



***Now seeking applications from towns of 5,000 or fewer in west central Minnesota.***

**DEADLINE TO APPLY: Friday, October 30, 2024**

**Is your town interested in having a welcoming, vibrant, and busy Main Street? Do you want to involve artists in your Main Street goals but aren't sure where to start?**

The Lake Region Arts Council and West Central Initiative are excited to announce the opportunity for small towns in our region who are interested in building their capacity and experience in collaborating with their creative community.

**Artists on Main Street** provides technical assistance, training, and financial support, to one town under 5,000 in population in West Central Minnesota that wants to learn how to effectively collaborate with their creative community. Towns that are actively working on downtown/Main Street revitalization and are interested in leveraging the talents of artists and creatives to build more vibrant and just rural economies, enhance civic life, and respond to challenges and opportunities are encouraged to apply.

Funding for the first year of this pilot project is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through grants from the Lake Region Arts Council, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the Arts and Cultural Heritage fund.

#### **About Artists on Main Street**

Artists on Main Street is a program led by Rethos: Places Reimagined and Springboard for the Arts that has taken place in 14 communities across Minnesota and North Dakota since its launch in 2018, resulting in hundreds of artist-led projects addressing main street challenges and opportunities.

The purpose of Artists on Main Street is to support rural community development at the intersection of arts and culture, downtown revitalization and historic preservation. Artists on Main Street is a year-long initiative that includes training and technical assistance for community leaders, creative placemaking training for local artists, and direct project funding. Community leaders leave with tangible skills and processes for hiring artists for civic projects, a portfolio of artist-led placemaking projects that gather information and ideas from the community, and strengthened relationships across sectors. Artists leave having had a chance to demonstrate their talents and ideas in the community and new relationships with civic leaders and local businesses.

Artists on Main Street uses an inclusive, "learn by doing" approach that includes as many artists as possible to demonstrate ideas and engage the community in a year of downtown activation through art, culture, and creativity. Rather than one large, permanent project, Artists on Main Street's philosophy is to support "lots of little," artist-led projects, many of which are temporary. Collectively, these projects support relationship building, increase economic vitality, and inspire a sense of stewardship and agency among community members of all ages and backgrounds.

Learn more and browse previous Artists on Main Street communities and projects:

[www.rethos.org/artists-on-main-street](http://www.rethos.org/artists-on-main-street)



### Program Benefits:

- Ongoing, customized training and technical support to implement an Artist on Main Street initiative in your community from Springboard for the Arts and Rethos: Places Reimagined
- 1-2 customized Creative Placemaking trainings for local artists.
- \$10,000 in funding for up to 10 small, artist-led projects (\$1,000 – \$2,000 each) that help communities accomplish their goals or address challenges related to downtown and main street.

### Eligibility:

- Artists on Main Street is open to communities with a population of 5,000 or fewer in West Central Minnesota (Becker, Clay, Douglas, Grant, Otter Tail, Pope, Stevens, Traverse, and Wilkin Counties).
- Lead Applicant must be a city government actively involved in downtown/main street revitalization.
- Lead Applicant must identify and provide contact information 3-4 Planning Team members who are willing to commit to participating in the planning process for the program, have a strong interest in learning how to work with and collaborate with artists on community development issues, and can represent a wide variety of stakeholders. (These individuals may be contacted by WCI and LRAC to confirm their interest and commitment)

### Selection Criteria:

- **Impact:** The applicant shows a true interest in “learning by doing” and believes in art and creativity as a process for building community. They show a nuanced understanding of their town’s unique challenges in downtown revitalization and have a vision for the impact they want this program to make.
- **Commitment:** The applicant demonstrates enthusiasm for the project and alignment with the goals, strategies, and activities of Artists on Main Street. They are eager to learn from artist-led responses to local challenges and opportunities. They also can offer a match of either \$2,500 for in-kind administrative and staff support or \$2500 to increase the artist project support budget.
- **Capacity:** The applicant identifies 1-2 individuals who will have the capacity to act as a coordinator(s) for the program. Coordination includes communicating regularly with Artists on Main Street facilitators, promoting the program to local artists, organizing project selection meetings, supporting and cheering on projects, and seeking opportunities for storytelling and communications (tools, training, and templates will be provided by Artists on Main St)

### Selection Timeline:

Complete and submit application by **Wednesday, October 30, 2024.**

Applicants will be notified of their application status by November 21, 2024.

If selected, the applicant must confirm participation by December 4, 2024.

### Timeline:

October 30, 2024	Application deadline
November 21, 2024	Community selected and announced
December 2024	Orientation Meeting (virtual)
January & February 2025	Creative Community Training #1: Setting short & long-term goals Creative Community Training #2: Project selection, supporting artist ideas
March-April 2025	Creative Placemaking workshops for artists take place (up to 2)
May-December 2025	Projects take place
May 2025	Creative Community Training #3: Storytelling and promotion
August 2025	Creative Community Training #4: Understanding impact, building on learning

### Application Process

Please fill out and submit the Artists on Main Street online application by 11:59 p.m. on **October 30, 2024**

## **Artists on Main Street Application Materials**

**Lead Applicant Organization:**

**Contact Name and Title:**

**Address:**

**City:**

**Email:**

**Phone:**

**Please list your Planning Team members, their phone, email, and title/role in the community:**

**Please briefly answer the following questions:**

**Impact:**

1. Describe your community and the role that Downtown/Main Street currently plays in the town.
2. What are the top 2 or 3 Main Street/Downtown goals or challenges that the Artists on Main Street program might address? These can be physical, social, economic, or other (i.e., empty storefronts, ideological/generational divides, long-term improvement projects, etc.).
3. Why are you interested in working with local artists on your Main Street/Downtown goals/challenges? What do you hope will be different in your downtown and larger community because of including artists in addressing these challenges?

**Commitment:**

1. This program requires participation of local individual artists and creatives (and please note – we have a broad definition of artist – artists can be painters, writers, crafters, musicians, woodworkers, filmmakers, radio hosts, and more!) Tell us about your local creative community. Are there specific creative groups or individuals you're excited to connect with during this program?
2. What challenges do you anticipate if you are selected for this project, and how might you work to address them?
3. Are you able to provide a cash or in-kind match of at least \$2,500.00? Please describe what the match will be and its source. In-kind examples: graphic design/marketing staff, space rental, refreshments at events, etc.

**Capacity:**

1. This program requires the community partner to have a local project coordinator that communicates regularly with Artists on Main Street facilitators, promoting the program to local artists, organizing project selection meetings, supporting artists while they implement their projects, and seeking opportunities for storytelling and communications. Who will this person be, and what is their current role and experience managing projects?
2. Is there anything else you'd like us to know?