



# **The Bridgeland Arch Bench Project – Call for Artists**

**Part of the Bridgeland Mainstreet Project**



# Bridgeland Art Bench Project

## CALL TO ARTISTS

The Bridgeland Business Improvement Area (BIA) invite artists or artist teams to submit qualifications for the design of one of three murals on art benches in Bridgeland, along 1<sup>st</sup> Street NE. The murals are intended to be painted directly on the art benches to create a temporary, vibrant, and engaging landscape. The murals will be enjoyed by motorists, pedestrians, businesses, and residents in the area.

Artists with experience creating outdoor murals are encouraged to apply. This opportunity is open to local professional artists with connections to the Bridgeland area. Individual artists or artist teams/collectives are eligible.

The BIA recognizes and values diversity and inclusion; and unique dimensions of diversity including race, ethnicity, gender, disability, age, religion, sexual orientation, work style, communication style, learning preferences and others.

## THE LOCATION

There are 3 art benches as part of this project and 3 artists will be selected for each art bench.

1. NE corner of 1<sup>st</sup> Ave & 7A Street NE
2. SW corner of 1<sup>st</sup> Ave & 8 Street NE
3. SE corner of 1<sup>st</sup> Ave & 9 Street NE



Note: Artists/Installers to confirm all dimensions on site.



## HISTORY/CONTEXT

We want to highlight the history of The Bridgeland community...

The Bridgeland community is diverse community and was developed sits on Treaty 7 territory, the traditional home of the Blackfoot Confederacy (Siksika, Kainai, Piikani), the Tsuut'ina, the Îethka Nakoda Wicastabi Nations, and the Métis Nation.

First Nations peoples, including Piikani, Kainai, and Siksika of the Blackfoot Confederacy, as well as Tsuut'ina and Nakoda, have inhabited the Bow River Basin for more than 10,000 years. The Bow River and surrounding area provided essential sustenance as well as an important transportation corridor for seasonal movement. The Nakoda were the only nation to establish a fishery in the Bow River, while other groups used it to strategically drive the bison hunt.

The buffalo traversed the Bow River at its shallow area near the present-day Reconciliation Bridge. Indigenous people roamed through this area, hunting, camping, and crossing the river as well. The area was treeless except for the banks of the Bow River.

The first European to explore the Bow River was David Thompson in 1787–88. Attempts were made to set up fur trading posts, but inadequate resources meant they closed quickly. Early European settlement centered around farming and ranching in the Bow Valley and commerce in Calgary. The fertile soils and lengthy growing season were conducive to farming oats, barley, wheat, and livestock, and irrigation structures were soon built. The Bow River provided food and a transportation route for settlers and merchandise. Calgary was established as a fort in 1875, and the Canadian Pacific Railway was completed to this point by 1883 — an event that facilitated settlement and the transportation of agricultural products. With European settlement came diseases, and several epidemics decimated First Nations populations in 1781, 1819-20, 1837-38, and 1869-70.

Riverside was initially an informal settlement on the north side of the Bow River, outside Calgary city limits, primarily with immigrants from several European countries. The building of the first Langevin Bridge in 1888 spurred settlement and the area became known as Germantown. The important trail to Edmonton became the locus of ongoing development and Riverside became a village in 1902, with boundaries extending from the river to 6 St and as far north as 8th Ave. Calgary's population boom in the early 1900's meant even more settlement along this busy transportation corridor and by 1910 significant development was happening in nearby Bridgeland including the Calgary General Hospital,

Fire Hall #4, Riverside Public School, along with a new Steel truss Langevin Bridge and a streetcar route along 4<sup>th</sup> Street and to the hospital. Many 2 and 3 story buildings were constructed including Riverside Hotel, Sligsby Block, Armour Reliance Block, Poffenroth/DeWaal block and north of 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue was Gallelli Block and Roma Grocery. Industries were also established such as Pioneer Stables, Riverside Ironworks and Riverside Steam Laundry (west of 4<sup>th</sup> Street) and Riverside Lumberyard to the east along Boulevard Avenue. Small grocery stores, shoe repair and barber shops, drug stores and department stores opened at street level, serving the many new immigrants who were settling on both sides of 4<sup>th</sup> Street.

Many languages were spoken by the German, Ukrainian, Italian, Jewish and Chinese residents who joined with nearby Bridgeland (which had been annexed to the city in 1907) to form the Bridgeland - Riverside Athletic Association. The area was busy with people, horses, streetcars, and many young children. Riverside was annexed to the city in 1910 and growth continued until 1914 when WW1 started. Further development was curtailed in the area until the 1950.



## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Three successful artist or artist teams will create a mural on one of three art benches located on 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue NE. The murals are intended to be a temporary measure, in place for approximately 2/10 years, that will add visual interest and contribute to the vibrancy of the area.

The murals offer a unique opportunity for artists or artist teams to develop a concept that can be experienced from different vantage points:

- **From the street level** - as pedestrians, vehicles, cyclists, and other roadway users traverse the space at different speeds.

The location of the murals on 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue NE opens opportunities to explore the community's roots through varying perspectives, including the relationship between Indigenous people and the early settlers that settled on Treaty 7 Territory.

## Goals

This project will:

- Reflect the past and present of the Bridgeland community.
- Consider the historical and present-day context of the location and the variety of cultural communities represented.
- Create visual interest and encourage pedestrians, motorists, cyclists and other roadway users to slow down and explore the community through its art.

## Public engagement

The artist or artist teams will be expected to organize and engage with the Bridgeland community, including residents, businesses, indigenous and visitors to develop a concept that reflects the community.

The engagement should build upon feedback gathered from the community, as well as new information gathered through engagement activities with the artist(s) and supported by BIA. The BIA can provide additional community context to support a thoughtful and inclusive engagement process.

## Collaboration with BIA

To ensure the public art project meets project goals, as well as the requirements of the community, the artist or artist team will be required to work closely throughout the project with BIA, as well as other stakeholders such as the City of Calgary (CoC) and CoC roadway engineers, to ensure the visuals and design comply with Provincial and Federal traffic safety standards (see technical considerations on following page).



## KEY DATES

Submission deadline:	<b>Friday, May 2, 2025 @ 5pm MST</b> <i>Late submissions will not be considered.</i>
Shortlist and artist selection:	Late May 2025
Public Engagement:	June – July 2025
Concept development	June - July 2025
Project completion:	August 2025

## TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The artist or artist team should be prepared to work within technical constraints as outlined by The City of Calgary, in compliance with the Traffic Association of Canada (TAC) and Provincial road safety guidelines.

At a high level, these include:

- **Colors:** yellow, white, and/or red as the primary background color are restricted.
- **Visuals:** cannot resemble traffic control or warning devices.

All imagery will be subject to review by The City of Calgary for safety purposes.

## COMPENSATION

The artist or artist team will be paid a total of **\$3,000.00 CDN** per art bench (not including GST) for organizing public engagement, development of the artistic concept and implementation of the artwork for one Art Bench. The successful applicants will be paid based on deliverables as per their Scope of Work contract.

The artist/artist team is responsible for managing their project budget.

The total budget includes (but is not limited to):

- Artist fees
- Consultation
- Artist time spent on organizing and conducting public engagement
- Travel if applicable
- Insurance
- Studio fees
- Installation fees
- Materials (specific roadway paint product), anti-graffiti coating, equipment required for the installation and a specialized crew to implement the artists vision on the overpass piers. The artist(s) can also take part in the installation/painting process.



## SELECTION PROCESS

### Step 1 - Shortlisting

All eligible submissions are reviewed by a selection panel consisting of 6 community members. The selection panel will shortlist artists or artist teams based on how their submissions meet the evaluation criteria below (rated out of a possible total 100 points):

### Step 2 – Finalist interviews

Shortlisted artists or artist teams may be invited to an online interview with the selection panel. Finalist(s) will be selected based on the evaluation criteria.

*The selection panel has the right to not award any of the submissions, and The Bridgeland BIA reserves the right to cancel/reissue this opportunity at any time.*

### Evaluation criteria

#### A. Letter of Interest: 30 points

- Explain your interest in this project and your connection to Bridgeland and Calgary.
- Explain your approach to developing artworks for a commission that requires colorful and vibrant artworks.
- How does your artist skills and approach translate to delivering a compelling design for this project.

#### B. CV - Project experience: 20 points

- Artists experience in mural design.
- Show your experience in working to a schedule.
- Demonstrated ability to deliver a project on time.
- Demonstrated ability to meet a set budget and deliver a project on budget.
- Demonstrated ability to collaborate with project teams, other stakeholders and engage with the public.

#### C. Artistic statement: 20 points

- How will this opportunity fit with your current artistic practice and theme of your work?

#### D. Portfolio Images – maximum 10 images: 30 points

- How does your artist practice translate to this medium.

## TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Prior to confirmation of award, the selected artist/artist team will be required to:

- Confirm a Commercial General Liability (“CGL”) insurance policy for bodily injury (including death) and property damage in an amount of not less than TWO MILLION DOLLARS (\$2,000,000.00) inclusive limit for any one occurrence. The Bridgeland BIA and City of Calgary must be named as additional insured parties.
- Complete a Scope and Fee contract defining project deliverables and payment schedule.



## HOW TO APPLY

### Submission package

Eligible submissions will contain:

- a) **Letter of Interest**
- b) **Curriculum Vitae**
- c) **Artist Statement**
- d) **Portfolio Images – maximum 10**

The submission package will be evaluated based on the application criteria on the previous page.

**Note that artwork concepts (proposals) are NOT required as part of this application. The successful artist will develop the concept after completing community engagement.**

### Questions and clarifications

Submit all questions in writing to [ed@bridgelandcalgary.com](mailto:ed@bridgelandcalgary.com) prior to 5:00 PM MST on Friday May 2, 2025.

## HOW TO SUBMIT

- Email [ed@bridgelandcalgary.com](mailto:ed@bridgelandcalgary.com) and attach all the required documents in a single email.
- Email subject line should say: **Bridgeland Art Bench Project**
- Note that the maximum file size for an email is 10 MB.
- Submissions are accepted in electronic form only.
- All submission files must be compatible with a PC.
- Links to posted media or content will not be viewed. All content must be contained within the email.

Incomplete or late submissions will not be considered. Three references will be requested for short-listed artists. References should include company name, current contact name including current telephone number, address, and e-mail address. The Bridgeland BIA reserves the right to contact references without prior notification.