



## CityArt in the Alley

### CityArt in the Alley Community Mural - Call to Artists

North Mankato, Minnesota

#### ISSUED BY

Twin Rivers Council for the Arts - CityArt Program  
www.twinriversarts.org | www.cityartmankato.com

#### PROJECT SUMMARY

Twin Rivers, through its CityArt program, invites qualified artists or artist teams to submit credentials for the design and installation of a large-scale exterior mural in North Mankato, MN.

This project is part of the CityArt in the Alley creative placemaking series, developed in response to the Belgrade Avenue reconstruction project. The initiative is intended to activate the corridor during construction by enhancing the visual environment, supporting local businesses and fostering community engagement through the arts.

The selected artist will be commissioned to create a mural that reflects the creative identity of North Mankato, with emphasis on the role of the arts in strengthening community connection, vibrancy and economic vitality.

#### PROJECT PARTNERS & FUNDING

This project is supported by:

- The Marian Anderson Fund of the Mankato Area Foundation (Lead Underwriter)
- Twin Rivers Council for the Arts - CityArt Program

#### PROJECT LOCATION

NaKato Bar & Grill  
253 Belgrade Avenue  
North Mankato, MN 56001

The mural site is a highly visible exterior wall within an active commercial corridor (see CityArt in the Alley Community Mural location attachment on pg. 4).

#### PROJECT SCOPE

The selected artist or artist team will be responsible for:

- Developing a site-specific mural design aligned with project goals
- Participating in stakeholder and/or community engagement opportunities through the CityArt in the Alley creative placemaking series (see pg. 5 for series activities)
- Preparing final design for approval by project stakeholders
- Executing the mural, including layout, painting and finishing
- Coordinating with CityArt staff regarding schedule and logistics
- Ensuring appropriate materials and techniques for long-term durability

## **PROJECT THEME**

The mural should visually interpret one or more of the following:

- The arts in North Mankato
- The North Mankato creative/arts culture (“art vibe”)
- The value of the arts in community identity and economic vitality

Artists are encouraged to propose original, concept-driven work that is engaging, inclusive and reflective of the local community.

## **PROJECT BUDGET**

Total Budget: \$6,250 (all-inclusive)

The budget includes, but is not limited to:

- Artist design fee and compensation
- Materials and supplies
- Surface preparation
- Equipment (e.g., lifts, scaffolding if required)
- Protective coating/sealant

## **PROJECT TIMELINE**

Call to Artists Issued: 4.23.26

Submission Deadline: 5.6.26

Artist Selection: 5.11.26

Design Development & Approval: 5.22.26

Mural Launch/Community Engagement Event: 5.31.26 (attendance required)

Installation Period: 5.31.26-7.18.26

## **ELIGIBILITY**

This Call for Artists is open to:

- Individual artists and artist teams
- Local and regional artists (Minnesota and surrounding areas preferred)

Applicants should demonstrate:

- Experience with murals or large-scale public art
- Ability to complete projects within established timelines and budgets
- Interest in community-centered work

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

This is a qualifications-based selection process. Finalists will be asked to develop a conceptual proposal. Submissions will be reviewed by a selection panel composed of representatives from:

- The Marian Anderson Fund of the Mankato Area Foundation (Community Mural Lead Underwriter)
- Twin Rivers / CityArt
- Gene Biewen and Noel Van Tol (CityArt in the Alley Presenting Sponsor)
- NaKato Bar & Grill
- City of North Mankato

## **SELECTION CRITERIA**

Applications will be evaluated based on:

- Artistic excellence and originality
- Relevant experience and portfolio quality
- Demonstrated ability to execute large-scale work
- Alignment with project goals and theme
- Capacity to engage with community and stakeholders

## **SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

Applicants must submit the following:

- Letter of Interest
- Artist Statement
- Resume or Curriculum Vitae
- Portfolio of Work (3–5 relevant examples)
  - Include images, descriptions, dimensions and locations
- Draft of mural concept (optional but encouraged)
- Proposed opportunities for community engagement/shared creation through the CityArt in the Alley creative placemaking series (see pg. 5 for series activities)
- References (optional but encouraged)

## **SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS**

Submit all materials electronically in a single PDF to:

cityart@twinriversarts.org

Subject Line: CityArt in the Alley Community Mural Call to Artists Submission

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The selected artist will enter into a formal agreement with Twin Rivers.

The artist will be required to adhere to all site, safety and project guidelines.

CityArt reserves the right to not select a finalist if submissions do not meet project needs.

## **ABOUT TWIN RIVERS**

Twin Rivers is a regional nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting artists, enriching communities, and expanding access to the arts through exhibitions, public art initiatives, education and creative partnerships across southern Minnesota. [www.twinriversarts.org](http://www.twinriversarts.org)

## **ABOUT CITYART**

CityArt is a program of Twin Rivers dedicated to enhancing the cultural vitality of the Greater Mankato region through public art, creative placemaking and community partnerships. [www.cityartmankato.com](http://www.cityartmankato.com)

## **CONTACT**

For questions regarding this Call for Artists, please contact:

Stacey Straka

cityart@twinriversarts.org

507.381.8981

# CityArt in the Alley Community Mural - Location

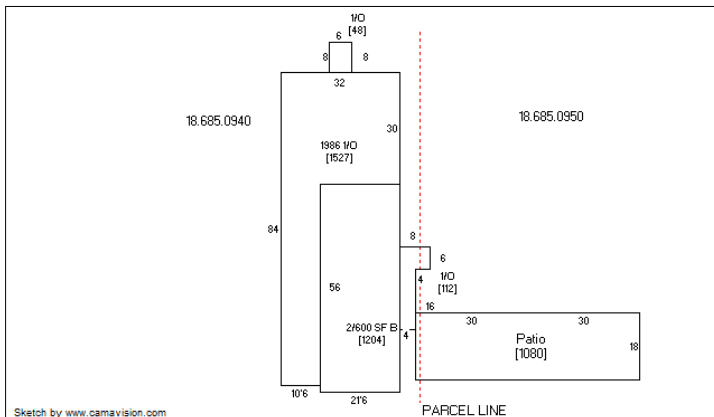
## PROJECT LOCATION

NaKato Bar & Grill  
253 Belgrade Avenue  
North Mankato, MN 56001

Side – Approximately 38 ft. x 10 ft.

Back – Approximately 8 ft. x 10 ft.

Please note that cars park in front of the wall during business hours.





# CityArt in the Alley

PRESENTED BY GENE BIEWEN AND NOEL VAN TOL

Due to the summer 2026 closure of Belgrade Avenue and Veterans Memorial Bridge, North Mankato is unable to host sculptures as part of the 2026–27 CityArt Walking Sculpture Tour.

To continue our commitment to annual public art experiences in North Mankato, CityArt—an initiative of Twin Rivers Council for the Arts—is launching Art in the Alley, a vibrant, creative placemaking series. This summer-long activation will transform the underutilized alley on the south side of Belgrade Avenue into a welcoming public space filled with art, activities and community connections.

## What is Art in the Alley?

Art in the Alley is a four-weekend series of themed creative activations designed to enliven Belgrade Avenue during a disruptive construction season. Through temporary artworks, hands-on experiences and artist-led engagements, the alley becomes a hub of vibrancy—reinforcing that Lower North Mankato remains open, accessible and full of creativity.

## Goals

- Support local businesses by driving foot traffic during construction.
- Create a welcoming, attractive atmosphere for residents, visitors and customers.
- Promote the vitality of LoNo, reinforcing that the district remains vibrant, connected and worth exploring.
- Offer meaningful, joyful public art experiences that connect people to place.

## Art in the Alley Programming

**Creating Art: Saturday, 5.30.26, 10 am-2 pm** - Artists will be commissioned to build temporary sculptures using the existing Belgrade pedestals. The alley will feature creation stations for all ages—visual arts, culinary arts, music-making and more.

**Art & Play: Thursday, 6.18.26, 4-7 pm** - Interactive and artist-designed elements invite visitors to explore, move and engage with art in a whole new way.

**Learning Art: Saturday, 7.18.26, 10 am-2 pm** - From hands-on lessons to live demonstrations, visitors can experience a broad range of artistic mediums and techniques led by local and regional artists.

**Celebrating Us in Art: Saturday, 9.19.26, 11 am-5 pm** - A culminating celebration of community, culture and creativity—honoring the ways art reflects who we are and how we come together.