

CALL FOR ARTISTS / REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

Date Posted: October 15, 2026

SOQ Due Date: November 6, 2026 by 5:00pm EST (submissions via email)

RFQ Contacts: Lisa Stinnett, Town Manager (lstinnett@cantonnc.com) + Travis Klondike (tmklondi@ncsu.edu)

Project Name: 225 Park Street Public Art Mural

Project Location: 225 Park Street, Canton, North Carolina (Haywood County)

Artist Commission: Up to \$16,500

Artist Preference: Western North Carolina-based artists

I. PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Town of Canton is seeking Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) packages from artists interested in developing and installing a public art mural as part of the ongoing rehabilitation of the 225 Park Street building in downtown Canton.

The Town is currently rehabilitating the building as an open-air, flood-resilient public gathering space and extension of the adjacent Sorrells Street Park. The project is being supported through multiple public and philanthropic investments and will include improvements to the existing building and surrounding site, accessible public restrooms, outdoor gathering and dining areas, recreational amenities, landscaping, furnishings, and lighting.

Funding from the Community Foundation of Western North Carolina (CFWNC) is supporting public-facing amenities intended to help activate the completed space. As part of its grant award, CFWNC has requested that the Town work with a local or Western North Carolina regional artist for the proposed mural, if possible.

II. PUBLIC ART OPPORTUNITY

The Town anticipates incorporating a mural or related painted artwork on an approximately 12-foot high × 50-foot wide partition wall (unconditioned, but all under roof) within the rehabilitated structure. The subject wall is newly constructed of dimensional concrete block, and functions as a divider between the “front porch” dining area and the primary gathering space interior to the building (see Appendix for architectural plan and site photo). The entire wall is under roof, with the north side of the wall being visible from Park Street and the south side being viewable from inside the primary gathering area.

The mural should contribute to a welcoming, engaging, and family-friendly public environment and complement the building's use as a flexible community gathering space. Rather than prescribing a specific image or theme through this RFQ, the Town is interested in identifying an artist whose previous work and creative approach demonstrate an ability to develop an appropriate concept in collaboration with the Town and project team. Following selection, the

chosen artist will work with the Town to develop a proposed concept for review and approval prior to installation.

In coordination with the selected artist, the Town can: (i) apply a solid color base coat to the wall prior to the artist mobilizing on site; and/or (ii) work with the artist to consider compositions involving varying levels of treatment on each side of the wall (i.e., the Town's preference is for both faces of the wall to be incorporated into the final artwork; however, the Town recognizes that different levels of treatment on each face may be appropriate based on the selected concept and available project budget).

The selected artist will be responsible for identifying proposed paint / coating materials and any artist-specific surface preparation requirements appropriate for the substrate and environmental conditions.

III. PROJECT BUDGET

The Town has established a not-to-exceed (NTE) budget of **\$16,500** for the mural commission. The final negotiated scope and fee are anticipated to include all costs necessary to complete the work, including, as applicable:

- Artist design and professional fees;
- Materials, paint, coatings, equipment, and supplies;
- Travel and transportation;
- Installation labor and other incidental costs necessary to complete the commissioned artwork

The Town and project team will coordinate with the selected artist regarding existing wall conditions, construction sequencing, site access, and other relevant project information prior to installation.

IV. PROJECT SCHEDULE

The Town anticipates adhering to the following schedule for this project:

- **October 15, 2026:** RFQ Posting Date
- **October 22, 2026:** Questions Due
- **October 27, 2026:** Questions Posted (if applicable)
- **November 6, 2026 (5:00pm EST): SOQ Due Date**
- **November 13, 2026:** Selection Notice
 - Note: the Town reserves the right to short-list and interview multiple artists prior to final selection notification
- **November 23, 2026 (no later than):** Town and Selected Artist to Execute Contract

- Note: selection through this RFQ does not constitute final approval of the artwork. The selected artist will subsequently work with the Town to develop a concept, scope, and schedule for Town approval prior to beginning installation.
- **December 21, 2026 (no later than):** Artist to Furnish Town with Draft Mural Concept
- **January 22, 2027 (no later than):** Artist to Furnish Town with Final Mural Concept
- **February 2027 - April 2027:** Artist to Install Mural
 - Final installation dates subject to weather conditions and Town issuance of a Notice to Proceed (NTP)

V. ARTIST ELIGIBILITY AND PREFERENCE

Professional artists with demonstrated experience completing murals, public art, or comparable large-scale artwork are encouraged to submit qualifications.

Consistent with the CFWNC's grant award to the Town, preference will be given to artists based in Western North Carolina or demonstrating a meaningful connection to the region. The Town encourages submissions from artists with experience creating work within public, civic, community, or family-oriented environments.

VI. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Interested artists shall submit via email a concise qualifications package containing:

- **Letter of Interest:** a brief statement describing your interest in the project, approach to public art, any connection to Canton or Western North Carolina, and confirmation of your general availability to develop and install the work within the anticipated project schedule (1-2 pages, max).
- **Portfolio:** images of completed work relevant to this opportunity. Please identify the location, approximate scale, year completed, and artist role for each project (no more than 10 images).
- **Artist Résumé and/or Biography + References:** including relevant public-art, mural, or comparable professional experience; and 2-3 contacts / references for previous clients or project partners (1-2 page, max).

Artists are not being asked to prepare a mural concept as part of this RFQ. Concept development will occur with the selected artist following selection and contracting.

VII. SELECTION PROCESS

The Town will review qualifications based on the following criteria:

Evaluation Category	Category Weight (points out of 100)
Statement of Interest / Artist Background / Approach to Public Art	15 points
Connection / Affiliation to Western North Carolina (preference)	15 points
Availability to Complete the Work within the Desired Project Schedule	10 points
Quality and Relevance of Previous Work as Indicated in the Portfolio	60 points

VIII. SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Questions pertaining to this RFQ (due October 22, 2026) and SOQ packages (due November 6, 2026 by 5:00pm EST) shall be submitted via email to:

Lisa Stinnett, Town Manager (lstinnett@cantonnc.com) + Travis Klondike (tmklondi@ncsu.edu)

Site photo (under construction; photo taken October 2026) and architectural plans with subject mural wall indicated.



