

Near West Side Partners and Milwaukee Police Department

Invitation to Artists - Request for Proposals

Painting the Near West Side

April 1, 2021

Neighborhood Background

The Near West Side is a Neighborhood of Neighborhoods. Located just west of Downtown Milwaukee, the Near West Side comprises seven unique neighborhoods, each with its own rich history, diverse residents, and tremendous assets. It is the birthplace and continued home of iconic brands and some of the state's largest employers, along with many other businesses, nonprofit organizations, schools, restaurants and entertainment options, and a resident population of 28,000, including nearly 10,000 students.

In 2014, five key Near West Side anchor institutions – Advocate Aurora Health, Harley-Davidson, Marquette University, Molson Coors and Potawatomi Business Development Corporation – came together to form Near West Side Partners (NWSP), a non-profit, public/private partnership. Through collaborative efforts, NWSP seeks to revitalize and sustain the Near West Side as a thriving business and residential corridor.

Project Background

In 2018, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) awarded Marquette University and NWSP a Choice Neighborhood Initiative (CNI) Planning grant. The HUD CNI grant provides funding for physical projects in the Near West Side that help to spur economic development and continue to build momentum throughout the neighborhood. NWSP has worked with neighbors and other stakeholders to brainstorm ideas for projects, evaluate the potential projects based on HUD's requirements and the potential for catalytic change, and then secure support from HUD to move the projects forward.

Painting the Near West Side is one of the six approved Action Activities being funded by the CNI grant. The goal of this project is to beautify the Near West Side commercial corridors by bringing more public art to the neighborhood. Public art installations serve many purposes including improving the facade of businesses, changing perceptions of the community, and showcasing the talent of local artists.

Through this mural project, NWSP and the Milwaukee Police Department (MPD) hope to:

- Create a greater sense of place by making connections between the diverse art community of Greater Milwaukee and the Near West Side;
- Display the unique characteristics of the Near West Side in a gateway image; and,
- Involve the community in the creation of the mural.

Schedule

- April 1, 2021 - Request for Proposals issued to the public
- April 25, 2021 - Deadline for artists to respond to RFP
- April 30, 2021 - Finalists notified of status
- May 16, 2021 - Updated concept sketch due from finalists
- May 21, 2021 - Winner notified
- June 2021 - Artist work begins
- August 2021 - Mural installation complete

Project Details

Drawing on the Near West Side neighborhood for inspiration, the potential artists should research and produce a concept sketch for storytelling that draws on the rich history of the people, events, and landmarks of the neighborhood. The canvas for this mural will be the northeast corner of the heavily trafficked intersection of North 27th Street and West Wisconsin Avenue. This is a City-owned building that is utilized by MPD.

Instead of a traditionally painted mural, this piece of art will be a vinyl building wrap so artists of all mediums are encouraged to apply. The size of the mural will be dependent on the ability of the selected installation vendor to work within the established budget.

Budget

The chosen artist will be paid \$5,000 for the copyright to reprint their image as a mural.

Selection Process

The artist will be selected by a committee consisting of Near West Side stakeholders including residents, local business owners, and representatives of the City of Milwaukee. Following the submission deadline, the committee will meet and review submissions, selecting up to 3 finalists who will receive feedback and be given time to update their original proposal. The finalists will receive an honorarium of \$150 to update their sketch. The committee chair will be available to answer questions. After updated designs are submitted, an artist will be selected that best meets the needs of the project utilizing the selection criteria.

Selection Criteria

Artists will be selected on the basis of:

- The artist must be a resident of Milwaukee County
 - A preference point will be given to residents of the Near West Side
- Expression of knowledge regarding the site, history and community
- Demonstration of understanding the intersection as a key gateway in the Near West Side and City of Milwaukee
- Ability to engage residents in the design of the mural

Submission Requirements

To be considered for this project, artists must submit the following by **11:59 pm on Sunday, April 25th** to Anna Weirick at ccc@nearwestsidepartners.org:

- Digital Imagery
 - High resolution images, jpeg, pdf, or png.
 - Include thumbnail images clearly labeled with artists name
- Other Proposal Packet Materials
 - Description of concept (150 words or less)
 - Biography (250 words or less)
 - Plan for community engagement in the development of the mural

Submissions will only be accepted via email. Proposals received after the submittal deadline will not be accepted.

If you have any questions, please contact Anna Weirick at ccc@nearwestsidepartners.org.

Site Photo

