

**CALL FOR ARTISTS / REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**  
**City of Muscatine, Iowa**  
**Public Art**

**Deadline for Submission:** March 1, 2021

**Project Organizer:** City of Muscatine Public Art Advisory Commission

**Contact:** Melanie Alexander, Staff Liaison to Public Art Advisory Commission and Director of the Muscatine Art Center, [malexander@muscatineiowa.gov](mailto:malexander@muscatineiowa.gov), 563-263-8282

**Project Budget:** base amount of \$25,000 (potentially greater for an exemplary project)

**INTRODUCTION**

The City of Muscatine's Public Art Advisory Commission announces a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to identify three qualified artists to develop site-specific public art proposals in and/or surrounding the newly constructed roundabout at Mulberry Avenue and Second Street in Muscatine, Iowa.

The RFQ is the first phase of a three-phased process concluding with the installation of a single public art project. The Public Art Advisory Commission will select three artists from the RFQ. Each selected artist will receive a stipend of \$750 to develop their public art concept. The three concept projects will then be presented for broad community input and selection. One artist will be selected for the third phase of fabrication and installation.

**ELIGIBILITY / MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS**

Professional or emerging/student artists 21 years of age and older residing in Iowa and neighboring states may apply. Artists who are full-time employees of the City of Muscatine are not eligible to apply. The application is open to individuals who meet these requirements regardless of race, color, national origin (ancestry), sex, sexual preference/orientation, gender identity, gender expression, transgender, marital or parental status, creed, religion or political beliefs, mental or physical disability, genetic information or status as a veteran. Artists must have the ability to travel to Muscatine, Iowa to complete the installation.

**SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS** (forms and details provided on pages 8-9)

1. Application Form with signature and list of two references
2. Letter of Interest – Tell us why the project is a good fit for you. (2 page limit)
3. Resume/CV (3 page limit)
4. Images of prior projects, preferably public art installations, (limited to 8 images, file size not to exceed 10mb)

**EVALUATION**

Submissions will be evaluated only if the application is complete, received by the deadline, and requirements are met. The Public Art Advisory Commission will make selections based on the artist's prior work, the artist's ability to complete and deliver a project that meets the stated goals, and the reasoning provided in the artist's letter of interest. During the selection process, artists may be asked to participate in an interview, and references may be contacted.

## PUBLIC ART GOALS

The City of Muscatine's Public Art Advisory Commission is open to a range of project ideas from multi-piece installations to a single, more "monumental" element. The goal is to install a permanent work that reflects the Muscatine community and/or its history, is unique to Muscatine, can be easily maintained, is designed to be durable, and will not impede the safety of motorists or pedestrians. The Advisory Commission will consider artists who work in materials and forms that meet these criteria.

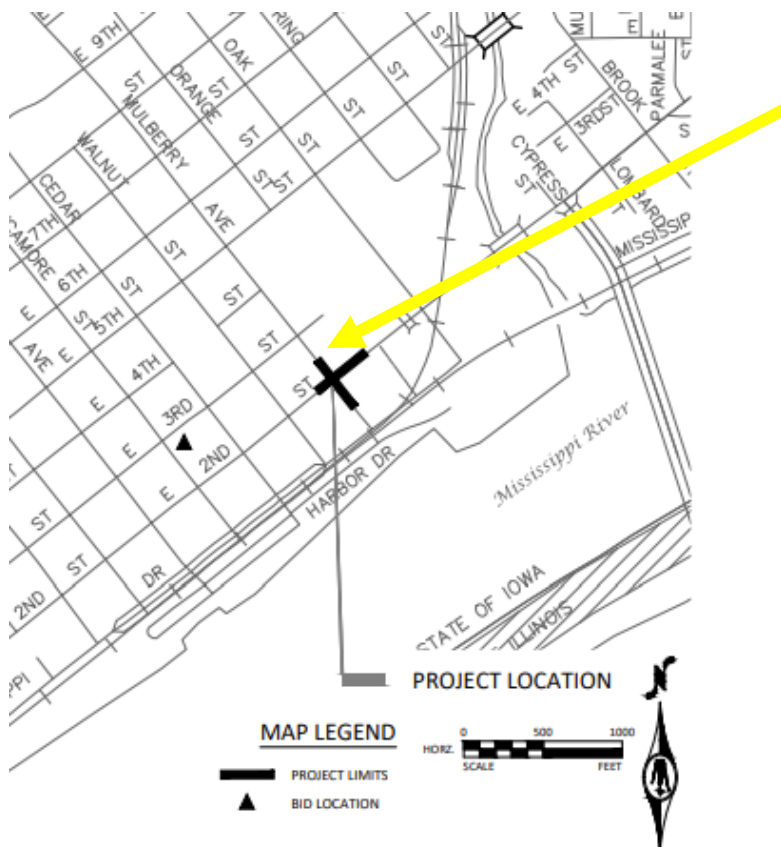
## CITY of MUSCATINE

Muscatine is a vibrant Mississippi River community where a rich tradition of community pride and entrepreneurial spirit has created an outstanding environment to live and work. Muscatine values its history, has a strong sense of community, is rich in cultural and economic diversity, and has strong global connections.

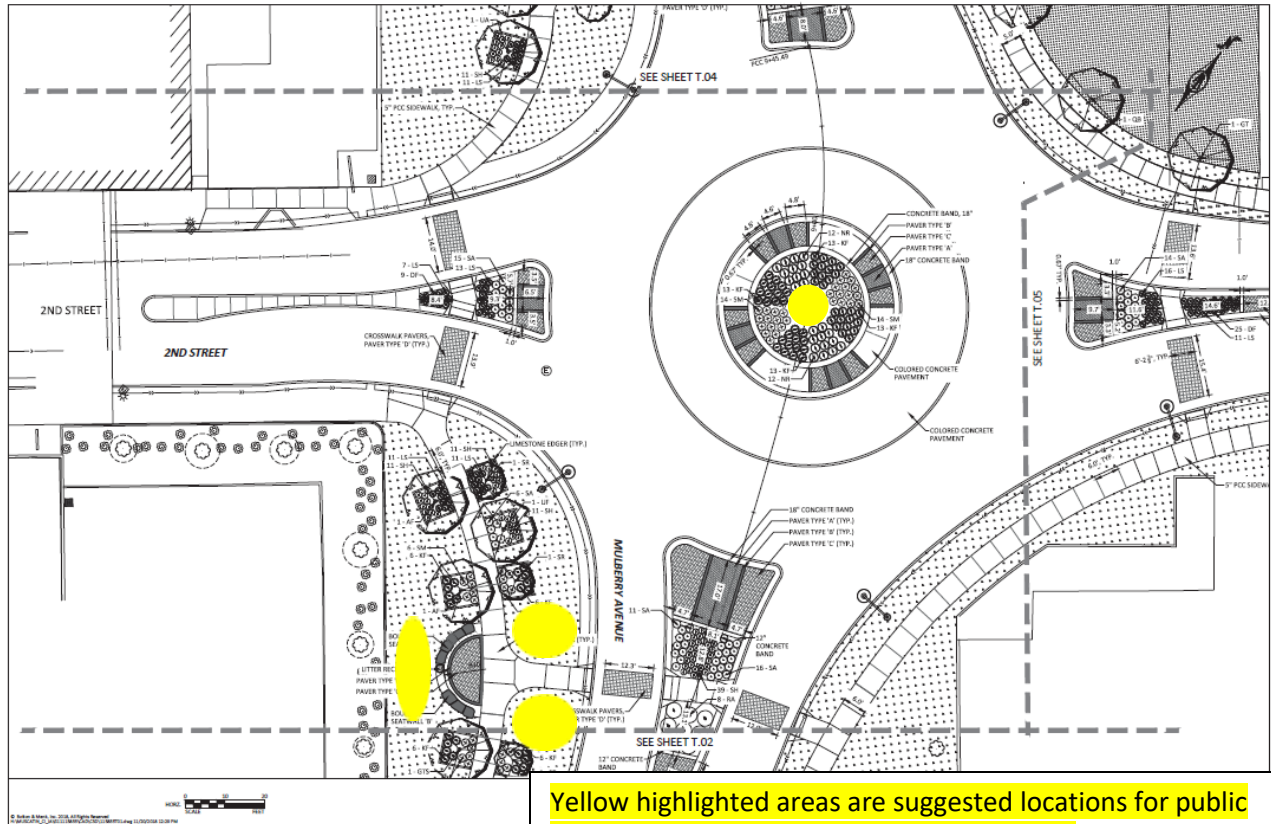
## SITE VICINITY

The site of the public art project serves as the gateway into Muscatine's historic downtown. Within the neighboring blocks of the roundabout, drivers and pedestrians pass by the headquarters for HNI Corporation, the historic Muscatine County courthouse, the Muscatine library / community center, downtown's historic three-story buildings with storefronts and upstairs apartments, and the Mississippi River.

## ABOUT the SITE



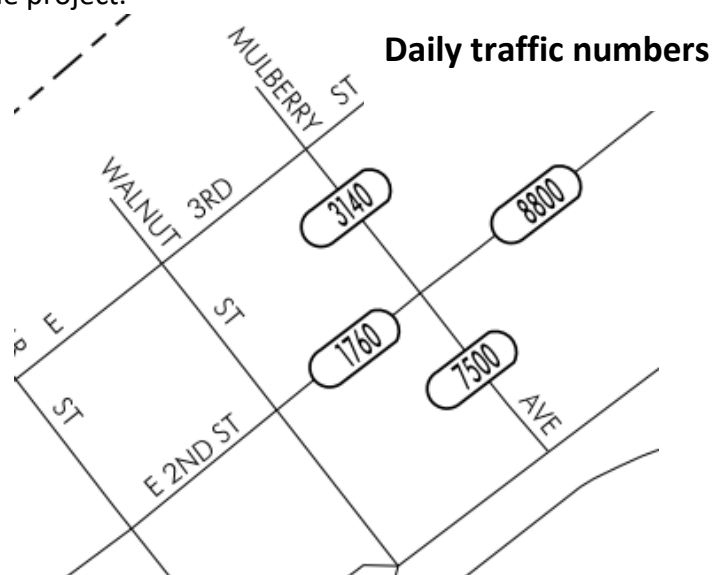
The Mississippi River is visible from the roundabout. The roundabout serves as the gateway to the historic downtown.



Concept plans may be developed for the center of the roundabout and/or near the semi-circle seating area on the Mulberry side in the direction of the Mississippi River. The current plantings can be adjusted to accommodate a highly desirable project.

Car and truck traffic through the roundabout is considerable. Pedestrians are not encouraged to walk through the center of the roundabout. Pedestrian traffic is directed through the four medians.

**\*\*The ideal concept for the center of the roundabout would provide some visual blocking so drivers are not distracted by activity in the blocks ahead. The ideal concept would not draw pedestrians into the center of the roundabout. Concepts that do not place art in the middle of the roundabout will also be considered.\*\***





View from inside the roundabout, looking away from downtown, on Second Street. To the right is the corporate Headquarters for HNI (office furniture manufacturer). The overpass with windows contains a conveyor for moving office furniture product to buildings on the other side of the street.



View from median, look through the roundabout and towards downtown, on Mulberry. The Musser Public Library/HNI Community Center is on the left. A Goodyear tire store, followed by a series of three story historic buildings, is on the right.





View looking through the roundabout away from the Mississippi River, on Mulberry Avenue. The tall building in the background is the historic Muscatine County Courthouse.



View through the roundabout following Mulberry to Mississippi Drive. The Mississippi River is in the background as well as a large historic home on the left.





Semi-circular seating area on Mulberry side of the roundabout. Parking lot for Musser Public Library/HNI Community Center is in the background.



Greenspace on the side of the roundabout facing Mulberry. The semi-circular seating (sections of limestone block) is shown. HNI Corporate headquarters in on the left, the bridge connecting Iowa and Illinois is in the center, and two historic houses are towards the right. The Mississippi River is visible behind the vehicles on the right.



## **TIMELINE\***

RFQ for Artists Released: December 1, 2020

RFQ Submission Deadline: March 1, 2021 at 5:00pm local time

Selected Artists for Phase-Two Notification: April 16, 2021

Phase Two Kick-Off Meetings – Question & Answer Session (online meetings): late April 2021

Selected Artists Complete Proposal Deadline: September 7, 2021 at 5:00pm local time

Community Engagement Phase Completed: January 10, 2022

Notification to Artist for Selected Project (one artist selected for Phase Three): January 28, 2022

Artwork Fabrication Phase: February 1 through June 30, 2022

Artwork Installation: Summer 2022

\*This timeline takes into account uncertainty related to COVID-19, especially to allow for community engagement involving citizens and other stakeholders. If the process moves more quickly, and participating artists are amenable, the timeline could be adjusted.

## **BUDGET**

Phase One: Initial application at the expense of the artist

Artists respond to RFQ. The City of Muscatine shall not reimburse any expenses for this phase. Muscatine Public Art Advisory Commission selects three artists to receive a stipend to complete a project concept. To move into the second phase, artists must sign a contract with the City of Muscatine outlining minimum proposal requirements.

Phase Two: \$750 concept development stipend per artist

In this phase, the three artists selected from Phase One will develop and complete a concept plan for their public art installation with a deadline of September 7, 2021. The stipend is intended to offset costs incurred in this process. The stipend shall be paid within 14 days of delivery of the public art concept proposal that meets requirements outlined in the signed contract.

An artist who is awarded the concept development stipend but cannot deliver a project proposal shall not be paid. An artists who cannot complete a project proposal shall notify the City of Muscatine in writing at the earliest possible opportunity.

Following submission of concept plans, the City of Muscatine will present the plans for public comment and community engagement. If a finalist is not selected from Phase Two artists, the City of Muscatine reserves the right to re-open the call for artists and to adjust the timeline accordingly. In transitioning to Phase Three, no selection shall be deemed final until a proposal has been fully approved and a contract agreement properly executed between the artist and the City of Muscatine.

Phase Three: \$25,000

This total sum is inclusive of all artist fees, insurance, fabrication, installation, travel, and all other project-related expenses. This sum excludes all structural support for the art, structural design services, and lighting needs. The City of Muscatine will separately fund and contract for footers, landscaping, lighting, and other needs. The artwork installation

schedule will be further developed during the second phase with a target deadline of installation in summer 2022. The City of Muscatine and the selected artist will enter into a contract outlining specific deliverables and timelines connected to disbursement of payment.

With community and City support for an exemplary project that is more costly, the \$25,000 budget may be increased. Artists should note that the need to raise additional funds would likely change the installation timeline as the community will need to raise additional funds. Any concept proposed as part of this process should not exceed \$75,000.

## **SUBMIT**

Request for Qualification materials are due by 5 p.m. central time on March 1, 2021, submitted by email to Melanie Alexander, [malexander@muscatineiowa.gov](mailto:malexander@muscatineiowa.gov). A confirmation email will be sent within 48 hours of receipt. If a confirmation email is not received, the artist is responsible to phone Melanie Alexander at 563-263-8282. Submission requirements are: Application Form with signature with list of two references; Letter of Interest – tell us why the project is a good fit for you (2 page limit); Resume/CV (3 page limit); and images of prior work, preferably public art installations (limited to 8 images, file size is not to exceed 10mb). The Application Form is provided on the following page.

## **NOTIFICATION**

All applicants will receive notification by email. Please do not contact the City of Muscatine or the Muscatine Art Center directly for results. The Muscatine Public Art Advisory Commission and the City of Muscatine reserve the right to change, modify, or revise the Requests for Qualifications, in part or whole, at any time without prior notice, and reserves the right to make no selection for this Request for Qualifications.



**CALL FOR ARTISTS / REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS**  
**City of Muscatine, Iowa**  
**Public Art – Second and Mulberry Roundabout**  
**Deadline: March 1, 2021 at 5 p.m. local time**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Artistic Medium(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/ State/ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Media: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The above signed applicant proposes to provide services in accordance with the specifications for the Public Art RFQ, Second and Mulberry Roundabout, Muscatine, Iowa. Required application attachments: resume or CV (3 page limit), letter of interest (2 page limit), and images of past work (limited to 8, not to exceed 10mb).

**Reference #1**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/ State/ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of Relationship to Artist: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reference #2**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/ State/ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of Relationship to Artist: \_\_\_\_\_

## SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL

### MUSCATINE HISTORY

The City of Muscatine began as a small trading post in 1833, and early settlers valued the rolling terrain, river bluffs, fertile land as well as access to the river. The establishment of flour and sawmills was instrumental in the area's growth. By the mid-1860s, Muscatine had also become an important lumber hub with logs being shipped down river and by rail for processing at the mills that dominated much of the land near the river. At the same time, local farmers discovered that melon, fruit, and other vegetables thrived in an area just to the south known as the Muscatine Island. The growing condition plus the expansion of the railroad prompted H. J. Heinz to establish a canning facility in Muscatine in 1893, the first outside of Pittsburgh, PA.

Muscatine's most celebrated industry took root in 1891 when John Frederick Boepple discovered that Mississippi River mussels made excellent buttons and established a button business in Muscatine. Other button businesses followed, including a company that specialized in making equipment for the button industry. At its peak, Muscatine made 1.5 billion buttons per year.

Muscatine has both attracted those with the entrepreneurial spirit and created homegrown trailblazers. In 1936, G. A. Kent moved his cattle feed manufacturing company to Muscatine to take advantage of river transportation. That company has been shaped by generations of Kent family members who have grown the business into a family of businesses. Today, Kent Corporation employs 2,000 employees throughout the world and manufactures corn-based products ranging from Ethyl Alcohol and corn syrup to specialty pet foods and mixes for soft serve ice cream. Entrepreneur Roy J. Carver, Sr. moved his pump business to Muscatine in 1938. Carver strategically presented his pumps to the United States military just ahead of World War II. The Navy was the primary customer at the start, but the company also transitioned into other markets. The Carver Pump Company remains in Muscatine. Carver also acquired the rights to a tire retreading system and founded Bandag in Muscatine in 1957. In 1932, C. Maxwell "Max" Stanley joined Central States Engineering, a company that began in 1913. Today, Stanley Consultants is ranked among the largest engineering firms in the world with over two dozen offices across the globe. Max Stanley along with two other men established the Home-O-Nize company with the mission of providing jobs for men returning from service during World War II. Today, that company is HNI Corporation, the second-largest office furniture manufacturer in the world. Its headquarters remain in Muscatine. Muscatine has been home to five Fortune 500 businesses.

One of Muscatine's entrepreneurs is truly notorious. The legendary Norman Baker gave hypnosis demonstrations in the early 1900s before he invented and manufactured the Tangle Calliaphone, launched the "Know the Naked Truth" radio station, "discovered" the cure for cancer, operated a cancer hospital, and battled the Federal Communications Commission and the American Medical Association.

The Muscatine citizen with the most remarkable legacy may be Alexander Clark, Sr., an African American who worked as a barber and amassed considerable wealth through real estate and selling firewood to passing steamboats. In 1867, Clark sued the Muscatine Board of Education after his daughter was not allowed to attend an all-white school. Clark won, and desegregation in Iowa schools began more than 85 years before the United States Supreme Court ruled on *Brown vs. Board of Education*. In addition, Clark's son was the first African American to graduate from the University of Iowa School of Law in 1879 while Clark himself became the second African American to graduate from the law school in 1884. He also became the United States minister and consul-general to Liberia, appointed by Benjamin Harrison.

The most recognized one-time resident is Mark Twain, who lived in Muscatine in 1854. Twain wrote, "I remember Muscatine for its summer sunsets. I have never seen any on either side of the ocean that equaled them."

Many influential women shaped the community's history. Fiery Pearl McGill became active in workers' rights while employed in the button industry as a teen. In the 1910s, she traveled the United States, giving powerful speeches encouraging workers to unite for better pay and working conditions. When Muscatine opened the junior college that became Muscatine Community College, it was a woman, Willetta Strahan, who served as its first dean in 1929. Another woman, Laura Musser McColm, became President of the McColm Dry Goods Company in 1933 after her husband passed away. She managed the business and served on numerous committees and boards including Iowa Wesleyan College's board of trustees.

Muscatine is a community rooted in its past, but it is also a community with global ties. Beyond the international reach of businesses in Muscatine, the non-profit organization, Muscatine Sister Cities, maintains relationships in surprising places such as Ramallah, Palestine; Parana, Argentina; Zhending, China; Kislovodsk, Russia; and four other distant cities. Muscatine is home to the Stanley Center for Peace and Security which works across countries, cultures, and policy sectors and drives policy in three issue areas: mitigating climate change, avoiding the use of nuclear weapons, and preventing mass violence and atrocities. Local visionaries have truly put Muscatine on the map, and their legacy provide a strong foundation for shaping a community that is global and hometown Iowa.

#### **Source of Information about Muscatine**

City of Muscatine, [www.muscatineiowa.gov](http://www.muscatineiowa.gov)

Muscatine Art Center, [www.muscatineartcenter.org](http://www.muscatineartcenter.org)

Greater Muscatine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, [www.muscatine.com](http://www.muscatine.com)

Photo Archive Musser Public Library, [www.umvphotoarchive.org/digital/collection/muspl/search](http://www.umvphotoarchive.org/digital/collection/muspl/search)

Muscatine History & Industry Center, [www.muscatinehistory.org](http://www.muscatinehistory.org)

Muscatine CVB, [www.visitmuscatine.com](http://www.visitmuscatine.com)

Alexander Clark, <http://www.iowapbs.org/iowapathways/mypath/father-fights-equal-rights>

Muscatine Sister Cities, [www.muscatinestercities.com/](http://www.muscatinestercities.com/)

Stanley Center for Peace and Security, [www.stanleycenter.org/](http://www.stanleycenter.org/)

Muscatine voices, cultures, and diversity, [www.celebratemuscatine.org/](http://www.celebratemuscatine.org/)