About the Facility
The Vermont Department of Mental Health is constructing a new facility at 26 Woodside Drive in Colchester/Essex at the site of the former Woodside Juvenile Rehabilitation Center. The new 16-bed facility will serve Vermonter who no longer require an inpatient level of care but continue to require significant support as they transition to a lower level of care. All residents will have the benefit of on-site nursing as well as Peer Counselors, Social Workers, Psychologists, and Activities Therapists. The residential program will focus on providing a therapeutic environment and programming that promotes recovery. This secure, state-of-the-art step-down therapeutic residence is a critical less restrictive level of care in a comprehensive mental health care continuum that serves all Vermonter.

This new facility has been designed according to the latest research regarding the profound effects the built environment has on our physical and mental health. Facilities that feel more like a home than an institution and that allow easy access to nature help residents feel safe, which is an important ingredient in recovery. Large windows will allow as much natural lighting as possible, and soft, neutral colors throughout the facility will help create a calming environment. The same level of thought and attention to detail has been applied to the outside of the residence. There will be many areas for sitting, relaxing, and socializing. There will be flower gardens and raised vegetable beds, which residents will help to plant and tend. There will also be walking paths and areas for exercise, with many ways to access them from inside the residence.
The residence will provide short-term/transitional assistance with a wholistic approach to treatment and a focus on wellness and independent living. The facility is bordered by the Winooski Valley Park District, Saint Michael’s College Natural Area, and the Woodside Natural Area.

**Design Specifics**
The architectural design consultants are Freeman French Freeman and Lavallee Brensinger Architects. Construction at the site is estimated to begin in the fall of 2021 and be completed in the fall of 2022.

**Public Art Opportunities**
The Committee has expressed a high priority for interior spaces, but given the limited public access, would also invite concepts that address exterior spaces and/or a combination of interior and exterior locations. The following areas at the site are especially suitable for permanent works of public art.

Interior locations include, but are not limited to, the interior common areas such as the waiting area, living room, and multipurpose room. Exterior areas include a secure courtyard area, the exterior of the existing gym wall, and/or areas on the outer grounds that are nearer the public trail systems. Commissioned works of art should have a long-term life span of at least 20 years. Potential areas are annotated in the following drawings.
Interior waiting area mock-up

Interior living room mock-up
Interior multipurpose room mock-up

Exterior Courtyard Area
Exterior Gym Wall

Gymnasium exterior photos and elevations
Exterior Entrances to Walking paths

Applicants are also encouraged to consider art designs that will be durable and safe as well as color trends in healthcare settings that impact resident and staff well-being. Example here: https://davidbaileyfurniture.co.uk/healthcare-furniture-colour-trends/