

Public Art Grant

Main Street Paris seeks proposals for a site-specific public art installation at 27 North Elm in Paris, Arkansas that will pay homage to our town's rich history and beautify the park. The project will be funded in part by the Division of Arkansas Heritage.

Of particular interest are projects that are sculptural and relate to trains.

Overview of project scope/vision/goals of the installation:

Our community has a deep-rooted history in coal mining and railroading. We would like the centerpiece of this project to be a train sculpture, designed to capture both the strength and endurance of the workers who built our town and the iconic steam engine that still resides here today. This installation will serve as a landmark that tells the story of Paris' industrious past while inspiring pride and connection for generations to come.

By blending artistry with history, this project aims to create a space where the community can reflect, remember, and take pride in our identity—transforming a piece of our past into a timeless symbol for our future.

Artist proposals will be reviewed based on the following criteria:

- Site specificity: ability of the work to engage art audiences and the general public with the location using elements of surprise, humor, imagery, design, etc.
- Quality of the proposal and prior work
- Fit for Downtown Paris community and our neighbors
- Feasibility of the proposal
- Originality and timeliness
- Safety of visitors and passersby

Artist Eligibility

Applicant must be an experienced visual artist and have provide evidence of previous work within the past ten years.

Selection Process Overview

The Selection Committee will review applications and select a finalist to execute their design for the site contingent on approval of the committee's recommendation by Main Street Paris and acceptance of subsequent design development deliverables. Execution of project is dependent on award by Division of Arkansas Heritage to Main Street Paris.

In addition to meeting eligibility requirements selection of finalists will be based on the following criteria:

- Quality of letter and quality of work samples
- Ability of artist or team to successfully design, produce and install project.
- Conveys artistic excellence and supports goals of the project including honoring the past and our current community
- Considers ways to creatively and meaningfully engage community (during design phase and as part of interactive engagement with audiences)
- Flexibility in design after engaging with local business owners
- Has a broad appeal, and considers diverse audiences
- Is durable, relative to the environment, vandalism, and changing seasons
- Is considered safe and low-maintenance **(The artwork must be freely visible and accessible to the public for at least two years.)**

Audience

Selected work must meet safety requirements and be able to withstand the effects of weather and public use for a minimum of two years. Prior to preparing proposals, applicants are encouraged to visit the location, both during the day and at night. Applicants are also encouraged to learn about the history and context of the location and neighborhood. Artworks will be on display free of charge to passersby 24/7 while invigorating the site as a destination for the community and tourists alike.

Site Information

The proposed site is the location of Union Bank Park on the Northeast corner of the Historic Paris Square. It has partial sun but no covering so materials used should be durable and able to withstand all weather.

Timeline

- Deadline for RFP submission; all required materials received by 11:59PM on October 2, 2025.
- A confirmation email will be sent to applicants once materials are received.
- Committee review and selection of design
- Artists notified of final selection no later than October 15, 2025
- Deadline for completion - one year from grant award

How to Apply:

The following should be sent to Danielle Barham by mail or email by October 2, 2025.

1. COVER SHEET

Applicants must include a cover sheet with their name, mailing address, telephone number, email, project title, and a single paragraph of up to 150 words summarizing the proposed project. If applying as a team, please include the names and emails for each team member and identify one team member as the lead contact.

2. PROJECT PROPOSAL AND BUDGET

Applicants must submit a project proposal of up to 1,000 words that clearly describes the project and its relationship to the specific site. Applicants must submit renderings and sketches of the proposed project. Proposals must demonstrate feasibility within the budget of \$12,000

3. CURRENT RESUME OR CV

Resume or CV should include information about education; work and teaching experience; exhibition history, if applicable; awards, grants, and residencies; and other relevant information.

4. RECENT WORK WITH IMAGES AND SCRIPT

Applicants must include (up to ten) digital images of recent works. These images are in addition to images submitted as part of the project proposal. Art concepts and/or recent works may be in any medium. For each image, include the title, date, and a brief description of the work.

Applications should be sent to:

Main Street Paris
301 West Walnut
Paris, AR 72855

Or via email at MainStreetParis@gmail.com.

For any additional questions, please reach out to Danielle Barham at 479-213-3881.