



REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE DESIGN OF A PUBLIC MURAL AT ESSEX JUNCTION FIRE DEPARTMENT

The City of Essex Junction is looking for a talented Vermont artist, or artist team, to design a new public mural celebrating our community. The project, We Are Essex Junction, will bring color, creativity, and local pride to the southeastern-facing exterior wall of the Essex Junction Fire Department at 3 Pearl Street.

We're seeking an artist who can capture the spirit of Essex Junction, including its people, history, and future, and turn that into a welcoming, inspiring work of public art. The selected artist will collaborate closely with a Local Review Committee made up of community members, city staff, and local officials to help shape the design.

If you're passionate about storytelling through art and want to be part of creating a lasting piece of public art for Vermont's newest city, we'd love to hear from you.

This RFQ was issued on October 24th, 2025.

Project Goals

The proposed artwork should reflect the following project goals:

- Integrate the major themes identified by the Committee's outreach efforts to local art students.
- Actively engage in placemaking and visual storytelling to assist in creating a high-quality pedestrian experience.
- Help envision Essex Junction's future as Vermont's newest City.

Who May Apply

Visual, craft, or design artists (or artist teams), in all media, including landscape architects and interior designers, who are at least 18 years of age and legal residents of Vermont are eligible to apply. Vermont Arts Council staff and trustees, City of Essex Junction employees, Local Review Committee members, and the Local Review Committee's family members are not eligible to apply.

Submission Process

All materials must be submitted either in person at the Essex Junction City Offices at 2 Lincoln Street or via email to Michael Giguere: mgiguere@essexjunction.org

There is no submission fee. Applicants should submit:

- Up to nine images of similar or related work.
- A narrative statement of interest in the project.
- A resume with references.

Selection Process and Estimated Timeline

November 14th, 2025: Deadline for interested artists to submit questions about the project.

November 28th, 2025: Committee to publish anonymous summary of questions submitted about the project on the City's website.

December 29th, 2025 at 4:00 pm: Deadline for artist submissions.

February 2026: Committee selects and coordinates with three artist finalists to develop an initial design pitch.

March 31st, 2026 at 4:00 pm: Deadline for artist finalists' pitch responses.

April – May, 2026: City and Committee will advertise and receive community input on artist finalists' pitch responses.

June 2026: Based on community responses, the City will invite one artist to conduct a full mural design and prepare a sample work plan for mural implementation.

July 2026: Artist prepares and submits mural design and related implementation work plan.

August 2026: Final design and work plan submitted by the selected artist. Design approved by Committee and City.

September 2026: Final grant report prepared and submitted by Committee.

Mural Design Budget and Expectations

EXPENSE DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
Artist 1 finalist and honorarium	\$300
Artist 2 finalist and honorarium	\$300
Artist 3 finalist and honorarium	\$300
Selected artist(s) design fees	\$2,800
Artist travel	\$200
Community engagement expenses	\$700
Community meeting expenses	\$400
Total Project Expenses	\$5000

A finalist honorarium of \$300 will be provided to each of the three (3) finalists. Each finalist will develop a presentation to be given to the Committee via a Zoom or in-person meeting. The presentation will include a preliminary concept for the site, including the precise placement of proposed art on the fire station's wall, keeping in mind the realities of the project budget, the project goals, the concept of "site specific" work, and potential strategies for community engagement and/or input in the design of the artwork. After a short period of collection of public comments on the finalist concepts, the Committee will select one of the finalists to develop their concept into a final design. The Committee reserves the right not to select a concept or finalist if it determines that the applications do not meet the project criteria or goals.

The selected artist (or artist team) will be awarded a \$2,800 planning and design contract. Funds will be used to pay the artist (or team) for their time in developing the specific details of the design, including materials, dimensions, location, and Committee/community input, as applicable, in the development of the design. The artist will also receive \$200 to assist with travel to the project site.

Anticipated Implementation Budget

The City intends to apply for a mural implementation grant through the Vermont Arts Council, which may provide up to \$15,000 for mural implementation. The City may also seek additional funding if possible. This anticipated implementation budget is inclusive of all implementation costs including but not limited to: artists fees, materials, travel expenses, general liability and auto insurance, transportation, and installation of the art. This may also include costs to review the design by a licensed structural engineer, and all required permitting costs if the work requires it. Once approved by the Committee, the final design will be forwarded to Essex Junction City Council for final approval.

Selection Criteria

The Committee will use the following criteria in their decision-making process to select artists:

1) Artistic merit. For maximum scoring, artists must demonstrate:

- Strong unique voice, vision, and/or authenticity of the work
- Aesthetics are potentially engaging emotionally, intellectually, and/or spiritually
- Appropriate technical skills and/or craft
- High degree of experience with public mural design

2) Communication and collaboration skills. For maximum scoring, artists must demonstrate:

- Ability to collaborate with design professionals, engineers, community leaders, and/or artists
- Ability to communicate clearly
- Ability to work within a team context
- Willingness to become familiar with the community/site

3) Project management skills. For maximum scoring, artists must demonstrate their ability to:

- Attend project meetings
- Research client needs and propose an appropriate design
- Access appropriate resources when necessary
- Develop an appropriate and realistic budget
- Complete projects on time and within budget

4) Alignment with project goals & site suitability. For maximum scoring, artists must demonstrate:

- Understanding of site context
- Alignment with project goals
- Use of durable and appropriate materials with minimal maintenance

5) Interview/presentation. For maximum scoring, artists must demonstrate:

- Clarity, professionalism, and responsiveness during interview
- Ability to convey artistic vision

6) Concept proposal. For maximum scoring, artists must create:

- A strong, feasible, and creative concept design
- A visually compelling concept

Once selected, the artist must design and create artwork that:

- Is of high artistic quality
- Is appropriate to the project site
- Is of durable design and uses durable materials
- Requires minimal maintenance
- Provides maximum resistance to vandalism
- Reflects one or more of the project goals identified by the Committee

Scoring Matrix

Committee members will score each application using the matrix below, and the average results will determine each artist's overall rating.

Category	Percentage of Overall Score
Artistic merit	30%
Communication and collaboration skills	15%
Project management skills	15%
Alignment with project goals & site suitability	10%
Interview/presentation	10%
Concept proposal	20%

City of Essex Junction Rights

The City of Essex Junction reserves the right to modify or issue changes to the original RFQ. Any change will be distributed on the Essex Junction website. The City of Essex Junction also reserves the right to reject any and all proposals received as a result of this solicitation, to negotiate with any qualified source, to waive any formality and any technicalities, or to cancel the RFQ in part or in its entirety if it is in the best interest of the City of Essex Junction. This solicitation of proposals in no way obliges the City of Essex Junction to award a contract.

Insurance & Purchasing Policy Requirements

The selected artist shall meet the insurance requirements of the City's Purchasing Policy. Also, all contracts for services shall contain indemnification and hold harmless language as required by the City's Purchasing Policy.

Nondiscrimination

The City of Essex Junction and the Local Review Committee do not discriminate against any qualified individual based on race, religion, color, creed, national origin, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, disability, citizenship, veteran status, or other category protected by applicable state or federal law.

Funding Source

This project is supported in part by the Vermont Arts Council, which receives support in part from the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

Questions?

Inquiries about the project are encouraged to be submitted to Michael Giguere at mgiguere@essexjunction.org, (802) 878.6944 ext. 1625 by November 14th, 2025.
