



REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

North Village Park
Public Art Project - Art Benches
Columbia, Missouri

Deadline to apply: Monday, Feb. 9, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. CST



OVERVIEW

The City of Columbia, Missouri invites **Missouri artists** to apply for a public art project for the art benches in the new North Village Park. At this point, artists should submit qualifications only, not a design proposal (see Selection Process and Application Information). Once an artist is selected, a design proposal will be prepared for the site.

ABOUT NORTH VILLAGE PARK

The 2.3-acre park is located in the North Village Arts District in downtown Columbia, Missouri. The former brownfield site is being revitalized as a public park focused on art and music. The park will be used as a primary location for citizens and visitors to Columbia to view a variety of outdoor public art displays that will be installed in multiple locations throughout the park. The

public art displays will enhance the park experience for patrons and impact the city's cultural tourism. Park visitors will be able to view and interact with the different outdoor art exhibits allowing for public opportunities related to art engagement, education and promotion. The park design will also incorporate a public performance space, destination playground, outdoor seating, sidewalks for vendor fairs and large lawn for community events.

See Appendix A at the end of this document for site plans.

ART BENCHES PROJECT

There is an opportunity for permanent public art in the park in the form of art benches. The sculptural benches will serve both functional and artistic purposes. Applying artists are encouraged to explore creative ways to incorporate their artistic visions into functional and accessible seating.

At this time, four benches are planned for installation (with possible additions in future years). Multiple artists may be considered for this project. However, if an artist would like to propose a series of benches, they should indicate in the application's Statement of Interest.

THE ART BUDGET

The budget has been established at \$5,000 per bench. The amount must include all artist fees, materials, fabrication, shipping, installation, etc.

ARTIST ELIGIBILITY

The project is open to all artists and artist teams, 18 years and older, **who are legal residents of the United States residing in Missouri** (will also consider artists across state lines in Kansas City and St. Louis metro areas). Professional artists with experience in the field of public art are encouraged to apply. All applicants, regardless of race, sex, religion, nationality, origin or disability, will be considered.

ARTIST SELECTION PROCESS

The City's Standing Committee on Public Art – made up of artists, arts professionals, community representatives and project staff – will review applications and choose finalists. Applications will be evaluated on the basis of artistic and technical merit and strength of past work. Though not required, relevant work in the field of public art is desirable. The number of finalists is not pre-determined.

All finalists will be invited to interview with the project selection panel and will receive an honorarium for doing so. Finalists will not be asked to develop design proposals for the interviews, but should be prepared to discuss how they might approach the project as well as present a survey of their past work and answer questions from the panel. The selection panel will recommend the applicant(s) they believe to be most qualified for the project to the City's Commission on Cultural Affairs. The City Council will finalize the decision. Once the contract has been approved by City Council, the selected artist(s) will be able to begin developing a proposal for the project. The design will be reviewed and approved by the Standing Committee

on Public Art, Commission on Cultural Affairs and City Council in a similar process for artist selection. The artist(s) will coordinate with Parks & Recreation staff to schedule a timeline installation of the work to coincide with the completion of the park.

TIMELINE

Subject to change based on project schedule

- Monday, Feb. 9, 2026: Deadline for RFQ submission (5 p.m. CST).
- February-March 2026: Finalist notifications and interviews
- April-May 2026: Commission on Cultural Affairs and City Council approval
- June-August 2026: Design and approval
- Fall 2026: Fabrication and installation.

APPLICATION INFORMATION

To be considered, artists will be asked to submit the following:

- Current résumé
- Contact information for two professional references
- Up to 10 images of previously completed artwork with project details.
- A typed statement of interest, no more than 500 words, that outlines how you might approach this project, if selected, what materials you might use, how this project could relate to your current work, etc. Do not include sketches or a developed description of a possible installation, just the basic statement of interest.

Do not send any materials not specifically requested. If sent, they will not be reviewed by the selection panel.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Applications must be submitted via online form by Monday, Feb. 9, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. CST.

Emailed applications cannot be accepted. Late and incomplete submissions will not be considered.

SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Access the online submission form on the Office of Cultural Affairs website at

<https://www.como.gov/arts/category/call-for-artists/>

INQUIRIES

City of Columbia, Missouri, Office of Cultural Affairs, 573-874-7512 or OCA@CoMo.gov

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

This request for qualification (RFQ) does not commit the City of Columbia (City) to enter into an agreement with any applicant and is not an offer for contract. All City arts programs are contingent upon availability of funds. At its sole discretion, the City may reject any or all applications, may modify or terminate the application or selection processes and without prior notice. Applicant agrees that all materials submitted become the property of the City and shall not be returned. Notwithstanding the foregoing, applicant shall retain all copyright in the work

which may be held by applicant. The applicant certifies that the information contained in the application is true and correct to the best of his or her knowledge. The City is not responsible for damage or loss of materials submitted. Failure to comply with all the requirements of this RFQ will constitute an invalid application.

RESERVATION OF RIGHTS

The City of Columbia (City) reserves the right at any time to supplement, amend or otherwise modify this solicitation and to request additional information from any participating artists for any reason and without prior notice. In addition, the City reserves the right to accept or reject at any time prior to the commissioning of a work, any or all proposals; to waive any defect or technicality; and to advertise for new requests for qualifications.

APPENDIX A

Park Site Plan



MARCH 4, 2024

ORR STREET PARK PROPERTY

PROPOSED PARK MASTER PLAN



210 ORR STREET



Figure 1: Proposed Park Master Plan