



## PUBLIC ARTS ADVISORY COMMISSION CITY OF WEST DES MOINES, IOWA

# CALL FOR ARTISTS

## RAILROAD PARK PUBLIC ART PROJECT

**\$50,000 COMMISSION**

### [ABOUT WEST DES MOINES](#)

The City of West Des Moines, Iowa, is a rapidly growing community located within the Des Moines/West Des Moines Metropolitan Area. West Des Moines has a wide array of amenities and culture and has frequently been recognized as a top locality for young professionals. *Forbes* has rated the Des Moines metro as the #1 city for young professionals. In 2018, *Money* listed West Des Moines as the #1 place to live in Iowa.

At the heart of the city lies the Historic Valley Junction district. This is the community's gathering place and where the City of West Des Moines began. It is a highly desirable place to live, work and play. The commercial district includes some of the City's most historic buildings and most modern retailers. Residents of Valley Junction are proud of their diversity, great schools, and parks. They recognize and celebrate the distinctive character of their neighborhood within the context of West Des Moines' success. In a word, Valley Junction is unique.

### [WEST DES MOINES PUBLIC ART PROGRAM](#)

The vision of the West Moines Public Art Program is the creation of a diverse collection of public works of art of high aesthetic and intellectual quality and excellence along with a program that promotes cultural expression and artistic appreciation. At the heart of the aspiration for public art in West Des Moines is the wish for an authentic, rich, and diverse arts culture that is seen and understood as uniquely arising from the community – an arts culture that benefits and enriches all those who live in, work in, and visit West Des Moines.

The mission of the West Des Moines Public Art Program is to create a city with enriching public spaces incorporating public works of art that offer moments of discovery and opportunities for reflection and growth--a city with public art woven into the fine grain detail of the public infrastructure. The Public Art Program champions excellence in art, design, architecture, and landscape. The Public Art Program and Collection should be the most visible symbols of West Des Moines' commitment to creativity, diversity of ideas and expression and socio-cultural multiplicity. A creative city provides inclusive and equitable environments for its residents,

business communities and visitors, extending opportunities for life-long learning and community connection.

The primary goals of the Public Art Program and Collection are to develop an aesthetically interesting environment, to integrate public works of art into public spaces, and to promote tourism and economic vitality of West Des Moines through the enhancement of public spaces.

The Public Arts Advisory Commission's permanent artwork collection continues to grow each year. See more here: [www.wdm.iowa.gov/PublicArt](http://www.wdm.iowa.gov/PublicArt).

## ABOUT THIS OPPORTUNITY

### ***Railroad Park Public Art Statement***

Historic Valley Junction is the gathering place that is the heart and soul of West Des Moines – a delightful mix of old and new, bridging generations with unique shops, vibrant events and a walkable hometown feel. Historic Valley Junction is West Des Moines' original main street.

The Railroad Park Public Art Work Group wants to celebrate the story of Historic Valley Junction through this art project. The Work Group wants every person who experiences this specific commissioned artwork to feel a sense of excitement and a connection to the community.

The project will include **two (2) permanent commissioned works of art** to be sited in rough openings sized 6'-8" by 3'-4" on the north face of the public restroom facility. The restroom facility is located on the west side of the stage/shelter at 425 Railroad Avenue. **The total budget for the project is \$50,000.** This not-to-exceed total must cover all artist fees, design and engineering including structural and electrical, fabrication, installation, lighting (excluding electrical service), site visits, travel costs, and other related expenses.

## SELECTION & PROJECT CRITERIA

Selection of a finalist or finalists will be based on the following:

- Quality of letter of interest
- Quality of work samples
- Background and prior work experience including community engagement
- Demonstration of project understanding and ability to meet project schedule
- Consideration of project criteria in conceptual design proposal

The artist's concept, final proposal, and ultimately the final artwork will need to meet certain criteria. Artwork should:

- Fulfill the Railroad Park Public Art Statement (see above)
- Include a high level of community engagement that is incorporated into the development of a final proposal by the selected artist
- Be low maintenance, durable, and resistant to vandalism; able to withstand extreme weather conditions
- Be dynamic and eye-catching; impactful and engaging
- Be aesthetically and photographically pleasing
- Be appealing both day and night and during all seasons

## ELIGIBILITY

Artist or artist team:

- Must have completed 2 commissioned outdoor public works of art of \$25,000 or more
- Must show an understanding of the community of West Des Moines and the Historic Valley Junction district; ***special consideration will be given to those artists who show familiarity with the district in their proposal*** (no travel costs will be covered for any pre-selection site visits)
- Open to any US artist/artist team
- Must be able to participate in a virtual interview, if needed
- Artists from various racial and ethnic backgrounds or those historically excluded are encouraged to apply

## SELECTION PROCESS OVERVIEW

This is an open call for artists who meet the eligibility requirements. To support an authentic, rich, and diverse arts culture for all, the West Des Moines Public Arts Advisory Commission commits to championing policies and practices of cultural equity that empower a vibrantly diverse, inclusive, and equitable community. Artist's submission materials will be blind scored by the Railroad Park Public Art Work Group. If necessary, interviews may be conducted with selected artists or artist teams.

Upon selection of an artist or artist team whether based solely upon submission materials or upon interviews, one artist/artist team will be commissioned to develop, fabricate, and install the permanent artworks.

## PROPOSED SCHEDULE

<b>May 1</b>	Call for Artists announced
<b>June 2</b>	Submission deadline / proposals forwarded to Railroad Park Public Art Work Group for review
<b>Week of June 12</b>	Railroad Park Public Art Work Group selects artist/artist team (schedule may be extended if interviews are conducted)
<b>June 22</b>	Approval of artist contract by WDM Public Arts Advisory Commission
<b>July 5</b>	Approval of artist contract by WDM City Council / artist begins final proposal
<b>Week of July 31</b>	Railroad Park Public Art Work Group approves final proposal
<b>August-September</b>	Artwork fabrication
<b>October 13</b>	Project installation complete/Valley Junction Gallery Night unveiling event

\*Schedule may be subject to change. Please address possible timeline concerns in the letter of interest.

## REQUIRED SUBMISSION MATERIALS

*In digital format only.*

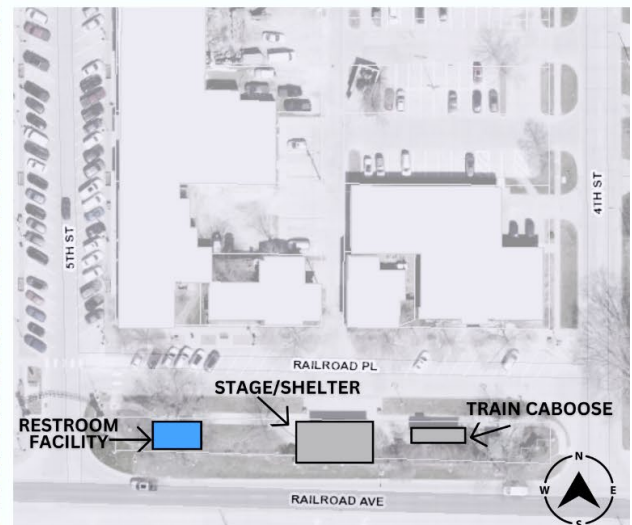
Provide the following in a single PDF document:

- Artist contact information:** include email, phone number, address, and website/social media if applicable
- Letter of interest:** please include statements addressing eligibility criteria, community engagement, and project criteria
- Biographical information and resume/CV for lead artist(s):** include one paragraph for each team member if artist team
- Three references:** (contact information only) for recently completed projects of similar scope
- Work samples:** include 3-5 work samples showing projects completed within the last 5 years with up to 3 digital images of each project; at least 2 must be \$25,000 or more commissioned artworks; please provide a brief description and budget for each work sample
- Initial Concept:** no more than 3 pages showing artist's initial concept for the Railroad Park Public Art Project that may include sketches, images, and text

Please submit all materials via email to Allison Ullestad, Arts, Culture and Enrichment Supervisor, [allison.ullestad@wdm.iowa.gov](mailto:allison.ullestad@wdm.iowa.gov). Include "Railroad Park Public Art Project" in the subject line. All materials must be received **by 5:00 p.m. CST on Friday, June 2, 2023**. No submissions will be accepted after this time. Receipt of submission will be acknowledged via e-mail.

Questions regarding this Call for Artists can be directed to Allison Ullestad, Arts, Culture and Enrichment Supervisor, at 515-222-3455 or [allison.ullestad@wdm.iowa.gov](mailto:allison.ullestad@wdm.iowa.gov).

## PHOTOS SHOWING RAILROAD PARK & RESTROOM FACILITY



PHOTOS SHOWING CHARACTER OF HISTORIC VALLEY JUNCTION

