



REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR OUTDOOR MOSAIC PROJECT IN JOHNSON CITY, TN

The Public Art Committee of Johnson City, TN is seeking qualifications from artists or art teams for the commission of an in-ground mosaic to be installed at the eastern entrance to Founders Park in Downtown Johnson City.

ELIGIBILITY: This opportunity is open to all professional artists over the age of 18 with previous mosaic installation experience. Applicants must reside within the United States. Refer to the Selection Criteria listed below for additional requirements.

BUDGET: Up to three finalists will be selected to develop design concepts for this project. The total project budget for the selected commission is \$17,500. Finalists will be paid a \$500 honorarium for their designs. The selected artist(s) will be paid \$16,000 for the commissioned work. The three finalists will be required to present their proposals to the Selection Committee over an online conference call. The selected artist(s) will be responsible for own travel costs, materials, housing, and personal liability insurance when installing the mosaic. The City of Johnson City will prepare the installation site prior to the artist's arrival.

DEADLINE: December 1, 2026 by 4:00 p.m. (Eastern Time)

QUESTIONS: Cheyenne Kumbhare ckumbhare@johnsoncitytn.org 423-975-2706

ABOUT JOHNSON CITY

Johnson City, Tennessee is situated in the heart of the Mountain South and Blue Ridge foothills. Abounding in natural beauty and opportunities for recreation and adventure, the city has become a regionally and nationally prominent destination for outdoor enthusiasts. In recent years, Johnson City has also begun to show off its considerable cultural assets, which range widely across the visual and performing arts. The city's public art program has played a critical role in this development. For the last decade, the Johnson City Public Art Committee has been enhancing the distinctiveness and livability of the community through arts installations and annual events freely accessible to all.

At a population of 75,000 and counting, Johnson City is primed for tremendous opportunity as it cultivates its reputation as a regional leader in sustainable growth. Preserving our cultural and historical roots, evaluating present opportunities, and investing in a diverse future are at the forefront of this vibrant city.

Johnson City's historic downtown district is an energetic hub of day-round activity and a major draw for locals and visitors alike. Downtown is home to an array of local restaurants, breweries, retailers, parks, public art, community events, and 360° mountain views. In the downtown area, the community values of honesty, authenticity, and meaningful connections are activated to welcome current, new, and potential residents and visitors.

FOUNDERS PARK

Founders Park is a 5-acre greenspace developed in 2014 to support stormwater mitigation efforts and limit flooding in the downtown Johnson City area. A portion of Brush Creek, a waterway that flows partially underground through culverts and channels throughout downtown, runs through the center of the park and was uncovered when the park was constructed.

Founders Park is part of a larger greenway vision for the city, forming a corridor that connects downtown Johnson City with East Tennessee State University and nurtures culture, commerce, and our area's natural habitats. The greenway area and park include native pollinator plants, greenspaces, and permanent public artworks, as well as functional items such as benches, walking paths, and educational kiosks. The park is also the main site for the City's Biennial Sculpture Exhibition, a leased sculpture display that brings in a new round of artworks for public viewing every two years.

A large lawn stretches across the western side of the park, and an amphitheater is located at the eastern end. A large, open-air pavilion sits adjacent to the amphitheater space, and each of these locations host a variety of outdoor events such as the Johnson City Farmers Market, outdoor festivals, and live music.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Johnson City Public Art Committee is seeking an artist/art team to design and install a site-specific, in-ground mosaic at the eastern entrance to Founders Park in Downtown Johnson City, Tennessee. The mosaic will be installed in a newly prepared concrete plaza.

The design should reflect the ecological and social benefits generated by the formation of Founders Park, highlighting the positive impact of the site's return to a more natural state. By uncovering portions of Brush Creek in Founders Park and nearby spaces, and then transforming areas around the creek into greenspaces, recurring flooding in the downtown district was alleviated. Until this time, flooding events had repeatedly damaged businesses and obstructed travel, and greenspaces were severely lacking within the downtown area.

When Founders Park was developed, the park grounds were elevated above the creek bed to allow the waterway to retain more water during periods of rain and storms. Retention walls were installed on the sides of the creek in the park area to create a stable buffer that could safely hold and manage rising stormwaters. However, the purpose behind the development of the park was not solely functional in terms of stormwater management; the intention was also to utilize the park as a catalyst to support economic development, foot traffic, and further investment in the downtown area. The park would serve as an outdoor center for community gatherings, hosting public events, public art installations, live music, and various recreational activities. In this way, the park has contributed to the health and overall quality of life of Johnson City residents and visitors.

Artists should consider the narrative and park description above when developing their proposals, focusing on the themes of ecological restoration, downtown revitalization, and the interconnection of human and environmental health. Abstract or more literal interpretations of the artwork theme will be considered.

The mosaic work is intended to serve as part of the gateway into the park, creating a strong presence that draws pedestrians to the area and engages viewers. Size requirements for the mosaic are included within the "Mosaic Site" section below.

The artist will coordinate with the City of Johnson City Public Works Department on installation and will have the opportunity to communicate preferences for preparation of the concrete. In the qualifications statement, the artist shall demonstrate previous experience with installed pieces, similar in style and scale to this project. Three finalists will be selected to provide a more detailed proposal, including design concept, budget information, and a maintenance plan.

MOSAIC SITE

The mosaic will be installed at the eastern entrance to Founders Park in Downtown Johnson City and will sit in the center of a circular concrete plaza at the intersection of S. Commerce St. and Wilson Ave. After moving into the park from this plaza/entryway, a set of steps descend into an outdoor amphitheater area with several tiers of grassy areas outlined with stone walls/seating.

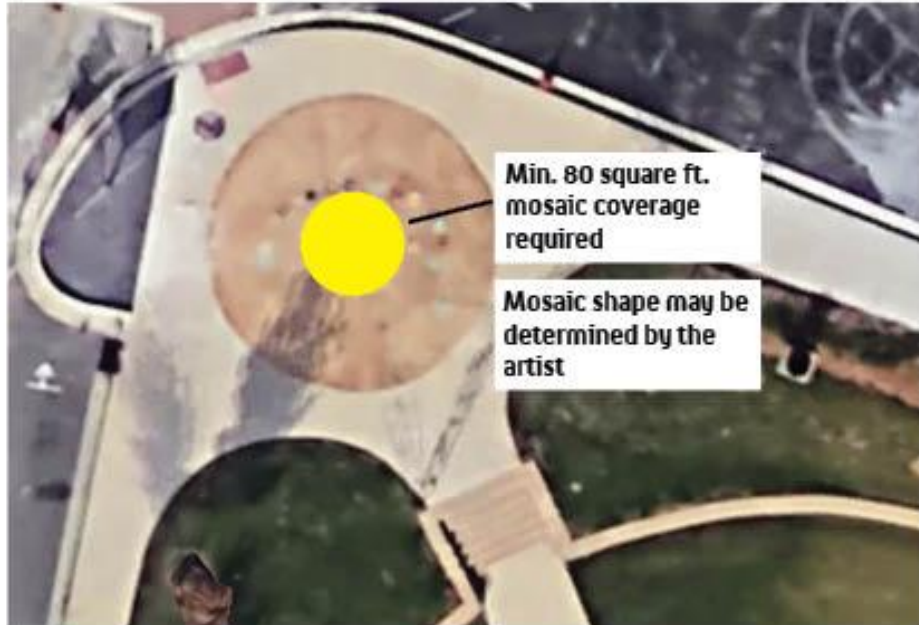
The mosaic will replace existing infrastructure that has fallen into disrepair, and the City of Johnson City will remove the current piece prior to installation. The concrete plaza will be repoured and prepped for the mosaic in consultation with the artist.

Photos below show the site with both the existing mosaic present and without the existing mosaic. View the area on the map and street view at:

<https://jcpublicart.com/mosaic-installation-site/>.

The mosaic may be contiguous or fragmented, but it must cover a minimum of 80 square feet of the plaza area. It may cover additional space if needed (as shown in the photo below).





SELECTION CRITERIA

A Public Art Selection Committee will review the qualifications of applicant artists and make recommendations to the Johnson City Public Art Committee. The Selection Committee includes artists, arts advocates, curators, administrators, project partners, and other arts and community development specialists. Their selections will be based on the following criteria:

- Artistic excellence as demonstrated in 10 digital images of the artist(s) previous work
- Evidence of work on mosaic installations of a similar type and scale
- Experience working on collaborative community projects
- Experience working on large scale projects
- Willingness to meet all contractual guidelines
- The use of content appropriate for all audiences

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

The selected artist must supply all required insurance documents and submit a general contract form prior to beginning work. The City of Johnson City will provide an Insurance Checklist detailing each required insurance item, including but not limited to a \$1 million/occurrence general liability policy and additional insured endorsements for the City of Johnson City for both ongoing and completed operations.

AI POLICY INFORMATION

Please view our AI policy information to ensure your design is acceptable prior to submission: <https://jcpublicart.com/jcpa-ai-policy/>

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Submit a digital portfolio at: <https://jcpublicart.com/founders-park-mosaic-project/>

Submissions must include:

- **Cover letter/letter of intent**
- **Resume/CV**
- **10 digital images of previous artwork**
- **Contact information for 3 professional references**

Please note: Art teams must submit qualifications under the name of one lead artist. In the cover letter, the lead artist must indicate that they plan to work as part of a team and must list the names of the artist(s) within their team. Art teams shall submit at least 10 images of previous artwork, but they may submit up to 10 images for each team member if desired.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

- **Deadline for submissions: December 1, 2026 by 4:00 p.m. (Eastern Time)**
- **Notification of three finalists: December 18, 2026**
- **Finalist proposals due: January 13, 2027**
- **Finalist presentations: January 15, 2027**
- **Final artist selection: January 25, 2027**

The mosaic installation will take place by May 28, 2027.

Installation will be scheduled in consultation with the City of Johnson City Public Works Department. When submitting your qualifications, please confirm that you can work within the timeframe noted above.