

Site and Design Information

Essex Junction Fire Department

About the Facility

The project site is the existing southeastern exterior facing wall of Essex Junction Fire Department (EJFD), measuring approximately ninety feet (90') in width by twenty feet (20') in height. Established in 1893, EJFD is located within the Village Center zoning district, nestled between the City's municipal offices, teen and senior centers and Brownell Library. Essex Junction Fire Department is an all-hazard, paid-on-call Fire Department providing fire protection, advanced EMS First Response, rescue, and HAZMAT response for the City of Essex Junction.

The site is regularly accessed by a variety of residents and visitors through a range of transportation modalities: pedestrian, cyclists and automotive. Furthermore, the pavilion and tables in front of the Library and the benches of the adjacent Veterans Memorial Park both provide stationary locations from which to view and enjoy the planned mural.



Figure 1: Existing conditions at the selected mural location, the southeastern facing exterior wall of the Fire Department. Source: Google 2018

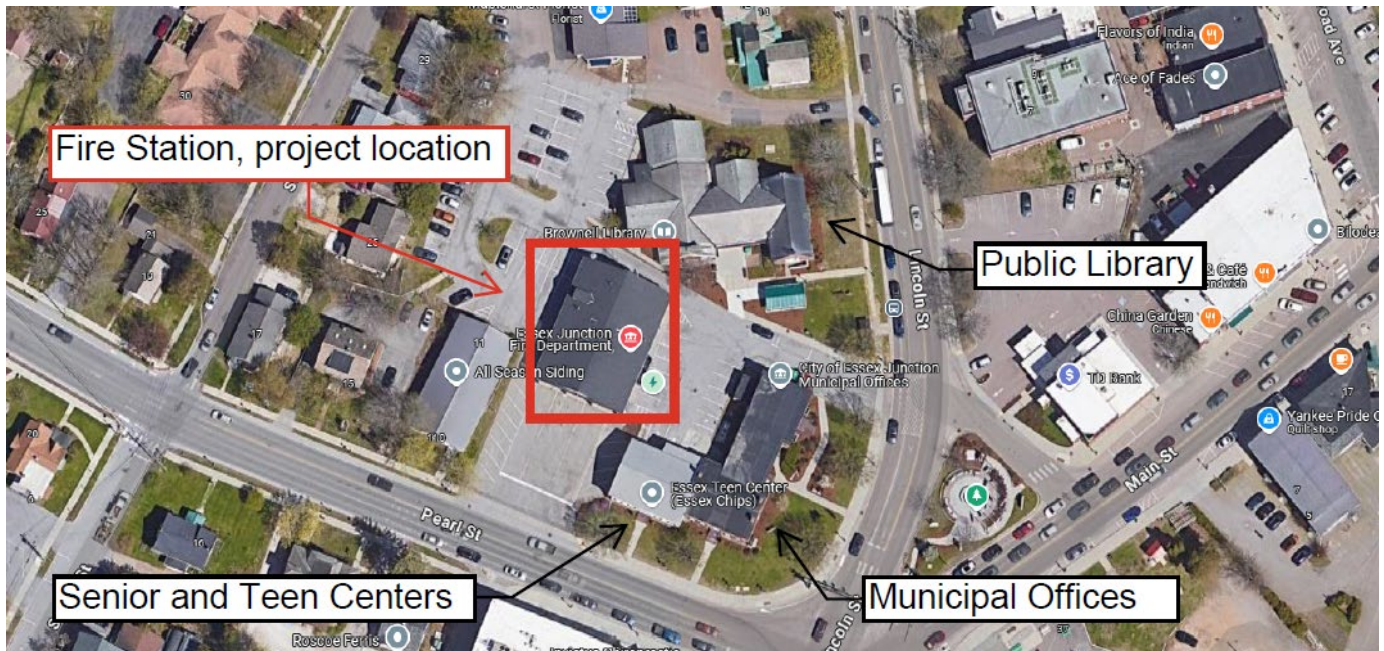


Figure 2: Project location - 3 Pearl Street, Essex Junction, VT 05452, identified by the red rectangle. Source: Google 2024

About the Community

Set between the slopes of Mt. Mansfield and Lake Champlain and named for the railroad lines that formed the heart of the village center, Essex Junction represents the convergence of Chittenden County's history, commerce, and settlement. Incorporated in 1892, the Junction is located on the cusp of Burlington and the farms, forests, and rivers of eastern Chittenden County. The present municipality was established in 2022, when what had been the Village of Essex Junction separated from the surrounding Essex Town, forming Vermont's newest City.

The City is home to approximately 11,000 Vermonters, a number which has been steadily increasing for decades. Compared to the state, based on the 2020 Census, City residents are three times as likely to be foreign born, a higher proportion are non-white, and are younger on average.

Part of the Essex Westford School District, the City has three elementary schools, a middle school, a high school, and technical education center. City residents and visitors benefit from three public parks which experience heavy utilization throughout the year. Outside the City, Essex Junction is known as the home of both the Champlain Valley Exposition and GlobalFoundries, the state's largest private employer. Within the community, a village center is the social and commercial heart of the community.

Design Specifics

First proposed as part of the ongoing development of the "Connect the Junction" Transit Oriented Development Master Plan, the project site will integrate the proposed artwork into existing community infrastructure that is both physically and socially at the core of the City. Final design should be completed by August 2026. The goal of this project is to augment and enhance ongoing efforts in

placemaking and visual storytelling, envisioning Essex Junction's future at this unique juncture as a new City.

While the current Comprehensive Plan predates the formation of the City, it includes relevant guideposts from the community's past. These include commitments to, "a culture that values diversity and offers a welcoming spirit" and reclamation of "space for people to create a high-quality pedestrian experience." More recently, in 2023 and 2024 the City conducted a series of community engagements resulting in a Community Vision and Strategic Action Plan. As part of its future self-concept, the community envisioned "investment in the public good and shared amenities and resources that create desirable living conditions." with, "a strong underlying desire to create an inclusive and engaged community...."

Aligning with these past commitments and future aspirations, the proposed mural project presents a unique opportunity to enhance existing public space located in the center of many shared amenities enjoyed by both residents and visitors. Building on other efforts to highlight points of connection in the community, the new artwork will add a vibrant visual record of the City's hopes and dreams for its future self.

Much of the City's recent focus has been on development in response to local and broader needs around housing, commercial development and transportation. Recent and ongoing infrastructure projects in the City center include: the recent completion of the Crescent connector roadway; renovations to the Municipal offices at Lincoln Hall; construction of mixed-use development; planned upgrades to the multimodal transit station (train and bus); and planned installation of a pocket park. While these are needed and valuable additions to the City, all of these projects lack an overtly artistic component.

The proposed mural presents an opportunity for City residents to be reminded that development need not be only functional - that it can also be creative, imaginative, and even beautiful. Participating in the design of artwork presents a different - but equally important - approach to placemaking. Collaborating on a project that doesn't require knocking anything down or building something different but enhances an existing part of the community will allow both longtime and newer City residents to engage with the City's infrastructure and each other in a new way.



Figure 3: Rendering of potential mural concepts for the project site for demonstration purposes only. Source: [Framework](#)

Funding Source Disclaimer

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.