

Call for Artists Application Guidelines

Graco Park Tunnel

Issue Date: 09/21/2026

The City of Minneapolis invites artists to create public artwork for the Graco Park Tunnel. The City is seeking artists with the capacity to work in a range of materials and a range of scales. The selected artist will design and create artwork on the tunnel interior. This bike and pedestrian tunnel connects Hall's and Boom Islands under the Plymouth Ave Bridge.



Application Deadline: Applications must be submitted by Monday, October 26, 2026, 5 p.m. CT.

[Check out all other key deadlines in the Application Timeline.](#)

For reasonable accommodations or alternative formats contact [Witt Siasoco](#). People who are deaf or hard of hearing can use a relay service to call 311 at 612-673-3000. TTY users call 612-673-3000 or 612-673-3000. Para asistencia 612-673-3000 - Rau kev pab 612-673-3000 - Hadii aad Caawimaad u baahantahay 612-673-3000.

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A. Graco Park and Hall's Island

Hall's Island shows up on the earliest known 1895 survey of the Mississippi River in Minneapolis. The City of Minneapolis operated a bath house on the island from 1905 to 1926. The City sold Hall's Island to Scherer Bros Lumber Co in 1963. In 1966, Scherer Bros filled the channel to connect the island to shore and expand mill operations.

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MRPB) purchased the Scherer site in 2010. From 2011 to 2013, they created a plan to restore the island and build a park on the adjacent shoreline. The Board approved the plan as part of RiverFirst and the Above the Falls Master Plan. In 2013, the Minnesota State Legislature authorized the restoration of Hall's Island. The MPRB agreed to name the park "Graco Park" as part of the 2018 agreement funding the park development.

For more information visit:

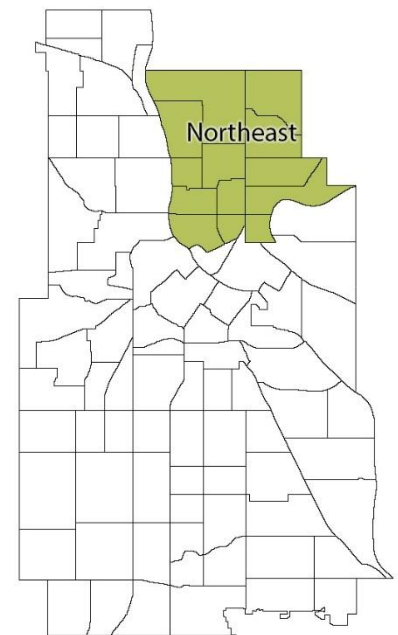
- [Minneapolis Park and Recreation Graco Park website](#)
- [Mississippi River Water Management Organization Hall's Island Project page](#)

B. Neighborhoods and Area

Graco Park is located on the Mississippi River next to the Northeast Arts District. It is in the the Saint Anthony West Neighborhood.

The area was traditionally within Dakota territory and near Ojibwe lands. Before industrialization, the river served as an important resource for travel for them. Including for travel, trade hunting and fishing

Northeast Minneapolis has been a traditionally working-class area. Lebanese, Polish, Finnish, German, Slovak, Russian, and Ukrainian immigrants settled in the area. Employment opportunities through the grain saw mills drew them in the beginning. Later they came for rail and factory jobs. By 1930, immigrants made up nearly 60 percent of Northeast's total population. In recent years, the makeup of Northeast has changed. New immigrants from around the world have continued to see Northeast as a haven. This has been particularly true for Somalis and Latin Americans.



[See more information on the current demographics of Northeast.](#)

In recent years, artists have also been part of the Northeast Community:

"In the 1980s, the area now known as the North Loop was a place that provided unregulated live/work space accommodations in mostly underutilized or vacant industrial buildings. Former, working class artists utilized these large unregulated spaces until razing

took place and new developments came with stricter city regulations. Many artists flocked from the North Loop area to a fairly deserted Northeast industrial community, because their work often did not yield immediate fiscal gains and in order to support their work and family they needed large cheap spaces that could serve dual live/work functions, which their former dwellings provided.” (From the [University of Minnesota’s Center for Urban Regional Affairs’ Twin Cities Gentrification Project](#).)

C. Graco Park Tunnel Public Art Project

The City seeks an artist/artist team to create a public artwork for this location. The art opportunity includes works on the tunnel’s interior walls and facade. This new artwork will be informed by comprehensive research and community engagement. It should connect the Park and serve the people who live nearby.

The City encourages experienced and emerging artists working in a range of materials to apply. Applicants should have connections with and/or capacity to work in and with these communities. Those selected will collaborate with the staff, the steering committee and community.

The goals of the public art project are to:

- Connect to and expand upon the goals and themes previously identified through Park planning.
- Create a public artwork that fosters belonging.
- Celebrates the importance of this site to the neighborhood, community, and city.
- Commemorate and celebrate the rich and culturally diverse communities in the area and their community histories.
- Gathered these histories through input from community members.

D. Eligibility

- Artists applying must be readily available during [the timeline](#).
- Artists currently under contract with the City may not be eligible. This depends on the timeline and schedule for those projects. Contact [Witt Siasoco](#) for more information.
- Current City staff and Minneapolis Arts Commissioners are not eligible.
- This project is seeking artists/artist teams who are practicing artists. These are not considered to be practicing artists and are ineligible:
 - Architectural, engineering and design firms;
 - Galleries and organizations;
 - Art consultants; fabricators and project managers.

- There is no restriction on the number of team members. Small teams are recommended to ensure simplicity in project coordination. A lead artist must be identified in the application to be the main contact for the project. This artist will be responsible for serving as the liaison and communicating between the artist team and City staff. It is strongly recommended most members have previous experience working together as a team on at least one project. Additional team members may also be considered after beginning work on the project.

E. Artist Compensation

The total budget for the public art project is \$250,000. This includes \$30,000 for the initial engagement and design phase. The City will enter into a fabrication contract after the Arts Commission approves the design.

These contracts will define stages of completion and a payment schedule. Payments are based on completing deliverables and not on number of hours worked. Details about artists' responsibilities for this project are in Section F.

F. Artist Responsibilities

Artists/artist teams will meet and collaborate with several groups. This includes community, the steering committee, staff and project partners.

Staff support: Throughout this process staff will provide support and technical assistance. The level of staff support ranges and depends on the artist/artist team's experience and the complexity of the project. Staff support may include:

- Drawings
- Writing revisions
- Developing a plan for and implementing engagement activities
- Connecting with and overseeing sub-contractors
- Assisting with the budget and timeline

The goal of this support is to:

- Help the artist/artist team do their best work
- Build their capacity for future work

Artists' responsibilities include completing and submitting deliverables on time. Contracts outline these in detail and they include:

Engagement and Design

- Work closely (and in person when needed) with project staff members and project partners.

- Develop and implement a community engagement plan for this project in collaboration with staff.
- Develop and refine concept designs with input from community, the steering committee and staff.
- Develop a highly detailed design that covers the vast majority of the wall space described above.
- Develop designs that meet all codes, such as safety and Americans with Disabilities Act requirements.
- Develop designs that meet all functional requirements.
- Develop final drawings, presentation materials, cost estimates, a budget, a timeline, and other visual and written deliverables.
- Provide designs and written materials for the City to obtain approvals from all appropriate parties. This includes the Public Art Advisory Panel, the Minneapolis Arts.

Communications and Administration

- Provide ongoing regular updates to City staff and project managers. Updates occur through regular meetings and email communications.
- Coordinate as needed with other consultants for the project.
- Submit invoices for payment according to City procedure.
- Communicating with staff prior to sharing information with reporters and through social media.

Maintenance and Fabrication

- Participate in a thorough design review of the draft designs with City art conservator.
- Develop a maintenance plan for the artwork.
- Fabricate artwork and/or subcontract and oversee fabrication by others.
- Sub-contract with professionals to provide all necessary plans and engineering.
- Provide signed engineering drawings for the artwork if needed.
- Arrange necessary inspections and testing.
- Provide a one-year warranty on the artwork.

Installation and Site Preparation

- Deliver and install the artwork in coordination with the site needs and schedule.

- Carry adequate insurance coverage for the project as per [Attachment C](#).
- Obtain necessary permits. (City staff can help identify these.)
- Provide or rent the equipment needed to install large scale works.
- Engage with and educate the community during installation.
- Comply with safety standards set by staff and site construction managers.
- Restore the site to its previous condition after installation, such as replacing nearby plantings.

Copyright and Ownership

- Provide the City with copyright privileges to make two-dimensional reproductions. These are for nonprofit use, such as brochures, publicity and web-site publications.
- Provide the City with the right to use any documentation of the project submitted. This includes site plans, images of engagement, fabrication, installation, etc.
- Waive rights according to appropriate sections of the Visual Artists Rights Act of 1990.
- Provide the City with the rights that are required by the permit from the Minnesota Department of Transportation. (Note that these rights are different than those typically required in the City's public art project (see attached General Requirements.)

[Learn about the Visual Artists Rights Act](#)

Documentation

- Provide the City with documentation of the project. This includes designs, written descriptions, quality photos and presentations.

G. Application Timeline

Dates

Monday, September 21

Monday, October 5, 5 p.m., CT

Wednesday, October 7, 4 p.m., CT

Friday, October 9, at 4 p.m., CT.

Friday, October 16, 5 p.m., CT

Milestone or Deadline

Call for artists posted

Informational meeting (optional, but encouraged). Contact [Witt Siasoco](#) for a link to the meeting or fill out an Intent to Apply Form

Questions due by 4 p.m., CT

Responses to questions and video from informational meeting posted on the City's website

Intent to Apply Form due

Monday, October 26, 5 p.m., CT

Monday, November 2

Monday, November 9, 4 p.m., CT

Week November 9

Week of November 16

Month of December

Estimated Services start date

September, 2027

Application deadline

Finalists Announced

Finalist's follow-up materials due

Finalists Presentations and Interviews

Artist/Team selected

Contracting

Estimated Installation

H. How to Apply

- **Attend the optional informational meeting.** An optional informational meeting will be held virtually on Monday, October 5, 4 p.m., CT Email [Witt Siasoco](#) for a link to the meeting. A video of this meeting will be posted on Friday, October 9 at 4 p.m., CT. on the City's website.
- **Fill out an Intent to Apply Form online by Friday, October 16, 5 p.m., CT.** We recommended you complete the Intent to Apply Form as soon as possible. After you do, you will receive a link to the folder to upload your application. You will also receive communication during the application process. This includes reminders about the informational meeting, when the answers to questions are available, and reminders about deadlines.

[Fill out the intent to apply form.](#)

- **Submit all questions about this application** in email to [Witt Siasoco](#) by Wednesday, September 30 by 4 p.m. CT.
- **Review the final posted questions and answers.** These will be posted on the City's website as an attachment to this Call for Artists on Friday, October 9 at 4 p.m., CT.
- **Upload a completed application by Monday, October 26, 5 p.m., CT.** After you have completed the Intent to Apply form, you will receive an email with a link to a folder to upload your application. Do not email materials to staff. Do not send links to applications through Drop Box or other file transfer programs. Handwritten, video or audio applications may be submitted upon request. Applications must be submitted by the application deadline. Late or incomplete applications may be rejected.

I. What to Submit

Past Applications: If you have applied in the past, you can often reuse materials from previous applications. This includes your resume and references. The narrative questions are different for

each Call for Artists. You can also reuse your images and images list. Alternatively, you may want to tailor the images to the types of opportunities and specific communities in the Call for Artists.

Artwork Samples:

Submit ten images as jpegs, demonstrating your artistic style and similar projects you have completed in the past. If submitting as a team, submit ten images total, and provide images by both artists.

- Only submit one image per jpeg
- Photo collages and images incorporating informational text are not allowed.
- Only share images of works for which you are the author/designer.
- It is recommended images be roughly 1920 x 1920 pixels and no more than 1.8 MB in file size.
- Images that do not meet the required formats may not be considered by the Selection Panel.

Written Materials:

The following should be submitted as one single pdf, formatted to paper sized at 8 ½" x 11". It should include the following elements:

1. **Cover Sheet:** A completed and signed copy of the [Coversheet](#).
2. **Your response to the narrative questions:** A brief narrative describing the following points (2-page maximum). Questions below are examples.
 - Why are you interested in this project?
 - Describe your connections to the Northeast Minneapolis community and/or why you are the right artist/artist team to be working on this project.
 - Briefly describe your creative process.
 - Provide an example of a creative community engagement activity that you have done in the past. In what ways was it creative? What were you hoping to learn from the community? How did you measure your success?
 - When considering the Artist Responsibilities listed section F, which aspects do you think you might need support from staff to be successful?
 - For artist teams, describe your experience working together in the past, including listing the specific projects you have worked on.
3. **Resume:** Current artistic resume(s) of all the artists involved, including relevant information (up to two pages per artist).

4. **Image List:** A completed copy of the **Image List**.
If you completed a project as a team member, the image identification should indicate your role in image submitted.
5. **References:** The names, addresses, emails, and daytime phone numbers of three professional references from past or similar projects.

J. How Applications Will be Reviewed and Artists Selected

The selection process for this project is defined by the City Public Art Policies. The panel will include: An artist, arts administrator, architect or landscape architect, arts commissioner, a project site representative, a Public Works staff member, an appropriate community representative, and two at-large members.

This panel will be required to comply with the conflict-of-interest policies and review and evaluate applications based on the criteria below.:

Stimulate Excellence in Urban Design and Public Arts:

- Is the artist's submission, previous work and/or proposed idea engaging and high quality in concept and construction?
- Is the quality of the artist's previous work comparable to other artwork commissioned by the City?
- Is the artist not overrepresented in the City's collection?
- Does the artist have a significant or engaging body of work?
- Does the artist have experience collaborating with city planners and other professionals?
- Does the artist have experience with architectural and engineering drawings and methods?
- Does the artist have experience in comparable projects and artistic disciplines?

Enhance community identity and place:

- Is the artist familiar with the community and setting and its characteristics, including history, identity, geography and cultures?
- Has the artist's previous work been appropriate to those communities and settings and the above characteristics?
- Does the artist have experience integrating artwork into infrastructure and public spaces?

Contribute to community vitality:

- Have the artist's previous projects attracted visitors and residents?

- Does the artist's previous work or proposed process build capacity between the private and public sectors, artists, arts organizations and community members?
- Does the artist's previous work or proposed process encourage civic dialogue about community, cultures or City issues?
- Do the artist's previous projects incorporate or address relevant cultural or historical events?

Involve a broad range of people and communities:

- Does the artist have experience working with communities and diverse groups?
- Does the artist have demonstrated ability to address ADA regulations as they apply to public art?
- Does the artist's previous or proposed process celebrate one or more of the City's cultural communities?
- Does the artist have experience in projects that bring people together or create gathering places?

Value artists and artistic process:

- Does the artist have a unique or appropriate cultural, geographic or artistic perspective?
- Does the proposed project or process appropriately support the integrity of the artwork and the moral rights of the artist?
- Does the proposed project or design process include the artist and the artistic process as a central element?

Use resources wisely:

- Is the artist's previous work or proposed project sustainable, secure and technically feasible?
- If the proposers are a team, is the team a manageable size and do they show demonstrated experience working together?
- Has the artist's previous work been within the timeline and budget and is the artist able to work within the City's timeline and budget?

K. No Applicant Recourse

- The City shall not be responsible for any costs incurred by any applicant in connection with this Call for Artists. Applicants shall bear all costs associated with application preparation and submission, and any other activity associated with this Call for Artists. This Call for Artists does not commit the City to award a contract. Submission of an application shall neither obligate nor entitle any applicant to enter into a contract with the City.

L. City of Minneapolis Public Art, Arts and Cultural Affairs

For over 30 years, the City of Minneapolis has enriched the lives of citizens and visitors by integrating public art into city planning, services design and infrastructure. The City's Public Art Program features:

- New commissions through the Art in Public Places program.
- The conservation and maintenance of the City's collection of over 100 works located across Minneapolis.
- Support to other departments and agencies developing public facilities, infrastructure, and public art projects.
- Permits to neighborhoods and community groups for art projects in the public realm.

[Learn more about our public art program.](#)