

## Call to Artists

### Request for Qualifications

#### Pontiac Field Public Art and Historical Signage Project Bayview Park, Erie, PA

**Budget: \$10,000 - \$15,000**

**Deadline to Submit Materials: 5:00 PM (EST) Tuesday, March 24, 2020**

#### Project Description

[Our West Bayfront](#) and [Erie Arts & Culture](#) are accepting qualifications from artists (or artist teams) for a public art opportunity at Bayview Park in Erie's West Bayfront community.

We are looking for artists (or artist teams) with strong portfolios of past work who demonstrate a proven track record of public art projects and experience in environmental, iconographic, and conceptual solutions for public art. Artists (or artist teams) will submit their applications online for consideration. From this, the Project Committee intends to select one finalist who is most qualified for this project. The finalist will be paid a modest design fee to conduct a site visit, meet with members of the Project Committee, and then create and submit a conceptual design proposal. If the conceptual design proposal is approved, the selected finalist will be expected to lead the production of the artwork from concept to delivery.

#### Project Budget

The finalist will be paid a \$1,000 stipend for travel expenses related to site visits and all expenses related to the creation and submission of the conceptual design proposal. The budget for the project is \$10,000 - \$15,000, including but not limited to all expenses related to project completion, site preparation, design fees, materials, fabrication costs, documentation, transportation, installation, and travel expenses. Once the conceptual design proposal is finalized, Our West Bayfront will work with partners to leverage contributions toward the project, such as materials, lodging if necessary, site preparation, etc.

Monies in the budget are able to be allocated to address all the necessary design components to achieve the desired transformation of the site. Budgeted amounts are projections only and may change at the discretion of Our West Bayfront. The final design will be subject to the engineering limitations of the site.

#### Project Goals and Scope

Pontiac Field at Bayview Park is a historic baseball field that has been in operation since the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The park was home to the African American team the Pontiacs who played here from 1936 – 1956 when baseball was popular outdoor entertainment in Erie

and throughout the nation. The players who honed their sport on the field included Sam Jethroe who became National League rookie of the Year in 1950 as a Boston Braves player, only three years after Jackie Robinson became broke the color barrier of major league baseball. In the early 2000's, the field was renamed to honor the Pontiacs and a sign was erected in honor of all the players and teams who have used the field.

See a short profile of the team and field's history here: <https://www.yourerie.com/hidden-history/black-history-month/hidden-history-the-pontiacs-eries-african-american-baseball-team/>

Pontiac Field is located at Bayview Park, a municipal park situated in a residential neighborhood in Erie's West Bayfront neighborhood, a few blocks from the downtown business district. The neighborhood has an important history as home to many of Erie's African American families going back for generations. The neighborhood was originally established by William Himrod, an entrepreneur who developed the area as an affordable community for free blacks and poor whites. The area, known as "New Jerusalem," became a safe haven for African Americans relocating to Erie in the years prior to the Civil War.

This area is now the focus of revitalization efforts led by Our West Bayfront in partnership with residents of the community and the City of Erie. These efforts have included improvements to Bayview Park, repairs to homes on the blocks surrounding the parks, and recreational and arts programming at Bayview Park. This public arts project is part of a broader initiative to bring greater awareness to the history of African American residents in Erie and in this neighborhood. This project is developed in the context of other recent and future projects that have similar goals, including the installation of a mural by the Erie Martin Luther King Jr. Center on their facility a few blocks from Bayview Park, and plans for a heritage trail that will mark other sites important to our community's history.

### **Description of Location and Project Requirements**

The Pontiac Field artwork will be located in the vicinity of Pontiac Field on the east side of Bayview Park. The park is situated within a neighborhood that is primarily residential, bounded by the Erie County Department of Public Health on Cherry Street to the west, residential homes to the south along West 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and the east on Walnut Street, and a steep bluff owned by the Erie Western PA Port Authority that leads down to the Bayfront Parkway and Presque Isle Bay to the north.

Two markers are currently located in the southwestern corner of the park: a sign that identifies the park as "Allen-Hetico Memorial Field" developed in 1983, and a second sign on wooden posts that includes a photograph of the 1941 Pontiac team (images of both signs are attached). This project should include the replacement of the wooden sign with updated signage and artwork relating to the historical legacy of the park. These two components could be integrated as one artwork, or treated separately with the installation of new signage along with separate piece of art.

The specific location of the piece is not limited to the current location of the signage, and the selected finalist is encouraged to consider the use of a variety of media. The Project Committee is open to proposals that are either two dimensional or three dimensional, provided the piece fits within the context (and constraints) of the park setting. Approval by the City of Erie will be required.

A link to the street view for [Bayview Park is here](#).

This installation must be able to endure weather associated with all four seasons in the Great Lakes region, including harsh winters that can bring below zero temperatures, strong winds, up to six feet of snow, and prolonged freezing temperatures.

### **Application Requirements**

- Artist (or team) biography
- C.V. emphasizing experience in public art and working with public agencies or private clients. If applying as a team, please include resumes for all team members.
- Artist statement that emphasizes the nature of your work and your artistic process.
- Letter of Interest
- Examples of past work (10 images)
- Work Sample Identification
- Artist website and/or social media

Letter of interest should address the following:

1. Why are you interested in proposing artwork for this project?
2. Why should the Project Committee choose you for this project?
3. What are some previous projects that you completed that are relatable to this project in size, scope, and budget?
4. How would you work with the community to gather stakeholder input and use it to inform the development of the artwork?

Work Sample Identification should address the following (for each item):

1. Budget
2. Date of work
3. Client/project
4. Additional explanatory text about specific artworks may be added, although this is not required.

### **Application Submission Instructions**

All materials should be submitted by March 24, 2020 by 5 PM EST.

Materials can be emailed to Anna Frantz, Executive Director, Our West Bayfront at [anna@ourwestbayfront.org](mailto:anna@ourwestbayfront.org). If an applicant desires to send hard copies they can do so using the following mailing address:

Our West Bayfront  
c/o Anna Frantz, Executive Director  
109 University Square  
Erie, PA 16541

### **Selection Process and Criteria**

The Project Committee will work with the artist (or team) to finalize the schematic design and integration of artwork with the site. Submissions will be evaluated by the Project Committee based upon the overall quality and merit of the artists' past works. The Project Committee will screen the artists' applications and will select one finalist who will be paid a modest design fee for an interview with the Project Committee and presentation of conceptual design proposals. Contracts and final budgets will also be discussed at that time.

Proposals will be selected by a committee consisting of regional art professionals and community members. Criteria for jurying proposals may include, but are not limited to:

1. Detail and completeness of proposal
2. Overall aesthetic of proposed artwork
3. Does it embody the vision?
4. Does enhance the park?
5. Does it invoke a sense of place?
6. Suitability for outdoor permanent installation
7. Artist demonstrates/provides evidence of ability to follow through and meet deadlines
8. Media
9. Subject matter

### **Timeline**

<b>March 6, 2020:</b>	Distribute RFQ
<b>Tuesday, March 24, 2020 (5:00 PM EST):</b>	RFQ submission deadline
<b>April 3, 2020:</b>	Finalist selected and notified; artist concept and stipend agreement signed
<b>April – May 2020:</b>	Meeting with Project Committee. Concept submission deadline anticipated for early May.
<b>May 2020:</b>	Public input on concept gathered, concept revisions/finalization
<b>June 30, 2020:</b>	Concept finalized and approved
<b>July 2020:</b>	Installation

**Local Preference**

To the extent possible, final proposals should include opportunities to work with Erie-based service providers.

**About Our West Bayfront**

Our West Bayfront, established in 2016, is a nonprofit neighborhood improvement organization that supports neighbors in action to build a better Bayfront community. Our West Bayfront enhances the quality of life in Erie's West Bayfront neighborhoods, situated directly to the west of Erie's downtown business district, by promoting civic engagement, thoughtful development, historical preservation and neighborhood pride.

**About Erie Arts & Culture**

Founded in 1960 as the Arts Council of Erie, Erie Arts & Culture is the Local Arts Agency (LAA) for Northwest Pennsylvania and partner of the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts (PCA). Our role is to promote, support, and develop arts and culture at the regional level; ensuring broad opportunities for residents and tourists throughout communities in Erie, Crawford, Venango, Warren, Mercer, and Lawrence counties to engage with the sector educationally, socially, and economically. Our presence ensures that all communities - regardless of their geographic location or economic status - are systematically and equitably served.

In support of our mission, Erie Arts & Culture:

- Provides tools, resources, and financial support to individuals and organizations that specifically utilize arts and culture as a platform to engage the broader community.
- Grows the capacity of our sector to ensure extraordinary arts and cultural experiences.
- Creates an environment in which artists and creative industries, representing a wide variety of disciplines, can thrive.
- Funds opportunities for lifelong learning through arts and culture experiences in classrooms, institutions, and public spaces.
- Consults on how arts and culture can be a component in any development or redevelopment project.

Images

