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Spencer, NC 28159-0045

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REQUEST FOR ARTIST QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ) Town of Spencer Downtown Mural Program

Town of Spencer, North Carolina

Issue Date: 10/12/2022

Deadline for Applications: 11/12/2022 5 PM

Project Overview:

The Downtown Mural Program Selection Committee is seeking qualifications from artists or artist teams for the commission of several outdoor public murals in downtown Spencer, NC. The Town expects to select at least five artists/teams. The exact number of artists selected, and the number of murals commissioned is subject to change based on the Town's discretion and budget. The mural locations will be located throughout downtown, with the aim of enhancing connectivity between cultural and economic assets in Spencer's town center.

Artists and artist teams are welcome to express interest in completing one mural and/or a series of murals. This is a qualifications-based selection process; artists will develop concepts after they are selected based on their experience, artistry, alignment with the program's goals, and demonstrated interest. The goals for the Mural Program, adopted by the Spencer Mural Selection Committee providing oversight for the program, are as follows:

- To use creative placemaking efforts to develop Spencer's contemporary identity through community-based collaboration.
- To explore the vibrancy of Spencer through the cultural experiences that promote the history, arts, industry, and regional authenticity that make this town special.
- To revitalize downtown as a cultural and shopping experience for both residents and visitors.
- To provide economic opportunities for local and regional artists, establishing Spencer as a place for creative people to live, work, and collaborate.
- To inspire, motivate, and instill pride in residents by creating an accessible outdoor gallery of beautiful and thought-provoking public art that reflects the unique character of our community.

The Town of Spencer employees will staff the program and the Mural Selection Committee will provide community oversight. Artists will work with the Mural Selection Committee and others familiar with Spencer's history to develop mural concepts and concept work. As all of downtown



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Spencer is within a historic district, concept work will need to receive a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) prior to seeking final approval from the Spencer Board of Aldermen (the elected town council).

The Committee will select all of the artists with consideration to their entire portfolio of walls with the aim of having a variety of artistic styles, mural themes, and artistic backgrounds represented. The Committee is especially interested in receiving submissions from artists with experience and interest in collaborative, community-based mural projects that build social ties, represent diversity, and/or develop a sense of communal ownership of public spaces.

The Committee is interested in receiving applications from artists with a range of experiences and skillsets. We welcome applications from seasoned muralists, local artists, as well as national and international artists with a strong North Carolina connection.

Local artists seeking professional development experience and interested in unpaid apprenticeship opportunities with professional muralists participating in this program should contact sallan@spencernc.gov. Apprenticeship are not guaranteed and will be considered on a case-by-case basis as opportunities arise.

The committee also wants to give our young people agency in the future of the town. To greater integrate the program into Spencer's future, we will be looking for at least one artist to develop concept work and oversee high school students (must pass a background check) as a project manager. The committee would also like to involve advanced art students in apprenticeship programs for other murals, to be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Tying this whole project together will be a digital guide accessed through onsite QR codes which will give visitors access to digital content including interviews with historians and the artists, footage of the mural creation process, custom filters, photographs, audio, and augmented reality features. Artists will be asked to give their permission to be filmed and participate in interviews and related project development. Please refer to Charlotte South End Mural Walk as an example of this technology in action.

All materials shall be submitted to Skye Allan at sallan@spencernc.gov in a single PDF document by November 16th 2022 at 5 PM. The Town of Spencer and Mural Selection Committee reserve the right to change the project timeline.



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Selection Criteria:

The artists will be selected based on the following criteria, as evidenced in application materials and conversations with listed references:

- Artistic accomplishment as demonstrated by images of previously completed artwork and references.
- Technical competence and comparable scale of past works.
- Demonstrated ability to collaborate with community stakeholders, if applicable.
- Demonstrated ability to complete projects on time and within budget.

Submission Materials (combine into single PDF document):

The following application materials are required:

- Personal Statement (no more than 1,000 words): Tell us who you are and about the kind of work you want to pursue.
- Experience (no more than 1,000 words): Describe your experience working on relevant projects. If you have never completed an outdoor mural project before, please explain how you anticipate executing this project and scaling your work up. Indicate if your previous work was completed individually or as part of an artist team and if completed as a team, please indicate your individual contribution.
- Images: Up to 10 and no less than 5 visual images of related art and design projects you have completed, named and numbered to match an annotated image list – Name, Year Completed, Location, and a Brief Project Description (100 words or less).
- References: Three (3) references from previous projects with current contact information, with their relationship to the artist noted.
- Insurance: Artist must be able to provide proof of insurance prior to beginning work, if insurance can be obtained before start of the project, please indicate those plans.

The following application materials are optional:

- Community Engagement Experience (no more than 500 words): Outline your experience collaborating with community members on public art projects and any proposed methods of engaging with community stakeholders and gathering input. Include at least one reference with current contact information
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- Preferred Walls (no more than 300 words): Which walls would best host your work and why*? Please refer to no more than 3 walls and you are not guaranteed your preferred wall. All walls will be prepared prior to artist beginning work with a basecoat of paint, an Alupalite panel, or Orajet Textured Wall Wrap depending on wall condition. Information on potential mural locations can be found in Appendix A at the end of the document and additional walls may be included in the final project plan.
- Resume: You may upload your professional resume.
- Interest in Local Apprentice (no more than 100 words): Local artists are eager to learn the process of creating outdoor murals. Are you interested in letting a local artist(s) assist you, in a way that you are comfortable, in executing your mural project? If so, please describe the type of assistance that would be helpful to you.
- Interest in Managing the Student Mural

Artist Fee & Projected Budget:

Fee is to be negotiated on an individual basis according to the scale and scope of the mural concept, as well as the qualifications of the artist. We expect the artist fees to follow the \$40 per painted square foot guideline. Shortlisted applicants will be asked to provide examples of project budgets and associated artist fees.

The artist will be responsible for ordering their own paint and equipment, keeping an accurate track of receipts to be reimbursed, or paid directly by the Town. The Town will work with the artists to determine a budget for paint and other required equipment (e.g. scaffolding). Artists will be expected to use high quality exterior paint and seals to ensure the longevity and sustainability of the murals and to protect the work from graffiti. The Town is open to considering the use of other materials, to be negotiated.

Community Profile:

Spencer, NC was an integral part of the early industrial development of the United States. The town was founded in 1905 around the establishment of a steam locomotive repair shop, which has since become the North Carolina Transportation Museum and named for Southern Railway president Samuel Spencer. The Spencer shoppes were the largest of their kind at that time, servicing repairs to trains travelling the Southern Railway. Spencer is located exactly 160 miles off the main line between Atlanta, GA and Washington, DC. Most of the Town was employed at the shoppes or at businesses that supported the shoppes, and the Southern Railway sold individual plots of land to them for residential builds. The town largely avoided the hardships of the great depression due to a healthy economy



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centered around transportation. Spencer retains a wealth of unique stylistic historic architecture boasting build dates ranging from the late 1800's through 1940. The Spencer shoppes closed for good in the late 1960's with the development of the diesel engine. When employment slowed from the closure of the shops, many homes and businesses fell into disrepair and abandonment. The recession and housing crisis in 2008 caused even more detriment to the town.

In the modern day the Town of Spencer has approximately 3,200 community residents and is primarily residential with a small downtown area that is the focus of this project. Right across the street from downtown, is the North Carolina Transportation Museum which annually attracts over one hundred seventy-five thousand visitors. These murals will encourage visitors to come across the street to engage with our town. The art will also encourage residents and potential residents alike to spend time in our downtown areas, facilitating a greater community closeness and pride.

Current growth trends anticipate a population boom in Spencer, of people working in Winston Salem, Concord, and Charlotte wanting to live close to nature in a close-knit walkable community. Spencer is rising to meet that future, developing our outdoor recreation spaces including the Yadkin River Trailhead Park, linked by the Wilcox pedestrian bridge to the Yadkin River Park, and connecting to the Piedmont Legacy Trail, the Yadkin River State Trail, the Daniel Boone Heritage Trail, and has been accepted as the Northern Entrance to the North Carolina Thread Trail. Beyond the trails, Spencer is expanding the Stanback Educational Forest, transforming the center of town back into a public park, and improving our outdoor sports facilities. These facilities, including the mural walk will be open and accessible by all residents and visitors at all times. The committed goal of the Town of Spencer is to promote healthy and affordable activities for community residents in a manner that is inclusive, accommodating, and rewarding.

Spencer is mostly known as where the railroad repair shop was and where the Transportation Museum is now. While both are important to the town's identity, they are not all that the Town is and the main thrust of this process is to diversify the represented identity of the Town. Potential topics to explore in the murals are: the civil rights history of the area including movie theater sit-ins to protest segregation, the local music scene, family resilience, the natural beauty of the surrounding landscape, our modern racial and cultural diversity, the school that instructed young disabled people to become watchmakers and jewelers, the workers of the Spencer Shops, local industrial history, the white squirrel colony, and our identity as the Gateway to Rowan County. We hope to explore a lot of concepts in these murals and intend to connect chosen artists to people familiar with Spencer history.

For more information on Spencer, please visit: <https://spencernc.gov/> and review the [Spencer Parks and Recreation Masterplan](#)



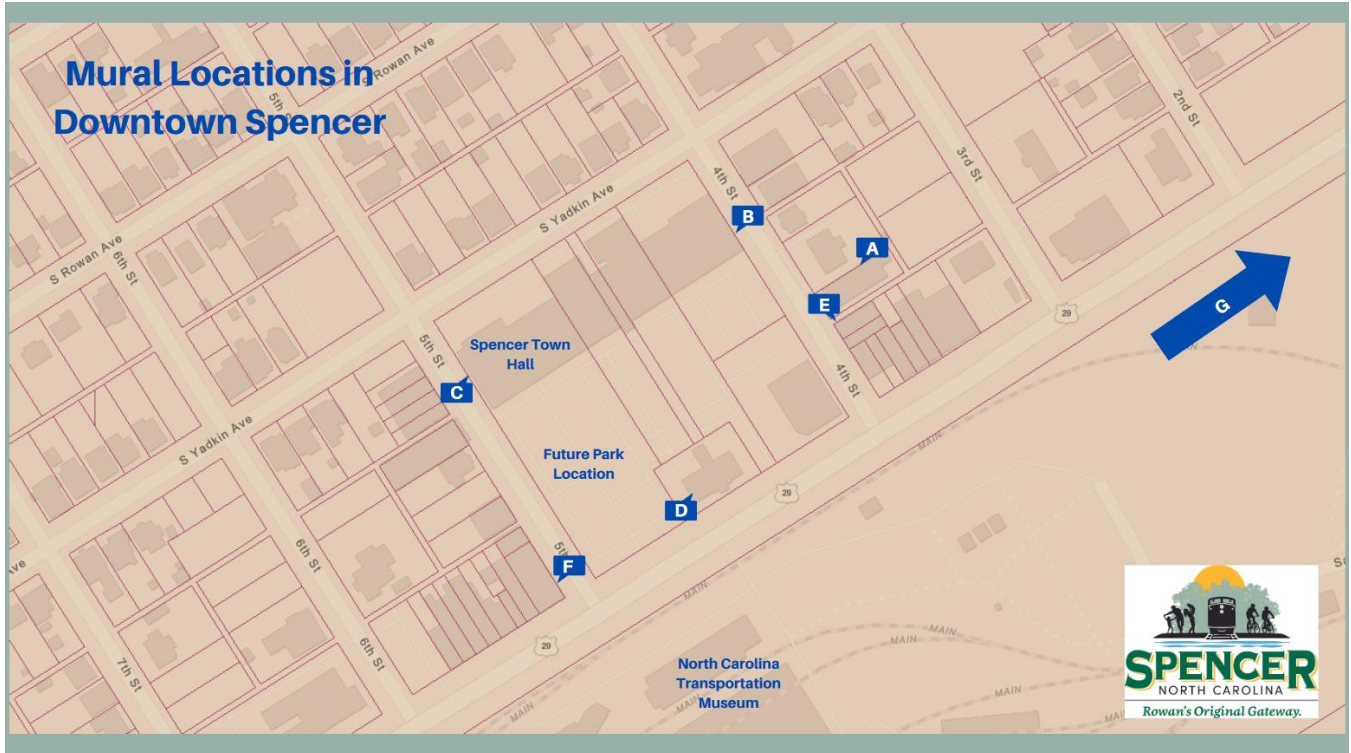
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Appendix A:





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North Carolina Doll & Toy Museum (A)

- **Address:** 108 4TH St, Spencer, NC, 28159, USA
- **Parcel Number:** 032 153
- **Dimensions:** 179.5 in Height x 196 in Width = 244.32 SQF





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RBC Holdings (B)

- **Address:** 123 5th St Spencer, North Carolina
- **Parcel Number:** 032 174
- **Dimensions:** 209 in Height * 1304 in Width = 18926 SQF





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Spencer Town Hall (C)

- **Address:** 460 S. Salisbury Ave. 28159
- **Parcel Number:** 032 194
- **Dimensions:** 159 in Height x 1377 in Width = 1529.4 SQF





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Transportation Museum Office (D)

- **Address:** 420 S. Salisbury Ave. 28159
- **Parcel Number:** 032 170
- **Dimensions:** 99 in Height x 279 in Width = 191.8 SQF





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Ludwig Linoleum and Carpet (E)

- **Address:** 102 4th St, Spencer, NC, 28159, USA
- **Parcel Number:** 032 151
- **Dimensions:** 147 in Height x 224 in Width = 228.67 SQF





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Little Choo Choo Shop (F)

- **Address:** 500 Salisbury Ave, Spencer, NC 28159
- **Parcel Number:** 032 128
- **Dimensions:** 119.5 in Height x 175 in Width = 145.23 SQF, 115 in Height x 175 in Width = 139.76 SQF, 110.5 in Height x 155 in Width = 118.94 SQF, 155 in Height x 112 in Width = 120.56 SQF



Dollar General (G)

- **Address:** 335 N Salisbury GQ Ave, Spencer, NC 28159
- **Parcel Number:** 043 008
- **Dimensions:** 231 in Height x 273 in Width = 437.94 SQF
- **Notes:** Student Mural, Text: Welcome to Spencer





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*Additional walls may become available