

Cook Park Legacy Mural Program

Request for Qualifications

July 12, 2021



Overview

The Trust for Public Land in partnership with City of Atlanta Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs invites Metro Atlanta artists and artist teams to submit qualifications for a site-specific murals for installation in Rodney Cook, Sr. Park (Cook Park,) located in the Vine City neighborhood of Atlanta.

This site-specific work of art should reflect the neighborhood's unique history and the artist selected will be required to work with community to create the design and installation of the artwork. The artwork will be installed in up to two areas of the park. All costs associated with the artwork must be integrated into the budget presented. Please see images in the document for location options.

Background & History

Cook Park, located at 616 Joseph E. Boone Blvd, is a 16-acre neighborhood park in Atlanta's historic Vine City named for the now deceased Rodney Mims Cook, Sr., a member of the Georgia House of Representatives who considered Martin Luther King, Sr. a friend. The project represents a collaboration between the City of Atlanta Department of Watershed Management, The City of Atlanta Department of Parks and Recreation, The Trust for Public Land (TPL), The National Monuments Foundation, City of Atlanta Office of the Mayor, and the community.

Rodney Cook, Sr. Park at Historic Vine City Atlanta's Historic Vine City and English Avenue neighborhoods have lacked public parks and have suffered from persistent flooding for decades. A collaboration between The Trust for Public Land and the City of Atlanta solved both problems by creating the new, 16-acre Cook Park, which will be able to store 9 million gallons of stormwater that otherwise would threaten residents' homes. With the park opening in 2021, residents will be able to enjoy the many unique passive and active recreational spaces while protecting hundreds of homes from flooding.

The incredible history of the neighborhood is what makes Cook Park and it's neighborhood unique. During the height of the Civil Rights Movement, Vine City was a vibrant neighborhood populated by much of Atlanta's African-American middle class. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Julian Bond and other prominent civil rights leaders called Vine City home.

From the beginning and over the course of the project, the community was engaged in a variety of ways, seeking to understand residents' concerns while forging valuable relationships. These conversations shaped the park, while the prospect of a major investment to address chronic issues of environmental injustice has provided a sense of hope among many area residents.

The park consists of wide sidewalks, shaded seating areas, a 2-acre pond, sports courts, a splash pad, and the City's first outdoor climbing boulders. A number of concrete vertical surfaces have

been integrated into the park for the future installation of painted murals to honor the legacy of the neighborhood's residents. These concrete walls are the areas we look to identify the right artists to tell the story of the neighborhood and its history.

Learn more about Cook Park at www.tpl.org/our-work/cook-park.

THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND

The Trust for Public Land is a national organization that was founded in 1972 on the conviction that all people need and deserve access to nature and the outdoors, close to home, in the cities and communities where they live, as a matter of health, equity, and justice.

TPL seeks to bring the benefits of parks and nature to the places, people, and communities that needed them most.

TPL has been involved with thousands of unique land conservation, preservation, and park development projects across the country. In Atlanta, TPL has been involved with the protection of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. childhood neighborhood, the conservation of over 18,000 acres along the Chattahoochee River, and the acquisition of land for the Atlanta BeltLine.

Based on TPL's expertise and relationships, TPL was asked by the City of Atlanta to collaborate with the City's Department of Parks & Recreation and Department of Watershed Management to implement a 16-acre park that would manage stormwater and to create a unique collection of passive and active recreational spaces that would benefit the residents who live within a 10-minute walk of the park. The Cook Park Legacy Mural Program is being funded by one of TPL's national donors.

CITY OF ATLANTA - MAYOR'S OFFICE OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS

The City of Atlanta's Office of Cultural Affairs (OCA) was established in 1974 to encourage and support Atlanta's cultural resources. The initial mission was to solidify the role that arts and other cultural resources play in defining and enhancing the social fabric and quality of life of Atlanta citizens and visitors.

Today the OCA understands that the arts play an essential role in defining the cultural vitality of the city and is working to enhance Atlanta's reputation as a cultural destination. The OCA aims to provide programs that contribute substantially to the city's economy and quality of life.

LOCATIONS OF PROPOSED MURALS AT COOK PARK

Stacked Stone Stairway and Restroom at Northwest Corner of Site

Proposed artwork will be installed on the front facing surfaces on either side of the stacked stone staircase located in the northwest corner of the park facing Cook Park’s splash pad and possibly the park’s restroom building. (Below)



Sports Courts at Southwest Corner of Park

Other locations are at the front facing surfaces surrounding the sports court in the southwest corner of the park at the intersection of Thurmond St. and Vine St and at the courts' terraced seating. (Below)



SELECTION PROCESS

A steering committee for the Cook Park Legacy Mural Program is comprised of residents of the Vine City and English Avenue neighborhoods, staff from the City of Atlanta, Mayor's Office of Cultural Affairs, representatives from the City of Atlanta Department of City Planning, and representation from The Trust for Public Land. The committee will review submissions and select three artists. The following will be considered when selecting artists:

- Artist connection to the project's neighborhood
- Artistic innovation and originality in past mural works
- Artist's experience working with community on past art projects

Once chosen, the selected artists, along with the steering committee will review the results of surveys distributed through the community to determine what community members would like to see in Cook Park. Based on survey feedback received, the artists will then develop and submit up to three mural proposals for which they will receive a fee. After steering committee members approve selected designs they will vote on the preferred design.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS

Artists must have previous mural experience and experience working with community. Artists must use the Vine Street/English Avenue community as inspiration along with using community feedback from the results of surveys that have already been distributed to the community. This project is all inclusive and should include all materials, assistants, and equipment. All artists must reside in Metro Atlanta or have a studio space in Metro Atlanta.

To be considered, applicants must provide a PDF in 8.5" x 11" no greater than 8 pages that includes the following:

- Artist statement: To include biography, website, and/or social media (1 page)
- Small portfolio (2-5 images) of past mural works.
- Preliminary budget and materials list.

PROJECT TIMELINE

- Monday, July 12 Application Opens
- Monday, July 26, 11:59 PM (EST): Application Closes
- Week of July 26 Committee Review
- Friday, July 30 Artists Selection and Notification
- Week of August 9 Community Conversations
- August 30 Mural Proposal Submission
- September 6 -15 Community Vote
- September 24 Winning Artist(s) Announced
- October 1-15 Mural Production
- Sunday, October, 17th Dedication

SUBMISSION AND INQUIRIES

All submission materials and any questions should be directed to Emily Fisher at eafisher@atlantaga.gov.