

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ) FOR PUBLIC ART at the Hodiamont Greenway: Gwen Giles Park



Great Rivers Greenway is looking for two artists or arts organizations to create artwork for permanent sign panels on the Hodiamont Greenway in the City of St. Louis' Gwen Giles Park. We are collecting qualifications by 4pm on Thursday, July 17, 2025, submitted through the Great Rivers Greenway website. There will be two separate contracts of \$4,000 each to create four pieces of art each. The art will be installed on sign panels along the greenway for the community to enjoy.

SUBMITTAL DUE: Thursday, July 17, 2025 by 4pm central time

SUBMITTAL VIA: Great Rivers Greenway website in a pdf format

Submittals are due at 4:00pm central time on Thursday, July 17 2025.

Electronic submittals only in pdf format will be considered. No fax or paper copies will be accepted.

All submittals received after the due date and time will not be considered. It is the responsibility of the respondent to ensure that your submittal has been received by Great Rivers Greenway prior to the deadline date and time.

QUESTIONS

All questions must be submitted to the Great Rivers Greenway website for this RFQ by 4pm central time on Thursday, July 3, 2025. Answers to questions received by Thursday, July 3, 2025 will be distributed to all known recipients of the RFQ by Tuesday, July 8, 2025 via the email address provided. Answers to questions will also be posted onto the Great Rivers Greenway website.

BACKGROUND

The Metropolitan Park and Recreation District, doing business as Great Rivers Greenway, is a regional public agency serving the City of St. Louis, St. Louis County, and St. Charles County. Great Rivers Greenway is making the region a more vibrant place to live, work, and play by connecting communities with greenways.

Great Rivers Greenway has engaged community members in a multi-year process to plan and design the Hodiamont Greenway across seven neighborhoods in St. Louis City. The community-identified priorities for this greenway include:

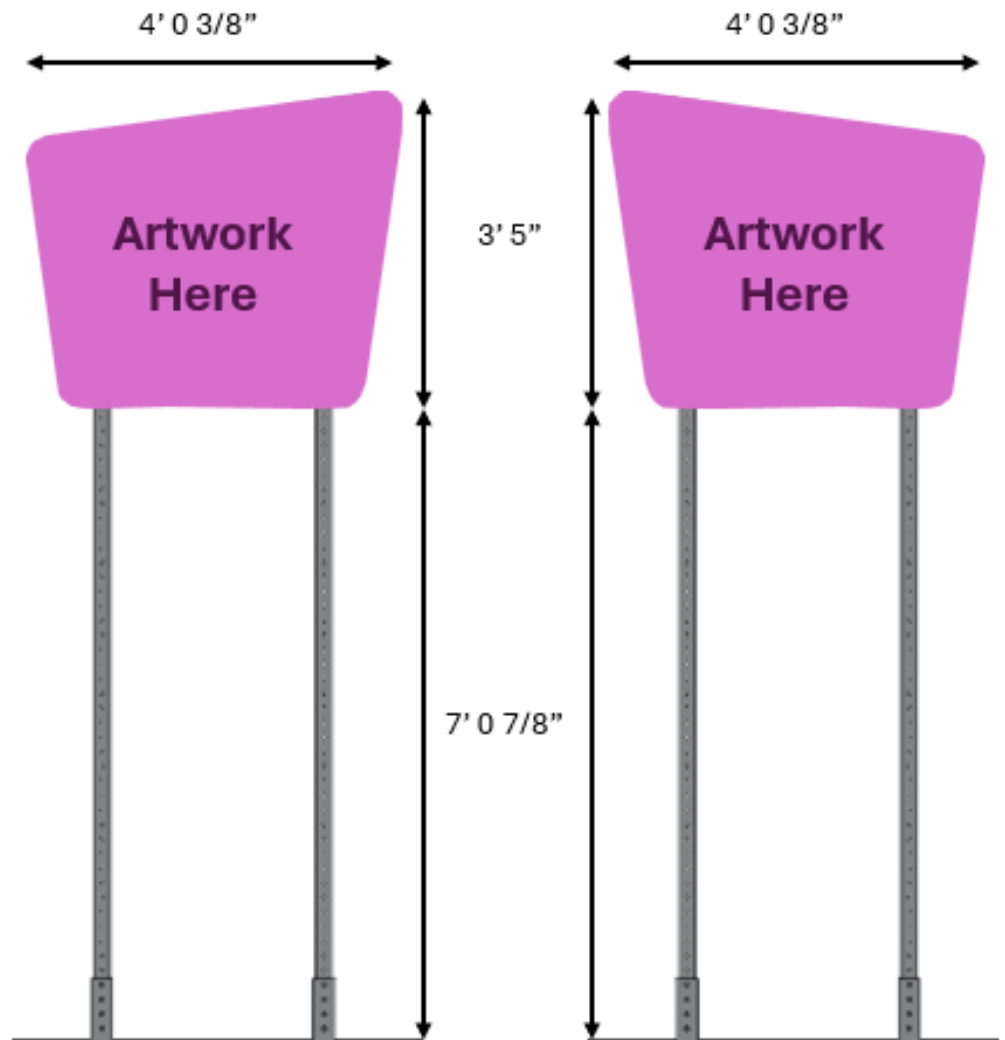
- Celebrating community and culture
- Facilitating socioeconomic growth
- Promoting safety, security, and access
- Advocating for health and wellness
- Enhancing the environment

Included in the first phase of construction of the Hodiamont Greenway are renovations to Gwen Giles Park. Park improvements include:

- Upgrades to the loop trail within the park
- Safety improvements at the crosswalk into the park
- New pavilion with seating and game tables

- 60+ new trees planted
- New parking including accessible spaces
- New park amenities such as lighting, benches, bbq pits, educational signage, an emergency call station, and a bike repair station
- New public art

The new public art at Gwen Giles Park consists of eight panels that will be installed on four double-sided signs. Each panel is trapezoidal in shape with rounded corners. Each panel is 4 feet and 3/8 of an inch wide by 3 feet and 5 inches high. The bottom of each panel is approximately 7 feet above ground level. The panels will be installed perpendicular to the greenway trail so that they can be viewed from both sides.



Panel dimension for public art along Hodiament Greenway in Gwen Giles Park



Example of public art along Hodiamont Greenway in Gwen Giles Park (not actual art panel size or shape)

The goal of the artwork will be to deepen understanding, broaden perspectives, and inspire engagement with the world around us. The art should convey interpretive themes of the site which include the following and/or the community-identified priorities for the Hodiamont Greenway listed on page 1 of this Request for Qualifications:

- Prairie Past: Natural features impact our past, present, and future. This area was once native prairie that was stewarded by Native American Peoples for many generations. French common fields shaped the street blocks we see today.
- The Last St. Louis Streetcar Route: For over 150 years, the Hodiamont Tracks have connected people and places. The first horse-drawn streetcar service on the Hodiamont Tracks began in 1859. It was replaced by cable cars pulled by below-ground cables in 1886 and then electric-powered streetcars with overhead lines at the turn of the century. The trolley sung about in “The Trolley Song” in the Meet Me in St. Louis musical is the Hodiamont Tracks streetcar. The Hodiamont Tracks were the last operating streetcar route when the streetcars were replaced by buses in 1966. Buses ran along the Hodiamont Tracks until 2009. The Tracks are named for Baron Emmanuel de Hodiamont. He was a Belgian monk who moved to St. Louis in the early 1800s and became a wealthy farmer who enslaved people and owned land in this area.
- Park Name: Gwen B. Giles (1932-1986) was a leader, activist, and public servant. She believed that racial discrimination was wrong and did something about it. Giles worked in leadership roles with the St. Louis Council on Human Relations and City of St. Louis Civil Rights Enforcement Agency to eliminate discrimination in business contracting and housing. Giles was the first African American woman to serve in the Missouri Senate and the first woman and first African American to be appointed St. Louis City Assessor. Civic leaders described Ms. Giles as intelligent, respected, and dedicated to civil rights and helping those in need.

- Architecture: Building design is an important neighborhood feature with direct impacts on daily life. Many beautiful homes, apartments, houses of worship, schools, and shops were built here between the late 1800s and early 1900s.
- Urban Renewal: Before this park opened to the public in 1959, dozens of homes and businesses stood here with a streetcar route running between them. Throughout the 1950s, the planning trend in St. Louis and across the country was to displace residents, demolish homes and businesses, and redevelop the land. In many of these areas, large institutional buildings, highways, and open green spaces were built, replacing the once vibrant neighborhoods. This park was named Catalpa Park when it opened after the tree that is native to this area and has heart-shaped leaves and large seed pods. In 1986, this park was renamed Gwen B. Giles Park to honor the first Black female Missouri senator.
- Healing from Grief: The burden of grief is shifted when it is shared in community. Grief can transform from something you carry alone to a collective process of healing, resilience, and empowerment. Whether we are grieving the loss of a loved one or societal injustices, sharing our stories can build connections and become a catalyst for change.

SCOPE OF WORK AND QUALIFICATIONS

Great Rivers Greenway is interested in hiring two individuals or firms to create artwork that will be printed on the panels. Artwork must be in digital format with a minimum of 150dpi at full scale. The artist will retain ownership of the original artwork.

Each individual or firm will be responsible for creating artwork for four of the panels to be displayed at Gwen B. Giles Park.

Great Rivers Greenway will be responsible for fabricating, printing, and installing the artwork on the sign panels.

The artist must allow Great Rivers Greenway to use, reproduce, publish, republish, exhibit, edit, modify, or distribute the digital copy of the artwork for the purpose of displaying the art along the Hodiamont Greenway at Gwen Giles Park.

The artist will be compensated \$4,000 for the digital files of the artwork and usage rights. Digital files of the artwork must be provided to Great Rivers Greenway no later than Friday, November 14, 2025.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING AND SUBMITTING QUALIFICATIONS

Please upload one submittal as a PDF file via the Great Rivers Greenway website. Submittals should contain:

- Artist(s)'s name and contact information
- A brief description (500 words max) of your vision for this artwork and how you will incorporate the interpretive themes and/or community priorities into this artwork
- Images of three (3) large-scale mural or graphic artworks that you have created
- A reference name, email, and phone number of a client or partner you have worked with on a custom artwork

It is the sole responsibility of the respondent to see that the submittal is received in proper time.

SELECTION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

Great Rivers Greenway may reach out with questions or for an interview.

Artists will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- Demonstrated understanding of the artwork needs including project site and scale, goals, and incorporation of interpretive themes and/or community priorities
- Relevant experience creating large-scale visual art for outdoor display
- Stylistic features and craftsmanship in examples of artworks provided
- Added value to the project based on unique experience, previous work, additional skills, approach, or other factors
- Connection to the West End neighborhood community

Upon selection of the artists, Great Rivers Greenway will negotiate the scope of services and other terms and conditions of an agreement with the selected artists. If such negotiations are not successful, Great Rivers Greenway reserves the right to begin negotiations with other respondents.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Any contract as a result of this Request for Qualifications will be awarded without discrimination on race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, or national origin.

Preference may be given to individuals or businesses located within St. Louis City, St. Louis County, or St. Charles County, and secondarily within the state of Missouri.

Great Rivers Greenway reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to 1) reject any or all submittals, when, in its opinion, it is determined to be in the public interest to do so, 2) waive minor informalities of a submittal, 3) cancel, revise, or extend this solicitation, 4) request additional information which the organization deems necessary.

This Request for Qualifications does not obligate Great Rivers Greenway to pay any costs incurred by any respondent in the submission of qualifications.