



Department of Planning and Conservation
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MONTAGUE MURAL GUIDELINES AND RIVERCULTURE MURAL PROGRAM

*Developed by the Department of Planning and Conservation
and members of the RiverCulture Steering Committee*

Adopted by the RiverCulture Steering Committee
August 17, 2021

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Montague Mural Guidelines is to encourage the creation of strong, compelling public art that is compatible with the preservation of the historical and architectural character of Montague. These guidelines include non-content related rules about presentation, location, treatment, and installation.

The RiverCulture Mural Program is a companion to these guidelines, designed to provide technical and financial assistance for compelling projects that align with community and/ or redevelopment goals of the Department of Planning and Conservation.

A few more points-

Murals funded by RiverCulture and/ or on Town property are required to meet the guideline standards and be accepted by through the RiverCulture Steering Committee.

All muralists are welcome to discuss any aspect of their project with the Director.

Community engagement is an important part of public art and as such, all muralists are encouraged to develop a community engagement strategy.

I. MURAL GUIDELINES

i. Definition: A mural is defined as an image that is painted or affixed directly on an exterior wall that is clearly visible from a public way. A mural is not a sign and may not advertise a specific product or business. A sign is defined as relating exclusively to the premises on which it is located, or to products, accommodations, services or activity on the premises. Zoning regulations for signs are available at:

https://www.montague-ma.gov/files/Planning_Board_Zoning_Bylaws_21919.pdf (Section 7.1)

ii. Mural presentation: Murals are encouraged on the side and rear of buildings, facing alleyways, public parking lots, and public parks. Murals are not permitted on the front façade of buildings that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places (village centers of Turners Falls, Montague Center, and Millers Falls). The façade is defined as the principal entrance facing a public roadway. Murals are encouraged on the side and rear of buildings, facing alleyways, public parking lots, and public parks.

iii. Preservation of brick exteriors: Because of the importance of brick architecture to community character, The Town discourages murals on previously unpainted brick walls on buildings. If a mural is proposed on an unpainted brick wall, the Town advises that murals be painted on mountable panels or other substrates, provided the building surface is not adversely affected. Murals proposed for previously painted brick walls do not require a substrate however the artist must prepare the surface for paint adhesion and longevity. The installation of other mural materials, like mosaics, should be discussed with the Planning Department.

iv. Preservation of architectural features: The Town discourages the application of murals on architectural features such as windows, doors, pilasters, cornices, building trim, roof lines, feature bands, and other recessed or projecting features. Projects designed to be painted on architectural features will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

v. Mural treatment and maintenance: Murals shall be treated with a clear top coating and/or other measures that will protect the quality of the mural finish, discourage vandalism and/or facilitate repairs. Protective coatings will be reapplied every three (3) years. Building owners are responsible for reapplying the clear top coat, and ensuring that mural is maintained/ repaired in the case of vandalism or accidental destruction.

vi. Height limitations: The top of the mural may be no higher than the roofline of the structure/building.

vii. Weight limitations: A mural with any element that weighs more than 7 pounds per square foot (7 psf) or in total weighs more than 400 pounds (400 lbs.) requires structural review by the Building Inspector.

viii. Removal: Any and all associated materials that were used to affix or secure the mural to the wall must be removed at the time of the removal of the mural. This includes, but is not limited to mounting hardware, brackets, caulk, adhesives, etc. Removal of materials must leave no irreparable impact to the façade. Any impact to the façade must be repaired.

iiiv. Permissions: Any muralist must have express written permission from the building owner prior to commencing work. (not applicable if the property owner is the muralist).

iv. Neighborhood Engagement: immediate abutting neighbors, including those across the street should be notified in writing or in person and have the opportunity to review the intended plans.

Limited exceptions to the mural guidelines may be granted by the RiverCulture Steering Committee on a case-by case basis.

II. RIVERCULTURE MURAL PROGRAM

The goal of the RiverCulture Mural Program is to encourage mural projects that enhance the community, increase connections between artists, neighborhoods and residents and foster successful and impactful projects that integrate with the cultural and community development goals of the Town.

To achieve this, the RiverCulture Program can offer the following assistance to qualifying projects:

- Community outreach and engagement
- Proposal development (budget, timeframe, scope, materials, and maintenance strategy)
- Coordination and permissions with relevant municipal bodies, as needed.
- Volunteer acquisition, as needed
- Implementation funding for materials and artist fees. Note: Funding is limited and subject to availability. Typically a 50% match is required. Projects will rarely be funded in full. Unfortunately, not all projects will be funded.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Individuals/organizations intending to create a mural on an exterior wall that is visible from the public right-of-way can apply for funding through the RiverCulture mural program.

- Mural applicants may be: An individual artist or group of artists
- A building or business owner
- A not-for-profit group as defined as an organization whose primary purpose is to provide general benefits to the public. IRS 503c3 status is not required; neighborhood associations, citizen-based groups and school organizations are also eligible.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Meet with the Director to discuss your mural at least one month prior to submitting your application.

Complete the application form and assemble the supplemental materials.

Email or deliver your materials to riverculture@montague-ma.gov

Present your mural concept to the RiverCulture Steering Committee for approval.

Begin work.



RiverCulture
1 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA 01376
413-863-3200
riverculture@montague-ma.gov
www.riverculture.org

RIVERCULTURE MURAL PROGRAM Application Form

Name:	
Mailing Address:	
Website:	
Phone:	
Email:	

MURAL LOCATION

Building Address:	
Building Owner:	
Owner Phone:	
Owner Email:	

Do you have property owner permission?

Yes No Not yet (Please describe)

Will any element weigh more than 7 Lbs/sqft or more than 400 Lbs?

Yes No

If Yes, the project will be reviewed by the Building Inspector.

Project Budget: _____ Financial request (if applicable): _____

RIVERCULTURE MURAL PROGRAM SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Narrative Questions

In a separate attachment please answer the following questions:

ABOUT YOUR MURAL

Describe the concept and/or purpose of the proposed mural.

Describe mural's relevance to its location and impact on the community.

What is the mural's proposed dimensions?

From what intersections/viewpoints can pedestrians and motorist see the mural?

What is the composition and condition of the wall where the mural will be painted/ installed?

How will you prepare the wall appropriately?

Provide a materials list (primer, paint, mosaic, glue, panels, protective coatings etc.)

Do you have a plan for maintenance and mitigating vandalism?

COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Describe the public outreach that has been to date, or is planned (e.g. meetings with the neighborhood association, business community, surrounding neighbors etc.).

Is there a sponsor organization for this mural? If so, please provide their contact information.

Provide a statement of support from the sponsor organization and/or neighbors, if applicable.

Provide a statement of support from the property owner.

MURAL FEASIBILITY

Describe the artist's past experience creating murals.

Describe your budget (Artist Fees, supplies, insurance, wall preparation, sealer, and scaffolding/lifts).

Describe your funding strategy for the mural project.

Describe your timeline for implementation.

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- Application Form
- Proof of permission, if you are not the owner of the building
- Sketch(s) or rendering of proposed mural, including dimensions
- JPG image(s) of site and physical surroundings
- Statement of support from sponsoring organization
- Narrative Answers

APPENDIX A: REVIEW CRITERIA

Applications will be reviewed and scored by the RiverCulture Steering Committee using the following criteria:

ARTISTIC MERIT: Projects that demonstrate a distinct visual language, high levels of creativity, concept, messaging and/or interpretation.

SCALE: Appropriateness of scale to the wall upon which the mural will be painted or attached and to the surrounding physical features.

CONTEXT: Architectural, geographical, socio-cultural, and/or historical relevance to the site.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT: General support/advocacy from the building owner/user, surrounding neighborhood, adjacent businesses, and/or arts community.

FEASIBILITY: Demonstrated ability to complete the proposed mural on time and within budget.

MATERIALS: Appropriate materials proposed to ensure the mural's longevity and durability.

STRUCTURAL AND SURFACE STABILITY: Commitment to prepare/repair the mural surface as necessary before painting and a plan for mitigating graffiti through design and/or graffiti coating.

LETTER OF SUPPORT FROM BUILDING OWNER: Commitment to keep the mural in place as approved for a minimum of 5 years and to maintain the mural during that time.

PUBLIC ACCESSIBILITY, SAFETY, and LIGHTING: Commitment to comply with Town regulations.

TOWN PRIORITIES: The mural supports or aligns with the community development priorities of the Town

APPENDIX B: RESOURCES FOR COMPLETING A SUCCESSFUL MURAL

Commonwealth Murals/ Community Mural Institute

The Community Mural Institute combines classroom instruction and experiential learning so that by the end of the Institute, artists can independently create and install exceptional community-engaged murals. The Institute teaches how to structure and facilitate community design and painting workshops, best practices for mural design, and how to create and install murals using the parachute cloth technique. During the Institute, each artist partners with a community group to design, paint and install a 150 square foot mural.

<https://www.commonwealthmurals.org/>

“Mural Making 101” by the Pittsburgh Arts Council

<https://www.pittsburghartsCouncil.org/component/content/article/20-general/4295-mural-making-101>

“Mural Creation Best Practices” by the American Institute for Conservation

<https://www.culturalheritage.org/docs/default-source/resources/mural-creation-best-practices-full-document.pdf?sfvrsn=4>

“Mural Painting Material” by Michael Townsend of Just Paint

<https://www.justpaint.org/mural-painting/>

“Plywood as a Substrate for Painting” by Mark Gottsegen of Just Paint

<https://www.justpaint.org/plywood-as-a-substrate-for-painting/>

“Community Murals” by the Chicago Public Art Group

http://www.cpag.net/guide/2/2_pages/2_1.htm#:~:text=Most%20collaborative%20murals%20are%20painted,a llow%20the%20wall%20to%20breathe.

“How to Paint a Mural- Complete Guide for Wall Painting” by Widewalls

<https://www.widewalls.ch/magazine/how-to-paint-mural-think-grid>

“Mural Notes” by The Paint Spot

<https://paintspot.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Tips-for-Painting-Murals.pdf>

Mural Routes/ Toronto/ <https://muralroutes.ca/>

We create, promote, educate, advise and link artists, organizations and others that are interested in the development of wall art. Mural Routes has become the primary advisor for communities engaged in producing public wall art in the Greater Toronto Area and beyond.”

“Mural Production: A Resource Handbook” by Mural Routes, Toronto.

Available to loan through the Department of Planning and Conservation