

Public Art Bench Program

Call for Expressions of Interest

Submission Deadline: Thursday, November 18, 2021

A Call for Artists and Designers in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

Acknowledgment

The Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (RMWB) is located on Treaty 8 Land, the traditional territory of the Cree, Dene, and the Métis peoples. It is the traditional meeting grounds of many Indigenous people since time immemorial. Continuing to recognize our past, present and future relationships with First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada, it is our shared responsibility to respect these lands, preserve these waters and nourish our relationship with the surrounding environment and with each other.

Project Overview

Public Art Wood Buffalo is inviting local artists and designers to submit an expression of interest to work with rural communities to create a custom-made park bench. The park bench designs selected will be duplicated in the **Kiyām Community Park** location, creating two (2) “sister” benches. One (1) bench from each artist will remain in the rural community park, and the “sister” bench will be installed in Kiyām Community Park. This call will create a total of four (4) park benches.

Designs for the park benches should be innovative, original and of a high-quality artistic expression. The benches can be fabricated by the selected proponent or sent out to be manufactured based on the design.

Project Goal

The Public Art Bench Program is a pilot project that is anticipated to be repeated in each community. This project is aimed at strengthening a visual connection between Wood Buffalo’s rural communities and its urban core.

The goal of this pilot project is to create four (4) park benches designed by local creatives in collaboration with our rural communities that:

- enhance the connection between people and place;
- contribute to placemaking efforts and civic pride;
- respond to the history, current or future use of the respective park;
- broaden public experience of the arts;
- highlight the importance of arts and culture.

The Municipality recognises the significance that public art can play in strengthening the community, building identity, developing creativity and increasing awareness of the arts in our lives as well as a bridge to the truth and reconciliation journey we are on.

*Public Art Wood Buffalo will coordinate all community engagement with the public engagement strategist and support the selected proponent in overall project delivery including resourcing manufacturers if needed.

Site Information

There are three (3) sites for the community park bench project as follows:

Site #1 - Vista Ridge Park

Vista Ridge Park is located at 1 Spruce Valley Drive in the hamlet of Saprae Creek Estates and is an all-season recreation facility boasting 60 skiable acres for skiers, snowboarders, and downhill tubing. The park features a terrain park, meticulously groomed runs and a bunny hill for beginners, with two-quad chair lifts, an outdoor skate park, playground and a golf course.

Interested proponents will have the opportunity to work with members of this community to inspire a park bench design. The selected artist/designer will fabricate or manufacture two “sister” benches.

History

The hamlet of Saprae Creek is located 25 kilometres south of Fort McMurray and is the third largest community in the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo. It is situated on the crest of the Clearwater River Valley and can be accessed from Alberta Highway 69. Established in 1987, Saprae Creek is a forested acreage hamlet that serves as a bedroom community to Fort McMurray. Saprae Creek is home to Vista Ridge, and 715 residents as per the 2018 municipal census.

Site #2 - Anzac Community Garden and Park

Anzac Community Garden and Park is located at the intersection of Cheecham Drive and Stony Mountain Road in the hamlet of Anzac and was built in 2015 and is situated in the heart of the community. It features gathering areas used for meetings and small gatherings, on-site community gardens, and a gazebo.

Interested proponents will have the opportunity to work with members of this community to inspire a park bench design. The selected artist/designer will fabricate or manufacture two “sister” benches.

History

The hamlet of Anzac is on the western shore of Willow Lake in the southern region of the Municipality and is near Gregoire Lake Provincial Park. Located approximately 45 kilometres southeast of Fort McMurray, Anzac can be accessed from Highways 63 and 881. Anzac is situated within a beautiful natural environment containing treasured resources such as lakes, streams, mature vegetation and wildlife habitats.

The community was originally named Willow Lake but was renamed Anzac in 1917 as a railway stop on the Alberta Great Waterways Railway Line. It was named Anzac after the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps who surveyed the area after World War I.

According to the 2018 census, there are 659 residents currently living in Anzac. The Anzac surrounding area is also home to Fort McMurray First Nation and the Willow Lake Métis. To help create a distinct character and sense of place, prominent buildings and other features such as public art, are encouraged to locate in the Community Core.

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Site #3 - The Kiyām Community Park

Kiyām Community Park will be the destination for the second “sister” bench designed by each artist/designer. This project is aimed at strengthening a visual connection between Wood Buffalo’s rural communities and its urban core.

The ‘**Kiyām Community Park**,’ formerly referred to as the Franklin and Main Park, is a new park located at the busy intersection of Franklin Avenue and Main Street in downtown Fort McMurray. Kiyām is a Cree and Michif word meaning “Let it be,” and naming this park in local Indigenous languages is a way to honour Indigenous heritage in Wood Buffalo. The new Park’s name is the result of extensive engagement with Indigenous community representatives on an appropriate name for the park in a traditional language spoken in the region, commemorating Wood Buffalo’s Indigenous heritage.

The Park will have unique features that stimulate the senses, tells our community’s and region’s story, and draws people to the area year-round in a beautiful setting that attracts the community, encourages downtown investment, and supports surrounding businesses. The Park benches will be placed in a strategic location, addressing the need for parks and outdoor spaces that contribute to improved health and safety and beautification, spurring downtown revitalization. Design of the Park includes accessible features such as community gathering spaces, a medicine wheel rock garden, micro businesses, an interactive water feature, a full-size basketball court, along with winter season activities such as ice skating and year-round lighting to enhance safety.

History

Franklin Avenue is in the heart of the downtown core of Fort McMurray and is home to several businesses and residential buildings. The Franklin Hotel was the first hotel established in Fort McMurray and occupied the site from 1911 until 1934 when it was destroyed by fire. Seven years after the hotel was built, Angus M Sutherland purchased the hotel and a section of the building served as Sutherlands Drugs until 1921. In 1922 Frank O’Coffey purchased the building. The hotel featured a restaurant and a beer hall, a large wood stove separated the two areas. The hotel became the social hub of the community and served as a meeting place and a source of recreation for visitors and residents.

Current and Future Use of the Site

The Municipality is developing the site into a park which will be highly utilized as public open space. It is expected that the park will become an important social gathering place within the heart of the downtown, with businesses as well as children and their families from the many nearby businesses and schools enjoying this amenity.

The park may also be used by people attending events or staying at the nearby hotels, when attendees/hotel patrons may ‘spill over’ into the park.

The approved plan for the park is available as **Appendix A – Approved Plan for Park**. All works will be in public areas and as such, must not present any danger to public safety, health or welfare.

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Budget

The total award for this project is **\$20,000.00** per artist/designer. The expected budget per bench is \$10,000.00 including fabrication. The awarded artist will design and fabricate two (2) “sister” benches. The bench designs are to be inspired through community engagement of citizens and visitors to Vista Ridge Park in Sapræ Creek, **or** Anzac Community Garden Park in Anzac. One (1) bench will be placed in the community park, and the “sister” bench is to be placed in Kiyām Community Park in Fort McMurray.

The following is included in the budget and to be undertaken by the selected artist/designer.

- Community engagement with interested participants from Sapræ Creek (Vista Ridge) or Anzac*
- Design concept creation
- Fabrication or manufacturing of the two benches
- Delivery and installation of the benches
- Sub-contractor and professional fees
- Insurance (general liability of up to \$2M)
- Detailed maintenance package (note that desired lifespan of bench is 15 years)

Anticipated Schedule

It is expected that the commissioned artist/designer will comply with the project’s general timeline dates, as highlighted below*:

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| a. Call for Expressions of Interest (EOI) | - | October 7, 2021 |
| b. Artist Information Session | - | October 21, 2021 |
| c. Submission Deadline | - | November 18, 2021 |
| d. Notice of Award | - | November 26, 2021 |
| e. Rural Community Engagement | - | Winter 2021/22 |
| f. Fabrication and Installation | - | Spring/Summer 2022 |

****Schedule subject to change.***

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Submission Requirements and Evaluation Criteria

Interested artists/designers are invited to submit applications to our online submission form at www.rmwb.ca/benchprogram

Submissions will be reviewed by the selection panel can receive up to 100 points based on the below criteria.

Every effort will be made by Public Art Wood Buffalo to contact the applicant prior to the submission deadline to request missing information. Applications that are incomplete after submission deadline will not be reviewed by the selection panel.

The online submission form will only accept files submitted in the following formats: PDF, WORD, EXCEL, JPG, PNG. Each file must not exceed 10MB.

Please contact Public Art Wood Buffalo at publicart@rmwb.ca or call PULSE at 780-743-7000 prior to the submission deadline if you are having issues with the online submission form.

1. EXRESSION OF INTEREST	A written proposal that explains why you are interested in the project. Consider responding to the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What excites you about this opportunity?• How would you describe yourself as an artist, designer or fabricator?• Describe your preferred art form, medium or working materials (i.e. illustration, woodworking, resin, painting, sculpture, etc.).• Offer insight into any complimentary skills you might have (i.e. experience in design software like AutoCAD, Fusion 360, Sketchup, experience in community development, public engagement, public art, etc.).• If planning to outsource manufacturing, provide insight into how you plan to accomplish this or into existing relationships.• Describe your experience collaborating with others or as a leader.• If you have a preference of which rural community you would like to work with, please describe your connection to this place.	50 Points
2. BIOGRAPHY	Provide a story about you as an artist or designer, what mediums you work with, and any credentials or experience that has shaped your practice. If applicable, include a link to your website or social media handle that best showcases your work.	10 Points
3. PORTFOLIO	Include maximum of 10 images in jpeg or pdf format. Images must be numbered and titled.	30 Points

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- 4. ANNOTATED IMAGE LIST** Submit an annotated image list that coincides with your portfolio images. Include a brief description of each photo (i.e. dimensions, materials, process, etc.) **10 Points**

Selection Panel

The selection panel will review the submissions and select two (2) lead artists/designers to work with the community of Sapræe Creek (Vista Ridge), or Anzac. The selection panel is comprised of 7 members inclusive of arts professionals, key stakeholders and interested citizens.

Artist Agreement

The successful artist or artist team will be required to sign an agreement with the Municipality. Upon notification of the winning proposal, the successful artist/designer will have 7 business days to finalize and sign the agreement. If an agreement cannot be reached within this period, the municipality may award the proposal to the first runner up to the winning proposal and allow 10 business days for that artist to finalize and sign the agreement or cancel and reissue the Expression.

Submission Deadline

Submissions will only be accepted online and must be received by **Thursday, November 18 by 11:59 PM (MST)**. Please visit www.rmwb.ca/benchprogram to submit using our online submission form.

All inquiries can be directed to:

Public Art Wood Buffalo

Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo

E: publicart@rmwb.ca

Please reference **Public Art Bench Program** in all communications

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APPENDIX

Appendix A - Approved Plan for the Kiyām Community Park

Plan View



Main Entry



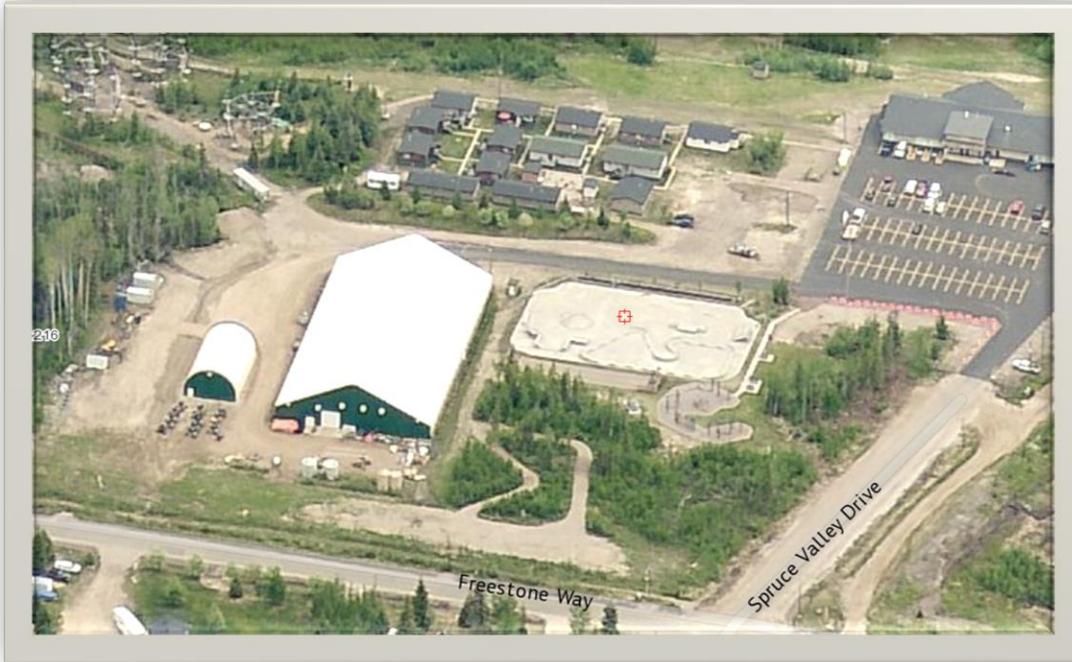
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Site Map – Anzac Community Garden Park



Site Map – Vista Ridge Park

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Appendix B – Visual Support Design Images

Public Art Benches in Alberta for Reference



Snail on a Leaf Bench at Celebration Garden in St. Albert by Karen Ho Fatt



Fallen Branch Bench at Celebration Garden in St. Albert by Eduino M. Sousa

St. Albert, Alberta



The Bloom Bench at the Rundle LRT Station in Calgary by Karen Ho Fatt



The Voyageurs Bench at the Discovery Canyon in Red Deer by Dawn Detarando and Brian McArthur

Calgary, Alberta

Red Deer, Alberta

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