



GRAND RAPIDS, MN

CALL FOR ARTISTS
NW Grand Rapids Social
Cohesion Sculpture
Art Opportunity

Request for Qualifications

About Grand Rapids

Grand Rapids is a unique blend of small town hospitality and character with big City conveniences and opportunities. Grand Rapids offers an excellent quality of life to residents of the region with outstanding educational opportunities, excellent medical care, exceptional cultural, natural, and recreational amenities, and an unequaled sense of community spirit. Grand Rapids provides residents safe, friendly, affordable housing and inclusive neighborhoods that retain and enhance nature in the City. Residents and visitors can move around the City with equal ease by car, bicycle, or walking. Grand Rapids welcomes and supports a diverse mix of thriving businesses and industries that provide quality jobs, promising careers, and economic vitality. Grand Rapids is a welcoming gateway to Minnesota's Northwoods tourism.

Grand Rapids, MN, population 10,869 (U.S. Census Bureau 2010), is located in Northeastern Minnesota on the banks of the Mississippi River and is the Itasca County seat. It's situated in the midst of numerous lakes and forests. A small City known for, logging, regional services, the arts, and its Native American and settler cultures — Grand Rapids is a place of many narratives. Grand Rapids is predominately white (96.5%), with Native American (3.1%), Latino (1.2%), Black (1.1%), and Asian (.9%) racial and ethnic minorities (U.S. Census Bureau 2010). Fifteen miles west of Grand Rapids lies the eastern edge of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Reservation; Native Americans are the largest racial/ethnic minority in Itasca County (4.9%).

The City's name hails from its 3.5-mile stretch of rapids now hidden by a reservoir created by a hydroelectric dam. The hydropower generated by the rapids attracted UPM Blandin's predecessor in 1902. The Mississippi also provided an optimal means of shipping logs to southern population centers. Whereas much of the northeastern Minnesota's "Iron Range" region historically focused on mining, Grand Rapids emerged as a logging town.

Grand Rapids Arts and Culture Commission

The City Council established the Arts and Culture Commission in 2013. It currently functions as a volunteer commission, reporting to the City Council, with nine members and a City staff liaison. Commissioners are selected by the Council and serve a three-year term. The Grand Rapids Arts and Culture Commission envisions a community inspired by the power of its abundant arts and culture. They believe:

- the arts pave the way to a welcoming environment for all regardless of age, race, ethnic origin, gender or sexual orientation
- arts and culture combined with recreational opportunities define Grand Rapids as a regional creative destination for relocation, shopping, tourism and entertainment
- the arts contribute to health and well-being by creating aesthetically pleasing places to walk, bicycle, hike and play
- engagement in the arts helps vulnerable populations build confidence, cope with stress and aid with healing
- carefully planned and artistic street design contributes to a vibrant downtown and accommodates all modes of transportation, helping to make movement accessible to all
- the beauty of the natural environment of the Mississippi River, lakes and forests is a defining and valued characteristic of our community
- accessible, quality arts educational opportunities, cradle through career and on through retirement, are essential to the development of a creative community
- communities with robust arts and culture are more prosperous and attract large and small businesses, reward entrepreneurship, and provide meaningful careers to residents

The Sculpture Project

The Arts and Culture Commission project will consist of one sculpture located at Legion Park at the SW corner of the intersection of Hwy 38 and Legion Lane/14th Street NW. [see following pages for location maps]. The Grand Rapids Arts and Culture Commission is looking for artwork that expresses the history, culture, and/or unique attributes of the Northwest neighborhood in Grand Rapids, Minnesota. Artists are encouraged to consider the Legion Park site as well as the larger context of the Northwest neighborhood when developing proposals. A wide range of media will be considered as long as the final artwork is safe and durable.

While it is not required that the artwork be collaborative in any way, the committee will give more weight to applicants that include an element of community involvement in their proposal. This could include school outreach, neighborhood participation, or other local engagement in one or more phases of the project. Applicants are encouraged to consider opportunities for collaboration in the idea/design phase, the fabrication/assembly phase, and the installation phase.

The goal is to give people living in the northwest neighborhood a sense of ownership of the completed artwork by providing opportunities to participate in its creation. The Arts and Culture Commission is looking for proposals that bring people together around public art. Specifically public art that represents the northwest neighborhood and provides a landmark to connect people living there.

Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

Artists are hereby invited to submit qualifications to be considered to participate in the design phase for the public art opportunities described below.

The Arts and Culture Commission will review eligible applications and select a group of up to three finalists/finalist teams to invite to Grand Rapids for an in-person interview. Each artist/team will receive a stipend of \$750 to cover fees associated with design and travel to in-person interviews. Further information will be provided to the finalists.

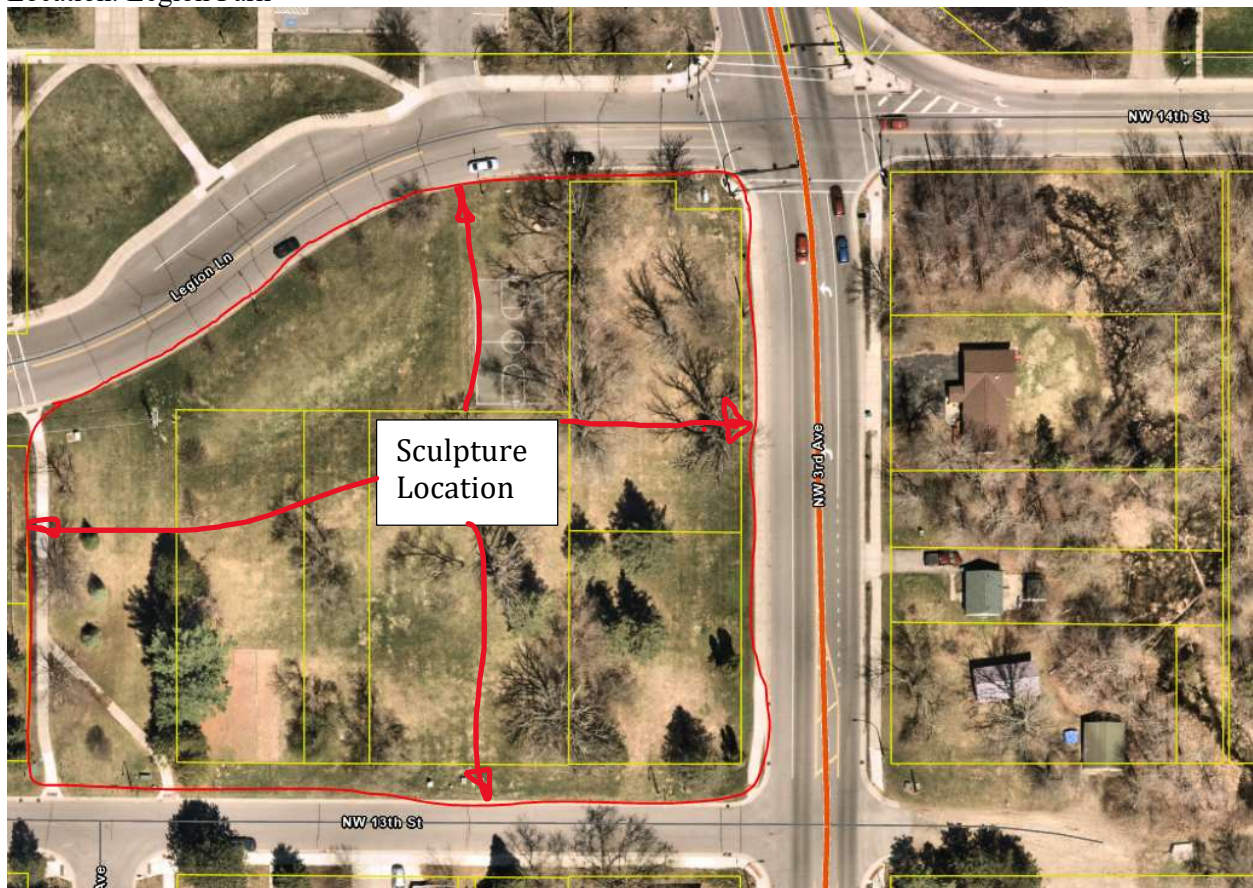
Upon completion of an in-person interview, one artist/artist team will be commissioned to develop, fabricate, and install the permanent artwork. The City will cover the expense of site/base preparation for the sculpture. Additional requirements will be outlined in instructions to finalists. Please see the following timeline for further details.

Budget: \$50,000

The budget the sculpture is \$50,000. More information about the sites will be made available to the selected artist[s].

Site Information

Location: Legion Park



Selection Criteria

Phase 1: Selection of artist/designers will be based on the following criteria:

- Quality of introductory letter.
- Quality of work samples.
- Ability of artist/team to successfully complete projects based on resume and prior work experience.

Phase 2: Design concepts must meet the following criteria:

- Design concepts are engaging, interactive in some way, and evoke curiosity of passers-by either through color, movement, material, whimsicality, or other considerations.
- Artworks should take into consideration all seasons in MN, and should be safe and low maintenance.
- Artworks convey artistic excellence and innovation.

Additional considerations:

- Art should be welcoming, accessible and appropriate to the site.
- Artists should address how they would work with the Arts and Culture Commission to engage the community in some way.

Eligibility

- Applicant must provide evidence of producing at least two commissioned public art projects of a similar scale and budget within the past ten years.

We are committed to a policy of providing opportunities to people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, veteran status, or physical ability.

Selection Process Overview

The Arts and Culture Commission will review applications and select up to three artists or teams to participate in the design phase. Each artist/team will be paid a stipend of \$750 to prepare design concepts. Deliverables include graphic depictions of the proposed artwork and a brief narrative description. Artists/teams will have approximately **seven weeks** to prepare preliminary concepts, including the presentations to the Arts and Culture Commission.

Schedule

- February 14, 2023 – RFQ announced
- March 21, 2023 – Deadline for RFQ submission; all required materials must be received by 4PM CST.
- April 4, 2023 – Committee review and selection of 3 finalists
- April 10, 2023 – City Council approves contracts with selected artists/teams for preliminary designs
- June 6, 2023 – Preliminary design concepts presented to Arts + Culture Commission
- July 10, 2023 – City Council approves final contract with selected artist or team. Commence design development.
- August of 2023: Based on approval of final design, artist/team commences with fabrication
- May/June of 2024: projects installed/project completion

Required Submission Materials (in digital format only)

Please provide the following text in 12-point font, in a single PDF document:

- Contact information for lead artist and, if applicable, all team members

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- Three references (contact information only) for recently completed projects
- One-page letter describing interest in project and approach to design; please include statement addressing eligibility criteria
- One-page listing of each work sample; please provide a brief description and budget for each work sample
- One-page biographical information or resume; if you have multiple team members, please keep biographical information for each team member to one page
- Work sample: Up to 10 digital images of your recent and relevant projects. Individuals and teams are limited to 10 images maximum. Save all images as standard JPEG and label each with applicant's full name and number in sequence corresponding with list of work samples.

NOTE: Do not submit a proposal for artworks at this time.

Please submit all RFQ materials via email to: tpagel@ci.grand-rapids.mn.us. All materials must be received by **4 p.m., CST, Tuesday, March 21, 2023**. No RFQs will be accepted after this time. If you need clarification or further information, contact Tom Pagel, City Administrator at: tpagel@grandrapidsmn.gov or 218.326.7626