

**ARTIST OPPORTUNITY:
MURAL ART WANTED TO BEAUTIFY VILLAGE WATERFRONT PARK**

Town of Bowdoinham
Bowdoinham, Maine

Release date: 03/10/2025

Due date for submissions: 05/01/2025

Contact information: planning@bowdoinham.com

I. OVERVIEW

The Town of Bowdoinham invites artists to apply for an exciting public art opportunity. Artists are invited to submit their qualifications ~~and preliminary concepts~~ for mural artwork that will beautify the village downtown.

Commented [YM1]: I thought we were not asking for concepts but rather a portfolio and complete an applicaiton?

We seek one artist to design ~~and install~~ a 120 square foot mural ~~on four pieces of aluminum metal sheeting~~ on the outside of the ~~public restroom/bathhouse in at the~~ Maily Waterfront Park located within the heart of Bowdoinham village ([1 Main St. Bowdoinham, ME 04008](#)).

Commented [YM2]: PW will install

The selected artist will receive \$4,200 to bring their vision to life. Applications are due May 1, 2025, and artwork should be ~~installed-completed~~ by August 31, 2025.

Submit your applications to be part of this transformative project that will highlight Bowdoinham's unique character and vibrant community spirit. [Put a hyperlink to an application here.](#)

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II. THEME

Residents of Bowdoinham voted on three potential themes for the mural and overwhelmingly selected "Waterways and Nature". Bowdoinham is well known for its natural beauty and diverse ecology, situated on the Cathance River and Merrymeeting Bay with forests and farmland rolling down to the unique tidal freshwater. The mural design should reflect the unique landscape ~~and natural features~~ of Bowdoinham.

III. AWARD

The Town of Bowdoinham will provide a total of \$4,200 to the artist for their time and effort. The Town will provide the aluminum panels to be used for the mural and will also cover the cost ~~of all painting materials as well as the cost~~ of installing the mural onto the building. The Town will enter ~~into a grant agreement/contract~~ with the selected artist. 20% of the award amount will be paid upfront, ~~40% on approval of final design~~ and 40% will be paid upon ~~installation and~~

Commented [YM4]: The only materials quoted in the memo to SB were for the metal and items for affixing it to the building.

Commented [YM5]: How does this work if we are just approving the artist. Perhaps we just put a date like August 1

~~acceptance completion~~ of the ~~project mural~~ by the Town. ~~Reimbursement for materials costs will be paid upon installation of the project.~~

IV. ARTIST COMMISSIONING PROCESS

Key Dates and Application Process:

- **March 10, 2025:** Call for Artists opens.
- **March 25:** ~~Public inquiry period opens. Virtual Q&A Session. RSVP HERE. Write in with your~~ Please send any comments and questions to planning@bowdoinham.com before March 24, 2025.
- **April 1:** An FAQ with written answers to submitted questions and any revisions to the call, if needed, will be posted.
- **May 1:** Call for Artists closes.
- **May 25 - 9:** Selection Committee reviews submissions and ~~selects artist~~ makes a recommendation to the Community Development Advisory Committee.
- **June 3:** The Community Development Advisory Committee votes to select the artist.
- ~~May 12~~ **June 11:** Announcement of Awarded Artist at Town Meeting.
- **By August 31:** Mural ~~art completed~~ installed in Maily Waterfront Park.
- **September 14-13:** Mural installed and unveiled to the public at Celebrate Bowdoinham.

Commented [YM6]: Tentative as I think we should meet with MAC about this before we launch. Can they come to our Feb meeting to discuss?

Commented [YM7]: Not sure that I need to have a virtual meeting but if that is what the group wants. I would rather just take in written inquires and produce a FAQ.

Commented [YM8]: Will need to make this

V. WHO CAN APPLY

This opportunity is open to any resident of the United States, aged 18 years or older. While artists from across the nation are encouraged to apply, special consideration will be given to current or former residents of Bowdoinham, as well as Maine-based artists familiar with the local community.

We welcome artists with expertise in community arts, creative engagement, murals, and paintings to apply. Artists of all experience levels are invited to submit their proposals.

VI. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

i) Statement of Interest and Artistic Project Concept

- Describe your artistic concept for the mural. (200 words max.)
- Describe your connection to Bowdoinham or nearby communities. (200 words max.)

~~Though not required, if you would like to submit a preliminary rendering of your mural design the committee will review it as part of your overall submission.~~

Commented [YM10]: Thinking this needs to be a fillable PDF document with instructions on it that we put on our website for folks to access and submit via email.

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Commented [YM11]: I thought the comment was that they should not have to spend extra time creating something they would not get paid for, plus if one person submits one and someone else doesn't than it doesn't seem that the applications are the same. Was this in the example?

iii) Artist Description:

- Describe your artistic experience, style, themes, and materials used. (200 words max)
- You may include your bio, resume, CV, or other relevant documents.

iv) Work Samples:

- Submit a portfolio of up to 5 images showcasing past relevant work.

v) Availability:

- Artist must be available to complete the project by [August 31, 2025](#).

VII. PROJECT CONTEXT

Town of Bowdoinham

Bowdoinham is a rural community of just over 3,000 situated on Merrymeeting Bay and three of the rivers that feed it, 14 miles inland from the Atlantic Ocean. It has a central village located on the banks of the Cathance River. People here are friendly, entrepreneurial, and community oriented. Bowdoinham is well-known for its thriving farming and artisan communities as well as its recreational opportunities. Townspeople love Bowdoinham because of its close knit community within a quiet and beautiful natural environment that is still close to Brunswick, Portland, Augusta, and Lewiston/Auburn.

Bowdoinham is an old town with a rich agricultural, industrial, and maritime history. The Town of Bowdoinham was settled in 1725 and incorporated on September 18, 1862 as the 17th town in the State of Maine. Bowdoinham's economic development is directly related to its positioning on the Cathance River and Merrymeeting Bay.

Merrymeeting Bay is formed by the confluence of six rivers: the Cathance, Muddy, Abbagadasset, Eastern and—two of Maine's largest rivers—the Kennebec and Androscoggin. Merrymeeting Bay drains 38% of the freshwater in the state. While generally considered an estuary, biologically, the Bay is classified as tidal riverine and geologically, as an inland delta. The Bay is for all intents and purposes 100% freshwater. Narrow river restrictions at the Chops and Thorne Head slow the incoming salt tide from 17 miles downstream and restrict the outgoing volume of fresh water draining more than a third of the state. It is the backed up freshwater rising 4-6 feet against the advancing salt water that makes the tide. The Bay is a 9,000 acre system of tidal freshwater marshes and open water that provides premier spawning habitat for all diadromous (needing time in salt and fresh water to complete their life cycle) fish species of the Gulf of Maine. It is the largest staging ground in the northeast for migratory waterfowl. The Bay is internationally significant for its many rare and endangered plants and animals including Parker's pipewort, stiff arrowhead, estuary bur-marigold, bald eagles, Atlantic salmon, and shortnose and Atlantic sturgeon.

Bowdoinham's economic development started in earnest in 1805, when the first bridge was built across the Cathance and the village became more than just a landing. By 1810 Bowdoinham had a post office, and by 1818 it was a thriving community. Shipyards lined the Cathance with access along the Kennebec to the shores of Merrymeeting Bay. Bowdoinham's first vessel, the sloop Merrymeeting, built in 1768, started an industry that was vital to the town for over 100 years. In

1850 the railroad arrived and Bowdoinham's population peaked at 2382. At this time another industry began, harvesting clear Kennebec ice and sending it, packed in sawdust in the holds of Bowdoinham ships, all over the world. In 1886 Bowdoinham had 24 ice companies. Saw mills, grist mills, a carding machine, a plaster mill and J.P. Kendall's innovative tide mill harnessed Bowdoinham's rivers. By 1890 the many ducks and geese on the Bay supported market gunning, providing large numbers of ducks for big city tables. Sturgeon, shad, and smelt were also caught and sent to the city. In 1880 Kendall's sons established Sagadahoc Fertilizer and later Long Branch Sheep Farm, for a time the largest sheep farm east of the Mississippi. On December 14, 1902 fire destroyed much of the business section of Bowdoinham, followed in March 1904 by another fire that burned still more. The land formerly used for waterfront industry is now used primarily for gathering and recreation in the form of Maily Waterfront Park where the mural will be sited.

In addition to spurring maritime and industrial development, Merrymeeting Bay affords Bowdoinham uniquely fertile soil that the town's residents have farmed since its settlement. During the 18th century, 95% of the townspeople raised their own food and fiber and sold the surplus to local people or businesses. By the 19th century, the demands of town and city populations created a larger marketing opportunity to serve the increasing population that no longer had access to farm land. During the 20th century, the production of farms was geared to the wholesale market. Substantial apple orchards; the Kendal Brothers sheep operation and fertilizer business; the Kelley, Prout and Dennison vegetable enterprises; the Millay, Wallace and Curtis dairy farms; the farmers growing for the New Sharon and Waldoboro canning companies; and the hay producers for the Bath and Boston markets were all enterprises selling wholesale.

Over the last 25 years, Bowdoinham has seen a resurgence of its agricultural tradition, now with 16 independent farms operating throughout the town, 10 of which are organic. This renaissance in farming has brought young farming families to town and excellent healthy food to Midcoast Maine. Bowdoinham has also become home to a number of artists and crafts people—sculptors, painters, writers, photographers, metal workers, furniture makers, and fiber artists—drawn to and inspired by the natural beauty of this unique place.

Strategic Vision supporting this project

The Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Bowdoinham, recently updated in 2024, envisions Bowdoinham in 10 years as “a quiet rural Maine community defined visually by agricultural landscapes, abundant woods and wetlands, a commercial village center, and historic buildings. Culturally, there is strong pride in the community backed up by a spirit of volunteerism and support for all things made and grown locally.” It describes Bowdoinham as “a place where small businesses thrive” and imagines a village that “has improved sidewalks and looks more attractive. The historic assets are better protected. The waterfront has even more amenities and is more highly used. People drive slowly and safely, and people on foot enjoy the walkability.”

As part of realizing this vision of an attractive downtown village with thriving small businesses and a waterfront park enjoyed by all, the Town's Community Development Advisory Committee is pursuing multiple initiatives at creative placemaking. Creative placemaking utilizes art, design, and cultural activities to revitalize public spaces, boost community engagement, stimulate economic growth, and foster community connection. The Town believes that installation of this mural will be an important first step in reshaping both the physical and social aspects of our waterfront park as we aim to attract new visitors while further strengthening Bowdoinham's distinct sense of place.

VIII. TEMPORARY PUBLIC ART

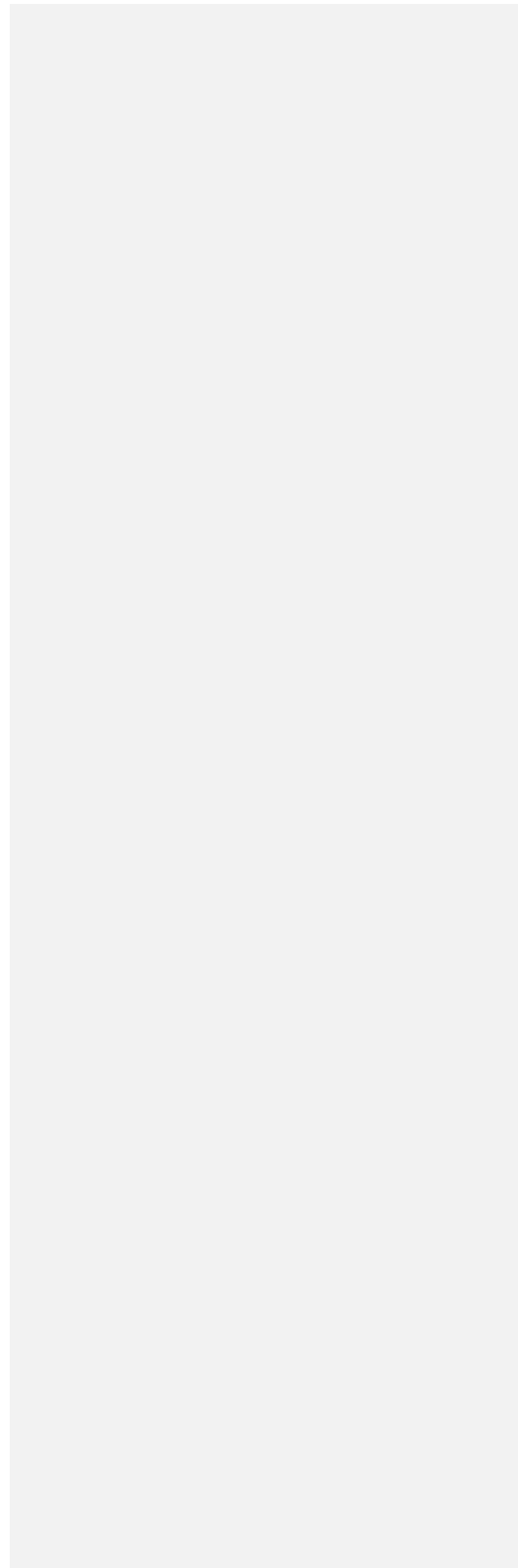
~~Temporary public art refers to artwork intended to remain on display for at least three months. The Town of Bowdoinham will enter into a separate grant agreement with the artist if maintenance is required beyond this initial duration.~~ Please note that the Town reserves the right to deinstall the mural or to reinstall it at a new location at any time, in accordance with community needs or unforeseen circumstances.

IX. MURAL SITE AND INSTALLATION DETAILS

i) Site Context

Located in the center of Bowdoinham village, Maily Waterfront Park is the community's cultural and recreational gathering place. It features an easily accessible public boat launch, picnic tables, a gazebo, and hiking trails. During the warmer months, the park is home to free Sunday concerts sponsored by the town and the weekly farmer's market. A short boat ride down the Cathance River will find you in the middle of Merrymeeting Bay, an ecological wonder and world famous bird hunting territory. If you continue further down the Kennebec River, past the city of Bath, you will find yourself in the Atlantic Ocean. The water, though fresh, is tidal given its proximity to the ocean. In the winter, ice fishing shacks appear on the Cathance river as locals fish for smelt. Once a year, townspeople come together in the park during the second week of September to "Celebrate" its birthday. Celebrate Bowdoinham is a celebration of Bowdoinham history, culture, arts, ecology, agriculture, commerce, and the wonderful people that call Bowdoinham home.

The public ~~restroom-bathhouse~~ where the mural will be installed is located in the center of Maily Waterfront Park. All vehicles entering Bowdoinham from the south on Route 24 pass the park and will be able to see the mural as they pass. The restroom is also next to the Lower Road railroad track that is likely in the coming years to become the Merrymeeting Trail, a public rail trail connecting Brunswick to Augusta for use by pedestrians, cyclists, and others. At this central and very visible location, this mural will serve as a welcoming visual marker for anyone coming to or passing through Bowdoinham.



ii) Mural Dimensions

Width: 192"

Height: 90"

iii) Installation Materials and Process

The mural will be constructed using four 4' by 8' aluminum panels that are 3/4" thick. See more technical details on the aluminum panels at the following link: XXX The artist will have the option to choose from these various aluminum composites and finishes"

- .080 painted aluminum
- .080 unpainted mill finish
- .125 unpainted mill finish
- Max-Metal, aluminum composite (ACM)

The town will buy and provide these panels to the artist for pickup at the Town Office. The Town will then install the panels after the painting is completed with the input and supervision of the artist.

Given that the height of the restroom wall is less than 8', two of the panels will need to be cut from 48" to 42" in height.

X. SELECTION PROCESS

A diverse review committee, including community stakeholders and, local artists, and municipal staff, will evaluate proposals for this Call for Artists. Final approval rests with the Bowdoinham Select Board Community Development Advisory Committee. Once selected, the artist will enter into a grant agreement with the Town.

Proposals will be assessed based on prior work of the artist, strength and originality of the artistic concept, and place-based relevance to Bowdoinham. Consideration of the artist's connection to the Bowdoinham community will also be a factor in the evaluation process.

XI. HOW TO APPLY?

Electronic

Email all submission materials to planning@bowdoinham.com

Mail

Mail one printed version of the complete submission to:

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Commented [YM12]: I will find a way to cut them before the artist gets them. Good reminder as an action item for me. 😊

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Attn: Yvette Meunier
Director of Planning and Development
Bowdoinham Town Office
13 School St
Bowdoinham, ME 04008

In person

Deliver the submission in person to the Bowdoinham Town Office before 4:00 PM on May 1, 2025.

Please send any outstanding questions to planning@bowdoinham.com