



GRAND RAPIDS, MN

CALL FOR ARTISTS

Mural

Public 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 unequalled 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 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 "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 Mural Project

The Arts and Culture Commission received a Downtown Business Corridor Grant from the MN Department of Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation to develop a highly visible and creative project that generates excitement, encourages citizen engagement, and engenders visible improvements. The Arts and Culture Commission's projects will consist of three sculptures and one mural. **This Request for Qualifications is for the mural.**

Grand Rapids is a significant location for Ojibwe and Dakota people, who had been living throughout northern Minnesota when the first settlers arrived in this area. The Pillager and the Mississippi bands had homes and villages on or near Cass Lake, Lake Winnibigoshish, and Leech Lake.

Grand Rapids' motto is "It's in Minnesota's Nature." Outdoor recreation opportunities abound in the thousands of miles of trails and over 1,000 area lakes, and the Chippewa National Forest, the Hill River State Forest, and the George Washington State Forest are all nearby.

The Commission would like to use this public art initiative to acknowledge and honor either:

- the significant relationship that historical and contemporary Ojibwe and/or Dakota people have with this area, OR
- the local flora, fauna, and natural elements that are important to the region's ecosystem and communities

One artist/artist team will be commissioned to create one mural in downtown Grand Rapids [see following pages for location maps].

- The mural must be removable from the exterior wall (not painted directly on the brick surface).
- Final size of the mural will be negotiated with the selected artist team. It is anticipated the size of the mural will not exceed 15' by 30'.

Please see the following pages for more information regarding the project.

Request for Qualifications (RFQ)

The Grand Rapids Arts and Culture Commission is facilitating the design and creation of a mural to be located in downtown Grand Rapids. 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.

Upon completion of an in-person interview, one artist/artist team will be commissioned to develop, fabricate, and install one mural. Additional requirements will be outlined in instructions to finalists. Please see the following timeline for further details.

Budget: \$20,000

The budget for the mural is \$20,000. This do-not-exceed amount must include all fees, materials, transportation, installation, storage, permits, and insurance. More information about the site will be made available to the selected artist[s].

Site Information

The mural will be located on the west façade of the Chalupsky building on the SW corner of NE 1st Avenue and NE 4th Street.



Selection Criteria

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

- Quality of 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 energetic, dynamic, unique, and engage the entire wall in some way.
- While the mural does not have to be a literal representation of nature, it should capture the qualities that nature can evoke [joy, peace, tranquility, relaxation, beauty, other] and is relevant to its context or depict in an artistic, creative manner the significant relationship that historical and contemporary Ojibwe and/or Dakota people have with this area.
- The mural has a high impact and conveys artistic excellence.
- The mural should require very little maintenance, and is resistant to vandalism and extreme weather conditions.

Additional considerations:

- Art should be welcoming, accessible, and creative.
- Artists should address how they would work with the Arts and Culture Commission to engage the community in some way.
- Artist must be willing to work with an early-career artist.

Eligibility

- Applicants must be experienced visual artists or artist-led teams residing in the state of Minnesota, with special preference given to artists from Northern MN.
- 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

- October 24, 2018 – RFQ announced
- November 26, 2018 – Deadline for RFQ submission; all required materials must be received by 4PM CST.
- December 4, 2018 – Committee review and selection of 3 finalists
- December 17, 2018 – City Council approves contracts with selected artists/teams for preliminary designs
- February 5, 2018 – Preliminary design concepts presented to Arts + Culture Commission

- February 11, 2019 – City Council approves final contract with selected artist or team. Commence design development.
- April 2019: Based on approval of final design, artist/team commences with fabrication
- October 2019: project 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
- 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 Samples: 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, Monday, November 26, 2018**. No RFQs will be accepted after this time. If you need clarification or further information, contact Tom Pagel, City Administrator at: tpagel@ci.grand-rapids.mn.us or 218.326.7626