



**CITY OF FITCHBURG  
MASSACHUSETTS  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR**

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**Press Release**

For Immediate Release

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**National Endowment for the Arts Announces 2012 Our Town Grant Recipients  
City of Fitchburg and arts partners one of 80 grantees selected nationwide**

**Fitchburg, Mass.** The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) announces 80 Our Town grant awards totaling \$4.995 million and reaching 44 states and the District of Columbia. The city of Fitchburg in collaboration with the Fitchburg Art Museum, Fitchburg State University and the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission is one of the grantees and will receive \$75,000 for the Main Street Art Project, which will feature public art installations and performances in vacant buildings located on Main Street in downtown Fitchburg..

Through Our Town, the NEA supports creative placemaking projects that help transform communities into lively, beautiful, and sustainable places with the arts at their core. The grantee projects will improve quality of life, encourage creative activity, create community identity and a sense of place, and help revitalize local economies. All Our Town grant awards were made to partnerships that consisted of a minimum of a not-for-profit organization and a local government entity.

The Main Street Art Project, which will feature public art installations and performances in vacant buildings located on Main Street in downtown Fitchburg. The project will include collaboration with ten local public, educational, not-for-profit, and community organizations. Multidisciplinary artists will engage in month-long residencies to conduct workshops with youth and create artworks that explore a wide range of themes pertaining to Fitchburg. The workshops will explore issues such as cultural identity, preservation of historic architecture, and creative problem-solving through the arts, and will engage the city's public school youth. The project's goal is to ultimately increase business activity on Main Street and inspire youth and entrepreneurs to view vacant properties as sites with creative possibility.

"Cities and towns are transformed when you bring the arts – both literally and figuratively – into the center of them," said NEA Chairman Landesman. "From Teller, Alaska to Miami, Florida, communities are pursuing creative placemaking, making their neighborhoods more vibrant and robust by investing in the performing, visual, and literary arts. I am proud to be partnering with these 80 communities and their respective arts, civic, and elected leaders."

"This is an amazing opportunity for the city to work with local artists to promote arts initiatives throughout downtown," says Mayor Lisa Wong. "The Main Street Arts Project will bring together experienced artists and our public school students to use art to help reinvigorate the downtown area.

The NEA received 317 applications for Our Town that were assigned to one of three application review panels based on their project type; arts engagement, cultural planning and design, or non-metro and tribal communities. The Main Street Art Project received a arts engagement grant award.

For a **complete listing of projects** recommended for Our Town grant support, please visit the NEA web site at [arts.gov](http://arts.gov).