

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 16, 2025

Call for Artists: Lead Muralist Sought for Kansas Avenue Bridge Public Art Project in North Topeka

Topeka, Kansas — The NOTO Arts & Entertainment District has officially released a **Request for Proposal (RFP)** for a **Lead Artist** to design and direct a major public art mural project under the Kansas Avenue Bridge in Veterans Park, North Topeka. This transformative project seeks to celebrate and share the rich, resilient history of the North Topeka community through bold, historically rooted murals that will become a lasting cultural landmark for the region.

The selected Lead Artist will receive a **\$10,000 stipend**, with an additional **\$6,000 budget** available for support artists. The deadline to submit a proposal is **October 15, 2025**, with mural completion expected by **June 15, 2026**, and a community unveiling tied to the **Semiquincentennial celebrations around July 4, 2026**.

The mural will span **eight sets of three vertical piers and top cap structures** under the Kansas Avenue Bridge—already primed for painting—and will include themes that reflect the area’s Indigenous origins, waves of immigration, industrial roots, devastating floods, civil rights challenges, and its recent cultural revival through the founding of the NOTO Arts District.

“This mural will be more than just a beautification project,” says Staci Schnacker, Director of the NOTO Arts & Entertainment District. “It’s an opportunity to honor our history, elevate local artists, and create a meaningful public space that tells the North Topeka story for generations to come.”

Key historical and cultural themes include:

- Early Indigenous presence and the legacy of landholder **Julia Gonville-Pappan**
- The founding of Eugene (now North Topeka) by **Laurent and Curtis**
- Political trailblazer **Vice President Charles Curtis**, a North Topeka native and the first Native American U.S. Vice President

- Civil rights activism led by figures like **John Ritchie**
- The 1903 and 1951 floods that reshaped the landscape
- The evolution of the area into today's vibrant NOTO Arts District

In addition to producing a cohesive mural design, the Lead Artist will be expected to assemble and direct a support team, engage with community members, and participate in a public unveiling.

Eligibility

The RFP is open to regional artists or artist teams, age 18 and older, with demonstrated experience in public art or large-scale murals.

How to Apply

Artists must submit a **single PDF proposal (max 25MB)** including a cover letter, concept narrative, team structure, timeline, budget, portfolio, and resume. Complete proposal guidelines can be found [here](#)

Proposals must be emailed to **staci.schnacker@notoartsdistrict.org** with the subject line: **Kansas Ave Bridge Lead Artist Proposal – [Your Name]**

Important Dates

- **Proposal Deadline:** October 15, 2025
- **Project Completion:** June 15, 2026
- **Community Unveiling:** July 2026

Contact

For more information or to request historical background materials:

Staci Schnacker

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About the NOTO Arts & Entertainment District

The NOTO Arts & Entertainment District is a nonprofit organization dedicated to cultivating art and experiences that inspire opportunity, foster community pride, and enhance economic vitality throughout Topeka and beyond.