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## **TOWN OF VERNON**



### **Request for Qualifications (RFQ) #2161**

**RFQ #2161 – Call for Artists Mural Project**  
**Submittal Date: July 15, 2026 at 1:00 PM**

**LATE SUBMITTALS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED**

**Town of Vernon, CT**  
**RFQ #2161 – Call for Artist Mural Project**

**LEGAL NOTICE**

The Town of Vernon, Connecticut is seeking a professional artist or artist teams to submit qualifications for the design and installation of a large-scale narrative mural at 1 Prospect Street, Vernon, CT. The area is a historic former city center for a thriving mill town and a current Cultural District for the Town of Vernon. We are seeking proposals that convey the dynamic energy of the Rockville area and that will send the message that Rockville welcomes and engages locals and visitors. Proposals should convey a clear sense of place and use the theme “Threads of Community” as a baseline.

Request for Qualification application submission deadline July 15, 2026 at 1:00 PM. Considered for this project, eligible artists or artist teams must submit the following materials, and materials must be received by the Town of Vernon via email to the attention of Annie Geitner, Accelerator Mural Project Leader, [ageitner@vernon-ct.gov](mailto:ageitner@vernon-ct.gov) as **a single merged PDF file**.

The selected firm must meet all municipal, state and federal AA and EEO practices and requirements. MBE's, WBE's, SBE's are encouraged to apply. The Town reserves the right to reject any or all proposals in whole or part, to award any one service or group of services or all services, to negotiate with any or all companies submitting proposals, and to enter into an agreement with any company for any services mentioned in this RFQ; if it is deemed to be in the best interest of the Town.

**Confidentiality** - If Respondent believes that any information in its proposal should be treated as confidential that material shall be clearly marked. The Town shall endeavor to protect confidential material from disclosure to non-Town employees to the extent required by State or Federal law. In no event will the Town be responsible for the inadvertent disclosure of your response to this RFQ.

John W. Kleinhans  
Town Administrator

**Town of Vernon, CT**  
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**SPECIFICATIONS**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Town of Vernon’s Cultural District and CT Main Street Accelerator Program is seeking a professional artist or artist teams to submit qualifications for the design and installation of a large-scale narrative mural that encompasses the spirit of the people, places, and traditions of Rockville. The area is a historic former city center for a thriving mill town and a current Cultural District for the Town of Vernon. We are seeking proposals that convey the dynamic energy of the Rockville area and that will send the message that Rockville welcomes and engages locals and visitors. Proposals should convey a clear sense of place and use the theme “Threads of Community” as a baseline.

The objective of this project is to create a piece of art that celebrates the many facets and characteristics of the Rockville Vernon area. The mural should reflect the wonders of the local community as well as the historic and future visions for the area.

The strategic priority for the town is to revitalize the Rockville/Downtown area of Vernon. Rockville is a former mill town that supported various manufacturing endeavors and a lively town with bars, restaurants, shops, and an opera house. The goal of the town and the Cultural District is to revitalize this area to once again become an area that can attract businesses, visitors and developers. Because of this the chosen artwork is intended to reflect the not only where Rockville has been but also where it is going.

Artists submitting proposals should consider how they might engage with the previous community engagement done at various locations within and outside the Rockville area. A summary of said engagement will be included in this document.

Our goals for this mural project are:

- To highlight and commemorate all things that are great about Rockville.
- To convey our commitment to the community and to revitalization efforts.
- To become a “welcome sign” or create a “sense of arrival” to people as they enter Rockville.
- The artwork must be safe and appropriate for the project site.
- The artwork must conform to all applicable policies, including building and sign codes.

We want to set our sights on the future of this area. The mural should encourage a vision forward with optimism, hope, and progress.

**ABOUT CT MAIN STREET ACCELERATOR**

CT Main Street runs a yearly Main Street Accelerator Program for municipalities. The Main Street Accelerator is a six-month professional development and team-building program designed to help Connecticut communities bring small-scale, high-impact downtown projects to life. At the completion of the program period municipal cohorts are eligible for grant awards to fund said projects. In 2025, Vernon put together a cohort of downtown partners to create a Rockville centered project that would contribute to the on-going revitalization efforts. This mural is the cohort’s project.

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**ABOUT THE VERNON CULTURAL DISTRICT**

In August 2025 some of the Rockville portions of Vernon were designated a Cultural District by the State of Connecticut. Cultural Districts are buzzing, walkable hubs where art, culture, and community collide. The goal of the Cultural District is to increase coordination and collaboration among arts and cultural organizations, build a vibrant arts and culture community, contribute to the economic development of the area, and amplify a sense of place in Rockville. This mural will be located at the entrance to the Cultural District.

**ABOUT CORNERSTONE FOUNDATION, LLC**

Cornerstone Foundation LLC is a nonprofit, faith-based organization with the mission of keeping people safe, fed, housed, and clothed. Cornerstone has been in operation in Vernon for over 40 years – quiet literally becoming a cornerstone for community members. Cornerstone is heavily involved in community and Town of Vernon events. They have allowed for this mural project to go on one of the walls on their campus. Cornerstone’s mission and commitment may be reflected or incorporated into the theme of the mural.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT WORK**

The Mural Project Team has worked hard to gather survey results from a community engagement campaign that was done in partnership with this project. It is the goal of the project team to incorporate results from our survey and community ‘Drop Ins’ into the concept of the mural. Please review the results while considering concepts.

**ELIGIBILITY**

This project is open to all US-based artists regardless of race, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, nationality, or disability. Artists from Connecticut are strongly encouraged to apply as well as Rockville residents and Vernon Public Schools alumni/students. Candidates must be professional/semi-professional artists, designers, or fabricators or partnered with professional artists, designers, or fabricators; eligible to work in the United States; and age 18 and older. The artist must be available to oversee the complete installation of the mural. Incomplete, ineligible, or late submissions will be deemed ineligible and will not be considered.

**ANTICIPATED PROJECT SCHEDULE \***

June 15, 2026	Call to Artists RFQ issued
July 15, 2026, 1:00 pm	Deadline submission for RFQ
July 31, 2026	Selection Panel evaluates RFQ responses, selects finalists
August 7, 2026	Interviews with semifinalists
August 17, 2026	Artists notified of decision, signed agreement
August 31, 2026	Art design finalized and approved
September / Late October	Installation
*Schedule and timeline are subject to change	

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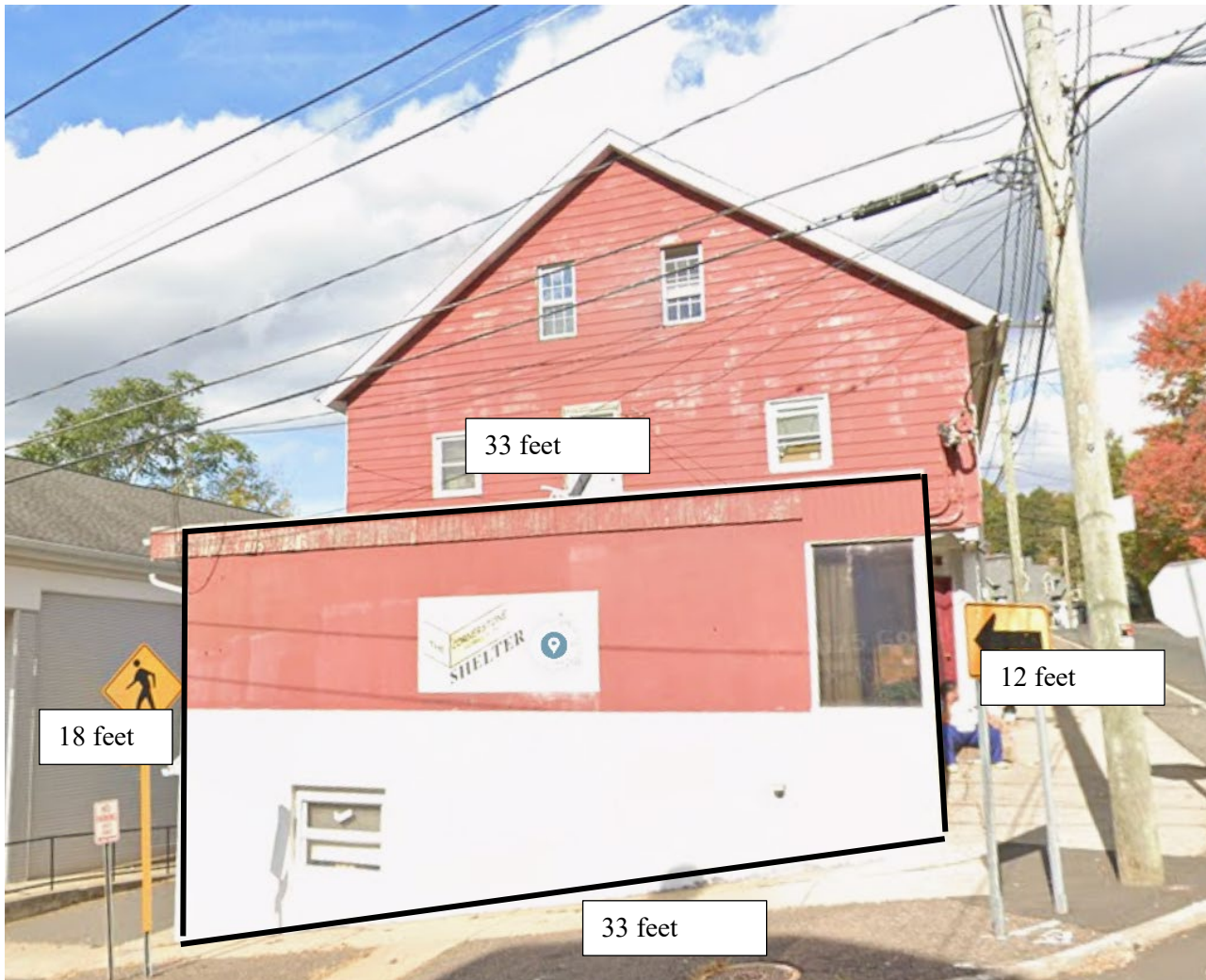
**PROJECT LOCATION**

The location for the mural is at 1 Prospect Street, facing west, on a highly visible road (Route 74). Because the selected building is located on the road into the heart of Rockville, we anticipate that the mural could likely become the unofficial “entrance” into Rockville. The mural will be visible from pedestrian and car traffic, travelling both east and west on East Main Street.

The mural wall surface is concrete and approximately 460 sq ft.

See below for a photo and measurements of the wall.

The artist will be responsible for the treatment of the surface prior to installation and for applying a UV sealant and anti-graffiti coating.



**BUDGET**

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This project has limited funding. A total of \$17,000 has been identified for the purpose of this project. This amount is intended to cover all aspects of the project including artist stipend, materials, equipment (including scaffolding/lifts as needed), and personal liability insurance.

**PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS**

1. Artists must complete this application for Request for Qualifications (RFQ) in its entirety. To be considered for this project, eligible artists or artist teams must submit the following materials, and materials must be received by the Town of Vernon via email to the attention of Annie Geitner, Accelerator Mural Project Leader, [ageitner@vernon-ct.gov](mailto:ageitner@vernon-ct.gov) as **a single merged PDF file**, July 15, 2026, at 1:00 pm. A confirmation email will be sent to all applicants. If you do not receive a confirmation email within 72 hours of the deadline, please contact Shaun Gately via email at [sgately@vernon-ct.gov](mailto:sgately@vernon-ct.gov) or by phone at (860) 896-4296.
  - a. Contact information: Name, address, telephone number, email address
  - b. Resume/CV for all artists involved in the project
    - i. Resume / CV highlighting artist and professional experience: (2-pages maximum)
    - ii. Up to 5 digital images of relevant previous work. Please label and describe images attached as a PDF or with a shared web address to a digital portfolio (high resolution, no larger than 1 MB each). Image list should include titles, dimensions, media, dates, and budgets of past projects and artwork.
  - b. Sketches or conceptual drawings of the proposed project
    - i. Please include a brief description of the concept proposed
  - c. Statement of Intent (No longer than 2 single-spaced pages)
    - i. A statement of intent will include a summary of artistic focus and professional career, especially as your background relates to this project.
  - d. Proposed installation timeline
    - i. Installation should be complete by December 2026.
  - e. Budget
    - i. Please provide a full budget breakdown for the mural.
  - f. References (Minimum of 2)

Also, should the artist envision incorporating additional community or student engagement in the design/installation process, we would welcome those ideas or suggestions.

**SELECTION PANEL**

The Main Street Accelerator Cohort along with Town of Vernon representatives, and the building owners will review all completed proposals. Selection committee members include facility managers, local art commission representatives, Rockville business owners and elected officials.

**We will select up to three finalists to interview. We will select one finalist for the project.**

**SELECTION PROCESS RFQ**

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RFQ Finalists selected. In July 2026, the Selection Panel will convene and evaluate all responses to the RFQ. Following evaluation, the Selection Panel may select up to three finalists, or may reopen the RFQ. Selection criteria will include:

- a. Adherence to the RFQ requirements. (10 points)
- b. Attention to the mission and theme of the project. (30 points)
- c. Evidence of ability to create large-scale, distinctive work. (30 points)
- d. Demonstrated ability to maintain project timelines and budgets. (30 points)
- e. Artist demonstrates connection to the project and Town of Vernon (5 points)

**FINALISTS PROCESS**

**If selected as one of the finalists, the artist or team will be asked to interview and provide additional material as needed.**

Open to selected finalists only. The selected finalists will be invited to interview and present proposals in response to this RFQ. A stipend of \$200 for preparation of the proposal will be available to each finalist upon execution of a written agreement with The Town of Vernon and submission of a completed W-9 form.

Evaluation of proposals. In August 2026, the Selection Panel will convene to conduct an evaluation of the finalists' proposals to the RFQ. Finalists will present their proposals to the panel. Following this evaluation, the Selection Panel will make recommendations to select or improve projects, make recommendations for alterations to project for final evaluation, or may recommend that the RFQ be reopened. Evaluation criteria will include:

- f. Adherence to the RFP (5 points)
- g. Professionalism of work proposed (10 points)
- h. Timeline and cost (10 points)
- i. Appropriateness and safety of proposed artwork for project site (5 points)
- j. Artwork's ability to address the context of its site location and placement (20 points)
- k. Artwork's ability to address the context, theme, and intended outcomes; (20 points)
- l. Artwork's level of visibility, engagement, and memorable impact (10 points)
- m. Presentation / Interview (10 points)

**OWNERSHIP**

The artist will retain ownership of any ideas submitted for consideration until a final selection has been made and a contract will be signed the Town of Vernon and the selected artist. At that time, Vernon will obtain 100% ownership of artwork produced, in whatever stage of completion, and the artwork shall become the property of Cornerstone Foundation as a work made for hire as defined by the copyright laws of the United States. Cornerstone Foundation shall be the sole and exclusive owner and copyright proprietor of all rights and title in and to the results and proceeds of artist's services hereunder. In addition, artist will represent being the sole author of the Work and that all services are original by artist and not copied in whole or in part.