

Milwaukee Riverwalk Mural Collection 2024

Request for Proposals (RFP)

Issued by Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 and the Downtown Placemaking Task Force

In partnership with the Milwaukee Riverwalk District

Issue Date: July 2, 2024

Submission Deadline: August 2, 2024

1. Project Overview

The Milwaukee Riverwalk Mural Collection will bring multiple permanent murals to walls Downtown along the Milwaukee Riverwalk, beginning with the four locations outlined in this RFP.

a) PROJECT OBJECTIVE

The creation of the Milwaukee Riverwalk Mural Collection will address priorities in the City of Milwaukee’s *Connec+ing MKE: Downtown Plan 2040* and *Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21’s Five-Year Strategic Plan*, with a focus on cultivating a connected, vibrant, inclusive Downtown environment through public art.

The primary goals for the Milwaukee Riverwalk Mural Collection include:

- Engage pedestrian and waterway traffic through compelling imagery and/or text
- Reflect the vitality and significance of the Milwaukee River and Riverwalk and the unique neighborhood context of each mural site

b) BACKGROUND

The Milwaukee Riverwalk is an approximately 20-block pedestrian promenade connecting three neighborhoods on either side of the Milwaukee River, cited by residents, commuters and visitors as a top Downtown destination of choice, according to the *Downtown Milwaukee Community Perceptions Survey (2019)*. The Riverwalk has been identified in both the City of Milwaukee’s *Connec+ing MKE: Downtown Plan 2040* and *Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21’s Five-Year Strategic Plan* as a priority space for activation and investment.

Connec+ing MKE: Downtown Plan 2040

The City of Milwaukee Common Council adopted the Downtown Area plan in July 2023, titled [Connec+ing MKE: Downtown Plan 2040](#), which sets a vision for the future of Downtown Milwaukee. The vision set forth in *Connec+ing MKE* represents Milwaukee’s collective intention for our city center and was generated through significant community engagement. This robust and inclusive engagement shaped eight overarching goals for the Plan, as well as “big ideas” and catalytic projects to guide public and private investment to continue to grow Downtown. Community feedback collected during the Plan’s development included a desire for increased public art, such as sculptures, murals and placemaking efforts. In addition, the Plan issues recommendations for activating the Milwaukee Riverwalk, including the following from Recommendation 21:

- “Continue to improve, expand and invest in the Milwaukee Riverwalk system, and encourage active uses and pedestrian friendly facades along the Riverwalk”
- “Activate the Downtown Riverwalk with public art and programming, including temporary art installations, sculptures, street busking, murals, and upgrades to lighting on adjacent buildings”

Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 Five-Year Strategic Plan

In addition, Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21's [Five-Year Strategic Plan](#), adopted by the BID #21 Board of Directors in September 2023, articulates a framework for advancing strategies and ideas to create new destinations and experiences that will elevate Downtown on regional, national and global stages. The Strategic Plan identifies key objectives related to the Riverwalk and public art, including the following:

- “Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 will act as the steward for Downtown’s public realm – expanding beautification services; identifying and advocating for needed repairs and improvements, and activating the Riverwalk” (Goal A, Big Move)
- “Raise Downtown Milwaukee’s reputation as the place for innovative, creative and delightful experiences” (Goal C.2)
- “Identify key intersections, blocks, alleys and gateways for the installation of public art and signage that defines Downtown as an active, vibrant and culturally distinct and diverse place for all” (Goal C.2.a)
- “Identify transitional spaces between districts and neighborhoods and advocate for the implementation of context sensitive solutions that celebrate the area’s physical, cultural and historical identity to bring communities together” (Goal F.1.a)

The Milwaukee Riverwalk Collection will serve to address the priorities articulated in both the *Connec+ing MKE: Downtown Plan 2040* as well as Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21’s Five-Year Strategic Plan, bringing added vibrancy to the Riverwalk and highlighting the impact of this key Downtown destination.

c) PURPOSE OF RFP

This RFP seeks submissions by individual artists and/or artist collectives, henceforth referred to as “Artists.” The intention of this RFP is to select multiple Artists for the final contracts, rather than one Artist for all four murals.

From the RFP process, up to ten candidates will be selected for advancement to the interview stage by the Downtown Placemaking Task Force, based on evaluation criteria that include:

- Proven ability to execute high-quality murals in the public realm, including considerations for durability and maintainability
- Final design reflective of the proposed thematic elements and neighborhood context for the mural site
- Artist willingness to collaborate with property representatives and the Downtown Placemaking Task Force to adjust the design concept
- Artist’s availability to work in Milwaukee, Wisconsin for mural installation

These candidates will be offered the opportunity to meet with project liaisons for a site walkthrough prior to an interview with the Downtown Placemaking Task Force. Following the interviews, up to four Artists will be selected for the final mural contracts, with final selections based on submissions that best meet or exceed the evaluation criteria.

d) DOWNTOWN PLACEMAKING TASK FORCE

The Downtown Placemaking Task Force is composed of artists, civic leaders, creative professionals, property owners/managers, and other key stakeholders invested in public art and community engagement.

The purpose of the Downtown Placemaking Task Force includes supporting the placemaking objectives outlined in the Connec+ing MKE: Downtown Plan 2040 and Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 Five-Year Strategic Plan, in addition to:

- a) Cultivating exceptional experiences and a sense of place in the Downtown environment through public art
- b) Engaging with and highlighting the unique work of qualified local, national and international artists
- c) Encouraging connectivity between neighborhoods, districts, and distinct Downtown spaces
- d) Building Downtown’s identity through the enhancement of third spaces
- e) Leading community dialogue between property owners, artists, community members and other stakeholders to enhance Downtown’s public realm
- f) Honoring the creativity of artists and maintaining the integrity of public art in Downtown Milwaukee

e) RFP Submission Requirements

1. **RFP Questions:** All questions related to this RFP should be directed via email to Erica Green with Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 at egreen@milwaukeedowntown.com and must be submitted by Friday, July 19, 2024, before 5:00 PM.
2. **Submission Deadline & Procedure:** Submissions are to be submitted via email to Erica Green at egreen@milwaukeedowntown.com by Friday, August 2, 2024, before 5:00 PM. Submissions should be in one compressed PDF file. Please ensure the email subject line reads “Riverwalk Mural Collection - <<INSERT ARTIST NAME IN ALL UPPERCASE LETTERS>>.”
3. **Submission Requirements:** Submissions must include the following elements:
 - a) **Proposal Statement** – Include a statement of up to 250 words. Describe your artistic concept and why your concept is a fit for the objectives of the Milwaukee Riverwalk Mural Collection.
 - b) **Concept** – Include conceptual art representing the proposed mural concept for the Milwaukee Riverwalk Mural collection, and/or similar past work that reflects the proposed concept. Take note of the Thematic Elements included for each location in section 3.
 - c) **Location Identification** – Please indicate the Milwaukee Riverwalk Mural Collection location (see section 3) for which your concept is intended. If your concept could be modified for various locations, please note that. Artists are welcome to submit concepts for multiple locations.
 - d) **Timeline** – Include an estimated duration of installation if your concept is selected. Indicate an estimated number of days or weeks for installation.
 - e) **Current resume** – Include a current resume. Teams may submit a combined resume.
 - f) **Previous work examples** – Photographs of previous work are encouraged.
 - g) **References** – Include the name, address, email address and phone number of up to three professional references.
 - h) **Budget** – Provide a statement acknowledging the project’s total budget cannot exceed the amount indicated for each location in section 3.

4. **Selection Process:** All RFP submissions will be reviewed by the Downtown Placemaking Task Force, including representatives from participating properties and other stakeholders.
5. **Adjustment to Design Concept:** The final design of the mural will be heavily based on the Artist's initial proposal, but subject to modifications based on engagement with the Downtown Placemaking Task Force. Property representatives and the Downtown Placemaking Task Force reserve the right to request modifications to the final design to ensure appropriateness for all audiences. The Downtown Placemaking Task Force may also request that the Artist consider adapting the concept to an alternate location in the Milwaukee Riverwalk Mural Collection.
6. **Field Review:** A field review/measurement of the surface is required by the final selected Artists to determine the exact specifications of the mural surface prior to installation. The selected Artists are responsible for responding to any variations in wall material, texture and size.

2. Mural Sites

a) Milwaukee Riverwalk at Marcus Performing Arts Center

- i. **Location:** West-facing wall of Milwaukee Riverwalk at Marcus Performing Arts Center (east side of Milwaukee River). Mural installation at this site will require painting from a water vessel on the Milwaukee River. Milwaukee Downtown will assist the Artist in identifying a preferred vessel and establishing safety guidelines for installation.
- ii. **Square footage:** Approximate size of this mural is 2,700 square feet.
- iii. **Thematic elements:** Located on the grounds of the Marcus Performing Arts Center, this mural should reflect the convergence of performing arts and the Milwaukee Riverwalk. In particular, the mural at this site must thoughtfully celebrate the [Milwaukee Theater District](#). Milwaukee ranks number one in the United States for number of theater seats per capita with 15,000 theater seats Downtown, and ideal proposals will creatively incorporate both the impact of the Milwaukee Theater District and the Milwaukee Riverwalk District.
- iv. **Budget:** The final Artist will receive a \$27,000 commission in three phased payments, which includes all project expenses, materials, rental equipment, and contingency. Additional incurrent costs may include obtaining general liability insurance, a requirement for each project. Project liaisons will assist the final Artists in obtaining affordable project insurance and identifying an affordable water vessel if needed.



b) Milwaukee Riverwalk at Knapp Street

- i. **Location:** East-facing wall of Milwaukee Riverwalk below Knapp Street Bridge (west side of Milwaukee River)
- ii. **Square footage:** Approximate size of this mural is 870 square feet.
- iii. **Thematic elements:** This mural should reflect the vitality and significance of the Milwaukee River and Riverwalk and the unique neighborhood context of the mural site, based on the artist's creative vision.
- iv. **Budget:** The final Artist will receive a \$10,800 commission in three phased payments, which includes all project expenses, materials, rental equipment, and contingency. Additional incurrent costs may include obtaining general liability insurance, a requirement for each project. Project liaisons will assist the final Artists in obtaining affordable project insurance.



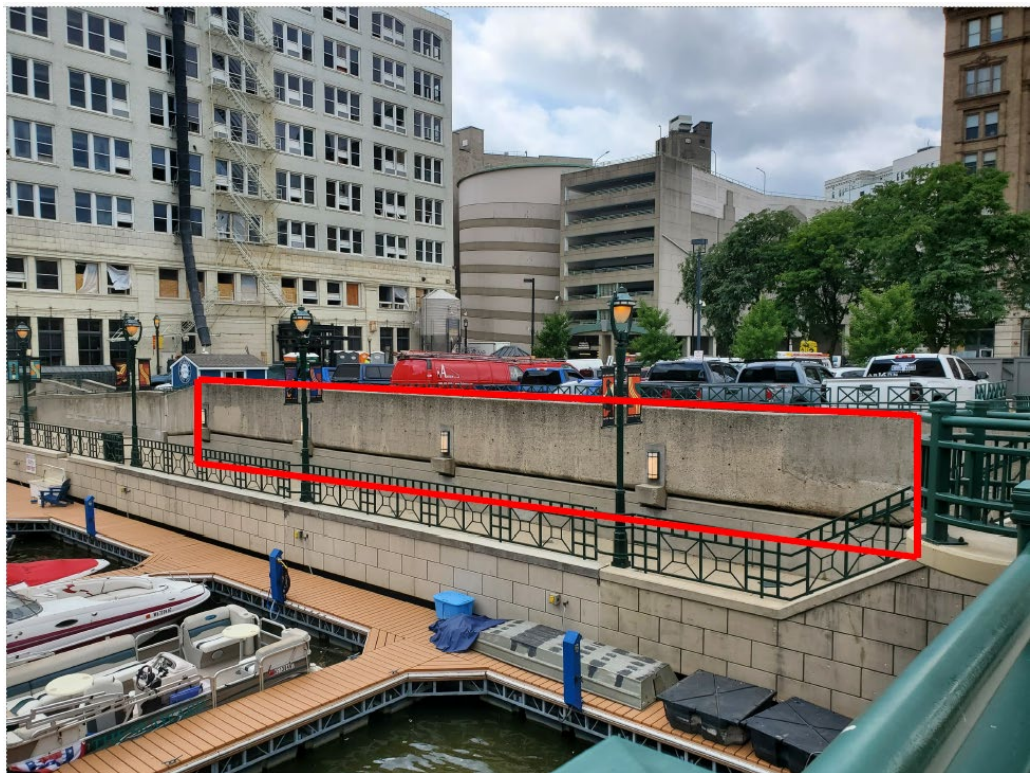
c) Juneau Street Bridge Tower

- i. **Location:** West-facing wall of Juneau Street Bridge Tower (east side of Milwaukee River)
- ii. **Square footage:** Approximate size of this mural is 600 square feet.
- iii. **Thematic elements:** This mural should reflect the vitality and significance of the Milwaukee River and Riverwalk and the unique neighborhood context of the mural site, based on the artist's creative vision.
- iv. **Budget:** The final Artist will receive a \$13,500 commission in three phased payments, which includes all project expenses, materials, rental equipment, and contingency. Additional incurrent costs may include obtaining general liability insurance, a requirement for each project. Project liaisons will assist the final Artists in obtaining affordable project insurance.



d) Milwaukee Riverwalk at 740 North by 3L Living

- i. **Location:** East-facing wall of Milwaukee Riverwalk at 740 North by 3L Living (west side of Milwaukee River)
- ii. **Square footage:** Approximate size of this mural is 750 square feet.
- iii. **Thematic elements:** This mural should reflect the vitality and significance of the Milwaukee River and Riverwalk and the unique neighborhood context of the mural site, based on the artist's creative vision.
- iv. **Budget:** The final Artist will receive a \$9,000 commission in three phased payments, which includes all project expenses, materials, rental equipment, and contingency. Additional incurrent costs may include obtaining general liability insurance, a requirement for each project. Project liaisons will assist the final Artists in obtaining affordable project insurance.



3. Tentative Project Timeline

July 2, 2024	RFP opens
July 19, 2024	All questions related to this RFP must be submitted by 5 PM Central Time
August 2, 2024	RFP submissions must be submitted by 5 PM Central Time
August 5, 2024	Internal review begins
Week of August 12, 2024	Advancing candidates notified
Week of August 19, 2024	Option for advancing candidates to participate in site visit with project liaison
Week of August 26, 2024	Interviews with advancing candidates
Early September 2024	Finalists notified
Mid-September through early October 2024	Mural installation as weather permits

4. Acknowledgements

Milwaukee Downtown, BID #21 would like to acknowledge and thank the collaborative partners supporting the Milwaukee Riverwalk Mural Collection, including:

- City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works
- City of Milwaukee Department of City Development
- Downtown Placemaking Task Force
- Marcus Performing Arts Center
- Milwaukee County
- Milwaukee Riverwalk District
- Milwaukee Riverwalk BID #15
- Milwaukee Theater District
- Visit Milwaukee
- 3L Living
- Centro San Antonio