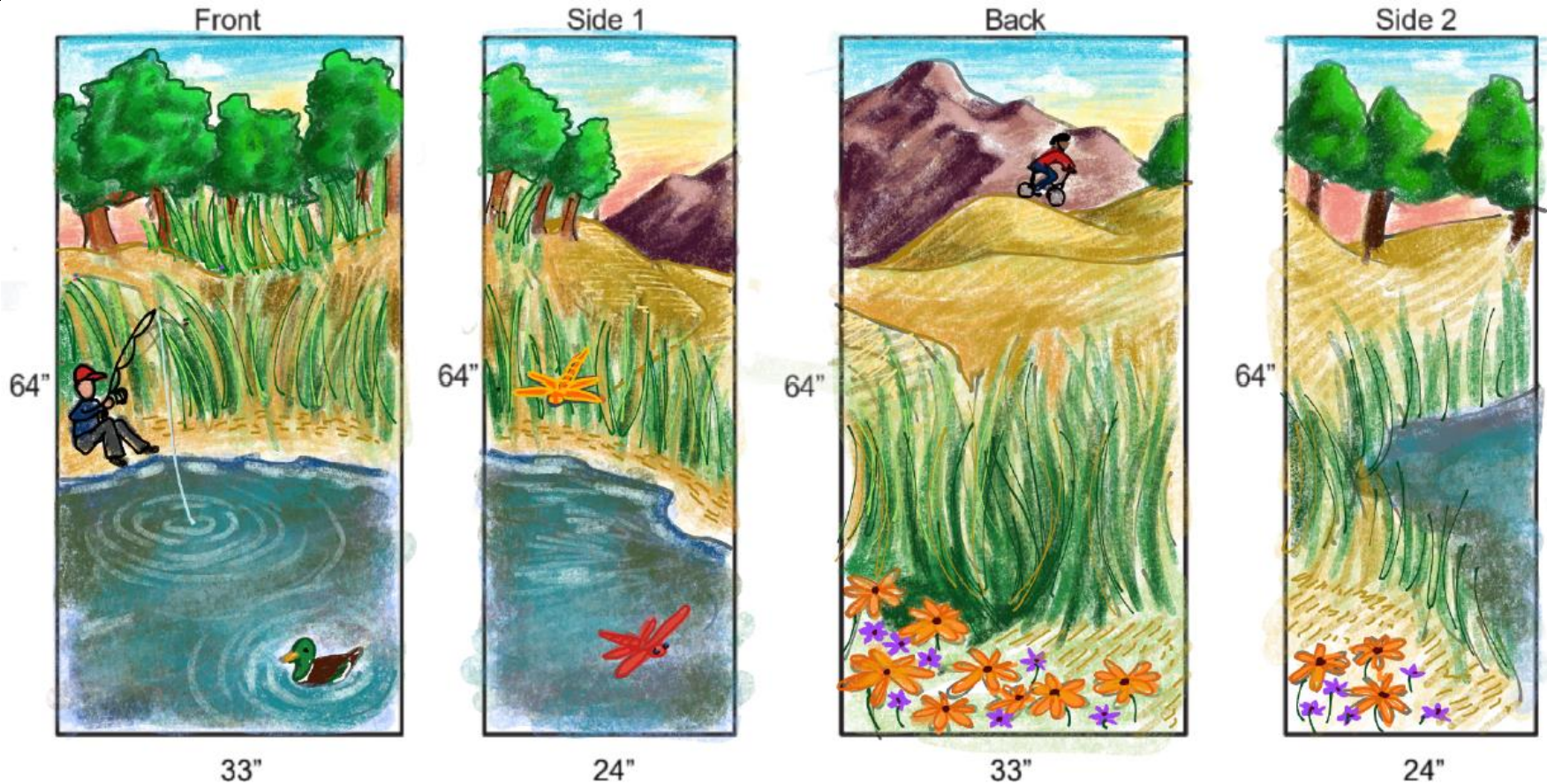
Design Description: This design is meant to memorialize the beloved Morello Ave "Tree of Lights" that was unfortunately cut down last Fall. In this design, I have depicted the tree and its shining lights to let the tree live on in memory, in a location very near to where it was rooted. At the roots of my design, I have decided to include important dates in Martinez history (open to include other important date suggestions). In this draft, the writing is loose and brief, but in a finalized, larger version, it will be clearer and artistically implemented. I also would think including the Sesquicentennial logo would be helpful for this design, to signify the significance of this time in our town's history. This design represents our town's past by both memorializing the tree that once stood for generations, as well as reminding us of what significant events we are rooted in. Even though the tree is no longer standing, its roots still remain, representing the impact our history has on both our present and our future as a city.

How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: This design speaks to both the historic and social values of the Martinez community. The Tree of Lights was a hallmark tree in the community landscape, nestled on one of the city's primary

roadways, Morello Ave, serving as a beautiful symbol of the goodwill and charity our community possesses. While the tree no longer stands, its roots still remain, and this design will continue to let the light of our community culture shine. Simultaneously, this design reflects the historic aspects of Martinez. With each tree root anchored to a significant moment in our city's history, this design offers a grounding of our community values, serving as a reminder of what Martinez is built upon and what significant moments have grown from it.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character: This design is especially significant to this location on Morello Ave. The Tree of Lights was a stunning display of lights located less than a mile up the road from this utility box's location. Its unfortunate removal after all these years has undoubtedly left a hole in the sights of residents such as myself, and I feel as if this design in this particular location will attempt to patch some of that hole, memorializing what once stood so near.

Artwork Title: Hidden Lakes



Design:

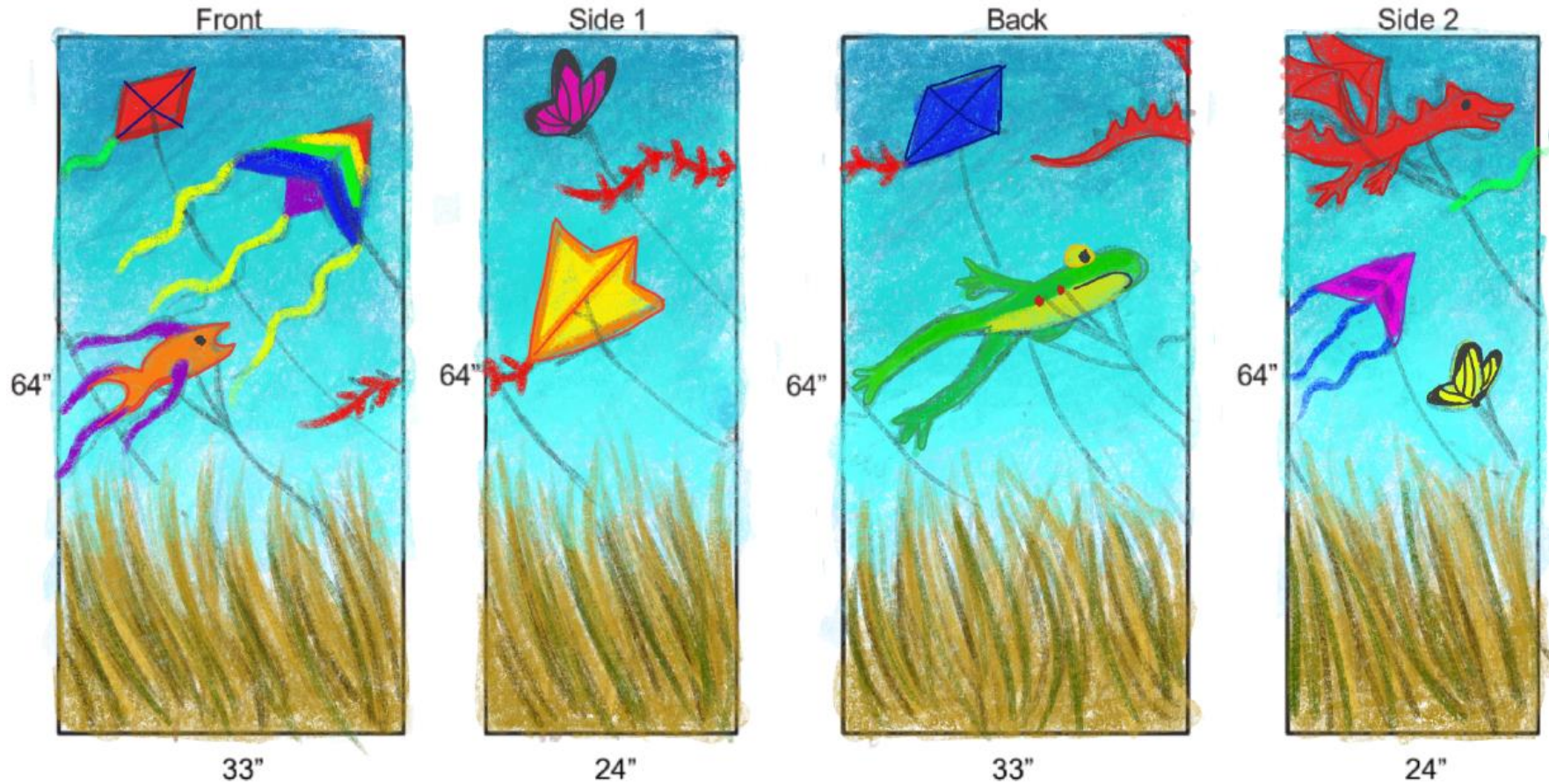
Design Description: This design is more simple in significance, intended to be an homage to the beautiful Martinez park, located just a mile or so up the road from this location. Growing up in Martinez, and continuing to live here into my adulthood, I have experienced countless memories at this park, from playing sports, to going fishing with my family, or getting lost in the winding trails that seem to appear from nowhere. Such a simple spot has such endless beauty, and I think this speaks to the city of Martinez as a whole. This scenic design allows for sincere appreciation and reflection on what makes Martinez so beautiful, highlighting the shared experiences so many of us have together at this single community location. For generations, families have gathered here, and it continues to be a remarkable spot to create traditions for the members of our community.

How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: Perhaps one of the most special aspects of Martinez is the remarkable pockets of nature it can offer its residents. Set against the backdrop of the stunning Mt. Diablo, Hidden Lakes Park is almost an oasis of peace among the city's sprawling communities, where all can gather for a wide variety of activities. From its sprawling golden

hills, perfect for biking, to its deep green secluded waters for an ideal fishing spot, Hidden Lakes is undoubtedly a place where countless Martinez residents share some of their fondest memories. This design will serve as a picturesque representation of this park, stirring up even the most hidden memories for so many community members fond of Hidden Lakes.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character: This design suits this location geographically as it is located not far from Hidden Lakes Park. In my personal history, this location is what I would always drive past when going to this park, and when I visualize this intersection, my brain automatically pushes to my fond memories at the lake and in the hills, just up the road from here. Having lived here my entire life, I am inclined to believe others would find themselves thinking the same.

Artwork Title: Flying Kites



Design:

Design Description: This design is an homage to one of my favorite places and things to do in Martinez: watching the colorful and unique kites that fly over the grass at the Waterfront Park. While there is not a utility box located particularly near this park, I think most residents would agree that the Waterfront is one of the most special places in Martinez. No matter the day you go, there is almost always a stunning array of soaring kites in the sky above the bay, with several returning characters (such as my favorite, the frog kites). This design casts an image of a more unspoken detail in the Martinez community, but these are the small things that I believe make this city so special. Each of the flying kites coming together in the sky creates a mesmerizing display, speaking to the ways in which our storied past as a city have accumulated into a city to still be in awe of today.

How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: For so many residents of Martinez, the Waterfront Park is a place for memories to be made. Whether it's a birthday, baseball game, family reunion, fishing trip, or just a day to take a walk, there is so much that can be enjoyed. A more understated gem of the park, though, is the soaring kites that fly over the grassy edges of the

shore. As a Martinez resident myself, I feel as if the kites are a perfect representation of the diverse crowds that flock to the marina, flying an array of colors and designs across the windy shores.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character:

Box 3: While this utility box is not directly near the Waterfront Park, I feel that this location is still appropriate for my design. Located near the exit to Alhambra Ave just up Highway 4, the images of the open skies and colorful kites serve as a reminder of what Martinez has to offer just a few miles over. The location of this box sits in a commercial/resident area, where lots of local businesses operate and residents run errands. I think including a design that conjures memories and images of the tranquil scenes at Waterfront Park will serve as a welcoming break from the bustling lives of the Martinez community, especially in an area that can get so busy.

Box 4: I am submitting this design for two different locations, as I feel it could potentially work for either. Alhambra Ave is perhaps one of the most robust and essential roads in Martinez, hosting the John Muir House, Alhambra High School, and is a segway into the charming downtown that brushes against Waterfront Park. For many, this road leads to so many memories that took place at this park, conjuring images of the chopping waters and blue skies full of these colorful kites. This road, home to so many essential pieces of Martinez, would be an ideal location for a design representing one of the most special places and scenes Martinez has to offer.

Artwork Title: A Step in History

Design:



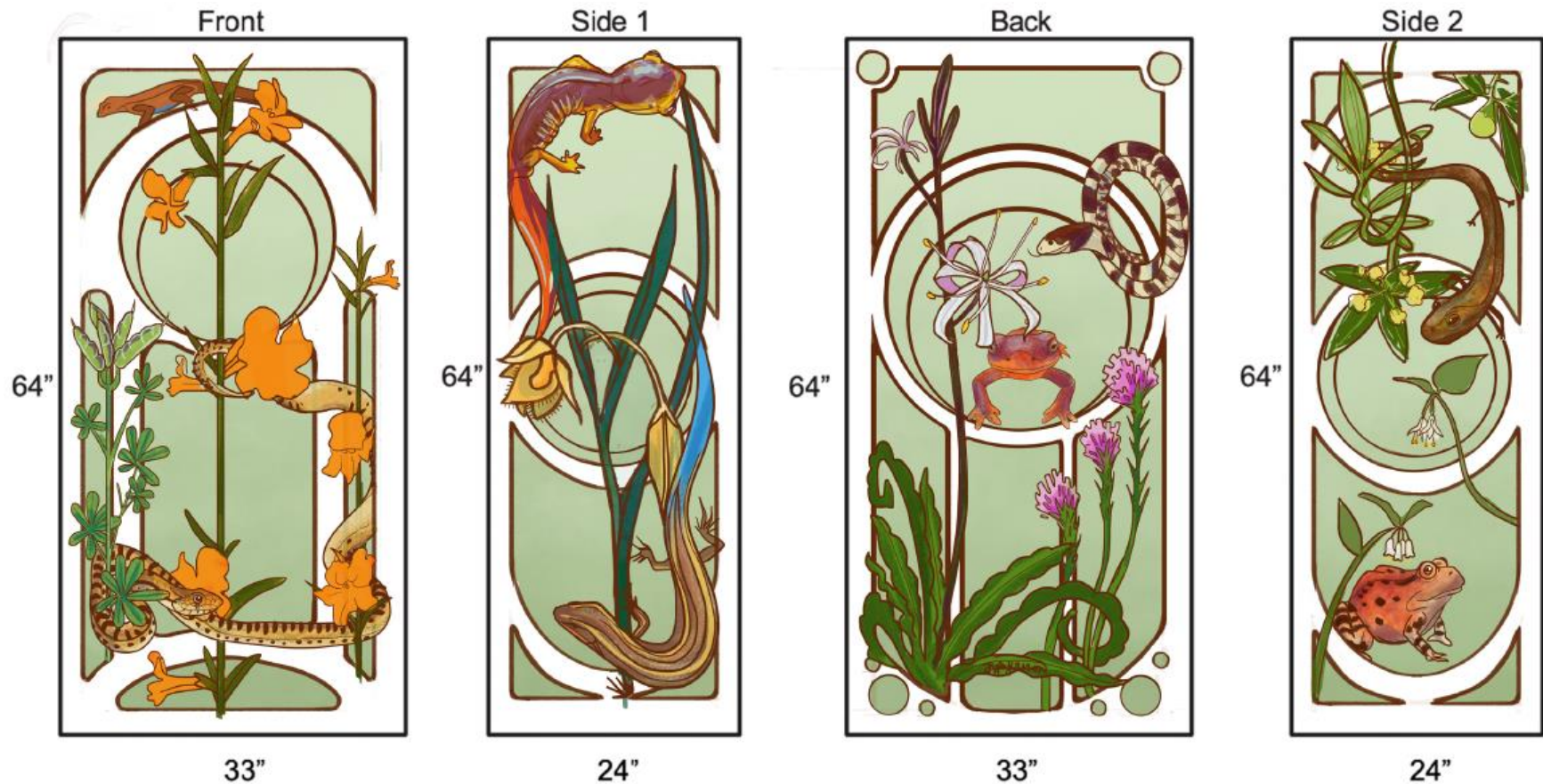
Design Description: The Front panel design (street side) hearkens back to the beginning of the country's journey featuring a combination of symbols of freedom: an eagle holding the Liberty Bell, and a halo of stars representing the original colonies. The Back panel (sidewalk facing) features a declaration of the semiquincentennial anniversary of the independence of the United States. The Side 1 panel states the name of the city of Martinez and the state of the union to which it belongs. The American flag shield is a recognizable a symbol of this nation, which represents the duty to uphold the values from which it was built. The crossing laurels branches represent harmony and peace. The Side 2 panel depicts the Martinez courthouse of today and of the future - a symbol of the seat of local and county government. The California state bear can be seen below it, with the harmony of crossed Laurels between them. This design echoes the symbolic roots upon which this nation was built and to which we Americans and all belong. The city's utility box project theme is a reflection of those values, honoring our shared heritage.

How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: Martinez still keeps 'the old' and that is a value I respect. Many of the original brick buildings have survived and been repurposed, not replaced. There is a respect for one's history in that and that is value that reflects the character of the local community. Martinez is steeped in history and you can see it when you simply walk around

downtown. The grand county courthouse is a connection to that history. It sits amongst the new buildings that now stand above it. Martinez does not reject the new; it loves its character, its classic buildings and atmosphere.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character: The box location being outside a local historic landmark and considering the historic theme of this project, I found it fitting to use a historic visual style. The background texture is from aged paper and the larger panels are framed by simple, linear ornamental borders. The design elements are in a monochromatic color palette of white and grey sepia, which also adds to the overall historic feel of the design. I have tried to use natural textures and colors to reflect the local natural environments. The strong visual shapes in the panel facing traffic are more easily readable and the back panel with text acknowledging the sesquicentennial anniversary is more for pedestrians passing by. The side panels are a happy medium.

Design:



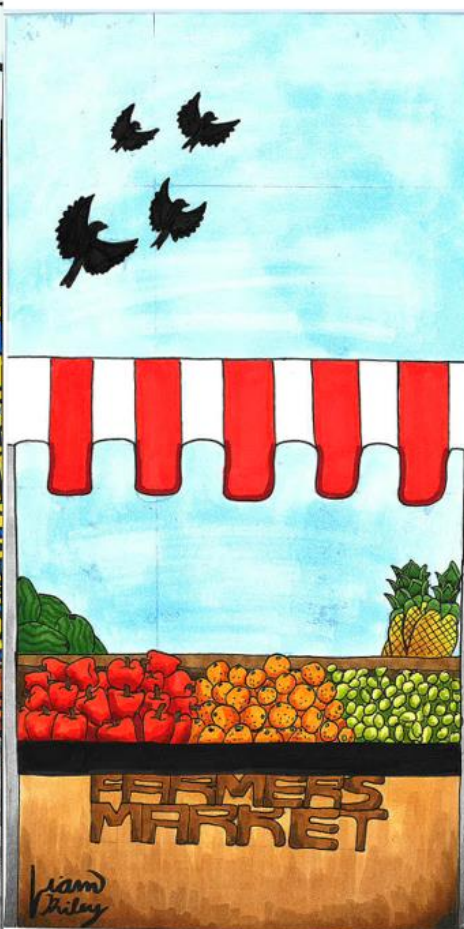
Design Description: This mural is a celebratory and educational piece of the native California amphibians, reptiles and plants that call Martinez home. Mount Diablo and other natural spaces around and within Martinez serve as important habitat to a plethora of CA native wildlife. This piece puts a spotlight on flora like the orange bush monkey flower, purple owl's clover, California bay laurel, wavy leaved soap plant, arroyo lupine, hooker's fairybells, and the Mount Diablo globelily. The animals depicted include: California newt, California slender salamander, yellow eyed ensatina, western skink, western fence lizard, California kingsnake, and the pacific gopher snake. These charismatic species have flourished here in the past, persist through conservation obstacles in the present, and symbolize a future of hope of a healthy coexistence.

How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: Martinez is the Bay Area's hidden gem for many reasons, this design highlights the ecological diversity it holds. As a city on the edge of the water, it serves as a transition zone between the land and the sea. Thus many microhabitats are able to house many kinds of animals and plant. Many people are familiar with birds and large charismatic creatures. A hidden gem within Martinez are its amphibians and reptiles. This design uses an art nouveau style (a well beloved and beautiful art movement) to paint these lesser known animals in a more positive light.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character: The city of Martinez itself is surrounded by regional shorelines and has views of nearby Mount Diablo, Mount St. Helena, Mount Tamalpais, and regional preserves. Nature surrounds and weaves through the city. Any location you put this design will pay homage to the neighborhood creatures many do not get to see.

Artwork Title: Moments Along the Way

Design:



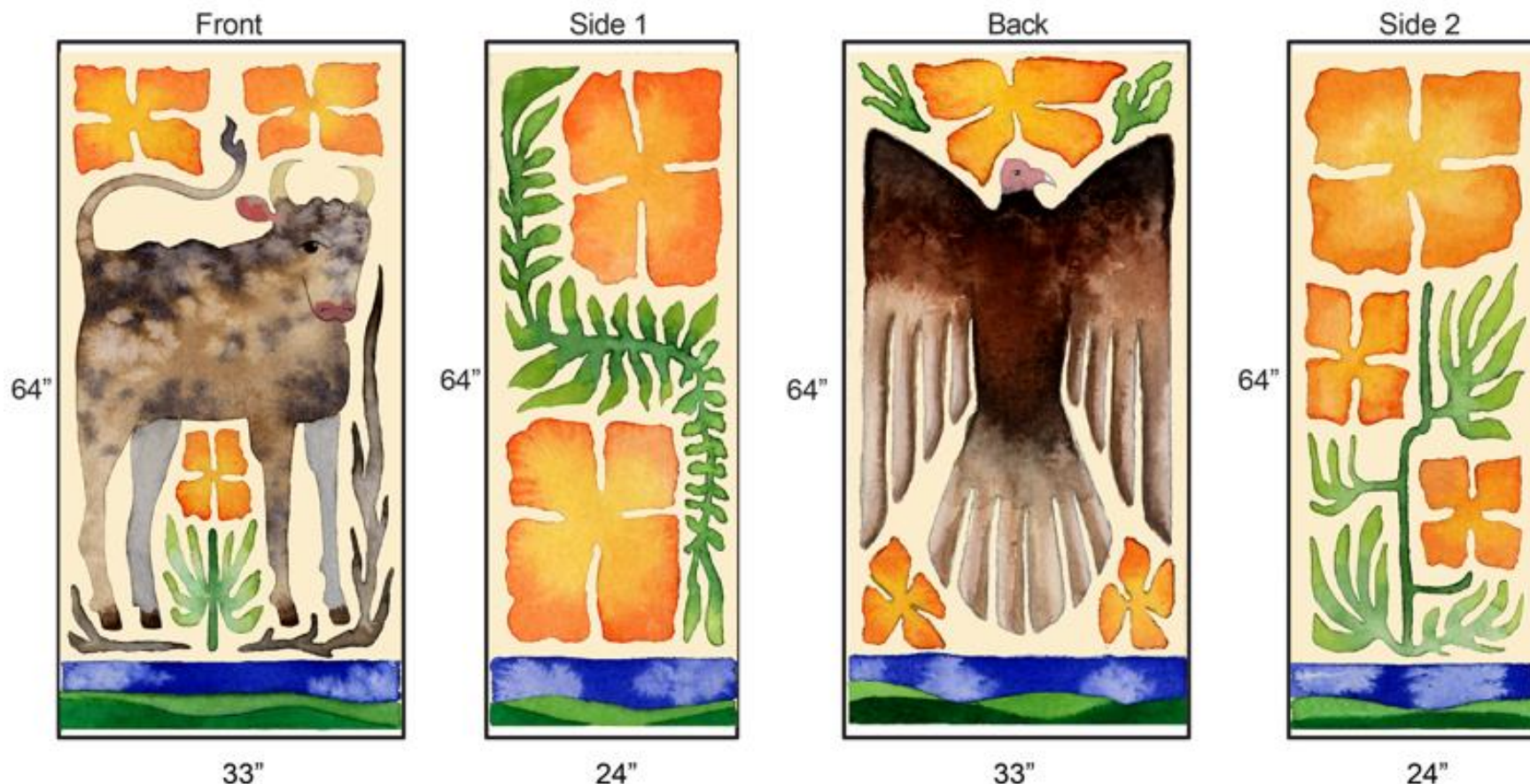
Design Description: The train shows our past. The farmers market shows what is happening today. The Mt. Diablo shows (hopefully) what will still be here in years to come as well as the big trees. The farmers market and the pathway to Mt. Diablo together show what enables us all to do things together.

How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: The farmers market bring foods, music and people together from all over the world. The train shows what was happening in Martinez many years ago. Helping the City to grow by bringing in supplies, products, foods, etc. The old trees show our history by imagining life around them in their day.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character: 1. Our trains: the train trestle at Alhambra & Amtrak 2. Farmers Market on Main St. 3. Trees - we see every day 4. Mt Diablo - we all know

Artwork Title: Alhambra Hills Forever

Design:



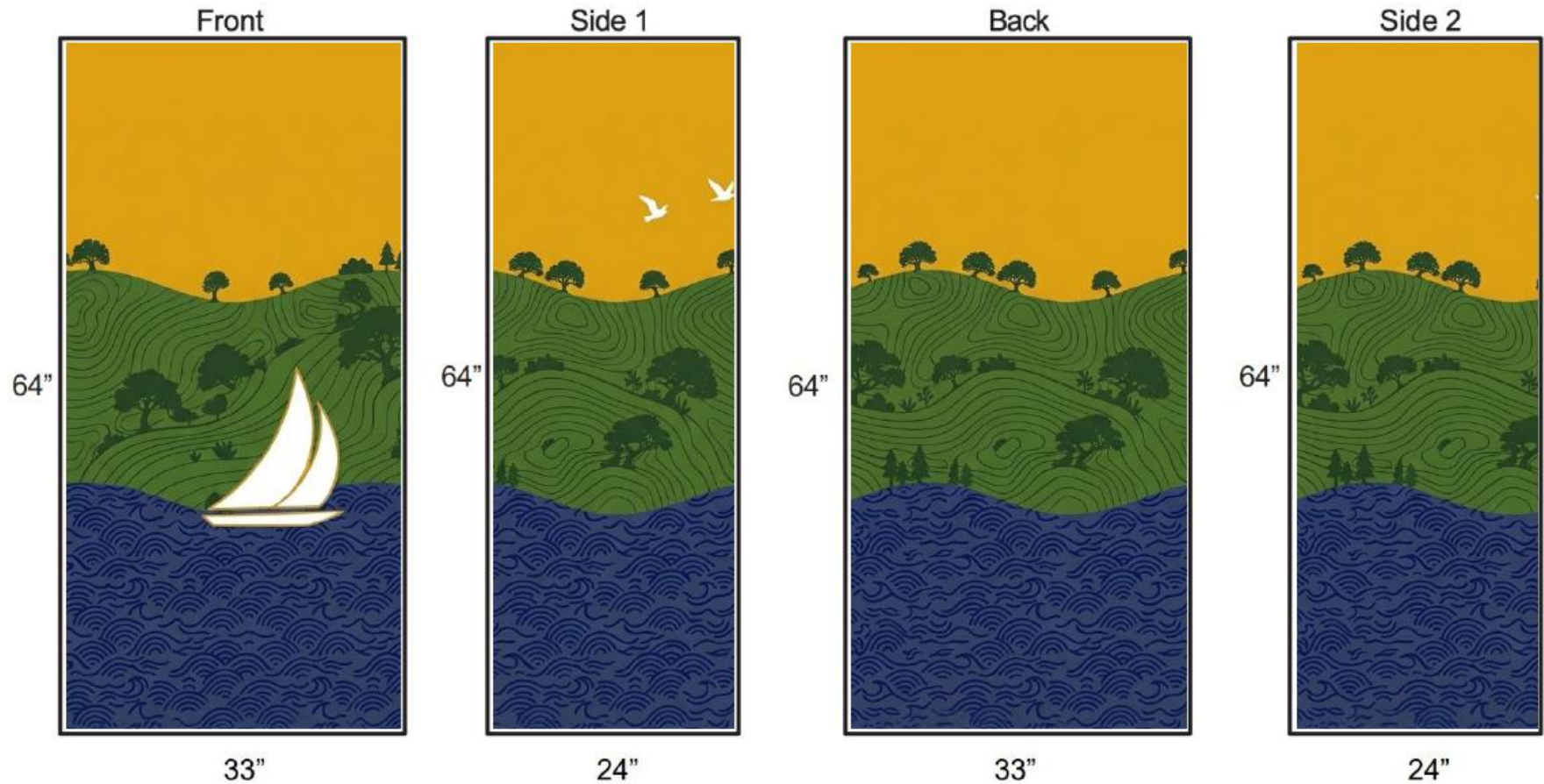
Design Description: "Alhambra Hills Forever", speaks to the energetic and visual presence of the iconic and ever-changing hills that envelop our town. The design features a motif depicting both the indigenous and naturalized flora/fauna of the area and utilizes a palette that reflects the rainbow of colors seen through the seasons. My design connects to the theme, "past, present, future, together", through imagery that depicts beings who have inhabited and shaped our local ecosystem for untraceable generations (turkey vultures & California poppies), and more recently introduced beings who alter our landscape as well as sustain the local human community (cattle). Abstracted foliage reminiscent of an evolutionary tree weaves through the design, connecting the past with the present, extending into the future and holding us all together, while puffy white clouds travel passively over green hills in the margins.

How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: The hills are the backdrop of our community values: they feed us locally and sustainably, inspire us with their explosions of color in the Spring and changing colors through the year, bring us peace of mind and body when we hike through them, and they support a huge and diverse animal and plant population.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character: My design draws influence from a few local styles, notably California Arts & Crafts and Folk Art, as well as utilizing a color palette inspired by the botanical colors seen through the seasons.

Artwork Title: Layers of Martinez

Design:



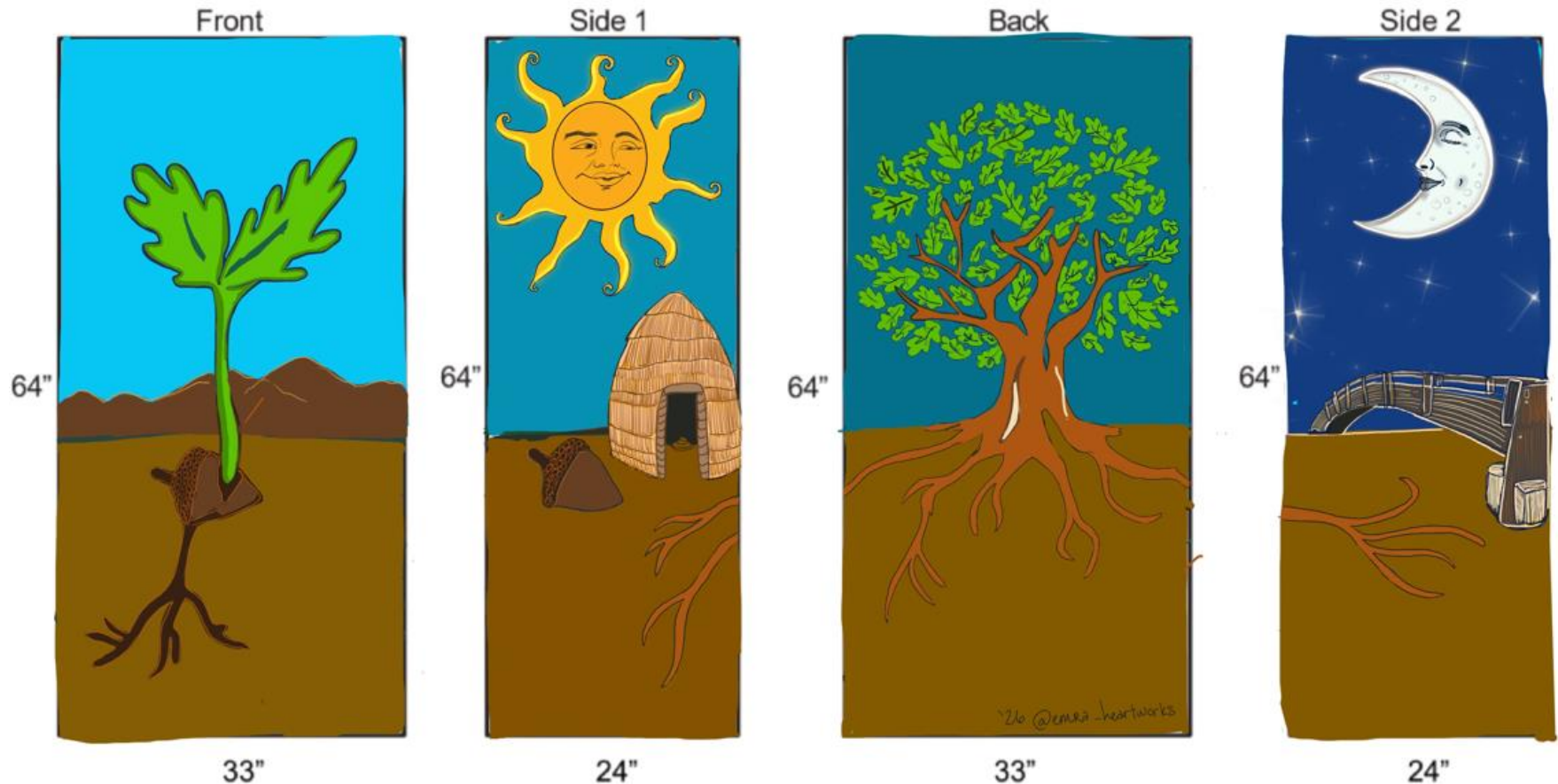
Design Description: This design represents three distinct elements that have been a part of Martinez for its 150 years of existence: Energy, nature, and the waters of the San Francisco Bay. Together, these forces have shaped our past, and will continue to shape our future.

How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: The tri-color design represents the unique history of our region, and how it's shaped our present moment: Yellow for the energy of our community and our energy industry; Green for our connection to nature conservancy, and for our city's continual growth; Blue for our coastal waters and our serene setting along the Bay.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character: The location of this utility box, right next to Highway 4, is a crossroads between the historical city of Martinez and its southern suburbs. This spot blends history and progress, and is a busy point between those living on either side of the highway. It is a natural point of interaction (near our city's beloved Contra Costa Stadium movie theater), and will help tie our geographically-dispersed city together behind a common identity.

Artwork Title: Communitree

Design:



Design Description: This design interprets Martinez's Sesquicentennial theme through the life cycle of an oak tree, which is a symbol of strength, continuity and the power of place over time. Each panel represents a different moment of time while remaining visually and conceptually connected through the tree + it's root system. The present is depicted on the front panel as a young sprout emerging from the soil, representing Martinez today as resilient, grounded, and growing. The past appears on Side 1 referencing the region's early history and the first people who shaped it. The future is illustrated on the back panel as a mature oak tree, each leaf a member of the Communitree. Side 2 represents togetherness through an image of the Radke Shoreline bridge, symbolizing the relationships that link our shared past, present, and future. As viewer move around the box, the design unfolds as a continuous narrative, honoring past, present + future.

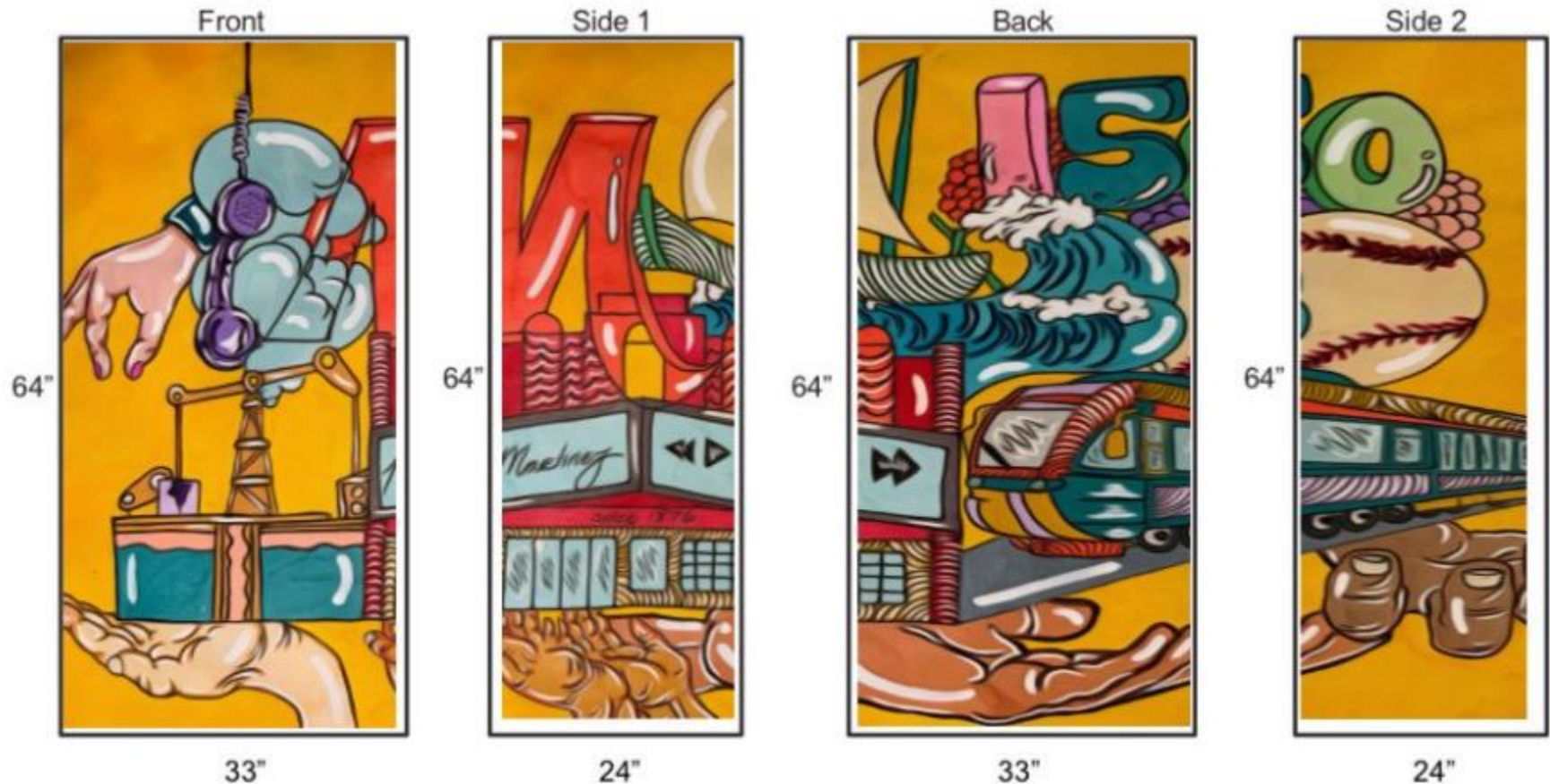
How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: This design uses universally recognizable symbols. It depicts land, sun, moon, shelter, and the oak tree to represent shared human experiences across generations. Rather than depicting a single narrative, the imagery is intentionally inclusive. The reference to early shelter acknowledges the region's indigenous roots + the many

communities who've shaped Martinez over time. The bridge symbolizes connection between neighborhoods, cultures + generations + the importance of relationship building. The sun + moon represent the shared cycles + rhythms of life and the oak tree, which is native to California is a unifying symbol of resilience, interdependence + growth. By presenting these elements as part of a continuous wraparound composition, the design honors Martinez as a place where many stories coexist, intersect and grow together, our shared roots in the land that houses us.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character: This design style reflects the surrounding context of Martinez by drawing inspiration from the area's natural landscape, architectural history, and small-town character. The use of the oak tree as the central visual element directly references the native ecology of our region, grounding the artwork in a sense of place that is familiar and meaningful to the local community. The simplified, illustrative style features bold shapes + a cohesive color pallet that will ensure the imagery remains clear and legible in an outdoor urban environment. This approach complements the scale + function of a utility box, making it accessible to viewers of all ages and backgrounds. The inclusion of elements such as a bridge and other simple forms reflect Martinez's environment and it's history as a multicultural and ever evolving community. Overall, the design balances natural + human made elements in a way that echoes the character of Martinez and it's beautiful landscape which is shaped by history + defined by connection + continuity.

Artwork Title: Building Martinez

Design:



Design Description: The piece reflects 150 years of evolution. Rewinding the past that made a call to the future as the greatest gift to the city of Martinez in 2026 of the present. Starting from the late 1800s-1900s, Martinez being known for its robust oil refineries, Historic downtown development of small business that are still standing today in the heart of the community and all the community advancements that are electrifying the city of Martinez like a Japanese bullet train.

How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: This design reflects the diverse cultural values of the Martinez community. Each hand is a symbol of togetherness, allowing anyone of color and every race to build a strong connection in a place they call home.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character: This design is relevant to the city of Martinez historic values and atmosphere that'll attract more visitors, and local community members to embrace the evolution of 150 years that has shaped the city and will continue to thrive.

Submission No.
30

Applicant Name: Quinn
Kopacek

Minor (Yes/No):
Yes

Parent/Guardian: Bronwyn
Kopacek

Preferred Utility Box: Any

Artwork Title: Martinez Life

Design:



Design Description: The focus of this artwork is to show how Martinez expands from land to water and the biodiversity included within that. What has taken place for the past 150 years (as represented on the kite) and hope for what is still to come and grow with us. The sail on the boat with the "M" for Martinez that has a heart attached to it. And also how residents can simply enjoy the beauty of what Martinez has to offer us today.

How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: I think that it shows the beautiful scenery we have in Martinez, both on land and on the water in the Marina. It shows people enjoying themselves doing activities they enjoy. Martinez has a rich 150-year history (as shown on the kite), and I think people always find a way to enjoy our town and its natural beauty.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character: It shows the bits of beauty that live all over our town and how many people can find ways to enjoy their time living here.



Design:

Design Description: This design honors Louisa “Louie” Strentzel Muir as a vital figure in Martinez history and as a woman whose labor, judgment, and creative life helped shape a legacy more often credited to others. Installed near the John Muir National Historic Site, the design re-centers Louie through a stylized portrait and letter-based imagery that reveals her as musician, ranch manager, reader, critic, mother, and force in her own right.

The design connects to the Sesquicentennial theme, “past, present, future, together,” by widening the story Martinez tells about itself. The past appears through Louie’s historical portrait, handwritten letters, orchard imagery, references to the Strentzel ranch, and botanical forms inspired by her own words about skeleton leaves and “phantom bouquets.” The present is reflected in the choice to make Louie visible in public space now, at a moment when communities are asking whose stories have been centered and whose work has remained unseen. The future is represented

through a more inclusive civic memory—one that teaches coming generations that history was built through shared labor, including the often-unrecognized work of women. “Together” is embodied in the full four-panel composition, which presents home, land, creativity, family, and public legacy as interconnected rather than separate. The front panel centers Louie in a bright, historically inspired portrait style. The side panels include a grand piano for her musical life, orchard and botanical imagery for her connection to Alhambra Valley, and skeleton-leaf motifs drawn from her letters. The back panel includes excerpts from her correspondence that show her encouraging John Muir’s writing and managing complex household and ranch business. Together, the panels honor Louie Strentzel Muir as a person whose unseen labor left a lasting mark on Martinez. It invites viewers to see local history with fresh eyes and to recognize the women whose work continues to shape Martinez.

How design reflects diverse cultural, historic, or social values of the Martinez community: This design reflects Martinez’s historic and social values by broadening the public story connected to one of the city’s most visible historic sites. The John Muir National Historic Site is widely recognized, but Louie Strentzel Muir’s role is less visible in public memory. This artwork focuses on Louie’s contributions as a capable ranch manager, musician, mother, business partner, reader, and critic. Her letters show a woman managing the practical life of the ranch and household while John Muir traveled and wrote. In one 1893 letter, she describes paying bills, handling money, reviewing deeds and mortgages, addressing delinquent tax lots, deciding to buy land, and monitoring fruit crops and prices. These details show that Louie’s role was active, skilled, and consequential. The design also reflects Martinez’s connection to land, agriculture, family labor, and the Alhambra Valley landscape. By centering Louie, the artwork recognizes the often-overlooked work of women in sustaining homes, farms, businesses, cultural life, and public legacies. It invites viewers to think more deeply about who gets remembered in civic space and why. This design uses historical photographs and letters as reference material. The submitted composition, illustration, layout, color treatment, and design are original and created by the applicant.

How design relates to the surrounding context or relevant local character: Utility Box No. 4 is located near the John Muir National Historic Site, so the design is directly connected to its surrounding context. The artwork responds to the Strentzel/Muir home, the surrounding orchards, Alhambra Valley, and the historic ranch economy that shaped this part of Martinez. The visual style combines a historically inspired portrait format with bright, graphic color suitable for a public utility box. Bold shapes, clear contrast, and simplified forms are used so the design can be understood from the street, while close-up details reward pedestrians who stop to look. This follows the project guidance that bold, bright colors and graphics tend to work well on utility boxes. The design uses imagery specific to Louie and Martinez rather than generic decoration: a grand piano, orchard fruit, skeleton leaves, handwritten letters, business documents, vines, and valley forms. These elements connect the box to the nearby historic house and to the layered daily life that happened there. The result is a site-responsive artwork that feels rooted in Martinez history while also visually fresh and engaging for today’s community.