

Painting OUR borough

utility box art project in Marlborough & area



Guide created by lead artist:
Mary Haasdyk Vooy



Painting our Borough was a community-focused public art project in Marlborough and area, in the summer of 2018.

10 artists

10 utility boxes

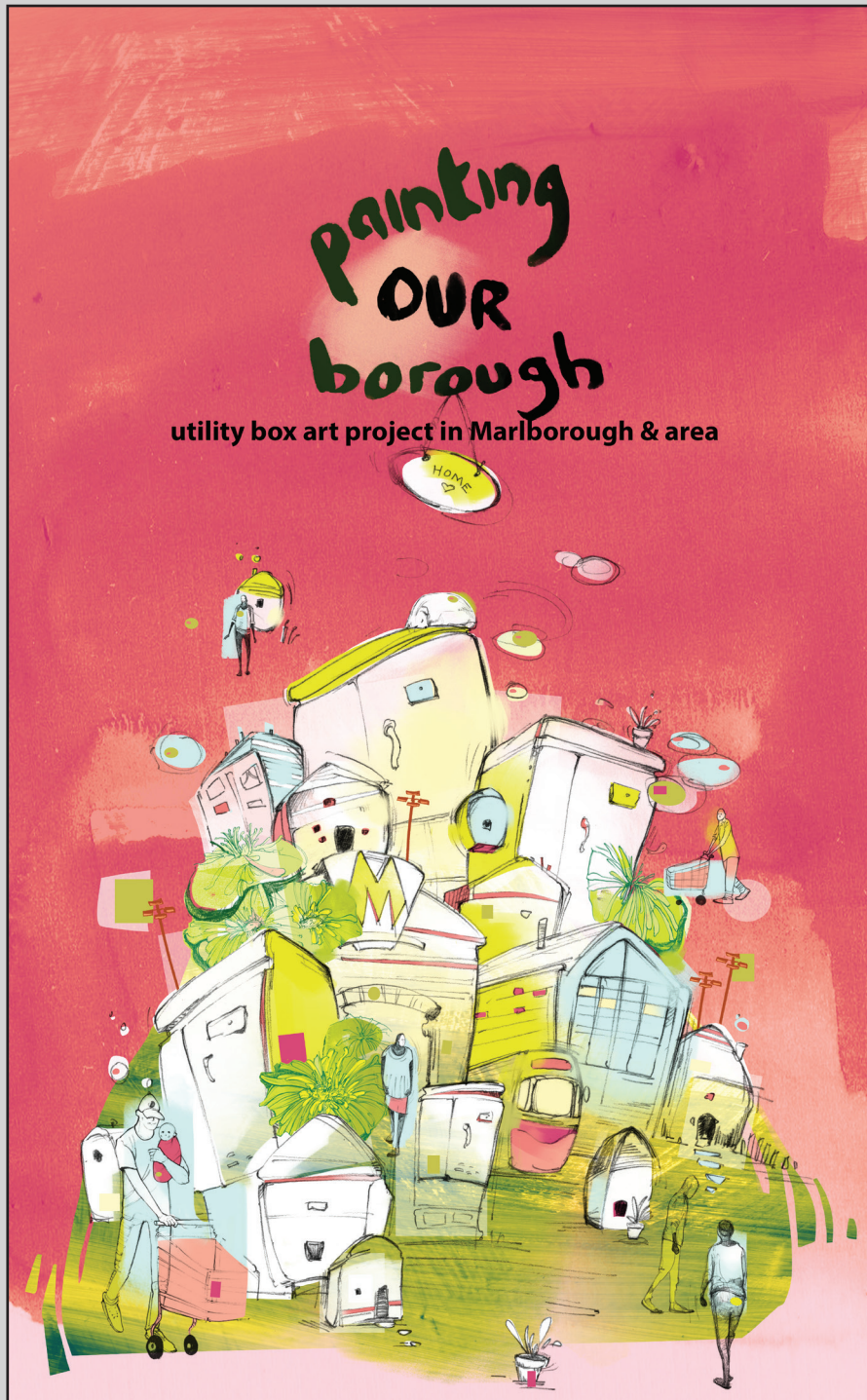
a common theme

lead artist: Mary Haasdyk Vooy

This was a City of Calgary led and initiated project, along with *Liveable Streets*. All boxes are City-owned traffic control boxes maintained by the Roads department. Expected lifecycle of painted utility boxes is 3-5 years.



The project intended to provide an introduction to public art for artists who do not have previous public art experience; the process was broken down into steps with workshop opportunities provided. Theme connects individual pieces together to create a larger cohesive project.

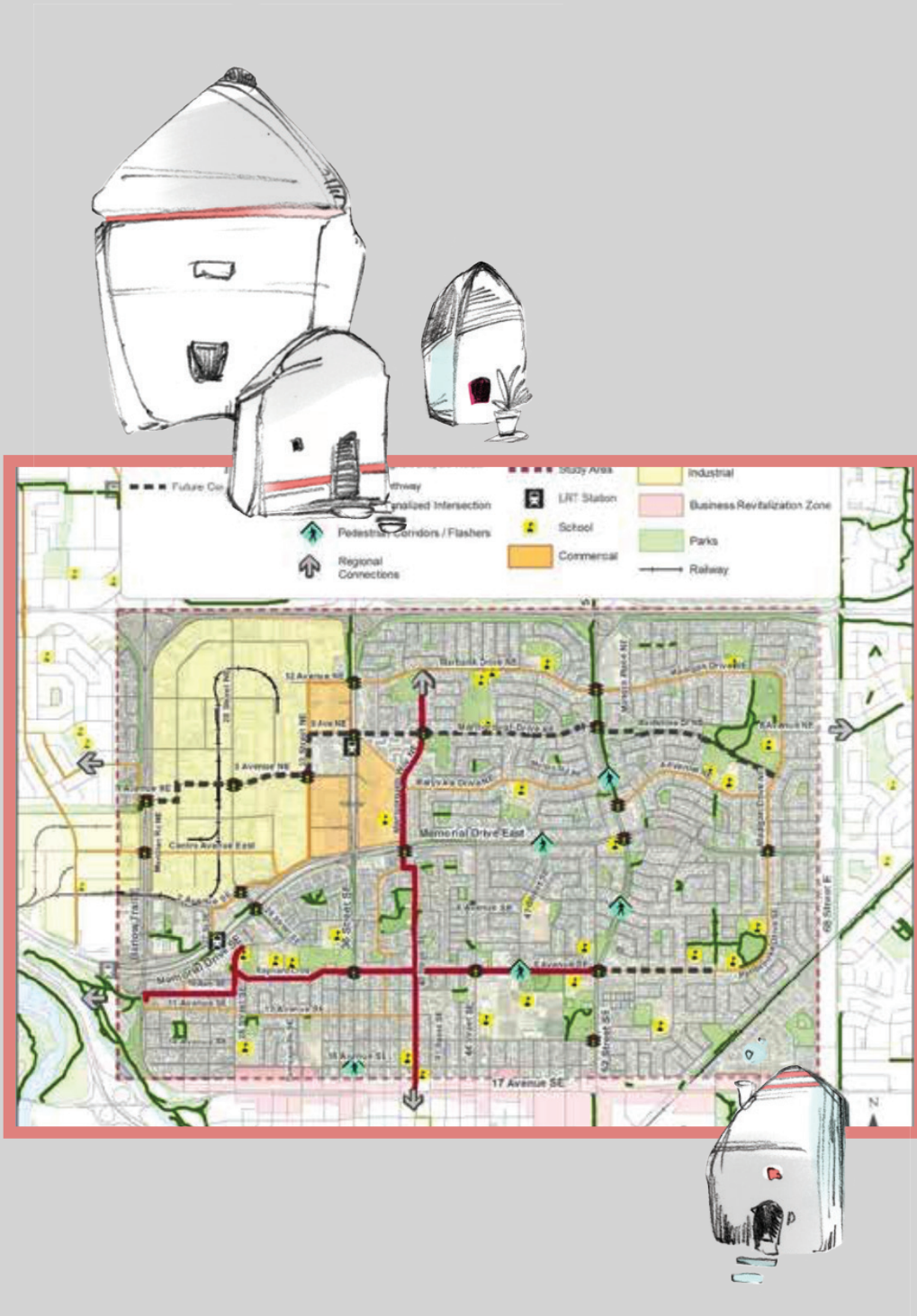


Lead Artist Role:

I had worked with the community of Marlborough on previous public art initiatives and was invited to take the lead artist role because of this pre-existing connection.

I was hired by the City to plan, organize and execute the project - developing the theme, events and workshops for the artists to participate in and assisting them as needed. The scope of work included 3 community engagement sessions, 6 workshop sessions and a final unveiling event.

I created this poster for the project to use within the community throughout the course of the project. The project took place over several months in the summer of 2018.



Liveable Streets:

The project was in partnership with *Liveable Streets*. The chosen utility boxes exist along routes where *Liveable Streets* implemented “complete streets” to create a safer, more liveable neighbourhood for those who call it home.

“Complete Streets” is an approach to street design that strives to accommodate all transportation modes including walking, cycling, transit and driving.

We chose the utility box locations to be along the new bike routes where possible, and included biking/commuting as part of the theme.

Public art is often a collaboration with other community initiatives like this.



Theme: Home

I chose a theme for the project based on the collaborative goals as well as my knowledge of the community. I provided guidelines for the artists to work within, so the project would work well as a series.



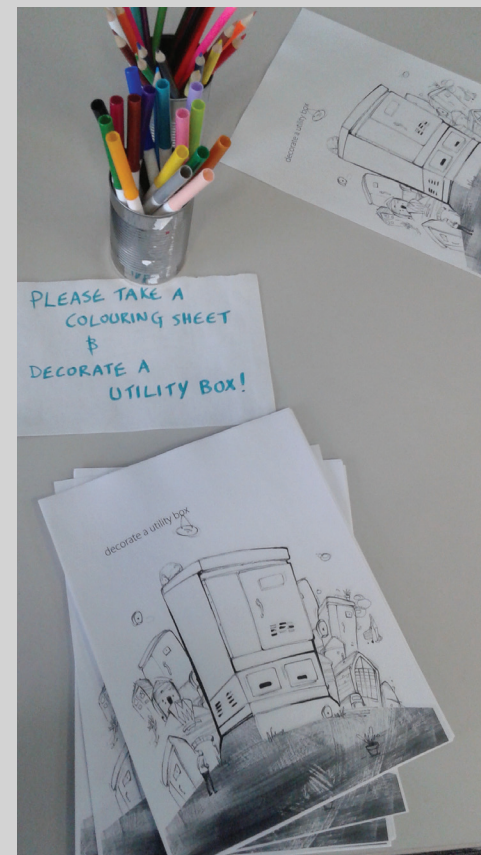
Goals:

- Explore what home means within this community and to its residents.
- Create a stronger sense of at-home-ness for residents, including both the long-time residents along with recent immigrant residents.
- Build on the work of Liveable Streets of making the neighbourhood safer for commuting.
- Hang up art in the community as you would hang up pictures on your wall to make it feel more like home.



Finding Artists:

An official call to artists was created through the City of Calgary Public Art Department, with the aim of finding artists who already had a connection to this neighbourhood. I promoted the project within community at the local library while call was still open for artists. Interested artists applied and were chosen through a selection panel.

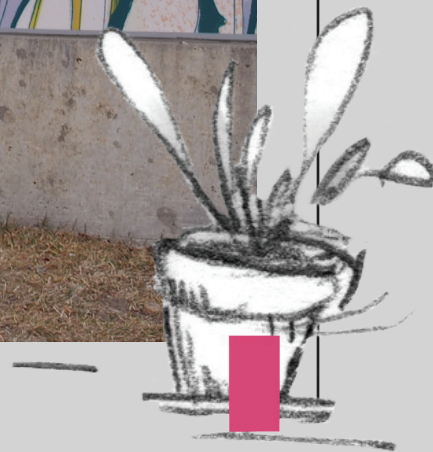


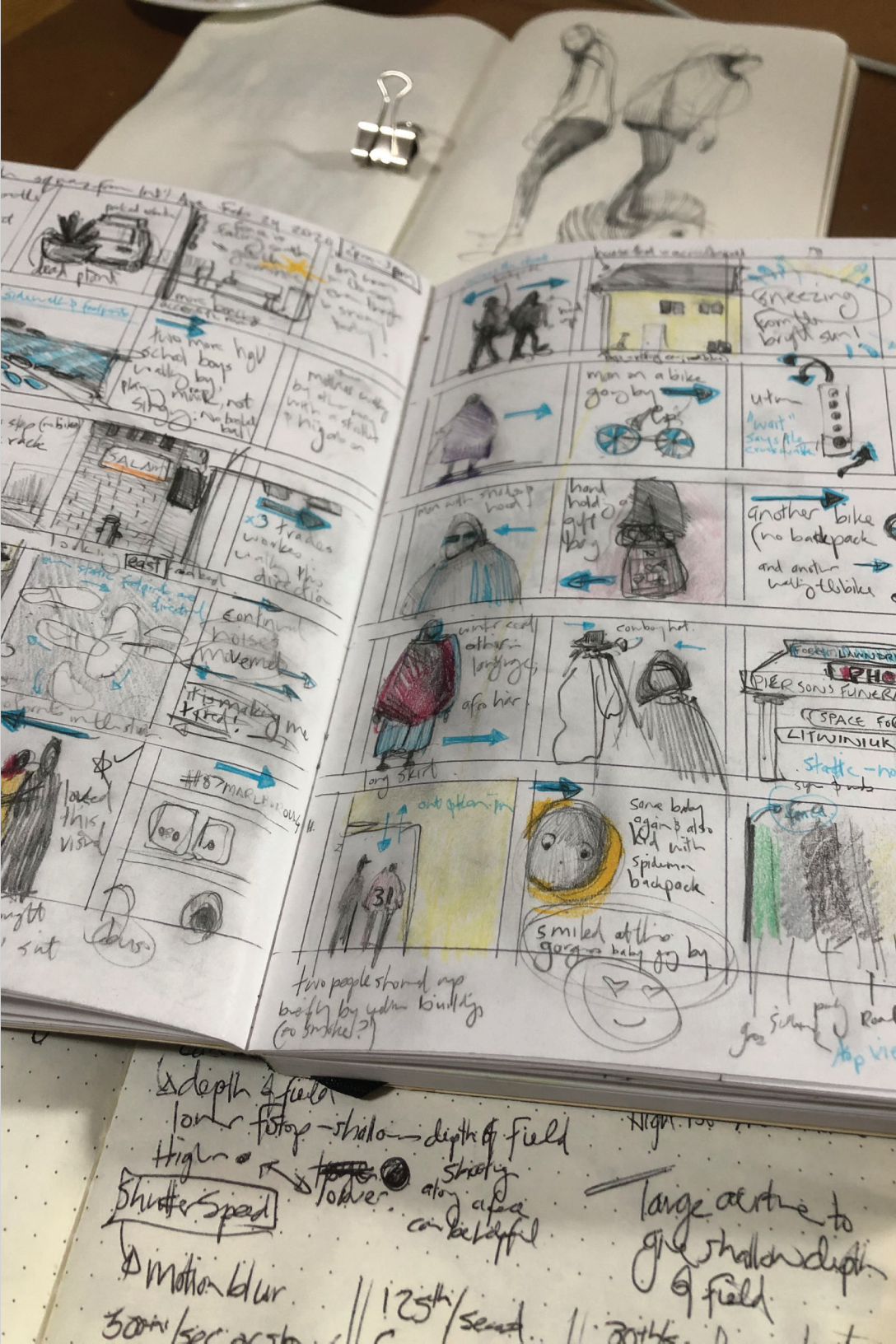


Getting to know the neighbourhood:

Our first meetings focused on introductions to each other and the various aspects of the project.

- Chosen artists were introduced to the project, the goals and the process.
- City of Calgary Neighbourhood Partnership Coordinator shared information about engaging with community.
- Online resources shared regarding local history and statistics.





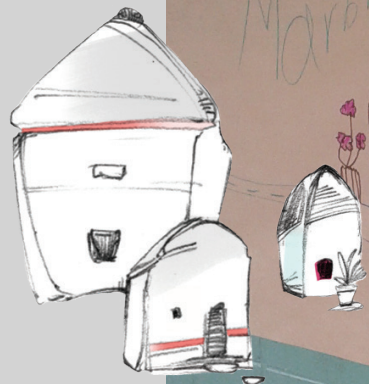
Engagement: observation

The initial step of engagement for artists was to spend time in the neighbourhood with an observational approach to get a feel for it.

Artists received a sketchbook for doing this with list of prompts I created to assist with ideas.

IDEAS FOR INDEPENDENT SKETCHBOOK RESEARCH:
Spend some time in the community: observe, record

- Talk to residents
- Talk to business owners
- Ask questions
- Be curious
- Take pictures
- Notice cultures/ethnicity
- Notice age demographic
- What activities are happening
- Where are people relaxing
- Where are people rushing
- What time of day is it
- What do the streets/yards look like
- Movement vs calm
- Think about colours, sounds, smells, mood, shapes, patterns, words, etc



Marbrough
Please by line
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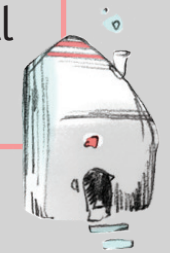
Engagement: community events

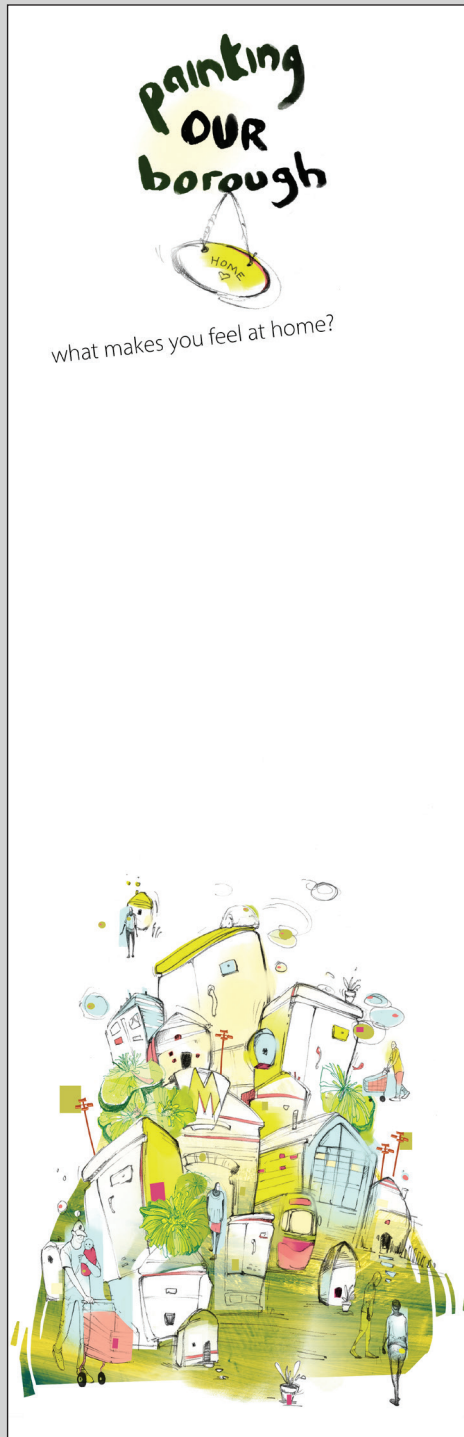
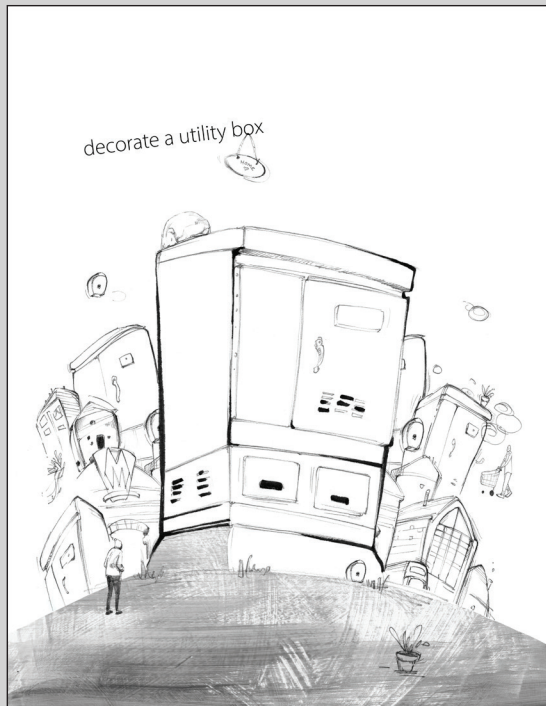
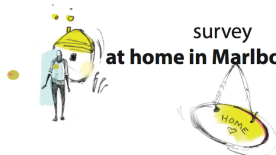
We participated in community events that were already planned by community association.

I had an existing relationship with the community association which was helpful, and table space was provided at which artists could share project and engage community.

- Neighbour Day event
- Stampede Breakfast event

Allows a chance to connect with residents and engage community through an event residents will already be attending.



survey at home in Marlborough

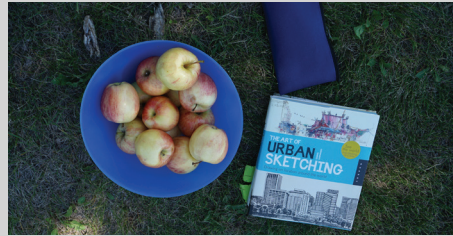
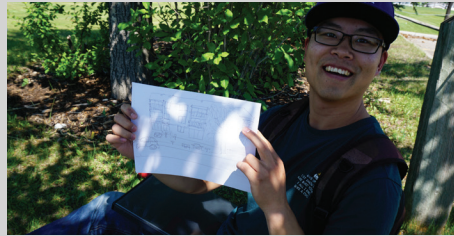
1. How long have you lived in Marlborough, or neighbouring community?
2. Describe your neighbourhood in one word.
3. Do you feel at home in this community?
4. What makes you feel at home?
5. Have you hung pictures on your walls?

Resources I created to assist with engagement:

- Simple question sheets based on theme.
- Colouring sheets to decorate a picture of a utility box.
- Large paper road on the wall with an invitation to draw your own home to it.
- Info cards to share about project, including a webpage for further details and an opportunity to share thoughts there.

Tips:

1. Engagement activities should be straightforward for participants.
2. Respect is important - recognize that thoughts and ideas shared are a gift from residents.
3. It is useful to have an option that does not require English literacy, especially with multi-cultural communities.



MARLBOROUGH URBAN SKETCHING

June 24 2-4pm

Bring a sketchbook and come join local artists for a fun afternoon of sketching in the community.

Event is open to anyone of any age or skill level. Meet outside the Marlborough community association. Paper and pencils available. Drop in event.

Event is organized as part of the Utility Box art project happening in Marlborough this summer through the City of Calgary.

To learn more about it, visit: utilityboxes.wordpress.com

Engagement: organized event

I planned an urban sketching event in the neighbourhood to which the community was invited to come and draw.

Numerous residents had expressed interest in art as the project was shared, which led to an urban sketching event for artists to connect with the community. Residents were invited to come and sketch and to learn about the project.

A specific organized event is more challenging: planning and advertising required; an appropriate activity, location and time is important for it to be successful.

Artist: Sharon Fortowsky

Sharon's concept incorporated aspects of food and culture, and she explored the businesses near her box location, using physical elements of food for mark-making.



Artist: Nicole Wolf

Nicole's concept included finding stories from residents around the theme of routine and disruption. She told these stories in small frames around the box.



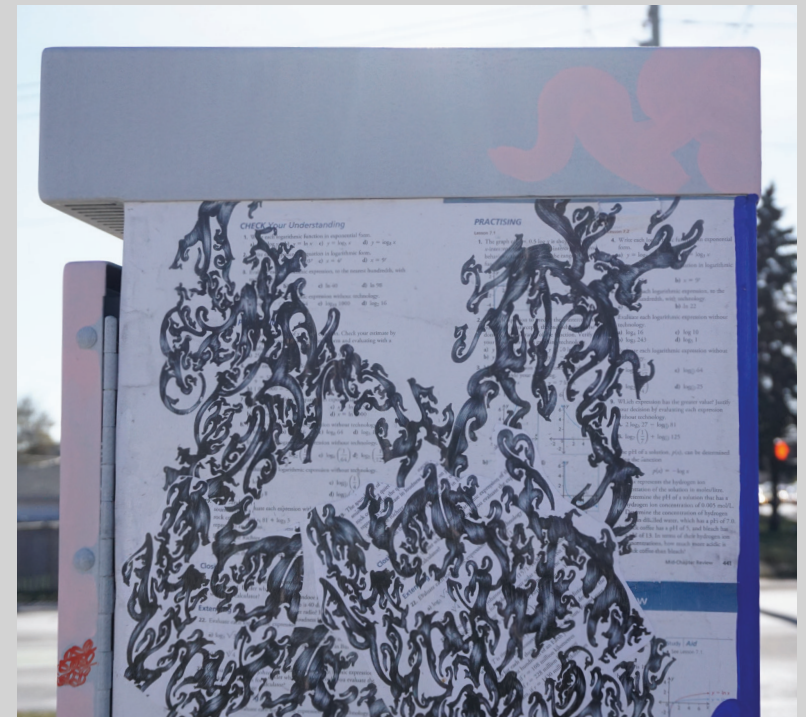
Artist: Jessica Semenoff

Jessica's concept included floral elements inspired by gardens in the community, as well as which flowers speak of "home" to residents - whether ones that grow locally or not.



Artist: Lusine Manukyan

Lusine's concept incorporated found materials. There is a school near this box. A discarded math text book was found on a bench nearby. The artist created artwork on the pages of this book and pasted them directly onto the box.



Artist: Michael Grills

Michael's concept explored the life cycle, purposes and uses of the many abandoned shopping carts he observed in the neighbourhood.





Artist: Emilija Angelovska

Emilija's concept was inspired by drawings done by kids during the engagement session as she explored "home" through their eyes.





Ashley Oshiro



Debbie.lee Miszaniec



Melisa Centofanti

Bike imagery was included on numerous boxes through the artists' unique approaches, connecting the images together through the theme.

Workshop sessions:

During the course of this project, the artists participated in workshop sessions that I organized. Where possible we met in the community for these:

- Idea development using info gathered through engagement.
- Demonstrations from local artists on techniques that related to this project.
- Group critique sessions for artists to share designs and get feedback from each other.
- Opportunity for in-process feedback while painting.





Painting:

Artists painted their boxes on location allowing for further engagement through the time spent in the community and interaction with residents.

Artist: Scott Clark





utility box biking tour marlborough

Join the artists on an unveiling tour of the new utility box artwork in Marlborough

Bring your bike along or RSVP on Facebook (event: Utility Box Biking Tour) if you don't have one - a limited number of bikes will be available.

Tour will begin at the **Marlborough Community Association** at **2pm on Sunday September 30**, 636 Marlborough Way NE

This event is organized as part of the City of Calgary Public Art Program, in partnership with Liveable Streets. To learn more about it this project and the artists and to see a map of the box locations, visit utilityboxes.wordpress.com



Final event: map and poster





Unveiling event: bike tour

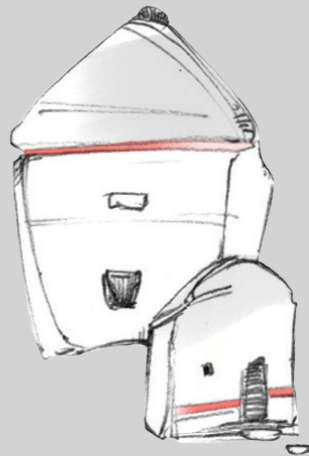
We invited the community to a guided bike tour of the new boxes with the artists. Bikes were provided by *Liveable Streets*. This provided the opportunity for the community to experience the project as a whole and learn of its connection to *Liveable Streets*.



Artist: Mary Haasdyk Vooy's

I received the opportunity to create a theme box at the end of this project. This utility box includes a map of where to find the rest of the boxes.





Further information about utility
box projects can be found at
calgaryartsdevelopment.com



photos and illustrations: Mary Haasdyk Vooy

