

VILLAGE OF ROSCOE

AGENDA ITEM - STAFF REPORT



Agenda Item: Discussion of use of public funds to paint over or remove the CRE8IV mural at 10534 Main Street.

Date: June 13, 2025

Meeting: COTW – 6/17/2025

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Department: Administration

Overview/Background Information

In 2022, the Village of Roscoe participated in a regional public art initiative in partnership with *CRE8IV: Transformational Art*, a program organized through the Rockford Area Convention and Visitors Bureau (RACVB). As part of this initiative, the Village contributed \$30,000 in public funds to sponsor the creation of a large-scale mural on the privately-owned building located at 10534 Main Street. The mural, developed by a professional artist selected through a juried process, was intended to serve as a placemaking feature and contribute to the revitalization and identity of Main Street.

Since its completion, the mural has received a mixed response from the public. While some residents have expressed appreciation for the artwork, the Village has also received feedback from several community members voicing disapproval of the mural's appearance. A number of those individuals have requested that the Village take action to remove or paint over the mural—potentially through the allocation of additional public funds.

It is important to note that the mural is not located on a Village-owned building. As such, any future modifications, including removal or alteration of the artwork, would require the cooperation and consent of the property owner.

Public Feedback and Survey Results

In response to public comments and concerns, the Village conducted a survey in June 2025 to better understand community sentiment regarding the potential use of public funds to alter or remove the mural. The survey was conducted through the Village's official Nextdoor platform, with participation limited to verified residents of Roscoe and surrounding neighborhoods. Respondents were asked to confirm their residency and select one of six statements best reflecting their views.

Qualitative Insight

The response options were designed to capture a range of nuanced perspectives—not just simple support or opposition. This approach provided insight into residents' underlying values, including:

- Concern about removing art based on individual opinion
- Emphasis on fiscal responsibility and limited use of tax dollars
- Preference for private, rather than municipal, solutions to aesthetic disagreements

This qualitative layer is especially important in public policy contexts where values, priorities, and perceptions of fairness often matter as much as statistical representation.

Quantitative Results

The survey received a total of **22 verified responses**. While the sample size is small and not statistically representative of the entire community, the results are still informative:

- **2 respondents (9.1%)** supported using Village funds to paint over or remove the mural
- **10 respondents (45.5%)** opposed using any additional public funds and believe the mural should remain as is
- **2 respondents (9.1%)** were neutral or had no strong opinion
- **1 respondent (4.5%)** indicated they were unaware of the mural and would need more information
- **4 respondents (18.2%)** expressed that public art is valuable and should not be removed based on subjective opinions
- **3 respondents (13.6%)** opposed public funding for removal but would support private efforts to alter the mural

In total, **18 of 22 respondents (81.8%)** expressed opposition to the use of additional taxpayer funds to alter or remove the mural—either by supporting the mural outright, discouraging removal based on aesthetics, or preferring privately-funded alternatives.

These results suggest a community concern regarding the use of public funds for aesthetic modifications to a previously approved and publicly funded art project.

Action Required/Recommendation

This agenda item has been placed for continued discussion and public comment regarding whether the Village should consider allocating additional taxpayer funds to remove, obscure, or modify the existing mural.

Below are some items the Board may wish to consider as part of its discussion:

- Should public funds be used for the removal or modification of a project that the Village itself previously sponsored and funded?
- What are the implications of altering or removing public art based on subjective or fluctuating public preferences?
- What would be the feasibility, cost, and process involved in removal or repainting, should the Village choose to pursue such action?
- What authority or responsibility does the Village have in regulating or modifying artwork located on private property?
- What precedent might be set by altering or reversing a publicly funded art installation?
- What options, if any, exist for addressing resident concerns without undoing the original investment or interfering with the integrity of the regional initiative?

Attachments

Public Sentiment Survey.docx

Photo of Main Street Mural.pdf

Artist Proposal for Mural.pdf

RACVB_Roscoe Partnership Agreement.pdf