



Call for Public Art Castle Rock, Colorado

Town of Castle Rock Public Art Commission

Wolfensberger Underpass Mural: Call for Artist Proposals

Short description

The Town of Castle Rock Public Art Commission invites professional artists and artist teams to propose a site-responsive mural for Town-maintained retaining walls along Wolfensberger Road near the BNSF rail underpass. The highly visible corridor serves pedestrians and motorists and will become increasingly prominent with planned nearby development. Artists may propose full or partial wall coverage and are encouraged to use the site's scale creatively. The maximum all-inclusive commission is \$70,000.

Long description

The Town of Castle Rock Public Art Commission invites artists and artist teams to submit proposals for a mural installation on Town-maintained retaining walls along Wolfensberger Road near the BNSF rail underpass in Castle Rock, Colorado. The project will transform a prominent pedestrian and vehicular corridor into an engaging public art experience and create a memorable gateway between established neighborhoods, Downtown Castle Rock, and planned destinations including The Brickyard and the Castle Rock Sports Center.

Artists are invited to create original designs that reflect the spirit of Castle Rock. Artists may draw inspiration from the community's history, identity, landscape, character, lifestyle, or sense of place, or explore Castle Rock through fun, imaginative, contemporary, or unexpected concepts. Artists are encouraged to interpret Castle Rock through their own creative vision and artistic style.

The project site consists of long concrete retaining walls on both sides of Wolfensberger Road. Approximate measured lengths are 655 feet along the north side and 746 feet along the south side. Wall heights vary with grade and reach approximately 26 feet 6 inches at the tallest measured point. The north sidewalk is approximately 6 feet wide and the south sidewalk is approximately 7 feet wide. Dimensions are approximate and must be field verified by the selected artist before final design and installation.

Artwork is limited to approved retaining-wall areas outside the BNSF right-of-way. No artwork may be applied to the underside of the bridge, the bridge structure, railroad-owned elements, or any wall surface within 50 feet of the track centerline in either direction along Wolfensberger Road. This exclusion creates four eligible retaining-wall areas: the north and south walls on each side of the railroad right-of-way. The Town will identify final paintable limits and coordinate applicable permits and access requirements with the selected artist.

Artists are not expected to cover every square inch of the available wall surface. Partial coverage and open compositions are welcome. Proposals may use repeated or flowing elements, areas of exposed concrete, concentrated areas of color, or other approaches that respond creatively to the site's scale and movement. The proposal should create a cohesive visual experience across all four eligible retaining-wall areas, even when individual elements are separated by open wall space.

The artwork should be visually engaging at roadway speeds and rewarding at pedestrian distance. Artists should consider sightlines, changing wall heights, shadows, intense sun and ultraviolet exposure, freeze-thaw cycles, snow, moisture, road grime, deicing materials, vehicle emissions, and the possibility of graffiti or vandalism.

The mural must use professional-grade exterior materials compatible with the existing concrete substrate. Applicants must describe the proposed surface preparation, primer, paint, application, ultraviolet-protection, and anti-graffiti coating systems and explain why the complete system is appropriate for long-term outdoor use in Colorado. Product compatibility and manufacturer application requirements must be addressed.

The Town anticipates requiring a compatible mural-preservation system that includes ultraviolet protection and a sacrificial anti-graffiti layer, such as MuralShield used with World's Best Graffiti Coating, or an approved equivalent. The final system will be reviewed with the selected artist, the Town's conservator, and the product manufacturer before installation.

The Town will work with the selected artist to coordinate necessary permits, site access, and agreed-upon cleaning or wall preparation before installation. The selected artist will be responsible for final design, materials, labor, equipment, lifts or scaffolding, travel, installation, protective coatings, insurance, safety compliance, and all other artist-controlled project costs unless otherwise stated in the final agreement.

The mural is intended to remain in place for approximately 10 years, subject to condition, maintenance, operational needs, and Town discretion. The selected artist will provide a one-year warranty covering defects in artist-provided materials and workmanship and will submit a written maintenance and repair plan for the Town's long-term care of the mural.

The selected artist may also be invited to participate in media, community engagement, or public-programming opportunities associated with the project.

Project schedule

- August 2026 - Call published
- September 30, 2026 - Application deadline at 11:59 p.m. Mountain Time
- October-November 2026 - Proposal review, artist interviews if needed, and selection
- Fall/Winter 2026 - Finalist notification and contract initiation

- Winter 2026 through spring 2027 - Site verification, final design development, permitting, material review, and installation planning, surface preparation and mural installation, as weather and site conditions permit
- June 15, 2027 - Target project completion

The installation schedule may be adjusted in coordination with the selected artist based on weather, permits, material requirements, access, and site conditions.

Application requirements

- Submit the following materials as one PDF document. Artists may include up to three design concepts in one application. Please see the separate site plan and approximate elevations.
- Statement of interest, 250 words or fewer, describing the artist's interest in the project and overall approach to the site.
- Artist or team resume demonstrating relevant experience with murals, durable outdoor artwork, or comparable large-scale public art projects.
- Two professional references for comparable completed projects if available.
- Five to ten images of relevant completed work with an annotated image list identifying title, location, year, dimensions, materials, client, and project budget.
- Concept drawing, sketch, digital rendering, or site mockup showing the proposed mural approach and the relationship among all four eligible retaining-wall areas. The concept may show full or partial wall coverage.
- Concept narrative, no more than 500 words, explaining the design, relationship to Castle Rock and the site, intended viewing experience, proposed coverage, and any community-engagement component.
- Materials and conservation plan identifying the proposed concrete preparation, primer, paint or coating products, application methods, UV protection, anti-graffiti system, compatibility between layers, expected durability, and maintenance considerations.
- Installation and safety approach identifying anticipated equipment, lifts or scaffolding, crew needs, access assumptions, pedestrian and traffic considerations, and estimated installation duration.
- Proposed project schedule, including final design, material procurement, surface preparation, installation, coating cure times, and weather contingency.

- Itemized project budget including artist design fee, labor, assistants, materials, equipment and lift rental, transportation, travel, installation, protective coatings, insurance, documentation, contingency, and other artist-controlled costs.
- No design fee will be paid for preliminary concepts submitted through the application process. The Town may invite a limited number of applicants to an interview or concept presentation before final selection, but may also select a finalist after initial review.

Eligibility criteria

This request for proposals is open nationally to professional artists and artist teams who are legally authorized to work and receive payment in the United States. Preference may be given to artists based in Castle Rock, Douglas County, Colorado, and the surrounding region; however, geographic location is only one consideration. The Public Art Commission reserves the right to select the proposal and finalist that best meet the project goals regardless of the applicant's location.

Applicants must demonstrate prior experience completing durable exterior murals or comparable large-scale public art installations and the ability to manage final design, materials, labor, equipment, installation, safety, scheduling, and coordination within the approved budget.

Proposed artwork must be original, appropriate for audiences of all ages, responsive to the project goals, and technically suitable for the site.

Applicants must be able to enter into an agreement with the Town of Castle Rock, provide required tax documentation, and maintain required insurance during the project.

Applications are welcome from qualified artists without regard to race, ethnicity, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, or other status protected by applicable law.

Selection criteria

- Artistic excellence and originality
- Response to Castle Rock and the site
- Technical durability and conservation approach
- Feasibility, budget, and schedule
- Relevant experience and project management

Rules and terms to apply

All submitted artwork must be original and must not infringe any copyright, trademark, privacy, publicity, or other intellectual property right. Artists are responsible for all necessary permissions, licenses, and releases.

Artwork may not include advertising, commercial branding, business names, product promotion, political endorsements, campaign messaging, nudity, graphic violence, illegal drugs, or content the Town determines is inappropriate for the site.

No artwork or paint may be applied to the underside of the bridge, bridge structures, railroad-owned elements, or wall areas within the 100-foot BNSF right-of-way zone extending 50 feet from the track centerline in either direction along Wolfensberger Road.

The selected artist must field verify site dimensions, remain within Town-approved paintable limits, comply with permit and access conditions, and coordinate work with designated Town staff.

The selected artist is responsible for all artist-controlled installation costs, including labor, assistants, materials, equipment, lifts or scaffolding, transportation, travel, protective coatings, insurance, safety measures, documentation, and cleanup, except for Town work expressly identified in the final agreement.

The selected artist must use a complete, mutually compatible exterior mural system and follow manufacturer requirements for substrate preparation, environmental conditions, application, drying, curing, and protective coatings.

The selected artist must maintain a safe work site and comply with applicable laws, codes, traffic-control requirements, pedestrian-access requirements, equipment rules, and Town safety requirements.

The selected artist will provide a one-year warranty covering defects in artist-provided materials and workmanship and a written maintenance and repair plan supporting the mural's intended 10-year service life.

Final selection is contingent upon successful execution of a Town agreement, verification of insurance, completion of tax and vendor documentation, and approval of the final design and technical plan.

Artists retain ownership of submitted concepts until an agreement is executed. The final agreement will address ownership of the completed physical artwork and the Town's rights to install, display, maintain, document, reproduce, promote, alter, repair, remove, or deaccession the artwork.

The selected artist agrees not to create or authorize an exact duplicate reproduction of the completed artwork within a 50-mile radius of the project site.

Application materials may be reviewed in public meetings and may become publicly available records. Applicants should not include confidential or sensitive personal information.

The Town may select a proposal, request clarification, negotiate scope, decline all proposals, modify the schedule, or cancel the project when determined to be in the Town's best interest.

Budget

\$70,000 maximum all-inclusive artist commission

The total artist contract may not exceed \$70,000 and must include all artist-controlled costs necessary to complete the project, including:

Artist design and project-management fees

Artist and assistant labor

Paint, primer, supplies, and compatible UV and anti-graffiti coating systems

Equipment, lift, scaffolding, ladder, and safety-equipment rental

Transportation, travel, lodging, shipping, and material delivery

Installation, site protection, daily cleanup, and final cleanup

Insurance, permits or fees assigned to the artist, and required documentation

Contingency and other artist-controlled project expenses

The Town will coordinate applicable permits, access, and agreed-upon initial cleaning or wall preparation. The exact Town-provided scope will be documented before contract execution.

The payment schedule will be established in the artist agreement and may include an initial payment after contract execution, progress payments tied to approved milestones, and final payment after completion and acceptance.