



---

## River Falls Utility Box Beautification Project REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The City of River Falls and River Falls Community Arts Base invite local artists to participate in a community public art project - River Falls Utility Box Beautification Project. Below are the specifications and instructions of this RFP.

This project is designed for beautification of the City of River Falls by painting mural on specific utility boxes. The art will become the property of the City of River Falls. Artists whose work is selected will receive a stipend of \$500 which will be used for supplies.

- Submission deadline: 5/10/2021
- Selected artist's notification: 5/24/2021
- Start date for selected artists: 5/28/2021
- Completion of artwork by: 7/12/2021

Please return completed forms and accompanying materials to the River Falls City Hall, 222 Lewis St. River Falls, WI 54022 or contact Mike Noreen at 715-426-3467 or [mnoreen@rfcity.org](mailto:mnoreen@rfcity.org).

### Introduction

River Falls Community Arts Base is seeking qualified artists and requesting proposals from individuals/teams from the surrounding community and from UW-River Falls to create two-dimensional permanent murals on selected utility boxes located in River Falls. This project will not only mitigate the negative effects of graffiti and unwanted postings on utility boxes, and thus reducing maintenance costs to the City of River Falls. It will also create lasting pieces of art that will improve the appearance of the town for residents and visitors alike.

This project will recognize and celebrate local artists, showcase local history, and foster a culture of the arts in River Falls. This project will add a unique attraction to the area encouraging visitors to stop and explore the town. Each participant will develop and submit a preliminary visual concept for the mural to be installed on the selected utility boxes. These plans will be reviewed and approved by a committee which will include a representative from the City of River Falls and CAB.

### Mission

The idea to transform something strictly utilitarian into something beautiful is not new. Cities across the nation, from Menomonie, WI; to Minneapolis, MN; to Fort Collins, CO, have completed similar projects to beautify and enliven their downtowns.

Past examples of projects



The Utility Box Beautification Project is an example of how Creative Place Making can transform a community. Creative Place Making, according to the Endowment for the Arts, is a concept where public, private, not-for-profit, and community sectors partner to strategically shape the physical and social character of their neighborhood or city around arts and cultural activities. Projects such as these create more livable communities with enhanced quality of life by increasing creative activity and creating a distinct sense of place. This RFP will tell you everything you need to know to carry out your project from start to finish.

## The 2021 Locations have yet to be determined

### Specifications

1. Artists may submit up to three proposals based on dimensions of the enclosed template and should include all sides. Note, actual boxes may be a different size. Artist signature must not exceed 3"x5" in actual size.
2. Artwork in draft must closely resemble the art that will be installed on the box.
3. All submitted proposals will become the property of the City of River Falls. There is no guarantee of how long the artwork may remain on box due to maintenance or replacement.
4. Applicants should view and become familiar with their proposed utility box and the location around it in order to contextualize their proposal.
5. Artists should request a specific box location, but the review committee reserves the right to assign the box to the artist.
6. The selection committee will review all proposals.
7. Selected artists will be notified by email and will receive instructions about necessary contract forms to be signed and returned at a time TBD.
8. Please submit your application and artwork to Mike Noreen by May 10, 2021.

### Eligible Proposals

The first priority is that the boxes become high quality artworks that enliven the community. Proposals should be positive, original, and creative and may (but are not required) to reflect the following:

- Create a sense of place- River Falls
- The character and culture of River Falls
- The history of River Falls

#### **Proposals will be ineligible if they involve:**

- A breach of intellectual property rights (all artwork must be original)
- Trademarks, brands, business names, logos, or copyrighted images
- Anything harmful or offensive to a third party
- Majority of proposal consisting of dark paints (dark paints can overheat a box)

### Policies and Guidelines

**NOTE:** The surfaces of the box will need to be properly prepared by the artist.

1. The submitted artwork must resemble the art that will be painted on the box.
2. Because the size of the boxes may vary slightly, be prepared to adjust your artwork to fit the size of the box.
3. Painting may begin any time after the proposal has been approved, but must be completed within three (3) weeks of starting.
4. The City of River Falls, River Falls Municipal Utilities or its contractors, must have access to the components in the box at all times.
5. During installation, artists may want to block off the box to keep the public from disturbing wet paint,

but care must be taken to give at least five (5) feet of sidewalk open for compliance with ADA requirements.

6. When washing or painting the box, it should be done in a manner so that no moisture gets inside the box through any vents. There is sensitive electronic equipment inside the boxes.
7. The vents should not be covered as not to restrict airflow from the cabinet.
8. Door hinges should not be painted so as to not lock the door in place.
9. Artwork must not consist primarily of dark colors; due to the potential overheating of the boxes.
10. The meter, labels, stickers, levers, hinges, and keyholes on the box should not have any coating over them.
11. The front of the box is the side with the vents and doors. The back of the box is the side with a plain face. However, the front of the box does not usually face the street.

### **Artist Benefits:**

- Artist Recognition via your signature on utility box (no larger than 3"x5")
- Notable mention of all artists in media information relating to this project.
- Information will appear on City of River Falls, River Falls Municipal Utilities and CAB website and social media platforms, as well as promotional material including artist name, artwork title, and photography of artwork.
- A stipend of \$500 for artwork installation and materials.

### **Instructions for selected Artists**

- Once your artwork is selected, you will be notified by a CAB representative.

### **Question and answer and contract signing**

- All artists will be required to meet with a member of the CAB board to receive an overview of painting instructions and sign your contract with CAB.

### **Prepping Utility Box:**

Follow these steps to prep your utility box.

1. Clean the surface of the box with biodegradable cleaner.
2. Rinse and allow surface to dry completely.
3. Sand the cabinet with a fine grade sandpaper until the surface feels rough. Be sure to wipe surfaces with a damp cloth to remove all dust/grit after sanding. It is recommended that all boxes be sanded prior to painting, as many may have an anti-graffiti coating that will interfere with paint adhesion.
4. Apply one coat of metal primer on box.
5. After primer coat is completely dry, a colored base coat should be applied.

### **Painting:**

- Use only Acrylic Paint: Golden or Liquitex high-viscosity paint, lightfastness 1 is recommended

Below is a comprehensive checklist of recommended supplies for the best painting outcome and your personal comfort. This may not be a complete list as all artists work differently and will require different supplies:

- Approved Utility Box Art signage to identify the artist while working
- Paint Stool or chair for comfort
- Buckets to hold water for paint brushes
- Paint brushes

- Painters tape, masking tape
- Cloth or plastic sheeting for protecting surrounding area
- Biodegradable cleaner
- Rags and/or paper towels

**Please be ADVISED:**

- Do not paint over any identification numbers/codes, warning or UL stickers or meter.
- Do not paint over keyholes or paint keyhole covers so that they cannot be opened.
- Do not obstruct vents.

**Preserving your work:**

Allow paint to dry completely. It is recommended that acrylic paint have 24-48 hours cure time before varnishing. Use a cloth to wipe down the box before applying the clear coat to preserve your artwork. Follow the directions of the coating. Mandatory: Apply two coats of Liquitex Gloss Varnish, each coat in the opposite direction, with adequate dry time in between. This is a permanent coat and will protect the paint from the environment, block UV, and will not amber. Let dry for a minimum of 5 hours. Apply a second coat. Allow to dry for a minimum of 5 hours. Apply a coat on top of this Liquitex Soluvar. This is not a permanent varnish, but is weather and UV resistant. This will enable better graffiti removal if needed.

**Cleaning the site:**

Artists are responsible for cleanup of their area and safe disposal of all paint materials.



---

## Submission Checklist

### Completed Application

- Artist name, mailing address, e-mail address, website, and telephone number.

### Artwork Information

- Artwork title and brief description of submitted piece (100 words or less) of reasons or inspiration behind your proposal (Will be used in promotional materials).

### Template Sample

- Proposals should be submitted on material as described under specifications using the provided box template design, and include all sides of the box. A color rendering as an accurate depiction of your proposed design for the box, including signature. All submitted proposals become the property of the City of River Falls. Artists are allowed to submit up to three designs.

Submission can be digitally or in hardcopy. If making a digital submission, your design should be on the template in this RFP.



## River Falls Utility Box Beautification Application

Thank you for your interest in participating in the River Falls Utility Box Beautification Project. Please fill in all information and print clearly. Don't forget to submit your artist bio and proposed box design template along with this form to Mike Noreen at 222 Lewis St or electronically at [mnoreen@rfcity.org](mailto:mnoreen@rfcity.org) River Falls, WI 54022.

### Artist Information

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Organization (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

If under 18 years old, age: Name of School \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Consent (under 18) \_\_\_\_\_

### Artist Information

*Please attach a brief artist bio and portfolio with your submission.*

Why do you believe public art is an important part of the community?

Please return completed forms to Mike Noreen at 222 Lewis St. River Falls, WI 54022



---

## Artwork Information

Please include Title of Submission, medium, submission description in no more than 100 words for each submission. (Rendering must be included in color in template provided showing all sides).





## Utility Box Template

Artist Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Box location: \_\_\_\_\_ Artwork Title \_\_\_\_\_

Side

Front

Side

Back
