

O'HARE AIRPORT PUBLIC ART OPPORTUNITIES: CONCOURSE D REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ)

Eligibility:	National			
Artwork Site Opportunities:	7			
Total Art Budget:	\$2,500,000			
Art Budget per site:	\$300,000	to	\$500,000	(see Budget Summary)

APPLICATION DEADLINE:	9/30/2026 Apply Online HERE
ARTIST INFORMATION WEBINAR:	Webinar Recording Available HERE
Answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) available HERE	
APPLICANTS, PLEASE NOTE:	
- This is a request for qualifications (RFQ). It is not an invitation for a new commission or a request for proposals. - Following the review of RFQ applications, a request for proposals (RFP) will be issued to the selected finalists. - The complete RFQ with images is available as a downloadable PDF on the DCASE website. - All images provided are generic representations of the site and are not to scale. All dimensions provided are approximate. Images and dimensions are intended solely to provide a general overview of site opportunities and artwork placement.	

SUMMARY OF THE OPPORTUNITY

The City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) in partnership with the Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA) invites professional artists (both individual artists and artist teams) to submit qualifications for consideration for integrated public art opportunities in seven (7) locations at Chicago O'Hare International Airport's New Concourse D, currently under construction.

PUBLIC ART IN AIRPORTS

Chicago's airports have long served as a canvas for the City's public art with an emphasis on local and global interests. The City of Chicago's world-renowned Public Art Program is reflected in dozens of public artworks at both of Chicago's international airports: Midway (MDW) and O'Hare (ORD). The Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events has worked in close partnership with the Department of Aviation to site key works from our collection, commission new public art, and advise on special projects and airport activations.

GOALS OF PUBLIC ART IN AIRPORTS:

1. Deliver a high-quality, world-class art program for Chicago airports.
2. Create a mix of cultural offerings including exhibitions, public art and site-specific performances that showcase the unique talents of artists and arts organizations.
3. Improve customer experience at airports by providing entertainment, beautification, visual and placemaking opportunities through the art program.
4. Promote Chicago as a destination for art and culture and connect visitors to the city's vast cultural landscape.

DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS AND SPECIAL EVENTS

The Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events (DCASE) is dedicated to enriching Chicago's artistic vitality and cultural vibrancy. This includes fostering the development of Chicago's non-profit arts sector, independent working artists and for-profit arts businesses; providing a framework to guide the City's cultural and economic growth; marketing the City's cultural assets to a worldwide audience; and presenting high-quality, free and affordable cultural programs for residents and visitors.

O'HARE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Conveniently situated in the center of the U.S., Chicago boasts two first-class airports. Chicago O'Hare (ORD) and Midway (MDW) International Airports make up one of the busiest and most strategically significant airport systems in the world. Both airports are owned and operated by the **Chicago Department of Aviation** (CDA), a department of the City of Chicago. The CDA is self-supporting, using no local or state tax dollars for operations or capital improvements at O'Hare and Midway.

O'Hare Airport offers nonstop service to 280 domestic and international destinations with nearly 50 airline partners and has approximately 200 gates across four terminals. More than 85 million passengers traveled through O'Hare in 2025.

O'Hare is one of the few airports in the world to operate as a dual connecting hub, with United Airlines operating primarily out of Terminals 1 and 2 and American Airlines operating primarily out of Terminal 3. These hubs together comprise more than 75% of O'Hare's passenger activity. In 2025, O'Hare was again named the *#1 Most Connected Airport in the U.S.* by the Official Aviation Guide's annual index and ranked #7 worldwide.

Learn more at **FlyChicago.com** and follow @fly2ohare and @fly2midway for news and updates.

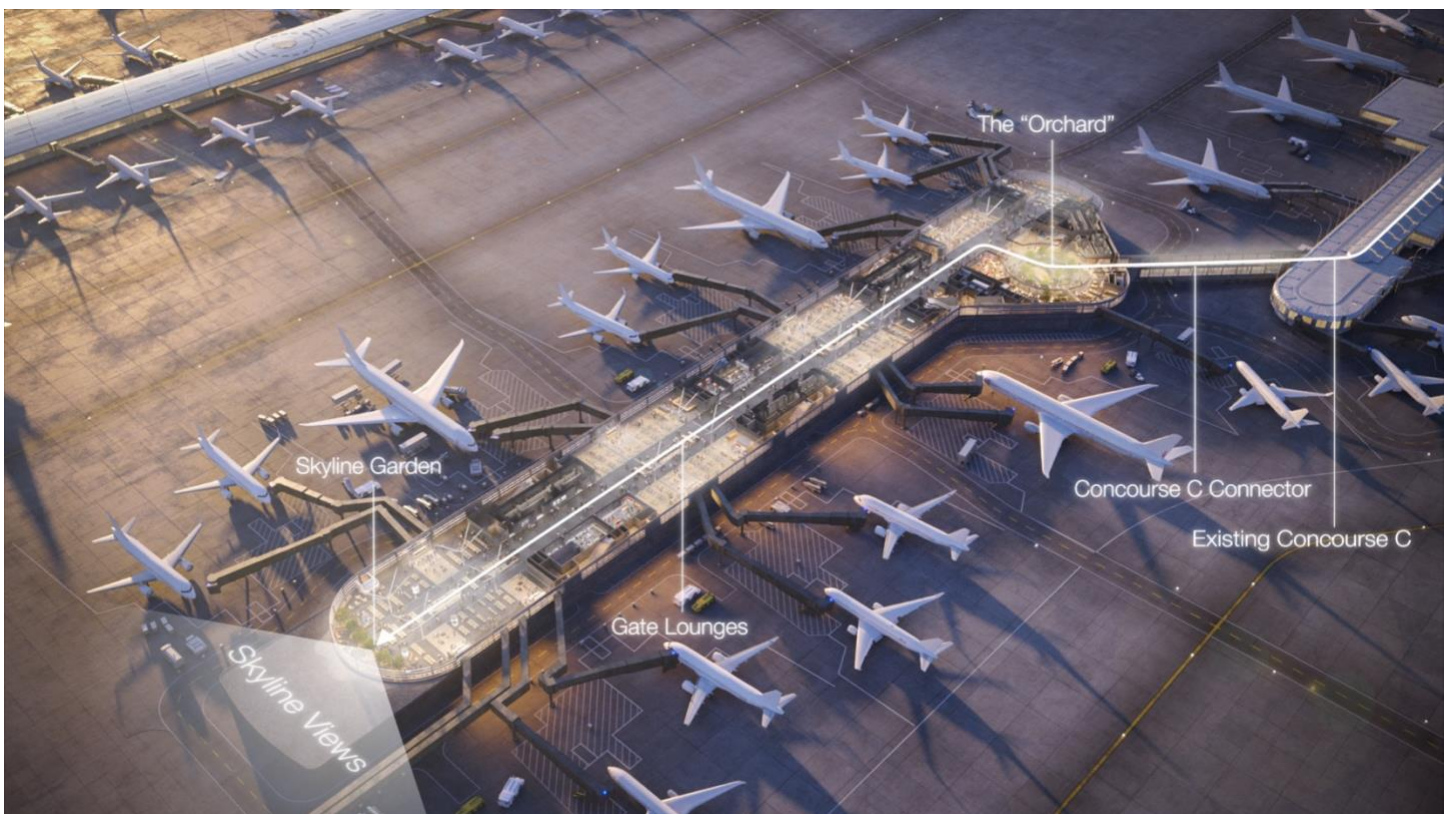
ORDNext

[ORDNext](#) is the bold next phase of O'Hare 21, the largest terminal expansion in O'Hare history. With construction now underway, it marks a complete reimagining of the airport's core, designed to elevate every journey and strengthen Chicago's role as a global leader in travel, trade, and economic growth for generations to come. Beginning with the New Concourse D, this multi-facility investment will reshape how millions of passengers move through Chicago.

The New Concourse D

The new 580,000-square-foot, multi-level Concourse D will add 19 new gates designed to accommodate both narrow- and wide-body aircraft. Planned amenities include over 20,000 square feet of lounge space, 30,000 square feet of commercial space, a 450-square-foot children's play area, and a new 65-foot-long walkway connecting to the existing Concourse C to carefully bridge past and present.

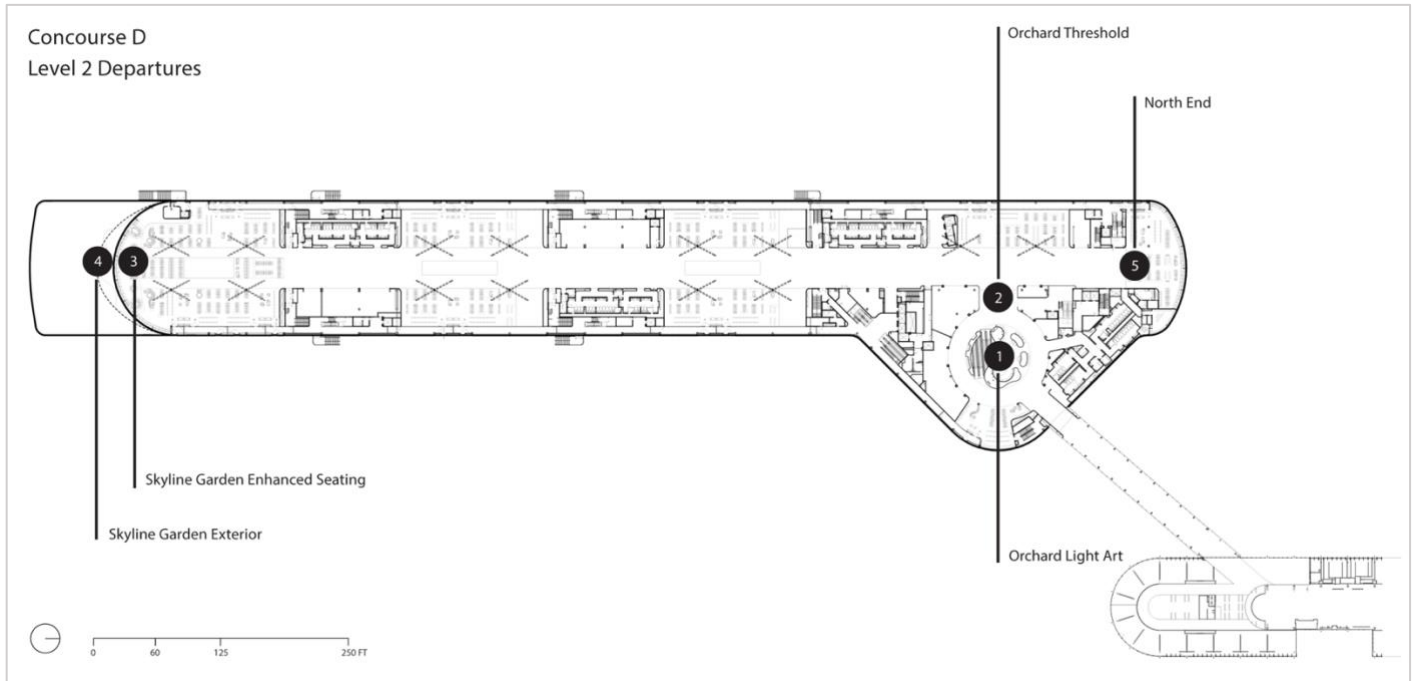
Passengers arrive in a skylit, multilevel space shaped by gentle curves and landscaped forms. This central gathering space introduces moments of rest, dining, retail, and play. A series of branching, tree-like columns pays homage to the orchards that were once cultivated on this land. Their sculptural canopies open sight lines, and support a curved roof designed to bring daylight deep into the building, creating a calm, naturally lit environment for passengers boarding flights. Warm materials evoke the tranquility of the Midwest prairie, while the south end of the concourse extends the view outward, framing the Chicago skyline.



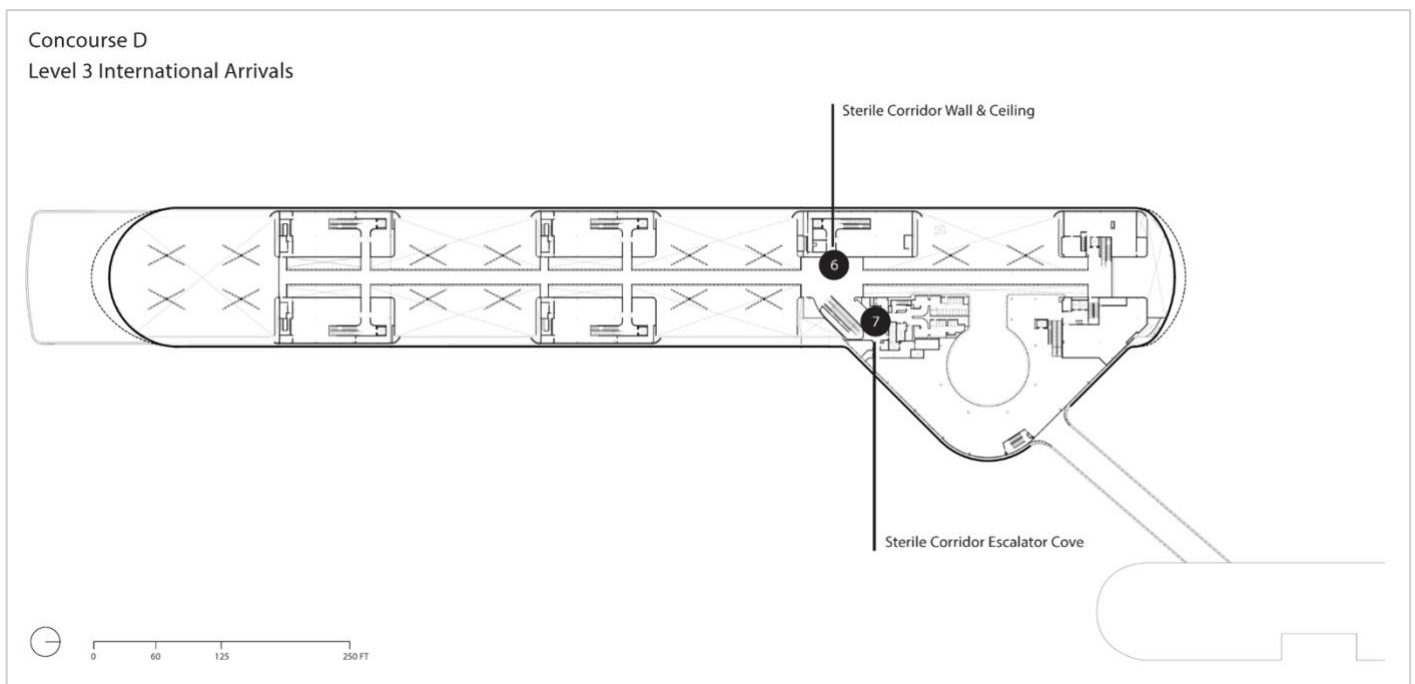
Concourse D. Rendering not to scale. Copyright City of Chicago 2026.

PUBLIC ART OPPORTUNITIES: CONCURSE D

Seven (7) site opportunities across Concourse D have been identified for integrated public art, as described below.



Level 2, overall plan. Scale approximate. Copyright City of Chicago 2026.



Level 3, overall plan. Scale approximate. Copyright City of Chicago 2026.

SITE CONSIDERATIONS

For all sites:

- **Budget:** Artwork project budgets vary by site opportunity, from \$300,000 - \$500,000, as detailed in this request for qualifications (RFQ). Each art budget is inclusive of all costs and fees associated with the artist's execution of the public art commission for the specified site, from beginning through completion, including but not limited to design development, engineering, fabrication, site preparation, delivery, installation, insurances, and other related expenses.
- **Anticipated timelines** (approximate):
All dates are estimates for planning purposes and are subject to change.
 - **Site construction:** Current - Winter 2028
 - **Art installation:** Summer 2028 - Winter 2028 (To be coordinated)
- **Dimensions:** All dimensions are approximate. In the RFP phase, finalists invited to submit proposals will receive detailed site drawings with dimensions, weight limits and other technical information, and request and receive clarifying information from the design team through DCASE.
- **Images:** All images are generic representations of the site and are not to scale. They are intended solely to provide a general overview of site opportunities and artwork placement.
- **Additional considerations:**
 - Each commissioned Artist will be responsible for coordinating with DCASE and the design team to:
 - Verify artwork is code compliant and does not impede site function or facility operations.
 - Confirm all dimensions, engineering calculations, final dimensions and engineering prior to fabrication and installation.
 - Each commissioned Artist will be responsible for coordinating with DCASE and the CMAR (Construction Manager at Risk) and CDA's PMO (Project Management Office) to:
 - Verify artwork is buildable and constructable within the existing constraints of Concourse D design.
 - Confirm all dimensions, engineering calculations, final dimensions and engineering prior to fabrication and installation.
 - Coordinate all installation with Concourse D Construction and Activation.

SITES 1 & 2:
THE “ORCHARD”
Concourse Level 2

A skylit, multilevel space shaped by gentle curves and landscaped forms, this central gathering space introduces moments of rest, dining, retail, and play.

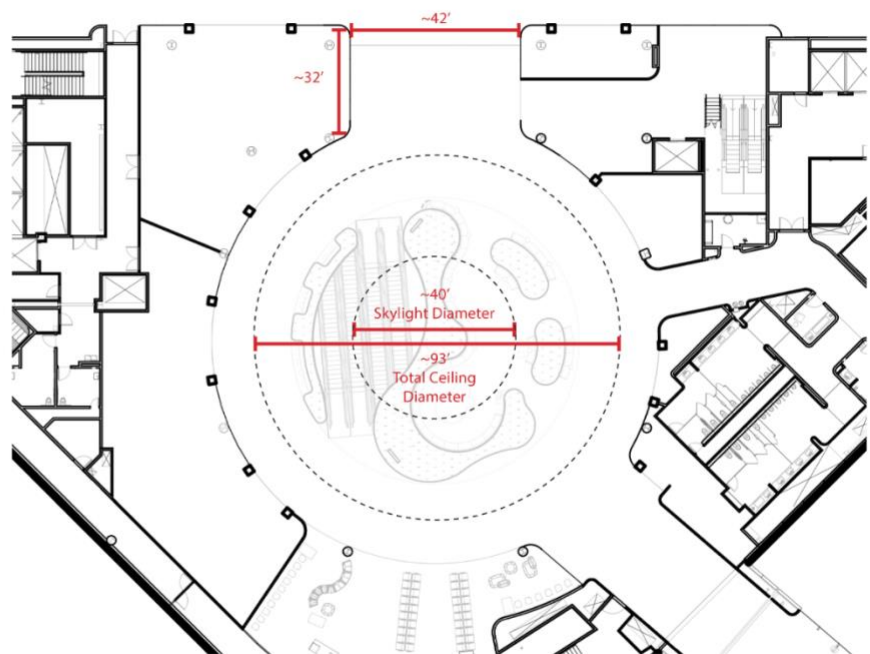


Level 2, Orchard (light art location). Rendering not to scale. Copyright City of Chicago 2026.



Level 2, Orchard (hanging sculpture location). Rendering not to scale. Copyright City of Chicago 2026.

Concourse D
Level 2 Plan Orchard



Level 2, Orchard, plan. Dimensions approximate. Copyright City of Chicago 2026.

Site 1. Orchard Ceiling

- **Art budget:** \$500,000
- **Approximate dimensions:**
 - Overall diameter: 93'
 - Skylight diameter: 40'
- **Potential media:** Light-based art integrated with the perimeter of the ceiling structure.
- **Additional considerations:** Artwork for this location must maintain compliance with code.

Site 2. Orchard Threshold

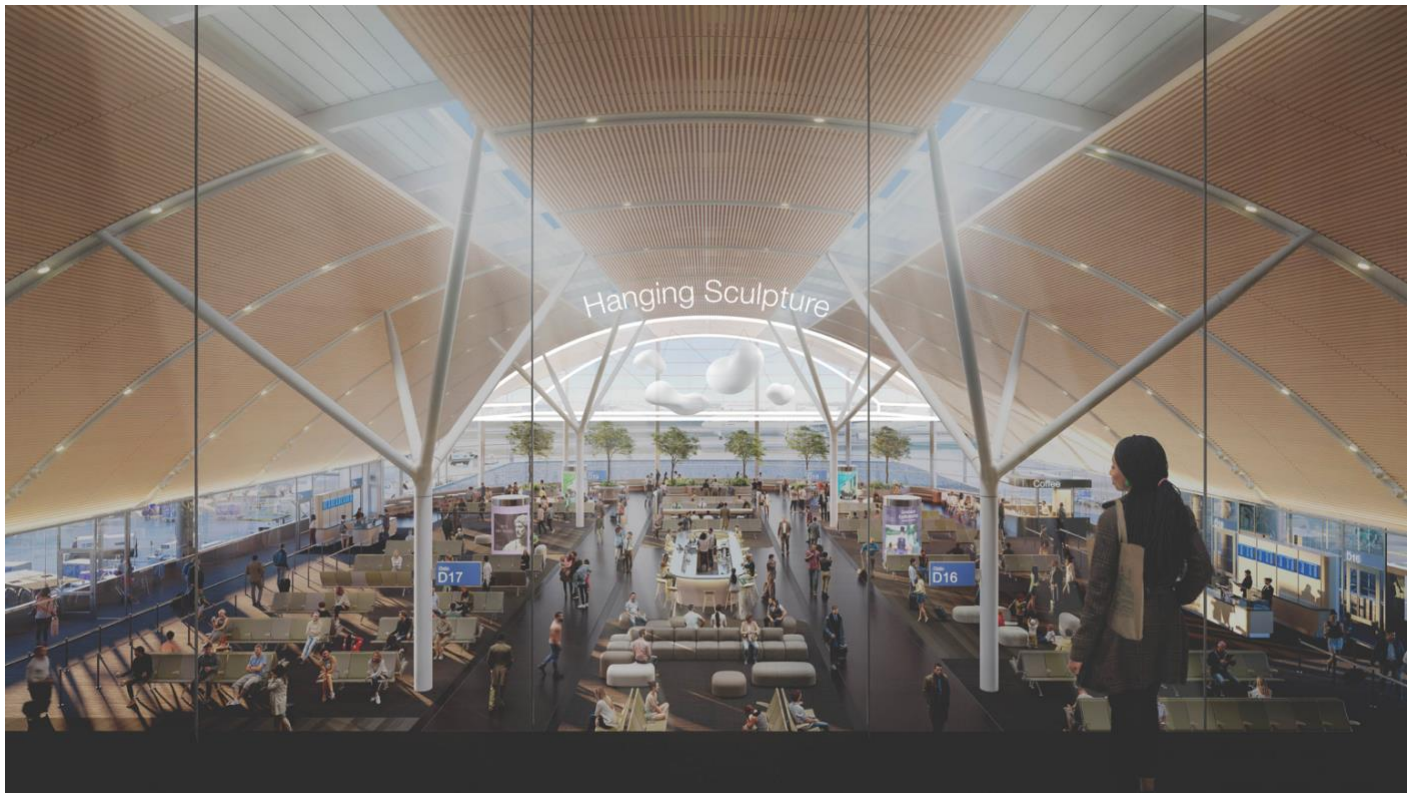
- **Art budget:** \$300,000
- **Approximate dimensions:**
 - **Height:** 12'
 - **Width:** 42'
- **Potential media:** Suspended three-dimensional artwork of suitable materials to comply with weight limits within the available space.
- **Additional considerations:**
 - Configuration may be a single cohesive unit or scattered site within the available space as long as weight limits are compliant.

SITES 3 & 4:

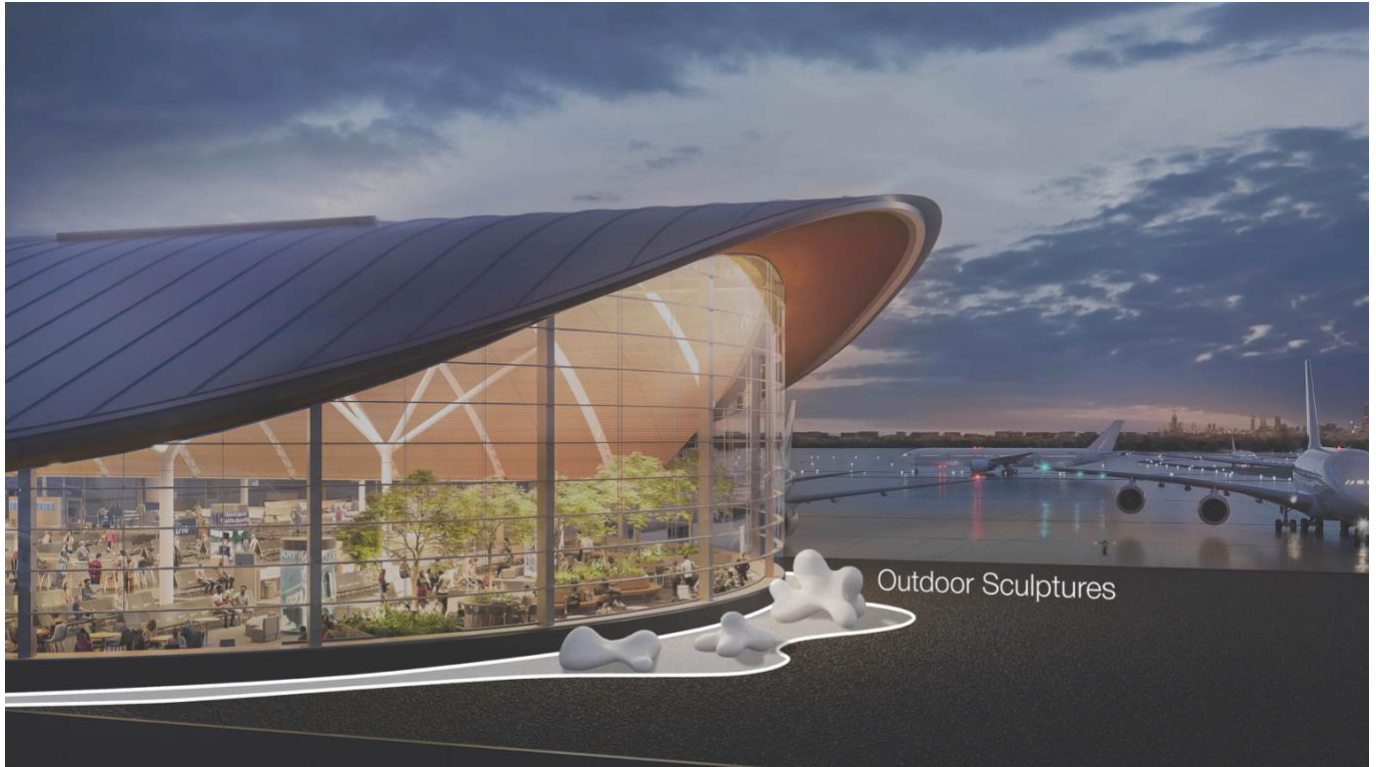
SKYLINE GARDEN ENHANCED SEATING: INTERIOR & EXTERIOR

Concourse Level 2

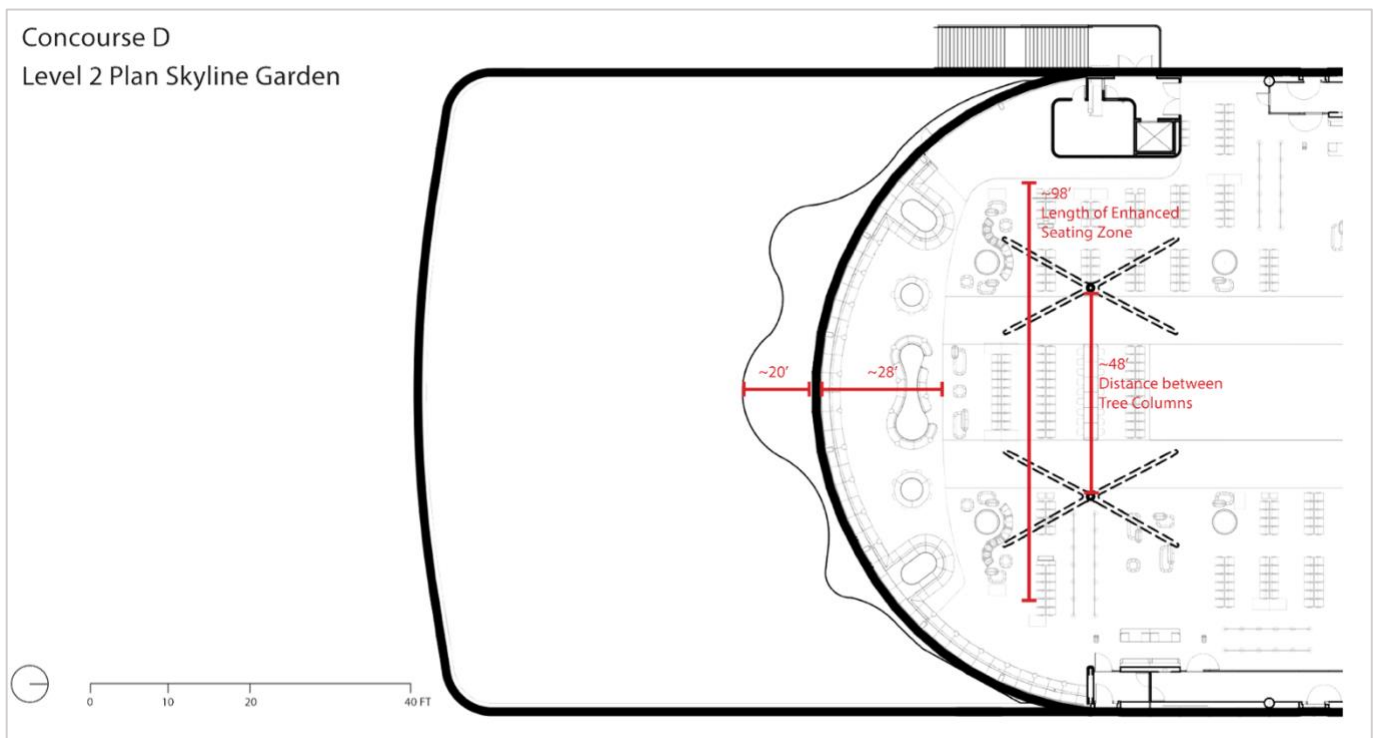
At the south end of the concourse, the passenger experience opens outward to views of the Chicago skyline. The Skyline Garden provides all types of seating and amenities for passengers awaiting boarding.



Level 2, Skyline Garden (interior). Rendering not to scale. Copyright City of Chicago 2026.



Level 2, Skyline Garden (exterior). Rendering not to scale. Copyright City of Chicago 2026.



Level 2, Skyline Garden, plan. Dimensions approximate. Copyright City of Chicago 2026.

Site 3. Skyline Garden Enhanced Seating: Interior

- **Art budget:** \$300,000
- **Approximate dimensions:** Variable (see detail)
- **Potential media:** Suspended three-dimensional artwork of suitable materials to comply with weight limits within the available space.
- **Additional considerations:**
 - Configuration of the artwork may be a single cohesive unit or multi-part and must comply with weight limits.
 - Artist to determine dimensions and placement of artwork within the available space.
 - Artist to consider the relationship between interior art (Site 3) and exterior art (Site 4), and potential influence on passenger experience.

Site 4. Skyline Garden Enhanced Seating: Exterior

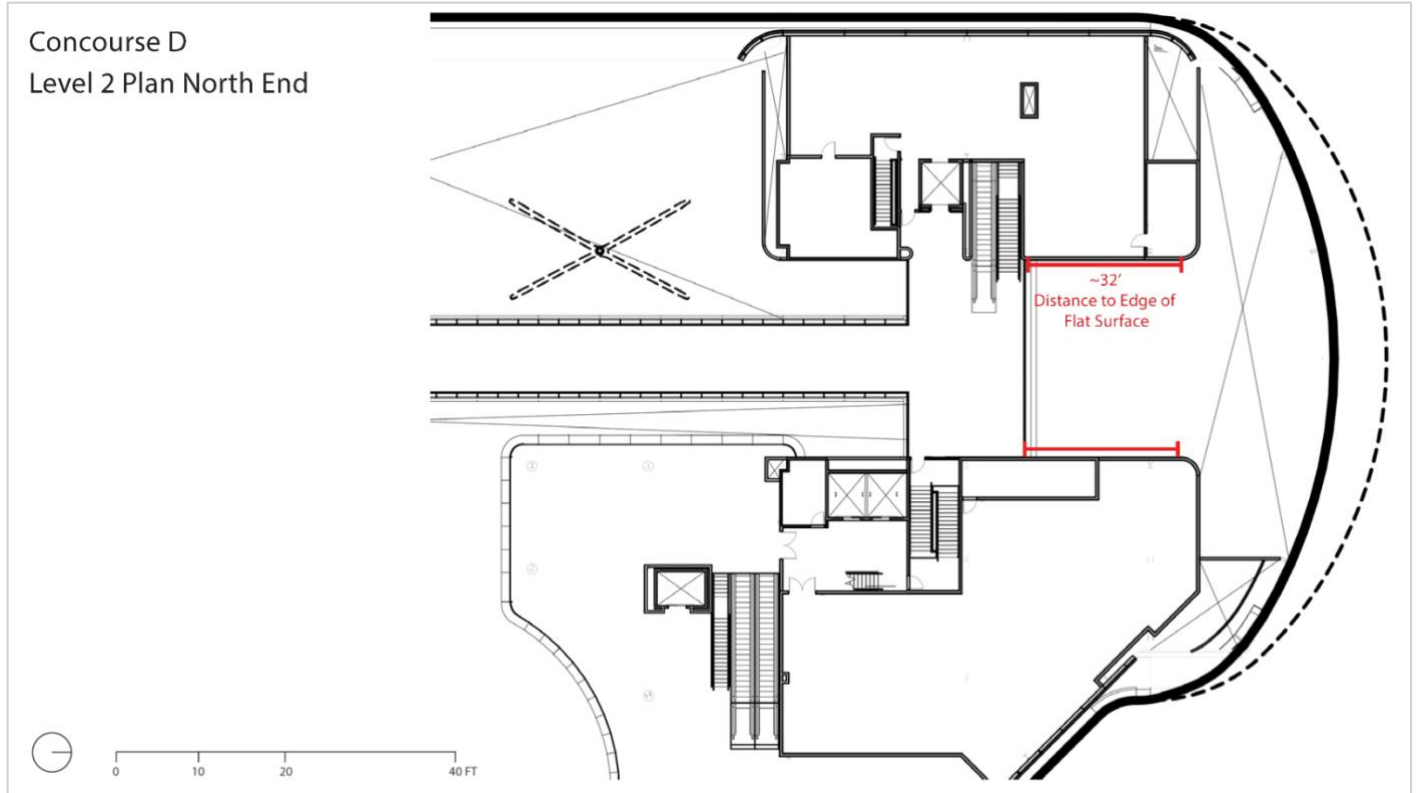
- **Art budget:** \$300,000
- **Approximate dimensions:** Variable (see detail)
- **Potential media:** Durable, ground-mounted exterior sculpture
- **Additional considerations:**
 - Configuration of the artwork may be a single cohesive unit or multi-part and must comply with weight limits.
 - Artist to determine dimensions and placement of artwork within the available space.
 - Artist to consider the relationship between exterior art (Site 4) and interior art (Site 3), and potential influence on passenger experience.

SITE 5:
NORTH END
Concourse Level 2

The north end of the concourse hosts passengers awaiting boarding, providing exterior views through the curved glass curtain wall. The massive walls designated for artwork are visible from the seating area below, the sterile corridor above, and from the passenger windows of aircraft on the airfield.



Level 2, North End. Rendering not to scale. Copyright City of Chicago 2026.



Level 2, North End, plan. Dimensions approximate. Copyright City of Chicago 2026.

Site 5. North End Walls

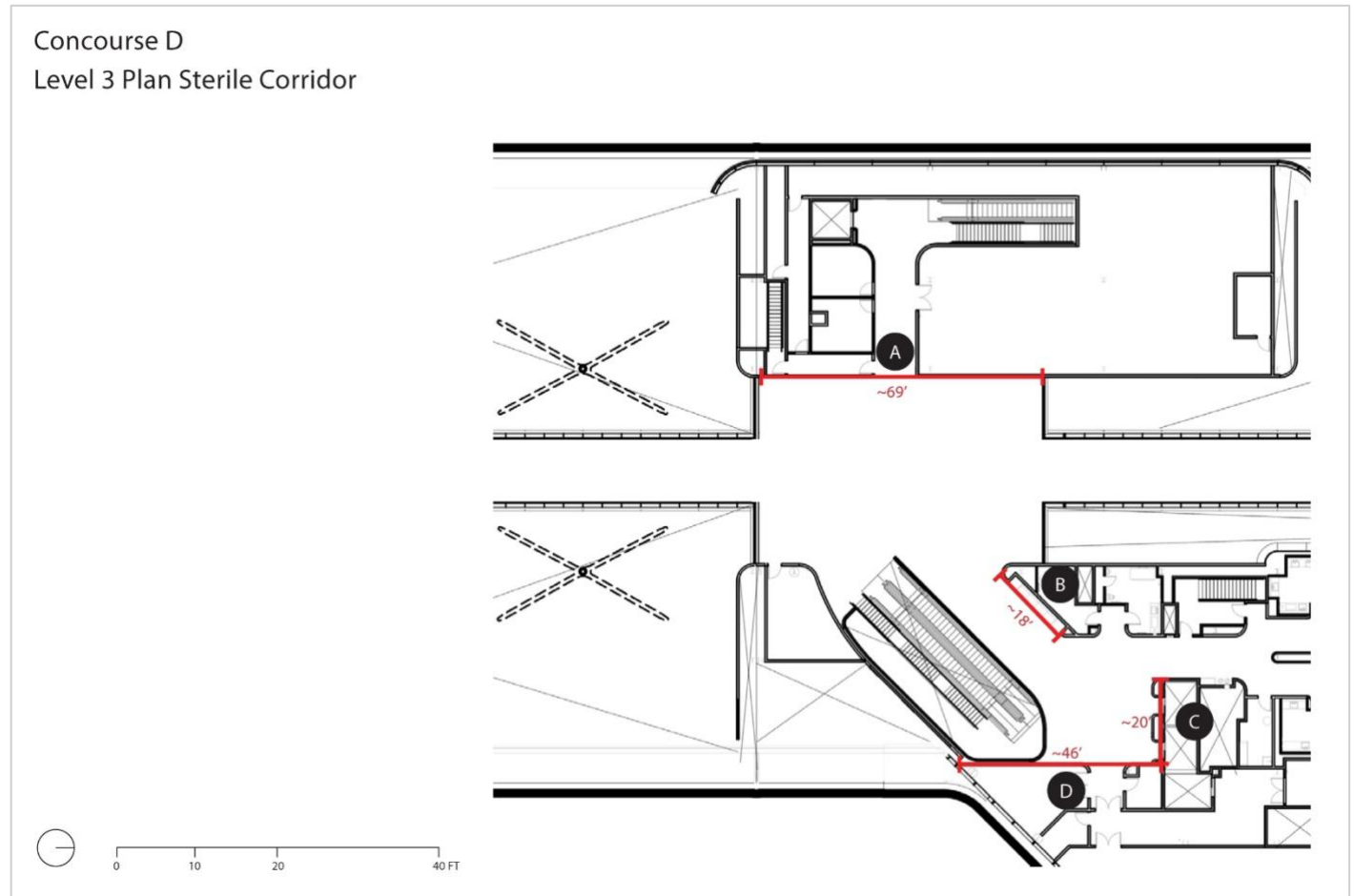
- **Art budget:** \$500,000
- **Approximate dimensions** (each wall):
 - **Height:** 27'
 - **Width:** 32'
- **Potential media:** 2-dimensional or low-relief 3-dimensional wall-mounted components of suitable materials to comply with weight limits within the available space.
- **Additional considerations:**
 - The two north end walls are an opportunity for a massive installation with a visual impact that can be experienced both from the concourse interior and from the airfield.
 - Configuration of the artwork may be cohesive or multi-part and must comply with weight limits.
 - Artist to determine dimensions and placement of artwork within the available space, using both walls.
 - Artist to consider how the dialogue between the two walls influences the passenger experience.

SITES 6 & 7:

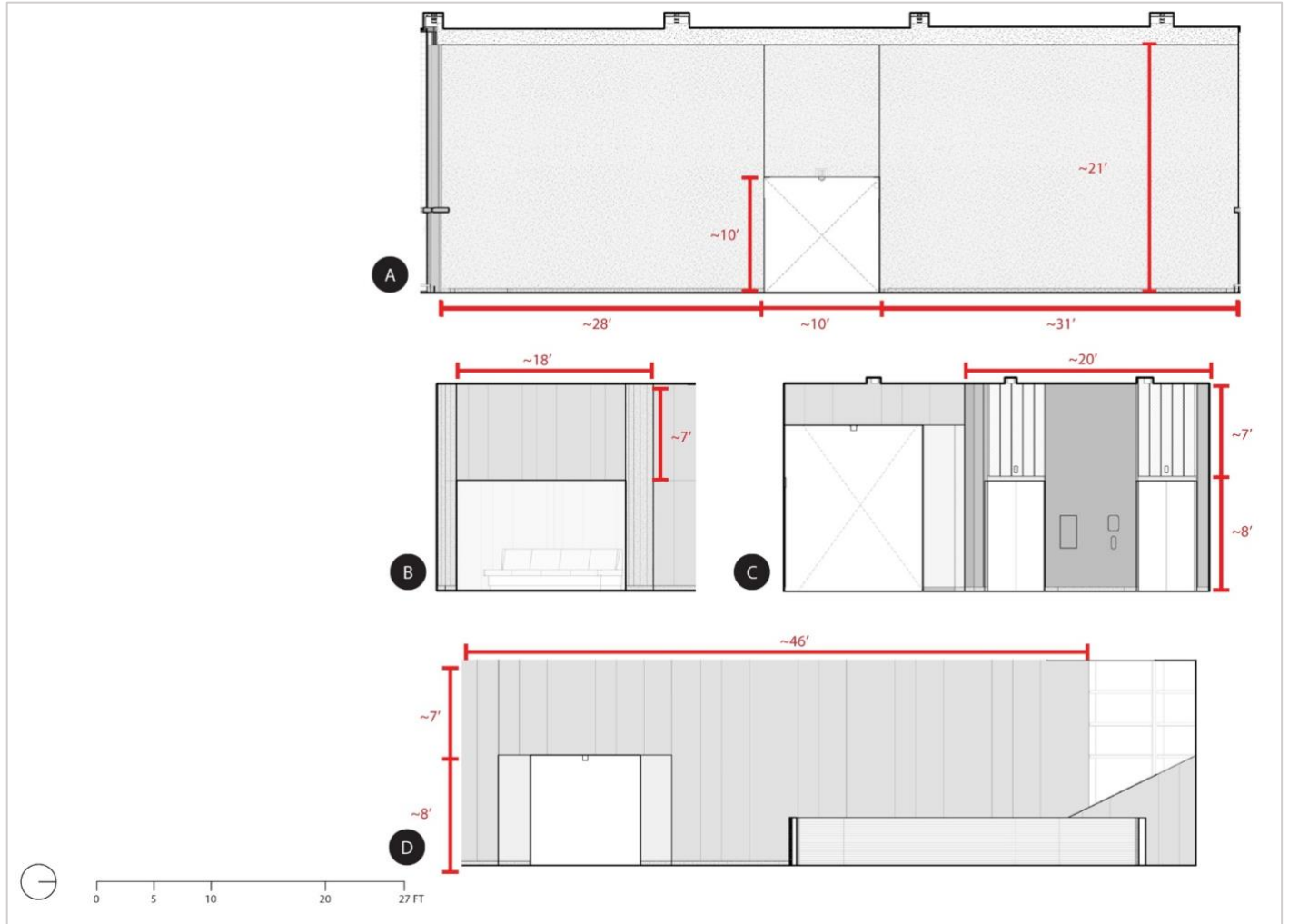
STERILE CORRIDOR: WALL & CEILING AND ESCALATOR COVE

Concourse Level 3

A major transitional and connecting point for arriving international passengers, the Sterile Corridor gives access to stairs and elevators leading to the future O'Hare Global Terminal.



Level 3, Sterile Corridor, plan. Dimensions approximate. Copyright City of Chicago 2026.



Level 3, Sterile Corridor, interior elevations. Dimensions approximate. Copyright City of Chicago 2026.

Site 6. Wall & Ceiling

- **Art budget:** \$300,000
- **Approximate dimensions:** Variable (see detail)
 - **A:** 69'

Site 7: Escalator Cove

- **Art budget:** \$300,000
- **Approximate dimensions:** Variable (see detail)
 - **B:** 18'
 - **C:** 20'
 - **D:** 46'

- **Potential media (Sites 6 & 7):** Wall-mounted or suspended, 2-dimensional or low-relief 3-dimensional components of suitable materials to comply with weight limits within the available space.
- **Additional considerations (Sites 6 & 7):**
 - The sterile corridor Walls and Escalator Cove are opportunities for 2-dimensional or low-relief 3-dimensional artwork, mounted to, or suspended directly in front of the walls.
 - Configuration of the artwork may be cohesive or multi-part, compliant with weight limits.
 - Artist to determine dimensions and placement of artwork within the available space.
 - Artist to consider the relationships and vantage points between the Walls (Site 6), the Escalator Cove (Site 7), and the sterile corridor, viewed both at close range and as passengers approach from a distance.

ELIGIBILITY

This opportunity is open nationally to professional artists and artist teams living and working in the United States. Artists and artist teams who have demonstrated a history of completing large-scale public art projects, and/or creating artworks suitable for acquisition and display in an airport facility, are encouraged to submit qualifications.

SELECTION PROCESS

1. Following the RFQ deadline, a Project Advisory Panel comprising visual arts professionals, CDA staff, and project stakeholders will review all submissions.
2. The Panel will select up to 4 finalists per site.
3. Each finalist will receive a Request for Proposal (RFP): a commission to develop a public art project proposal. In the RFP phase, finalists will receive detailed site drawings and technical information, and request and receive clarifying information from the design team through DCASE.
4. Finalists will present their proposals to the Panel, which will select an artist or artist team for each commission.

SELECTION CRITERIA

- **Artistic Excellence:** Quality, originality, and craftsmanship of past work.
- **Relevance:** The artist's ability to create work that is responsive to the site and demonstrates an understanding of place and public engagement.
- **Feasibility:** Ability to execute a large-scale public artwork within budget, schedule, and site conditions.

BUDGET SUMMARY

- **COMMISSION FOR ARTWORK** (per site):

Artwork budgets vary by site, from \$300,000 - \$500,000, as detailed in the table below and throughout this RFQ. Each public art commission budget is inclusive of all costs and fees associated with the artist's execution of the public art commission for the specified site, from beginning through completion, including but not limited to design development, engineering, fabrication, site preparation, delivery, installation, insurances, and other related expenses.

- **HONORARIUM** (per finalist):

Each finalist will receive a **\$2,000** honorarium to develop a conceptual design proposal for one of the seven site opportunities.

Public Art Site Opportunity	Commission Budget
1. Orchard Ceiling	\$500,000
2. Orchard Threshold	\$300,000
3. Skyline Garden Enhanced Seating: Interior	\$300,000
4. Skyline Garden Enhanced Seating: Exterior	\$300,000
5. North End Walls	\$500,000
6. Sterile Corridor Wall & Ceiling	\$300,000
7. Sterile Corridor Escalator Cove	\$300,000
Total:	\$2,500,000

SCHEDULE*

* All dates are anticipated, approximate, and subject to change.

Phase	Start	End	Weeks
Request for Qualifications			
RFQ open via CAFÉ online application system APPLY HERE	8/19/26	9/30/26	6
Artist Information Session (Webinar) VIEW RECORDING HERE	9/2/26		
Review of qualifications	10/2026	12/2026	10
Notification of finalists	1/2027		1
Request for Proposals			
Finalist concept proposal development	2/2027	4/2027	6
Finalist concept proposal presentations	4/2027		1
Notification of commission awardees	5/2027		1
Commission for Artwork			
Final Design Development	6/2027	12/2027	24
Notification To Proceed	1/2028		
Fabrication	2/2028	8/2028	24
Delivery and Installation	Summer 2028	Winter 2028	16
Anticipated project completion	Winter 2028		

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Application must be submitted **digitally via the CAFÉ online application system** at <https://opportunities.wearecreativewest.org/opportunity/17678/CAFE> and include:

1. Letter of Interest:	<i>Required:</i>	1 page describing the applicant's connection to the project, relevant experience, and conceptual approach
2. Work Samples:	<i>Required:</i>	6–10 images of past large-scale public art projects
	<i>Optional:</i>	1 Video (up to 2 minutes) with accompanying 2—3 sentence description
		Data provided in the Work Sample must match data provided in the Annotated Image List.
3. Annotated Image List:	<i>Required:</i>	A single PDF including: thumbnail image, title, media, year, dimensions, location, project budget, project timeline (start and end dates), and commissioning entity for each image (or video) uploaded to Work Samples
		Data provided in the Work Sample must match data provided in the Annotated Image List.
4. Résumé or CV:	<i>Required:</i>	1–2 pages per artist; team applications must include one résumé/CV for each team member in a single PDF
5. Team Roles:	<i>Required if applying as a team:</i>	Outline of responsibilities of each team member in a single PDF

Only applications received through the CaFE online application system will be deemed complete and be reviewed. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

QUESTIONS / WHO TO CONTACT

<https://artist-help.callforentry.org/doc/who-to-contact-for-help>

RFQ Artist Information Webinar

Wednesday, September 2, Noon - 1 p.m. (Central Time)

[PRE-REGISTER HERE](#)

DCASE will host a webinar presenting information about this RFQ opportunity and the online application process. Time will be provided for Q&A.

An FAQ will be generated from questions asked during the Artist Information Webinar, to be made available online.

Questions About This RFQ Opportunity:

Contact DCASE: publicart@cityofchicago.org

All questions must be submitted via email. No phone calls.

Technical Assistance Using CaFÉ:

<https://www.callforentry.org/artist-help-cafe/>