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Midtown Pairs Art with Safety for Creative Crosswalk Project

Midtown streets feature art beneath the feet of pedestrians in the name of safety

Houston, TX (May 1, 2015) – Midtown, Houston’s most walkable neighborhood, increases pedestrian safety in a creative way with the installation of the Artistic Crosswalk Pilot Project. The pilot project located at the intersection of Elgin and Louisiana Streets, was completed on May 1st. Local artist and University of Houston professor Aaron Parazette created the design.

While visually appealing, the ornate project marries public art and pedestrian safety by improving accessibility and encouraging drivers to be more aware of pedestrians at marked crossings. A signal box that controls the traffic lights at the intersection will be adorned in a similar design to compliment the crosswalk. Similar projects that infuse art at pedestrian crosswalks can be found in major cities around the world.

“People love to walk and bike around Midtown, and we want to make sure they can do so safely. These creative markings encourage drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians to look out for one another, and they further enhance the appeal of the area,” says William R. Franks, chairman, Midtown Management District.

The creative crosswalk is in line with Midtown’s Public Arts Master Plan, which facilitates collaborative efforts between the District and the arts community. This project also serves as a way to delineate District gateways using public art. Thanks to the offering of restaurants, retail options and entertainment venues in Midtown, pedestrians can find anything they need in just a few footsteps.

The new artistic crosswalk is one of several mobility and pedestrian enhancement projects that create comfortable and safe corridors in the Midtown District. These projects are focused on balancing the needs of all modes of transportation including automobiles, bicycles, and pedestrians. Other projects include the recently completed Bagby Street Greenroads project and the upcoming Caroline Street and Holman Street projects.

The creative visionary behind the design, Parazette is a decorated artist who was named Art League Houston’s Texas Artists of the Year in 2012. He has been a faculty member at the University of Houston School of Art since 1997.



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ABOUT MIDTOWN HOUSTON

Midtown Houston is comprised of two organizations, the Midtown Redevelopment Authority / Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone No. 2 and the Midtown Management District, which share the common vision of shaping Midtown into a vibrant, mixed-use pedestrian-friendly urban community in the center of Houston, Texas. Midtown is located between Houston's central business district and the Texas Medical Center. The area is generally bound by Interstate 45, State Highway 288, US Highway 59, and Texas Spur 527. Midtown is the first management district in Texas to receive the Cultural Arts & Entertainment District accreditation from the Texas Commission on the Arts. For more information about Midtown Houston, the Midtown Redevelopment Authority and the Midtown Management District, visit www.houstonmidtown.com.

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